



SMYRNA DELAWARE



TWENTIETH CENTURY CLUB



TOWN HALL AND OPERA HOUSE-1900



THE CHURCHES OF SMYRNA



DELAWARE HOME AND HOSPITAL



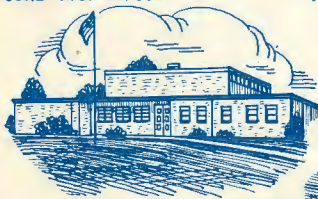
PLANK HOUSE - DUCK CREEK



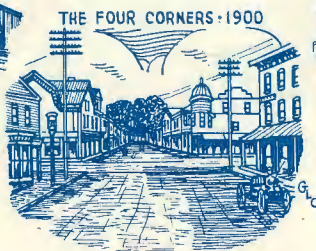
J.B. MOORE HIGH SCHOOL



BIRTHPLACE OF J.B. MOORE



ALLAN McLANE ARMORY



THE FOUR CORNERS-1900



CITIZEN HOSE CO.

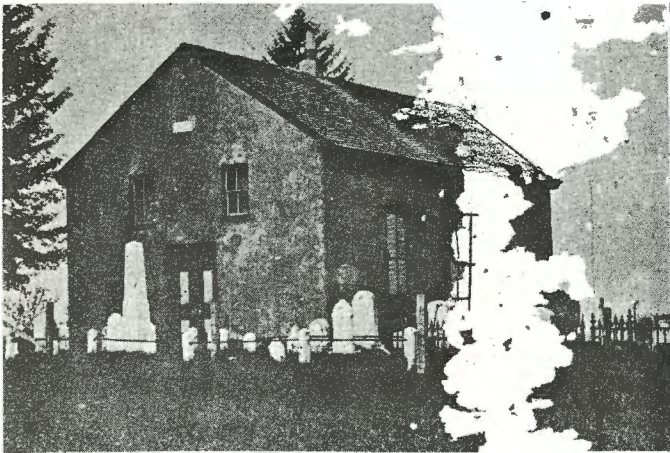
1768



1968

F174
.S55
C3
1968





Only known picture of Brinzion Baptist Church
Post card - 1900

and the Dickinsons had acquired the tract. The meeting house was rebuilt of brick and renamed Brynzion. It served the Baptists until its destruction by wind in the mid 1940's.

Among the most noted personages of Brynzion was Rev. James Jones who had been a surgeon in the American Revolution. Jones was by birth a Delawarean and by some accident of fate was called upon to treat soldiers for yellow fever in Duck Creek Cross Roads during the American Revolution. After his discharge he came to Duck Creek Cross Roads and later settled near Brynzion and served as its pastor for fifty years. He died in 1830 and was buried in Brynzion Cemetery.

ASBURY METHODIST CHURCH

During the years that the American Revolution was fought, a spiritual revolution was conceived. As the political revolution was the climax of a series of events over a long period of time, so was the establishment of the Methodist Church.

In 1729, two brothers, John and Charles Wesley, along with other fellow students at Oxford University, England, assembled themselves together for religious conversation. In jest one of their fellow students made a derisive allusion to the exact and METHODICAL manner in which the Wesleys and their friends performed their various tasks which their sense of Christian duty required. Sometime afterwards those persons of the Anglican Church, who met with the Wesleys in order to revive their religious fervor, were referred to as members of the Methodist Society. John Wesley became the acknowledged leader of this new group. So great was Wesley's success in reviving the religious fervor especially of the poorer people that the Anglican clergy closed the churches to the meetings of the Methodist Society. This action later caused the establishment of a separate Methodist Society outside the fold of the Church of England.

Philip Embury and Robert Strawbridge, two Irish immigrants, began the preaching of Methodism in the colonies in

1760 and 1766 respectfully. They were followed by Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor in 1768. Francis Asbury arrived three years later. During the intervening years from 1760 to 1771 Captain Thomas Webb, an officer in the British Army, had been converted to this new faith. He carried the gospel over sections of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and perhaps Maryland. His preaching paved the way for Asbury's works in these colonies.

How and when Methodism first arrived in Duck Creek is shrouded in mystery. A glimmer is found as to its first hinted arrival by Reverend John Lednum in his "Rise of Methodism in America".

"Mr. Turner, a local preacher, came from New Jersey in 1778 into Appoquinimink above Duck Creek. Among others that were awakened was Lewis Alfree, who, from a great sinner, became a useful Methodist preacher. In the course of his preaching, Alfree spread the gospel across Duck Creek and the Cross Roads, the old name for Smyrna, and thus planted the seeds for the visits of Francis Asbury".

Probably in 1779 George Moore preached near Blackiston Cross Roads; at Mr. Joseph Wyatt's house in The Alley*; at Duck Creek Village and at the Cross Roads. Alfree and Moore were converted laymen whose untiring efforts created a keener religious attitude among those to whom they preached.

Mr. James L. Stevenson, who had arrived from England immediately before The Revolution, was sympathetic to the Methodists. Although Stevenson was a member of the Church of England, he opened his house to the Methodist for worship. Promptly he was excluded from the Communion of the established Church. From thence he cast his lot with this new sect.

On Thursday, December 30, 1780, Francis Asbury met about three hundred persons gathered in, at, and around the log cabin of Stevenson. That occasion marked Francis Asbury's first visit and preaching mission to Duck Creek Cross Roads. The sermon was so forceful that it infuriated the citizens of the Cross Roads to such a degree that Asbury was cautioned never to return. He did not heed their warning for his Journal states repeatedly that he preached at Duck Creek Cross Roads. It was sometime after this warning that Asbury, according to folk-lore, delivered his soul-stirring discourse using as the text St. John's Letter to the Church at Smyrna [Turkey] as recorded in "The Revelation".

Among those present at Stevenson's cabin was Joseph Wyatt, who had recently moved from "The Alley" to the Cross Roads. Asbury must have placed great confidence in Wyatt for records show that "in 1780 Mr. Asbury employed Brother Wyatt as a preacher in and about Duck Creek Cross Roads". Wyatt was the first resident Methodist preacher in the Cross Roads. Services were held both at Wyatt's home and in the Quaker Meeting House in Duck Creek Village.

In 1783 Duck Creek Cross Roads Methodist Society was joined to the Dover Circuit. William Glandening and George Kimble were the Circuit riding preachers. Often times during the year, the Society would hold its meeting in the Episcopal Church. Mr. Kimble did not finish the year as the preacher. In his place Francis Asbury appointed Reverend Thomas Ware. This man of God, originally from New Jersey, had served in

*Located four miles West of Smyrna. See Map



The Revolution; had been converted and then assigned as an itinerant circuit preacher.

"One Sunday early in 1784 shortly after his appointment by Asbury, Reverend Ware received an invitation to preach at the Established Church [Episcopal] at Duck Creek Village. He had gone through part of the morning service, and still standing at the desk gave out the text; but before he had finished his introduction to the sermon, three men marched into the Church, in Indian file, and stood before the desk. The foremost one said that he was a vestryman. He ordered Reverend Ware out of the desk and out of the Church, and he further stated that if Ware did not go, he, himself, would compel Ware to go out. As Mr. Ware did not obey the mandate of the speaker, he seized the Reverend Ware by the collar and dragged him from the desk. A doughty friend seized the persecutor in like manner, and raising his fist ordered the persecutor to let the preacher go or else he would knock him down. Mr. Raymond, who was a Justice, called out, "Don't strike him, Mr. Skillington. If he does not let the preacher alone and cease disturbing the congregation, I will commit him." By this time the persecutor had loosed his hold of Mr. Ware, and he and his companion returned from the church letting Reverend Ware finish his discourses".

From scattered sources evidence points to the fact that Francis Asbury was in this vicinity early November prior to his meeting with Bishop Coke at Barratt's Chapel later that month.

In November 1784 Francis Asbury again visited Dover. He made his intentions known to preach at Duck Creek Cross Roads. A plot was formed in the Cross Roads to prevent his preaching. A Mr. Bishop was sent to inform Asbury about the resistance to Asbury's preaching at the Cross Roads. Records do not indicate where this occurred. They state that Asbury listened intently. Not wishing any harm to befall the work of the Kingdom of God, or his followers, Asbury, in consequence on this interference, rode on through the rain and the darkness to the house of a friend beyond the village.

In the same month and in the same year which the former events occurred to Asbury, Bishop Coke and Richard Whatcoat stayed and preached at the Cross Roads. The date was November 12, 1784. Two days later Asbury met Coke at Barratt's Chapel near Frederica. That meeting marked the formal beginning of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

Two years later in 1786, the Methodist of Duck Creek Cross Roads erected their first house of public worship on a plot of land donated to them by the Revolutionary hero, Allen McLane. The site was located on Delaware Street near its present intersection with North Street. Those men of God named their Church in honor of Francis Asbury. Thus this body of believers erected the first church building in Duck Creek Cross Roads as a circuit church.

General Conferences for Delaware were held in Duck Creek Cross Roads in 1791, 1792 and 1797.

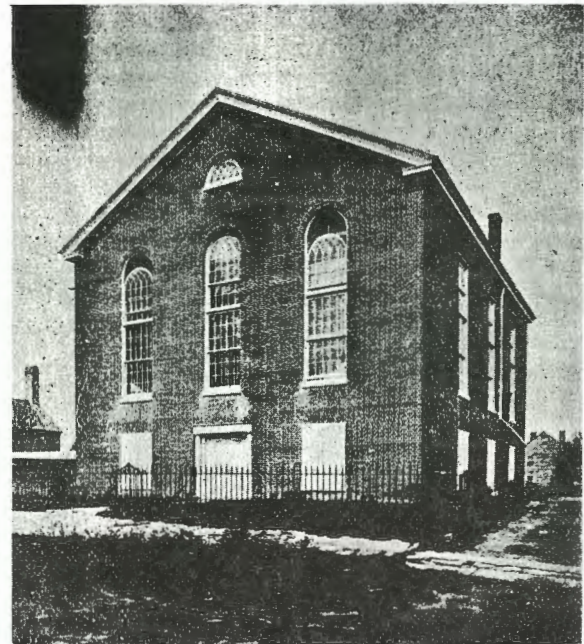
A meeting was held on March 4, 1799 for the purpose of "chusing and nominating" seven Trustees for Asbury Church, Duck Creek Cross Roads. Twenty-one persons attended that meeting. The following were elected: James McDowell, James Stevenson, John Cole, George Kennard, Israel Peterson, Peter

Lowber and Simon VanWinkle, John Cole was appointed Chairman; James Stevenson, Secretary; and George Kennard, Treasurer.

The Trustees then appointed a committee to wait upon Mr. Allen McLane "to obtain a deed for the property upon which our church now stands". Later that year the deed was obtained along with a Certificate of Incorporation which was accorded the Trustees by an Act of Delaware Assembly.

The members of Asbury became to realize by 1843 that their old wooden church was no longer adequate. After a long debate the lot upon which the present church stands on Mt. Vernon Street [then Ball Street] was purchased from Dr. Fisler. By design or by coincidence this lot was originally part of the land owned by James Stevenson, at whose cabin, still standing in 1843, Asbury had first proclaimed the gospel.

On May 24, 1844 the cornerstone was laid, and the erection of the edifice began. The bricks used in the construction were made from the clay found on the lot of old church. New Asbury Church, when completed in 1845, cost \$7,000. It was two stories high with a lecture room on the ground floor, and the sanctuary seating six hundred [600] persons on the second floor. The building was heated by stoves, and contained clear glass windows for light and ventilation. As the new church was a modest structure, no provisions were made for a bell.



ASBURY CHURCH 1844

At this time Smyrna became a separate charge responsible for circuit churches under its care among which were Severson's, Raymond's and Friendship.

During the morning preaching service on Sunday, October 28, 1855 the alarm of "Fire" was called. Upon investigation the male members of the congregation found that the log cabin next to them was afire. The men were able to quickly pull the logs down, and dragging them back into the garden, the blaze was extinguished. The symbol of the birthplace of Methodism in Smyrna had thus been destroyed.



The great moral conflict that raged throughout the country between 1850 and 1865 did not escape Smyrna's secular or religious attention. Because this town was a divided one during the Civil War, Asbury's record are silent except for the routine business that was conducted.

In the evening of Saturday, December 11, 1869, the sexton closed the church doors and departed for home. For some reason he did not check the heaters in the basement before his leaving. As the custom in those days, he had coaled them, opened the dampers to burn off the coal gas, but he did not close the dampers in order to bank the fire. On that night, "the M.E. Church burned". Before the blaze could be controlled the conflagration had spent its fury. The basement [now called the ground floor] containing the Church records and twelve hundred volumes of books of the Sunday School Library was a charred ruin. The ceiling was partially collapsed and the sanctuary was fire scarred and water soaked. The Methodist were without a home.

The insurance company paid the Trustees twelve hundred dollars [\$1,200]. With that money they sought to repair the damages. However, many members of the congregation felt that the building should be enlarged. Reverend Aaron Rittenhouse was successful in bringing the vision of a rebuilt Church to the fore. He did not see the realization of his labor as the Reverend John F. Clymer, D.D., replaced him in the fall of 1871.



Post card 1901 - Drawing from an artist's sketch
Circa 1890

Reverend Clymer, a descendant of a signer of the Declaration of Independence from Pennsylvania, exhibited all the tenacity and vigor of his ancestor. Working along the plans suggested by Reverend Rittenhouse, and adding his own experience as a church builder, Reverend Clymer directed the rebuilding of the Methodist Church. An eighteen foot front of pressed brick was added. This was topped by a bell tower and steeple, one hundred thirty five feet high. The basement was lowered and two more class rooms were added to the Lecture Room. The improvements to the sanctuary were a divided staircase, a wide vestibule, black walnut fronts to the galleries and rolled stained glass windows. The cost of the rebuilding was eighteen thousand dollars, all of which was pledged.

Records do not indicate where the Methodist held services of public worship from 1869 until the reopening of their edifice on November 4, 1872. On that day, Reverend George A. Phoebus, D. D., recently assigned, along with Bishop Foster formal rededicated Asbury. The ceremony was conducted amidst the thought that although the amount of money needed for the project had been pledged, little had been paid. The effects of the Panic of 1871 had recently reached Smyrna. Some of the heaviest subscribers, who were business men, were unable to meet the pledge. Other members of the congregation, feeling that times would worsen, became reluctant to pay their share and thus the debt stood. Efforts were made to reduce the mortgage but to no appreciable degree. In 1879 the amount owed was still ten thousand dollars.

At a meeting of the trustees, one J. B. Cooper, the Treasurer, [who held a note against the church for \$500.] stated that he could no longer carry the note. He further announced that a solution had to be reached immediately. Mr. Cooper presented a plan - in it he would cancel or use his five hundred dollar note if twenty other men would equal his amount. This would clear the mortgage. Nine men volunteered. The following Sunday morning, Rev. Thomas H. Haynes forcibly detained the congregation after the preaching service. He explained to them the need for the money, and told the members that he would devote his entire efforts towards that end until the entire amount was raised in cash or negotiable notes, properly endorsed, in thirty days. The amount was raised within the stated period of time. Therefore on one of the Sundays in October 1879 the Centennial Celebration of Methodism in Smyrna was held amid great rejoicing.

In the decades that followed Asbury continued to grow spiritually. A chapel was opened at Smyrna Landing, and one of the members of Asbury, Novel T. Jerman, erected a chapel on East Commerce Street. This Chapel was later moved to a site on West Commerce Street in a section of town called "Spruance City".

The physical plant of the church was also improved with the addition of a pipe organ, stained glass windows, carpeting, electricity, central heating, new pews and an addition containing a kitchen and four Sunday School rooms.

Nineteen thirty nine [1939] witnessed the reunion of three branches of Methodism. This work was accomplished after several years of arduous soul-searching work done by representatives of the eldest Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist



Protestant Church separated in 1828 over a controversy of lay representation in Conference, and the Methodist Episcopal Church South separated in 1844 over a slavery question.

In the charter of the regrouped denomination EPISCOPAL was dropped. Therefore Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church became Asbury Methodist Church.

As time rolled the passage of years further away from Asbury's concept of the constant moving of preachers - the practice was slowed. Rev. Walter L. Beckwith served the congregation for the longest period of time - nine years, 1948 to 1957. During the ministry of Rev. Beckwith, Asbury experienced a deep spiritual upsurge. The result was an increase membership, an overflow attendance in Sunday School, and a large number of participants at morning worship. All of these combined factors pointed the way for expansion.

The preliminary plans were drawn up and discussed while Rev. William Revelle was the pastor. He was succeeded by Rev. J. Howard Link, under whose ministry the parsonage in 1961 and the Sunday School Building [the educational wing] in 1963 were completed. The expenditure for this expansion was two hundred thirty three thousand dollars [\$233,000.]

Thus Asbury Methodist Church has grown from its humble beginning in Duck Creek Cross Roads to a stabilizing force in the community of Smyrna today. As it continues its ministry in this year which marks the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of Smyrna, Methodism in this town will undergo two transformations. This first change will be marked by the merging of two church denominations - the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist. This new body of believers will be known as The United Methodist. This second variation, although not new in itself, is the departure of the minister Rev. Edwin J. Horney. He does not leave this flock of nearly seven hundred souls to join himself as pastor to another congregation. Rather he departs to further administer the service of the Kingdom of God at the Delaware Home and Hospital for the Croni-



Asbury Methodist Church with Educational Annex
cally Ill - located here at Smyrna.

The tall spine, which is lighted each night on Asbury's venerable building, points a beckoning finger towards heaven. In that pointing Asbury challenges the passerby towards greater spiritual service to God and to humanity.



Interior of Asbury's Sanctuary from Balcony

THE CHURCHES OF DELAWARE

by

FRANK R. ZEBLEY

Author of "Along the Brandywine"



*A history, in brief, of the nearly 900 churches
and former churches in Delaware as
located by the Author.*

1947

Church was unsuccessful. Later, a hall in Spruance City was secured, fitted up as a chapel and meetings were held once a month. In 1881, the Odd Fellow's Hall was secured for the services. In 1883, Bishop Thomas A. Becker purchased the old Presbyterian frame church, during the rectorship of Father George S. Bradford, who was also rector of Holy Cross Church at Dover. The dedication service was held on Sun., June 10, 1883. The service was conducted by Bishop Becker assisted by Father Bradford. High Mass was celebrated by the Rev. B. J. Keiley. A concert was given in the evening by St. Peter's choir of Wilmington. The church was named "St. Polycarps" in honor of a bishop of Smyrna, Asia, who was martyred in the second century. The stations of the cross were erected and blessed on Wed., Mar. 1, 1893, by the Rev. E. J. Mealey.

Until 1911, the rector of Holy Cross Church came to Smyrna twice a month and offered Mass. Then, the burden became too great for the Dover priest so one of the Salesian Fathers of Wilmington came by train and held services twice a month. When this arrangement weakened, arrangements were made for a priest from St. Joseph's Industrial School at Clayton to offer Mass on the first and third Sundays of the month.

Early in 1918, Bishop John J. Monaghan decided to sell St. Polycarp's Church to the Centennial M. E. Church, colored, and to build a new church at Clayton. A site was purchased but owing to war-time conditions the erection of a church was postponed. Bishop Monaghan decreed that St. Joseph's Chapel at the Industrial School should become the Parish Church.

Smyrna M. P. Church. A church site at the cor. of East and Methodist Sts. was purchased on Mar. 18, 1845, from Samuel M. Fisler and a substantial frame church was built. The church became defunct and was sold to the Presbyterians in 1846. This church has had one of the most varied existences of any church in Delaware. It has been consecrated to the service of the Methodist Protestants, the Presbyterians, the Roman Catholics and the Methodist Episcopalians.

A second congregation of Methodist Protestants was organized in 1923. They were incorporated on July 3, 1923. During that month a church site at Frazier and Union Sts. was purchased from Rowland Ford. A frame church was then built. They struggled along with a heavy debt until 1930 after which the building was sold. Later, members of the Pilgrim Holiness Church held a revival here but there were not enough converts to organize a church.

Asbury Methodist Church (M.E.) at Smyrna. In 1780, the Rev. Francis Asbury preached in an orchard between Duck Creek Crossroads and Duck Creek Village. The first Methodist services in Smyrna were held in the home of James L. Stevenson by the Rev. Philip Cox. In 1786, a frame church was built. The land was donated by Allen McLane. It was located on Church St., north of Mt. Vernon St., and was named "Asbury M. E. Church."

Francis Asbury preached here on Nov. 29, 1789, on Sept. 13, 1790, and on May 25, 1801. He attended Conference here on Sept. 11, 1792, and again on Oct. 10, 1797, when yellow fever was raging in Philadelphia and the Conference was transferred to Duck Creek. The church was enlarged in 1819 and in 1823, Benjamin Coombs deeded more land for cemetery purposes.

On June 24, 1843, the congregation purchased from Samuel M. Fisler, for \$300.00, 62 perches of land on the n. w. side of Methodist St., now Mt. Vernon St. The erection of a brick church was started. The corner-stone was laid on May 28, 1844. This building was used until 1869. On Dec. 11, 1869, the

church was seriously damaged by fire. "The services of a little fire-engine, belonging to the town, proved invaluable on this occasion as the fire could not be reached by water thrown from buckets." Both the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians offered the use of their churches for worship. The Methodists met in the Presbyterian Church while a new brick church was being erected.

The corner-stone of a new church was relaid on Oct. 7, 1871. It was opened with a service on Feb. 4, 1872, conducted by the Revs. R. L. Dashiell and A. Rittenhouse. It was dedicated on Nov. 24, 1872, by Bishop Foster. During the 1870's the Methodists could be baptized by immersion if they so desired. On Mon., Sept. 10, 1877, a class was baptized in the Hoffecker mill-pond, south of Smyrna.

In 1889, major improvements were made including an organ gallery, library room, new pipe organ, rolled cathedral glass windows, altar enlarged, new carpet and hard oil finish on the woodwork. On Apr. 27, 1890, the church was reopened, with the Rev. George E. Reed, President of Dickinson College preaching both morning and evening sermons. In 1934, further improvements were made.

The Willard Wright Memorial organ and the Deagan chimes were dedicated on Sun., Mar. 16, 1947, by Bishop Chas. W. Flint and the Rev. R. E. Green, the pastor. The organ was a bequest from Willard Wright and the chimes were a gift from Dr. and Mrs. C. J. Prickett in memory of the Revs. R. K. Stephenson and J. W. Colona, former pastors. The old graveyard, on Church St., is still used for interments.

The first Methodist camp-meeting in Kent County was held in a grove three miles below Smyrna, on the road to Dover, in 1805.

Jerman's M. E. Chapel at Smyrna. In the 1880's, one of the problems of sincere religious workers was to induce the less prosperous members of a community to attend church. Perhaps it was pride but these persons seemed reluctant to attend church services because they could not afford to dress as well as their more prosperous neighbors. In an effort to reach these persons in Smyrna, in 1880, Joshua T. Jerman purchased an old store building on Commerce St., the site of which is now included in the right-of-way of the Du Pont Highway. Mr. Jerman had the building converted into a chapel, named it "Mission Chapel" and a Sunday School was conducted by Mrs. Jerman, a member of Asbury M. E. Church.

On May 1, 1891, the trustees of Asbury Church purchased a lot in Spruance City and the chapel was moved to the new site, rebuilt, and named "Jerman's Chapel." In 1902, under the will of Mr. Jerman, the building was placed in the hands of three trustees together with a trust fund of \$890.00 for the maintenance of the building with the provision that the chapel be used for Methodist meetings only. A short time later, the trustees, under the will, turned the chapel and trust fund over to the trustees of Asbury Church. Sunday School has always been held, first under the leadership of Mrs. Jerman and then by members of Asbury Church. For a few years it was a preaching station on the Smyrna Circuit. In 1914, during the pastorate of the Rev. Milton McCann, the chapel was entirely rebuilt.

It was dedicated on May 16, 1915, by the Rev. Warren Brown assisted by the Rev. Milton McCann, the pastor. The altar had been built entirely by Mr. McCann. The Methodists ceased to hold meetings here in 1936.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church at Smyrna. This congregation secured the use of Jerman's Chapel and started to hold meetings in 1936.

Asbury United Methodist Church

218th Anniversary

Morning Worship - 11:00 a.m.

Homecoming Celebration - October 20, 1996

Prelude Elizabeth Goodman, Organist
Introit Asbury Chancel Choir
*Processional Hymn "God of Grace and God of Glory" 577
Hymn "Blessed Assurance" 369
Unison Prayer

**God our Creator, we lift our voices in praise this day
knowing we join the voices of all the saints
past, present, and in the future,
who praise You for your abounding mercy
and steadfast love.**

**We thank You for all those who have lived in the faith
and now, triumphant, live with you.**

Thank You for the faith of the founders of this congregation.

**With so many witnesses in a great cloud on every side
of us, we call on your abiding attention, love,
and guidance that we may be faithful people throughout
another day, another week, another year. Amen.**

Cherub Choir Conducted by Jane Stewart
Carol Choir Conducted by Marie Reynolds
Hymn "The Old Rugged Cross" 504
Speaker Anne Mace
A Time of Reminiscence led by The Rev. K. Wayne Grier
Chancel Choir Conducted by Elliott Jones
Solo Sandy Nickerson
Hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" 526
*Offering, Doxology, Organ Solo Miriam Horney
*Hymn "In the Garden" 314
Scripture The Rev. Edwin Horney
Meditation The Rev. Edwin Horney
Solo Marva Thomas
Asbury Handbell Choir Conducted by Marie Reynolds
Special Presentation Elliott Jones and Allene Poore
*Closing Hymn "Amazing Grace" 378
The Benediction The Rev. K. Wayne Grier
*The Lord's Prayer Sung Together
Postlude Elizabeth Goodman, Organist

* Please stand, as able.

Immediately after the Morning Worship, lunch will be served in Fellowship Hall.

**The Unveiling of an Historical Marker
at the Site of Old Asbury Church**

Immediately Following the Conclusion
of the 2:00 Service

Homecoming Day, October 20, 1996

Asbury United Methodist Church
Smyrna, Delaware

Introductions by Samuel V. Mace

Chair of the Asbury Board of Trustees

Chair of the Cemetery Committee

Invocation The Rev. K. Wayne Grier
Pastor of Asbury United Methodist Church

Speakers:

Bruce C. Ennis State Representative

James T. Vaughn, Sr. State Senator

Robert Newnam Mayor of Smyrna

George L. Caley Historian

C. Russell McCabe

*Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs with the State
of Delaware*

Unveiling of the Marker

Benediction The Rev. K. Wayne Grier

1778 ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1972

"That which we have received, we give unto you"

OUR Heritage from the Past!

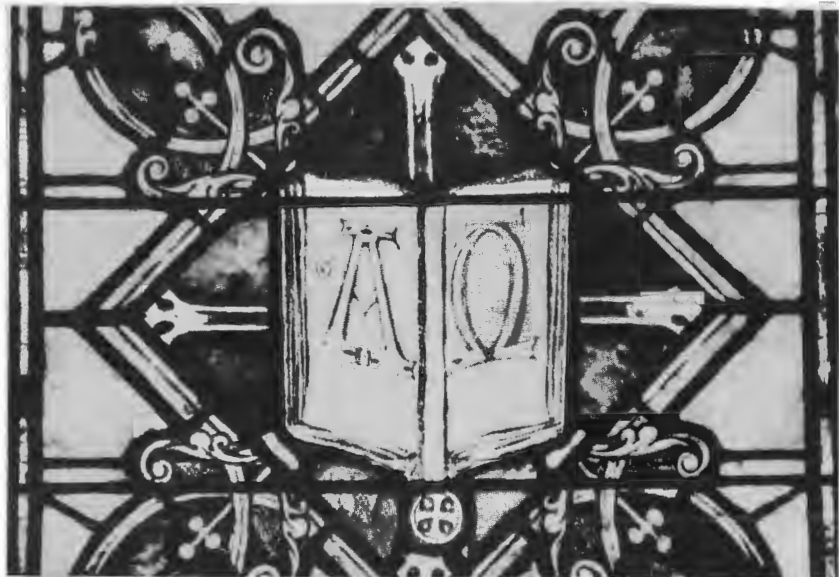
YOUR Trust for the Future!!

Luke 24:13	5	
Luke 24:14	6	
Mat 28:1	7	
John 14:24	8	
Mat 28:8	9	
Luke 24:9	10	
Luke 24:10	11	
Luke 24:11	12	
Luke 24:12	13	
Luke 24:13	14	
Luke 24:14		

The Great Commission

14 *Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat *at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, *and preach the gospel to every creature.





OLD ASBURY CEMETERY



GLENWOOD CEMETERY



HOUSE AT GLENWOOD CEMETERY
(Formerly used by Sexton)



Restored Half - Spindle Windsor Chair

"Remove Not The Ancient Landmarks"

Chas. L. Hamby
Oct. 15-1945

Church dedicated 1912
New Bells cast
Organ console lowered
Paints inside out
Steeple woodwork repaired
etc.

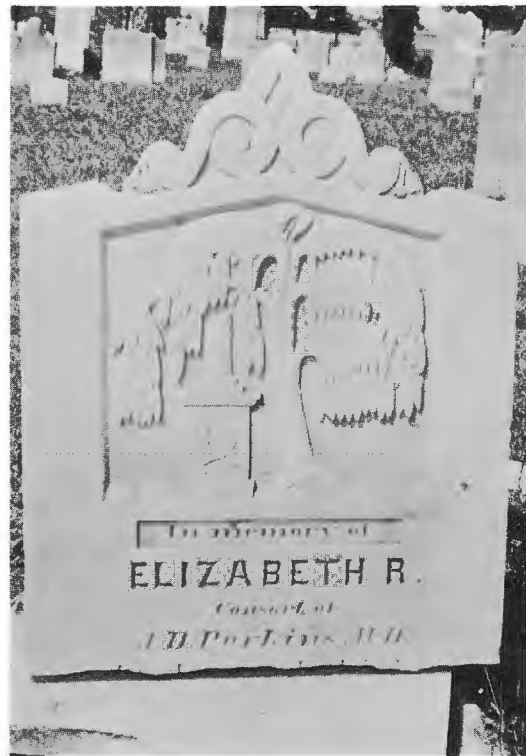
Elevator installed Jan. 24, 1958, June 9, 1960
Black Linoleum on stairs July, 1968
New Asphalt chingie roof Oct. 1958
New fence around parsonage and
pastor's par. Oct. 1958
New Dated Bells in parsonage Dec. 1965
New Lostar Program in Sunday school, Dec. 1966
Mr. W. W. Johnson, in charge of
restoration project
conducted by
Mr. W. W. Johnson, Ray Tower
April 6, 1958

Land donated in 1911 to church
Easter Sunday April 17, 1960
Parking lot in rear of church dedicated October 1960
Caravanion, service, donated by Young Adult Bible class, used First
Time Monday Thursday Mar. 30, 1961
Rev. J. Howard Link and family moved into new parsonage
later same Garden July 8, 1961
Parking lot lighted Dec. 1961
Old parsonage removed, 1962
First Sunday in new Educational Building Oct. 30, 1963
New Bells in church Oct. 1963

W. W. M. Price Died Feb. 7, 1948
E. W. M. Price
Feb 10 1948

sharply shot to death
at Texas Nov. 22 1963
1959

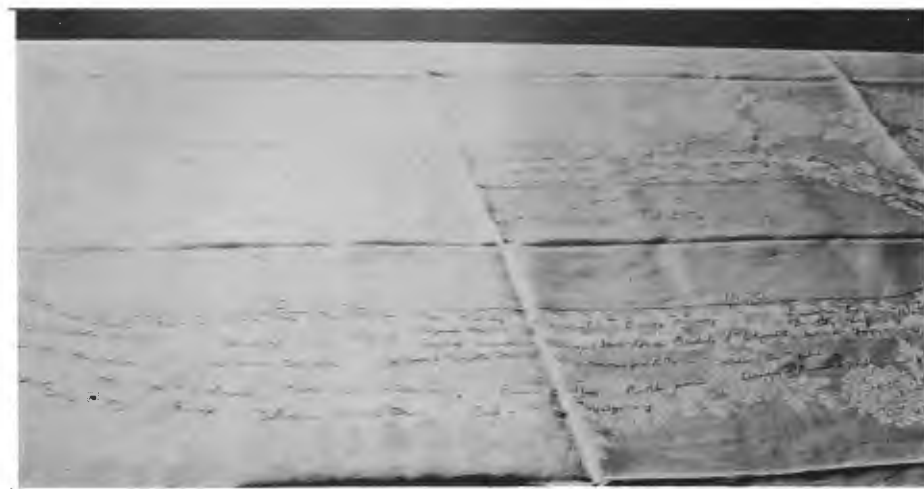
These and other records appear on the wall of the Tower Room.



OLD ASBURY CEMETERY - Tombstone with weeping willow design symbolic of tears for the deceased—about 1850.



VICTORIAN TOMBSTONE - Monument with Planter Trefoil design (club-shaped) symbolic of Unity of Body, Soul and Spirit and/or Father, Son and Holy Ghost.



CENTENNIAL TABLECLOTH

NOTE OF THANKS . . .

This work could not have been completed had we not had the able assistance of many persons, in and out of Asbury, who gratefully contributed their material, time and effort to the assembling of this history. Therefore, we wish to take this opportunity to thank each and every one, who in any way whatsoever, helped with this publication.

We point with pride to the work of Mr. William C. Shane, Jr. and his staff who spent innumerable hours in conference for the assembly, mock-up, picture taking and printing of this work.

An extra special note of thanks to my wife Irene for her patience and fortitude in bearing with me during those many trying months of work.

George Kaley

PICTURE CREDITS THIS SECTION

Sunday School Classes and Sanctuary—all with people—Huddle Studios, Clayton; Administrative Board, Colin Faulkner; Culinary Artists, William Short; and all others Guy Hostetter.

INTRODUCTION

In every age man has sought to find the meaning of life beyond himself. In the seeking he has developed many systems of ethics, philosophies and religions. For each, man has erected his temples to his gods.

Eons ago the ancestors of our Western Civilization, who lived in that section of the world which we call the Middle East, were convinced that one God alone created, sustained and maintained them. As their knowledge advanced, so did their concept of this God whom they called YAHWEH. Those peoples, called Israelites gave to the world the concept that God is love. The revelation of this love for the human race was manifested through the birth, crucifixion and resurrection of God's only son—Jesus Christ.

After His resurrection and ascension Christ's disciples taught others about Him, and those who accepted Christ and His teachings were called Christians. For almost two thousand years those bearing that name have taught and spread His gospel wherever they have gone. Time and distance have diversified the ways and means by which man has sought to worship this Saviour.

In want of a definition of these diversifications man has labeled them—sects or denominations. Many were the beginnings and many were the endings of these groups. Yet His Kingdom has marched forward.

With the discovery and colonization of the New World—western civilization and its religion was transplanted and renewed. No sooner had the colonist settled then he began to worship. Yet here in the New World he lived in small settlements or else he himself was scattered sparsely in the wilderness. These conditions prompted him, out of necessity, to worship God in his own individual way. Ties to the "Mother Church" in the Old World were strained, sometimes broken, or in many cases changed to meet the conditions of the New World. What finally emerged was a thoroughly new search for the meaning of life.

Here was Duck Creek Village. From this settlement to present day Smyrna, religion has played no mean part in building the bridge of civilization across the chasm of time in this small corner of this great planet. Among those sects and/or denominations which emerged was the Methodist Society—the forerunner of the congregation known as Asbury.



John Wesley and Charles Wesley

THE FOUNDING

In 1729, two brothers, John and Charles Wesley, along with other fellow students at Oxford University, England, assembled themselves together for religious conversation. In jest one of their fellow students made a derisive allusion to the exact and METHODICAL manner in which the Wesleys and their friends performed their various tasks which their sense of Christian duty required. Sometime afterwards those persons of the Anglican Church, who met with the Wesleys in order to revive their religious fervor, were referred to as members of the Methodist Society. John Wesley became the acknowledged leader of this new group. So great was Wesley's success in reviving the religious fervor, especially of the poorer people, that the Anglican clergy closed the churches to the meetings of the Methodist Society. This action later caused the establishment of a separate Methodist Society outside the fold of the Church of England.

Philip Embury and Robert Strawbridge, two Irish immigrants, began the preaching of Methodism in the colonies in 1760 and 1766 respectfully. They were followed by Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor in 1768. Francis Asbury arrived three years later. During the intervening years from 1760 to 1771 Captain Thomas Webb, an officer in the British Army, had been converted to this new faith and carried the gospel over sections of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and perhaps Maryland. His preaching paved the way for Asbury's works in these colonies. Captain Webb introduced Methodism into Thoroughfare Neck (Friendship) in 1770. He was followed later by Robert Turner of New Jersey who preached throughout Appoquinimink Hundred. Sources indicate that Turner in 1774 converted Lewis Alfree who says, "Lednum, from a great sinner became a useful Methodist preacher." Alfree owned at least a thousand acres of land in the Hundred and lived about two miles west of Greensprings. From his home he and other preachers spread the gospel to Thoroughfare Neck, Pine Tree, Blackiston's and Carrollton (Severson's).

As early as 1775 Alfree and Turner held religious services in the Neck, and by 1778 a permanent Society had been established there. At the same time, Alfree moved into the area of present Ginn's Corner and formed another society which erected White's Chapel in 1776 or 1777. It stood between the Corner and Pine Tree. Then came Lee's or Lea's, which was east of Pine Tree. These two congregations were east of Pine Tree. These two congregations were succeeded by Dickerson's. Dickerson's was along the King's Highway near the present site of "Old Union."

While Alfree and Turner were doing their evangelistic works, other itinerants were also in the field. Records state that in "1774 an itinerant Methodist preacher had visited and preached in the homes of Benjamin Hazel and Benjamin Blackiston and also in the home of Widow Howard near Lewis Cross Roads (Kenton)." However it was Alfree in 1778 who was instrumental in the formation of the Blackiston Society which continued to meet in both homes.

Alfree, then accompanied by Robert Turner, turned south-east from Blackiston and went to Carrollton where they

preached at James Severson's home cir. 1777. It is also possible that they went to Raymond's home, because Asbury notes in his journal that he visited and preached at Mr. Raymond's home on July 15, 1778. Thus several Methodist Societies were formed and surrounded the Duck Creek area. Why the itinerants or Asbury himself had not preached there is a matter of conjecture—for there are no hints or clues given. However, sometime during 1778 Lewis Alfree did come into the village and Cross Roads and did begin his ministry.

Looking back across the years of time, we cannot but hold in admiration the tenacity of this man. He came "to towne" when the colonists were in the throes of the American Revolution. Feelings about the revolt were still mixed, and emotions ran high on both sides of the question. There were about thirty-seven thousand people scattered throughout Delaware, and at least ten thousand of them, mostly town dwellers, were Royalists, who still maintained allegiance to Church and Crown. Although the Methodist Societies were separated from the Church of England, they were eyed with deep suspicion by those espousing the cause of Liberty. All sorts of rumors were out about "those Methodists"—the chief among them being "although most of them are of the poor class and tradesmen they are Tories in disguise waiting for the opportunity to seize power and return it to the Proper Authorities. For this act they will be rewarded with Crown privileges."

Many of the rumors were based on partial facts. Although John Wesley had admonished his 24 preachers in the colonies to be neutral in National affairs, one Martin Rodda, an Englishman, failed to heed the warning. He openly consorted with a band of Delaware Tories for the overthrow of the Colonists' Cause, and thus upset the "so-called apple cart" here on the Peninsula. When the King's Proclamation against the colonists reached our shores, Rodda took it and spread it across the peninsula from Lewes to Elkton. Then Wesley, forgetting his earlier advice, reprinted in his personal letter to the American Methodists, a Dr. Johnson's argument entitled "Taxation, Not Tyranny." There two incidents branded all Methodist preachers as Tories and Traitors. Meanwhile there were wild stories about a great plot led by one Cheney Clow, to join the Methodists of the Blackiston Forest area and the Tories, to a unit of the British Fleet which was operating in the Chesapeake Bay. What further proof was needed?

It is most unfortunate that the information involving the Methodists and Clow, who was a commissioned officer in the British Army, was later proved to be "just rumors." Nevertheless these incidents led Asbury to be investigated and fined five pounds for preaching near Annapolis. This incident, along with the leniency of Delaware's test law, caused him to seek asylum in Judge White's house near Whitleyburg in November of 1778.

Thus were the state of affairs when Lewis Alfree, itinerant, began his work in Duck Creek for the Kingdom of God under the banner of Methodism. Among those who were touched by Alfree's preaching were Joseph Farrow, (Ferra) who lived one mile south of Little Duck Creek and Joseph Wyatt who lived in "The Alley." This name was applied to a large tract of land which extended westward from present Clayton to halfway to Blackiston's Cross Roads. It was about 2 miles wide and laid

between the Maryland Road (Clayton-Millington Road) and Mill Creek. The remnant of this name appears today in Middle Ally Road which runs between the aforementioned highway and Route 300. While he lived in that area Joseph Wyatt's home also served as a meeting house. Farrow also opened his home to preaching, and there are all indications that he himself was the chief expounder of the word.

While Asbury was still at Judge White's, a conference was held at Broken Back Church in Fluvanna County, Virginia. On April 28, 1779 Asbury, in absentia, was appointed to serve the Delaware Circuit along with Caleb B. Pedicord, Freeborn Garrettson, Mecajiah D. Bruler or Debruler, and Lewis Alfree. These men labored over the entire state and parts of Maryland. All of them, with the exception of Garrettson stopped and preached at Duck Creek Village and Cross Roads.

Caleb B. Pedicord or Petticord 1779-1780 was a native of the Western shore of Maryland, and came under the influence of Robert Strawbridge who converted him. Asbury thus described him—"He was a ready scribe; wrote an elegant hand, but like the Master, he was acquainted with grief." Among his many converts was Thomas Ware who served Duck Creek in 1783 and 84.

Freeborn Garrettson "the great preacher" was born August 15, 1752 in Maryland, was converted in 1775 and began preaching the same year. In 1784 he was ordained by Dr. Coke and then volunteered to do missionary work in Nova Scotia. Later, he was assigned to work in New York State and never returned to the Peninsula.

Mecajiah D. Bruler or Debruler appeared very briefly on the scene. He was born in Harford County, Maryland entered Christian work in 1779, was assigned to the Delaware Circuit and in 1784 returned to local life.

Lewis Alfree was an intimate friend of Asbury and sources indicate that he was the third native born Delaware preacher.

Quaker sources state that "the society of Methodists held meetings at our meeting house in Duck Creek from 1779 until 1785." From this fact we may infer that the foregoing itinerants may have preached in that building.

Asbury remained in seclusion at Judge White's for almost two years. During that time a private letter which he had written to one of his English associates who was leaving this country, fell into the hands of the military authorities. When the letter was opened and read it was found that Asbury defended the cause of the rebels, and thus the colonists became satisfied that he was not an enemy, but a true and earnest friend. After the middle of 1780 he suffered no more further personal annoyances, and the Methodist itinerants generally were permitted to travel throughout the country.

In 1779 one Philip Cox stopped and preached at the log cabin of James L. Stevenson in Duck Creek Cross Roads. Stevenson who had come from England was a member of the Established Church, but because he had opened his dwelling for Methodist worship he was excluded from the Duck Creek Anglican Church. It is said that one day later while he was holding worship a mob assaulted his cabin. They placed pries at the corner of the building and attempted to do violence to the structure. However, the worshippers inside following the



Francis Asbury

injunction of Jesus prayed so loudly for "those who despitefully use you," that the assailants became frightened and fled.

It was at this cabin that Francis Asbury preached his first sermon in Duck Creek Cross Roads on Thursday, December 30, 1780. That he was to be at Stevenson's on that date must have been known, because at the time of his exhortations about three hundred persons were gathered in, at and around the cabin. According to all references it was the only structure on either side of Ball Street (Mt. Vernon) from present Main to Market. It sat on Mr. & Mrs. Donald Knott's present lawn which is located on the west side of Asbury Church. The structure was a hip-roofed single story log cabin with an attached shed kitchen. It had two rooms in the main building with a center door which entered one room. From this description one can imagine that it was a "log cabin version of The Lindens" which survives today at Duck Creek Village.



Asbury chose as his text, Matthew 3: 7-10 "O, generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham for our father; for I say unto you that God is able of those stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire."

His discourse on this text was so forceful that it infuriated those hearers to such a degree that Asbury was cautioned never to return to the Cross Roads. Among those present at Stevenson's cabin was Joseph Wyatt who had recently moved from "The Alley" to the Cross Roads. He and Asbury most certainly must have known each other before Asbury's visit to the Roads that day, and Asbury must have placed great confidence in him, because records show that "in 1780 Mr. Asbury employed Brother Wyatt as a preacher in and about Duck Creek Cross Roads." Unfortunately we do not know whether that appointment was before, or, on that December's Day. However Wyatt, a shoemaker, was the first resident Methodist preacher in the Cross Roads. Services were held both at his home and (as stated before) in the Quaker Meeting House in Duck Creek Village.

During that year of Asbury's first visit to Duck Creek Cross Roads those people who had worshipped in the home of Joseph Farrow (Ferra) built a goodly frame meeting house near the Kings Highway. They named it Farrow's Chapel. Among the original members were the Garrisons, Smiths, Boggs and Jeffersons. Also during that year Asbury visited Benjamin Blackiston several times and noted in his journal "Blackstown is going to build a chapel." When it was finally erected is doubtful, but Asbury in his journal states "preached at Blackstown's (Blackiston) Chapel October 30, 1785." From this we might infer that the chapel was erected prior to that date. However this chapel planned by Asbury was forty by six feet and was the largest edifice on the Peninsula, exceeding that of Barrett's. Seventeen hundred and eighty-one was the fateful year for the Methodists and the Colonists. On February 5 of that year Caesar Rodney, Governor of Delaware, signed Francis Asbury's certificate of citizenship. This act removed all doubts concerning Asbury's loyalties. Then in October at Yorktown, Virginia as the British musicians played "The World Is Turned Upside Down" an aide to Lord Cornwallis surrendered the British Troops to General George Washington. The revolution was ended. Man's political life was freed from the tyranny of the king, but in this political revolution, the seed had been sown for the revolution of man's spiritual ties from the Established Church. That revolution, began in England under John Wesley and transplanted to the shores of North America by his few faithful followers, saw its fruition, not then in 1781, but later at the Christmas Conference at Lovely Lane Church, Baltimore, Maryland in 1784.

In Delaware that year (1781) the Conference divided the state into two circuits—Kent and Sussex, but by the next year (1782), Kent was dropped and the entire ministry assigned to Sussex. However, before the calendar year's end Dover Circuit was cut off from Sussex. In each year's list the name of Duck Creek Cross Roads was always listed.

Francis Asbury's name headed the list of appointees, and for the years 1780-1782 these following men also served the circuit: Caleb B. Pedicord, Joseph Cromwell, William Gills, John Coleman, Lee Roy Cole, John Tunnell, Moses Park, Henry Metcalf, David Abbot and Joseph Waytt. Although these men were not ordained, they were given the title of pastor. However, they could not administer the communion, give baptisms nor perform marriages. These were the men who, as itinerant circuit riding preachers, rode the length and breadth of Delaware from present Middletown to Lewes. Delaware (despite its 37,000 population) and the Delmarva Peninsula, with the exception of what is now Maine, was the least settled of all the original states. It contained most of the natural primitiveness which was known at its discovery. The settlements were scattered and most of them, with the exceptions of Wilmington, New Castle, Duck Creek Cross Roads, Dover and Lewes, consisted of from four to twelve dwellings which included the usual tavern and/or inn. Roads were mere paths through the forests, and most communication and transportation moved via water.



Forest and Road Path

Yet these preachers pressed on "toward the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." They held meetings in private homes, in borrowed churches, in barns, in open fields, and even in inns and taverns. It did not matter as to the time of day or night. They were ready and eager to proclaim the word of God. Those pioneer preachers were rugged individualists, and their diverse backgrounds only helped to spur them on. They were strong in their beliefs and fearless in their expressions of them. It is to the everlasting credit of Francis Asbury that he was the genius who guided, not only those aforementioned evangelists, but also many of those who follow them.

Joseph Cromwell (1780) came from near Baltimore and entered the itinerancy in 1777. Asbury said of him, "He is a prodigy, a man that cannot write or read well, yet his words go through me every time that I hear him." Cromwell preached until 1792 when "he yielded to the fires of temptation and was expelled."

Little is known about William Gill (1781-82) other than he was a native Delawarean, lived near Cantwell's Bridge (Odessa) and was by trade a tailor. It was said that he had a weak body, but a strong mind in the Lord. He died in 1788 in Kent County, Maryland.

Asbury, working with Dr. Thomas Magaw, of the Episcopal Church in Dover, planned to establish a school to educate the youth. Accordingly a Jole Coleman of Virginia was engaged to instruct. While serving in that capacity he also "rode the circuit" (1781). In 1785 he desisted, withdrew and became a full-fledged minister in the Episcopal Church in Virginia.

Lee Roy Cole (1781) a native of Virginia became an itinerant in the 1770's and took to circuit preaching in the state of Delaware. In 1784 he was ordained an Elder, but was expelled from Methodism in 1785. Shortly thereafter he was reinstated and continued in the ministry until he died in Kentucky in 1830.

John Tunnell (1781) was also a Delawarean. His place of birth is unknown. However, he began preaching late in 1777 or early 78. An early description of him says, "He was truly an Apostolic man; his heavenly-mindedness seemed to shine out of his face, which made him appear to some more like an inhabitant of heaven, than of earth. His gifts as a preacher are great." After thirteen years of labor for the Master, he developed consumption (T.B.) and died in Sweet Springs, Virginia. Bishop Asbury preached his funeral sermon.

Moses Park (1782) entered the itinerancy in 1781 and departed in 1790.

Henry Metcalf (1782), who died in 1784 while kneeling in prayer, came to Delaware from the South in the late 1770's. Lednum says of him that "he was a good man of a sorrowful spirit and under constant apprehension."

One of the most noted early itinerants was David Abbot (1782) the son of the historic Benjamin Abbot, a pioneer preacher in New York, Pennsylvania and parts of Maryland. Young Abbot did not succumb to his father's preaching but was converted in 1773 in New Jersey under the ministry of Philip Gatch. Abbot became an itinerant in 1781 but stopped in early 1784.

On a Sunday in October in 1782 David Abbot was holding forth at a great meeting in a grove of trees on the east side of the road leading from Duck Creek Cross Roads to Duck Creek Village. (This grove existed in the Glenwood Avenue area from about the location of Price's Farm Machinery Building northward across the upper end of the new shopping mall). During the preaching service, Benjamin Abbot came looking for his son. He waited until the son had finished, and then he himself addressed the congregation. Benjamin Abbot says "I stepped on the stand and gave an exhortation and instantly God attended the truth with power, the people cried aloud and we had a great shout in the camp; but as this was likely to interfere with our next appointment, I dismissed the people and went to Blackiston's Meeting House, where the people expected me. . .subsequently I removed myself to the house of Reverend Joseph Wyatt in the Cross Roads where I continued my preaching."

Later it was noted that both of these sermons in the Cross Roads rekindled the old hatred and oppositions of the citizens of the area to the Methodists. Although Asbury had been a frequent visitor to the area he was again cautioned against returning. He did not heed the warning for his journal records that he repeatedly preached at the Cross Roads. It was after this warning that Asbury, according to folk-lore,

delivered his soul-striving discourse using as his text St. John's letter to the Church at Smyrna (Asia, now Turkey) as recorded in "The Revelation."

On April 20, 1782, Robert Appleton, Edward Martin, William Truaxx Marsh, Abraham Staats Jr., John Barlow, Robert Standlay, Jacob Deakyne, Thomas Deakyne and John Collins received one acre of land in trust "to the extent and express purpose of building a preaching house or chapel for the use of Methodist preachers in Thoroughfare Neck." These were the first trustees of present Friendship, and they at once began the erection of an edifice for public worship. The chapel, completed in 1783, was constructed of cedar logs. It measured 24 x 24 feet.

Then on May 13, 1783 James Severson deeded land to James Hull, Moses Thompson, Elijah Bartleet, John Jarrell, Benjamin Truaxx, John Connor and John David May for the purpose of erecting a "new meeting house." This building replaced a rough log cabin at Carrollton which had been in use since 1778.

During 1783, William Glandening and George Kimble were assigned to the Dover Circuit. Glandening, a Scotchman, "was given to wonderful trances and visions." However, in 1786 he was thought to be insane, but the declaration was not justified. He left Delaware and went to Virginia and North Carolina where he spent the remainder of his life. Kimble, on the other hand, led a lesser known life, and there are very few facts which have come down to us. We do know that in 1783 a vacancy occurred on the Dover Circuit because of Kimble's inactivity. But whether he was removed, withdrew or died it is not known. Thomas Ware, of Greenwich, Gloucester County, New Jersey, was recommended to fill the vacancy by Caleb B. Pedicord. Ware had been a Continental during the American Revolution, and had been converted to Christ by Pedicord. One observer stated "he was not more viliant as a follower of Washington than he is now become a soldier of Jesus Christ. He preaches with burning zeal."

Asbury accepted Pedicord's recommendation and assigned Ware to preach his first sermon in Duck Creek. Somehow, his prowess as a speaker had preceeded him, because he was invited to occupy the pulpit of the Church of England in Duck Creek Village. That church was still without a pastor, as its rector had fled to the mother country during the Revolution. The communicants of the parish had not, as yet, received the news that Methodist ministers were not to be ecclesiastically recognized and so the invitation was issued. The day arrived and Ware appeared. He had admirably conducted the service and while he was still standing at the desk he gave out the text; but before he had finished his introduction to the sermon, three men marched into the Church, in Indian file, and stood before the desk. The foremost one said that he was a vestryman. He ordered Reverend Ware out of the desk and out of the Church, and he further stated that if Ware did not go, he, himself, would compel Ware to go out. As Mr. Ware did not obey the mandate of the speaker, he seized the Reverend Ware by the collar and dragged him from the desk. A doughty friend seized the persecutor in like manner, and raising his fist ordered the persecutor to let the preacher go or else he would knock him down. Mr. Raymond, who was a

Justice, called out, "Don't strike him, Mr. Skillington. If he does not let the preacher alone and cease disturbing the congregation, I will commit him." By this time the persecutor had loosed his hold of Mr. Ware, and he and his companion returned from the church letting Reverend Ware finish his discourses".

After the close of the American Revolution the Methodists in America continually urged John Wesley to provide them with a church organization within or without the Anglican Church. They held that the colonies had become an independent nation; that the powers of the English Church had been separated or had ceased, and so they saw no reason why such an organization might not be formed, and by 1783 they felt that this organization should be independent. John Wesley agreed, and applied to the Bishop of London for the ordination of some of his ministers. He was refused. Thus Wesley was faced with a dilemma, but he met it with intellectual calm. He had satisfied himself (after carefully reading and studying Church history) that Bishops, Presbyters and Elders were all one and the same; the only difference being that the Bishop was elected by the latter. So in 1784 he selected Dr. Thomas Coke, as his bishop for America, and with the assistance of several other Presbyters of the Church of England, Wesley ordained Coke to that office under a new title—Superintendent. At the same time he also ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey as elders. These three men were instructed to go to the United States where Dr. Coke was to ordain Francis Asbury as a Superintendent. For their use, Wesley abridged the prayer book of the Church of England, made some changes in prayers and ritual, substituted the word "Superintendent" for Bishop and "elder" for priest or rector. Thus the independent organization was laid. And so on Friday, November 12, 1784, Superintendent (Bishop) Thomas Coke, L L D came from Wilmington, Delaware on a borrowed



Dr. Thomas Coke

horse to Duck Creek Cross Roads. He was entertained at the house of John Cole (location unknown) and while there Coke preached his first sermon on the Peninsula. He had as his traveling companion Richard Whatcoat who also preached.

From Duck Creek Cross Roads these two emissaries went to Dover where Richard Bassett housed them. Leaving Dover they rode to Barrett's Chapel, where on Sunday, November 14, 1784, Superintendent (Bishop) Coke preached and administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It was at this point in history that Francis Asbury, just arriving from Snow Hill, Maryland, entered the chapel, saw Coke, went to the pulpit and greeted him with a holy kiss. This was the most momentous and memorable occasion in the history of Methodism. For not only was that the first Sacrament of the Lord's Supper which had been administered in this country by a regularly ordained Methodist preacher, but it also marked the time and place where the formal organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church was agreed upon. This act took place the following month in Lovely Lane Chapel, Baltimore, Maryland at the conference known to posterity as the Christmas Conference.

Here in Duck Creek Cross Roads life continued in the quiet tenor of the days. Nelson Reed and Adam Cloud were the two preachers who served the Dover Circuit during those momentous and historic occasions.

One of the members of that local congregation was Colonel Allen McLane, Duck Creek's Revolutionary War hero.

During the pastorate of Samuel Dudley and Joseph Wyatt in 1785, McLane and his wife Rebecca gave to the Duck Creek Congregation a parcel of land to be used for a meeting house. The site was located on present North Delaware Street near the intersection with North Street and was large enough to accommodate a chapel and one graveyard. Although there are no records extant, one may infer from the gift statement that

the congregation had still been meeting in private homes. During 1786 a frame building was erected at the cost of £200 or \$1000. It faced south, was thirty feet square and held 300 people. The chapel sat some 30 feet west of an alley which was entered from Ball Street (Mt. Vernon). This lane was only fifteen feet wide and had no outlet at the further end. In fact it was so narrow that carriages and wagons could scarcely pass each other or turn.

The chapel itself was plain and wide; it had a high pulpit, plain plank benches with no backs, but did boast of glass windows. The worshippers were both white and Negro with the men sitting on one side of the meeting house and the women on the other.

During those years between the ending of the American Revolutionary War and the beginning of a stable government under the Federal Constitution, Methodism in this area, as elsewhere in the south, filled the spiritual void which had been created by the departure of the clergy of the Established Church. Many converts were added to the rolls, and these Christians were want to have places of worship. In the areas adjacent to, and surrounding the Cross Roads those early religious pioneers established, erected, and/or rebuilt; a wooden meeting house was erected at Raymond's; Old White's, Lee's and Dickerson's, which were erected sometime prior to or during the American Revolution were combined, and a new congregation named Union was established in 1789; Muddy Branch, below present Leipsic was founded 1790; monthly meetings were being held in a private home situated near the Line Stone which separated Delaware from Maryland (near present Delaney's). While in that latter state, congregations in Cecilton and at Head of Sassafras were flourishing and also meeting in private homes. All of the foregoing stations plus others were on the Dover Circuit and were served by circuit riding preachers. As the territory to be covered was extensive, two or more preachers were usually assigned to the circuit. This permitted the holding of services at least one day a month (not necessarily Sunday) in one particular meeting house or family homestead.

These heralds of the gospel were changed each year from circuit to circuit because Asbury held that the constant rotation of ministers was essential for the on-going of the Kingdom of God. He felt that he knew from experience that in this way the pastor would be beholden to on one person or group in the congregation; that he would not become involved with personalities; that he would not get to know the "different sides" of his flock, but that he would be able to deliver his sermons without fear or favor, knowing, in most instances, that he would pass "this place no more." Those listed reasons by Bishop Francis Asbury were the basis for the constant change of ministers in the corporate church up until as recently as 1960.

After the formal founding of the Methodist Episcopal Church the title "Elder" was given to one who was ordained, while the unordained bearer of the good news retained the respectful sobriquet of minister or pastor. However, the name Superintendent was not readily substituted for Bishop and thus the former title was quickly dropped. The Church, having an Episcopal form of government, found itself forced to rule

over scattered congregations and mission stations from Nova Scotia, Canada to Georgia, United States of America. Confronted with this problem the Bishops sought ways and means to solve it.

They divided the entire territory amongst themselves with each Bishop being assigned to govern a conference. The general government of the entire church was centered in the corporate body of Bishops known as the Ecclesiastical Council whose powers were seemingly unlimited and whose governed territory was too diverse and too unwieldy.

New districts and circuits were created, and elders named whose duties were to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to perform all other duties prescribed by the liturgy. The exigencies of early American Methodism in the field of supervision caused the emergence of elders, who by their wisdom and experience, were found to be valuable in counsel, preaching and in the building up of young churches. Bishop Asbury saw this emergence and was quick to discern the usefulness of this kind of man. It was in that informal manner by which they became the forerunner of an officer known as the Presiding Elder (modern district Superintendent).

As the Council was new and inexperienced in the mode of American transportation and travel, they felt that each year the entire church should assemble together for what is now termed a General Conference. They also felt that they should sit in on all District Conferences. As the carrying out of these ideas soon proved most unsatisfactory, the Bishops came to recognize the need for a general law making body. They also saw the impracticality and the almost impossibility of assembling all the preachers from the entire eastern seaboard of the North American continent, and at the same time they acknowledged the futility of the Council's attendance at all District Conferences. Therefore, under the leadership of Bishop Asbury, they devised a plan which seemed to answer their needs. This was the plan briefly stated:

Each conference to retain a bishop who would have jurisdiction over all the districts and circuits within its territory; each district to have a presiding Elder, to be elected by the elders of his circuit. From among all the Presiding Elders of the whole church, never fewer than nine to be chosen to represent the entire denomination; said nine to sit with the Bishops on the Ecclesiastical Council. This body to have the authority "to mature everything which they should judge expedient for the unity, the doctrinal and the moral (social) integrity of the Church, provided however, that only its unanimous decisions be presented, and that these decisions be binding in any district only when they had been agreed upon by a majority of the members of said conference." The Bishops to have the authority to convene The Council.

Although this scheme met with the approval of the majority of elders, and was a favorite conception of Bishop Asbury, it was found, upon closer scrutiny, to contain many flaws, and raised as many questions as it purported to answer. Not many months passed until the plan became the cause of much dispute and contention. It was openly stated that the plan was a sheet (cover up), for both the Church and the Council were found to be again completely under the control of the Bishops,

who by the exercise of their discretionary powers could constitute their own council and make rules without the benefit of the other nine Presiding Elders. Then, too, the fact that those nine represented the whole church was cause for much concern, for it was felt that many might be selected from one certain district. The opponents pointed out the weakness of the tenet of unanimous decision holding that most decisions were reached by the majority. They fought the dependency of the Council's decision upon the several districts. They held that it would tend to break up the uniformity, if not the harmony of the denomination, for some districts would approve and execute the rules, while others, in which a majority dissented, would legally disregard them. And so the discussion raged on and on throughout the denomination from 1788 until Friday, September 17, 1790 when the Philadelphia Conference gathered in Duck Creek Cross Roads to render its decision.

The Philadelphia Conference embraced all of the following states: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and the Eastern Shore of Maryland, while the Dover district contained the following circuits: Dover, Caroline, Somerset and Annessex. Records do not state whether or not some or all of the other Bishops attended, but Asbury did. He or they again heard all the pros and cons about the plan, and after much heated debate the elders here assembled voted in its favor. Although it had won the approval of the day, the settlement was not general nor permanent, and the continued growing opposition compelled the Bishops to abandon the plan by the end of the year. Church historians agree that the debate at that conference in Duck Creek Cross Roads, in essence, sounded the Death knell for the Bishops' Ecclesiastical Council Plan.

Seventeen hundred and ninety was truly a memorable year for Duck Creek Cross Roads and Methodism. Here in the village a post office was established at the Indian Head Hotel which was located on the site of the present School Administration Building on South Main Street. Thomas Hale was both the proprietor and postmaster. The congregation here learned that Bishop Asbury, under the direction of the other Bishops, had written a letter to the proper federal authorities stating that the Methodist Episcopal Church recognized the United States of America as the legal constituted government "of the several states united." Said communication being carried by Asbury and Coke to Washington himself. That message was deemed to be of such import that President George Washington wrote the government's response to the denomination. Also during that year another important spiritual step was taken when all the conferences passed an ordinance for the establishment of Sunday Schools throughout the denomination.

On Friday 13, 1791, Duck Creek for the second time was the site of the Philadelphia Yearly conference. The business was conducted in private, but the preaching services were open to the public. Joshua Clayton, the president of the State of Delaware, who had opened his house on the circuit as a place for preaching, attended most of the sessions. Bishop Asbury wrote in his Journal—"Our conference began and was conducted in much peace and harmony amongst the preachers and the people." (Quite a contrast to the meeting of the previous years). He continued, "Our meetings in public were attended



Allen McLane

with power." That statement was Asbury's way of saying that the preaching was great, the singing and the testimonials tremendous, and the soul-savings-beyond expectation.

From 1787 until 1791 the following preachers rode the Dover Circuit: John Jarrell, Thomas S. Crew, James O. Cromwell, Elders, Jacob Brish and Aaron Hutchinson, Pastors, 1789; Joseph Everett, Elder, Christopher Spry and Fredus Aldridge, Pastors, 1790, and Thomas Foster and Evans Rogers, Pastors, 1791.

On September 12, 1792 the conference for the Philadelphia District was again convened in Duck Creek Cross Roads. That this meeting was held here for the third consecutive year is indicative of the spiritual, social and physical importance of the village. The Cross Roads was the largest settlement in the Dover Circuit; sat aside two major roads; was located near Green's Landing (Smyrna Landing) where packets, schooners and sloops early arrived and departed; contained the largest Methodist congregations and meeting house in the area; had a post office; was the site of several businesses and stores, and boasted of two taverns—one in the village itself and the other at "old" Duck Creek.

The Cross Roads had also gained "the limelight" that year by the action of the members of the General Assembly. In those days that August body held their meetings in the Kent County Court House. In 1792 that building was being repaired, and in their coming and goings the assemblyman seriously interrupted the work. This constant stoppage so irritated the sheriff that he turned out the law-makers. This infuriated them. In haste and in anger they came to the Cross Roads and met in the Indian Head Tavern. There they resolved to make the village the capital of the state. Later, however, calmer thinking prevailed, and by the time that the legislative session had ended, the resolution was repealed.

At the religious session concord reigned thus permitting that body to accomplish a goodly amount of work. A report was heard which recommended that the Ecclesiastical Council Plan be dropped; that the Bishops consent to consider a General Conference Plan; and that the term of Presiding Elder be eliminated. This body voted to endorse the recommendations. The members also duly noted that the terms of elder, pastor, preacher and reverend were being used interchangeable by all classes and societies of people. Thus within a few years further on from that date—all minutes show that the bearer-of-the-good-news was being called pastor. Asbury notes "We parted with a good love feast, from which the gay and the worldly, at least were excluded."

Early Methodist preachers and historians wrote that the Duck Creek Congregation experienced a great spiritual growth and awakening beginning in 1792 and ending in 1795 when the charge was visited with a great revival of religion during the early part of the latter year. Upon closer investigation to the cause of the growth, this writer believes that he has discovered the apparent reason for the increase. In the search two found statements were the basis for the assumption. The records of the Presbyterian Church show that their Reverend John Miller died on July 22, 1791 and left the Cross Roads congregation pastorless, while the Reverend Alexander G. Cummins, the Episcopalian Historian reports that after the death of

Reverend Sydenham (Parson) Thorne in 1793, the entire parish of Duck Creek languished for many years.

If these are the two actual versions then we may assume that Methodism filled a spiritual vacuum which was created by the demise of two well known spiritual leaders. Then, too, we must bear in mind the fact that the church or meeting house was not only a spiritual center, but it was also the social focal point of its day.

Modes and customs had not changed too rapidly from 1725 until 1795, and for many people, life was still hard and cruel. Although there was an increase in population, many persons moved west, still leaving widely scattered villages, farms and so called plantations. Roads were mere lanes, sandy and dry, or muddy and mired, as the weather occasioned. Oxens were widely used as beasts of burden, with horses reserved for those who travelled, or for the wealthy. Grain was sown by hand, cut with a sickle and winnowed or cradled, while other farm crops were produced under the most laborious conditions. Most homes contained a spinning wheel and a loom for the spinning and weaving of cloth. Shoes frequently were manufactured and repaired at home, while each dwelling contained at least one candle mold, butter churn and mold, quilting frame and sausage grinder. The Circuit riding preacher, the visiting priest and the occasional visitor brought the news of the outside world to the community which was discussed and debated upon whenever the congregation or parishioners met. The tavern was the setting for politics.

Walter Fountain and George Pickering were the shepherds of the flock in 1792. Very little is known about Reverend Fountain. However Pastor Pickering's life was quite noteworthy. He was born in Talbot County, Maryland in 1769; converted in 1787; assigned to Baltimore Conference in 1790, and in 1792 was transferred to the Dover Circuit in the Philadelphia Conference. In 1793 he was sent to New England where the Methodist Church was still in the formative stage. Rev. Pickering served that area until his death in Waltham, Massachusetts in 1846. For 56 years this man of God had proclaimed the gospel, and at his demise it was written "he was the oldest effective traveling preacher on the globe."

The two aforementioned were followed in 1793 by William Page and John Milburn. He only was returned in 1794. Seventeen ninety-five saw the assignment of three ministers to the circuit—William Hunter, a native of Tyrone, Ireland; Joseph Jewell, later of Canadian fame; and William Jessup, native of Sussex County, Delaware. It is assumed that they were sent as the result of the great spring revival of 1795. Yet their joyous endeavors were cut short. Church records and secular histories are not too concise, but all indications point to the fact that the area was visited by a plague or pestilence that year. An unknown writer, writing in 1840 stated "In 1795 the charge (Dover Circuit) was visited with a severe sickness and mortality during the autumnal season." By 1796 normal conditions were returned and Reverends Joseph Smith and Isaac Robinson were appointed.

The Philadelphia Conference had scheduled Philadelphia as its conference site for 1797, but because of the prevalence of yellow fever in that city the session was moved to Duck Creek Cross Roads. Prior action at the other yearly conferences

had witnessed the reinstating of the office of Presiding Elders. When the meeting was called to order in the Cross Roads, Bishop Asbury had the Presiding Elders to occupy the President's chair. He wrote—"I appointed the Presiding Elders to take my seat, and sat alone, because the hand of the Lord was upon me. . . I preached 3 sermons. . . on Friday 13 we arose, I was much outdone, yet happy". From that statement one might infer that Asbury was not well at the time, and so by using the elders to conduct the business sessions he conserved his strength for the important task of proclaiming the gospel. Yet one is not positive that such was the case. Among other business conducted was: the appointment of the first Book Committee to investigate the establishment of a concern for the publication of Methodist writings; setting apart of eleven persons for elders; election of three deacons; changes in the discipline; and the appointment of preachers—Reverends Joseph Witby and Benjamin Essex to the Dover Circuit.

It was noted in 1797 that Colonel Allen McLane, after suffering many privations, had been appointed by an Act of Congress, as the revenue collector for the Port of Wilmington. Also that the shortened name of Duck Creek had almost replaced the official title of Duck Creek Cross Roads, and that the settlement near the vicinity of the stream was generally known as Old Duck Creek.

Thomas Jackson and Joseph Smith were the ministers in 1798, and Reverends Daniel Couch and Nathan Sawain were the pastors while Christopher Spry was appointed as Presiding Elder. On February 22, 1799 a notice was given to the Duck Creek Society that a meeting would be held on March 4 of that year for the purpose of "choosing and nominating" seven men to serve as Trustees for Asbury Church, Duck Creek Cross Roads. This statement points out the fact that the meeting house had not had one trustee since its erection in 1786. By investigation into the property customs of that day one finds that the term "meeting-house" was generally applied to all places of Methodist worship. A "church" was the official name given when the property was administered by the trustees, and a "chapel" was the building built given and mostly maintained by the donor. Therefore one may logically assume that Colonel and Mrs. Allen McLane were responsible for the care and keeping of Duck Creek's Meeting House. As he was absent from the community and the congregation for extended periods of time due to his position in Wilmington, one cannot help but assume that he could devote little time to his religious property. Therefore ways and means had to be devised to insure that the structure would remain in the hands of the society. Therefore the call was made.

So on March 4, 1799 twenty men attended that historic assemblage—James Stevenson, John Cole, James McDowell (cabinetmaker), Israel Peterson (tanner), George Kennard (merchant), Simon VanWinkle, Peter Lowber (tan-yard owner), James Henry, Philip Denny (landowner), Messer Beaton, Daniel McDowell (cabinetmaker), Benjamin Farrow, William Spearman (storekeeper-Old Duck Creek), Major Taylor, John Palmatary (landowner), Benjamin Bassett, Robert Patterson (shipowner), Thomas Hull, and Molleston Curry (landowner). They elected the following as trustees: James Stevenson, John Cole, James McDowell, Israel Peterson, George Kennard, Peter

Lowber and Simon VanWinkle. John Cole was appointed chairman; James Stevenson, secretary; and George Kennard, treasurer. Then two committees were appointed—one for incorporation, and the other to wait upon Mr. McLane to "obtain a deed for the property upon which our church now stands". A Certificate of Incorporation was granted by an Act of the Delaware Assembly and was recorded on March 23, 1799. The deed for the property was executed by Colonel McLane on the following 9th of May.

*We the Trustees Elect and Chosen on the
Tenth Day of March . . . in the year of our Lord One
Thousand Seven hundred and Ninety Nine
of the Society or Congregation of the Methodist Episcopal
Church at Duck Creek Cross Roads, the said Society or
Congregation having been first notified by Advertisement
Set up Tenth Day before the day aforesaid about mentioned
in public view, at or near the place of Meeting mentioned
in the said Advertisement, Agreeably to the Act of Assembly
entitled "An act to enable all the Religious denominations
in this State to appoint Trustees who shall be a body
Corporate, for the purpose of taking care of the Temporalities
of their respective Congregations" Do hereby certify,
Declare, and Make known, that we have and do take
upon ourselves the Name of the Trustees of Asbury
Church at Duck Creek Cross Roads, Kent County
and State of Delaware, and Request that this
our Certificate May be Recorded in the Office
of the Recorder of Deeds of Kent County and State aforesaid
Agreeably to the Act of Assembly aforesaid in such
Case made and provided In Testimony whereof
We hereunto set our hands, and Seal this
Tenth Day of March in the year of our Lord
One Thousand Seven hundred and Ninety Nine
John Cole
Geo Kennard
James Stevenson
Israel Peterson
James McDowell
Simon VanWinkle
Peter Lowber*

State of Delaware
Kent County
Recorded in the Public Office
at Dover, for Kent County aforesaid, in
Book F. Volume 23, folio 154.
In Testimony whereof
I have hereto set my hands, and Affixed the
Seal of the said Office the twenty third
Day of March, in the Year of our Lords One thousand seven
Hundred, and ninety nine 1799
Simon Melmer Wilson Recorder

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

DEED

This Indenture made this Ninth Day of May in the Year of our Lord one Thousand seven Hundred and ninety nine between Allen McLane of the Borough of Wilmington in the State of Delaware by Rebecca his wife of the one part and John Cole, George Kennard, James Stevenson, James M. Bowel, Samuel Peterson, Simon Vanwinkle and Peter Lorber Trustees in trust for the use and purposes herein after mentioned, all of Duck Creek Hundred in and near the Village of Duck Creek Cross Roads in that County on Delaware aforesaid of the other part, Witnesseth that the said Allen McLane and Rebecca his wife, for and in consideration of the regard, esteem and affection which we bear for the Members of the Methodist Church their religious principles, as also for the sum of Five Shillings to us in hand paid, at or before the sealing and delivery of these presents, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have given, granted, bargained, sold, released, confirmed and conveyed, and by these presents do give, grant, bargain, sell, release, confirm and convey unto the said John Cole, George Kennard, James Stevenson, James M. Bowel, Samuel Peterson, Simon Vanwinkle and Peter Lorber Trustees and their heirs, executors, assigns and assigns forever according to Law, in trust for the uses and purposes herein after mentioned and declared, all the estate right, title, interest, property, claim and demand whatsoever, either in Law or

equity which have or may be to be made jointly by the said Trustees and their executors and the said Allen McLane and to be kept open as a lot for their joint use and benefit for ever, which premises are warranted and to be defended from themselves & their Heirs, unto the aforesaid John Cole, George Kennard, James Stevenson, James M. Bowel, Samuel Peterson, Simon Vanwinkle, and Peter Lorber and their executors, chosen and appointed as aforesaid from the time of closing of them the said Allen McLane and Rebecca his wife their Heirs and assigns in testimony whereof the said Allen McLane & Rebecca McLane have hereunto set their hands and seals the Day and

Year aforesaid
Signed, sealed and acknowledged
in the presence of us
Subscribed

Allen McLane
Rebecca McLane

Received the Day of the date of the above written Indenture from the aforesaid John Cole, George Kennard, James Stevenson, James M. Bowel, Samuel Peterson, Simon Vanwinkle, & Peter Lorber Trustees by the hand of John Cole five Shillings in the open consideration for the aforesaid sum.
John Cole
Allen McLane

Reverend Henry Boehm, known alike by Methodists and United Brethren as Father Boehm, came to Duck Creek on Monday, June 2, 1800 where, for the fifth time, the Philadelphia Conference held its annual sessions. Sixty-six preachers who were connected with the business of the conference were present and both Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat presided. The business meetings, which lasted for six hours each day, were conducted at the home of George Kennard. Religious services were held at the church by the great revivalists of that day—Dr. Chandler, John Chambers and Jesse Lee. One revival meeting continued for forty-five hours without cessation. On the night of June 5 over two hundred souls were gathered to hear the exhortations, and during that night a great outpouring of the Spirit moved them all "to shout" at one time. The shout was followed by happy singing. George Kennard in later writing to one of the other Bishops, who had not attended, thus noted the results of the revival, "Since the commencement. . . we have taken one hundred and sixty-seven into our society; so that we have now about three hundred members in the village, and the work is still going on".

During 1800, when the salary of the traveling preachers was \$64.00 per year, the Duck Creek Society in conjunction with those of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Alexandria and Dover, petitioned the General Conference to raise the

stipend. This petition was granted. However, it seemed not to have specified the amount of money to be paid.

Sometime during that year, Mr. Hughes, a native of Ireland, was employed by the trustees of Asbury Church to establish a school. As Bishop Asbury was enthusiastic about the education of anyone who could not read or write, he took a personal interest in this venture. He returned to the school on May 21 of the following year during examination time. The schoolmaster had worked so well with his charges that the Bishop was astonished by their progress. Unfortunately for all concerned, Mr. Hughes did not elect to continue his work at the Cross Roads, and the school passed into oblivion.

A state of quiescence seems to have existed in Duck Creek from 1801 until 1803. Except for the names of the preachers who served the Dover Circuit little or nothing is known. Thomas Ware, who was remembered as having preached his first Methodist sermon on the peninsula in the Established Church at Old Duck Creek, was appointed Presiding Elder of the Dover Circuit in 1800, with Archibald Foster and Louthar Taylor as his preachers. William Bishop and Larner Blackman served in 1801; the latter who became one of the most eminent pioneers of American Methodism. (Blackman is to the Mississippi River Valley area what Asbury is to Delaware.) Eighteen hundred and two saw the stationing of Thomas Dodson

and William Earley as pastors, while 1803 witnessed the preachings of William Hunter, Jesse Justice and Thomas Walker.

Almost one hundred preachers convened at Duck Creek Cross Roads on May 19, 1803 for the Philadelphia Conference. This was Duck Creek's sixth one, and it was held in the Friend's Meeting House in the village. This building was located on a large lot of land situated on lower South Street near East. The discussion that year revolved around the Book Concern (Methodist Publishing House). After its establishment in Philadelphia some five years before, it was ordered to be moved to Baltimore—the reasoning being that Ezekiel Cooper, a minister and its head—should itinerant like all the other preachers. Reverend Cooper declined to move even after Bishop Asbury had written to him to do so. Mr. Cooper claimed that the Annual Conference had no jurisdiction over him, that Baltimore had not been consulted, and that the idea of having a book agent itinerate with all his stock of books, presses, types, and so forth from city to city merely for the sake of conforming to Bishop Asbury's thoughts, was not in keeping with the well being of the Book Concern. Once again the ministers ruled, after much debate, in favor of the moving, but the margin was so small that by 1804 the General Conference (successor to the Bishops Council) selected one city, New York, as the future permanent location of the Book Concern. Ezekiel Cooper was then re-elected as the General Book Agent.

At this meeting the Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat heard reports concerning the increased growth of the Methodist Societies in the entire Philadelphia Conference. They also noted the number of new applicants for preaching, therefore during that year the number of districts were enlarged and boundaries were changed. Then in the spring of 1804, by action of the Philadelphia Conference, many other circuits within the District were formed. Duck Creek being among the new ones in the Delaware District. The Dover Circuit was divided and Duck Creek was created. What appointments were set off with it, and what territory was embraced has not been determined. However, from all source material available, one may surmise that the following societies were most certainly included—Blackiston's, Webster's, Union, Thoroughfare Neck, Scotten's at Lewis Cross Roads, Seversons, Raymonds, Muddy Branch and Farrows. The Presiding Elder for the Delaware District was Reverend Doctor William P. Chandler, and the Circuit preachers were Thomas Everane and Thomas Stratton.

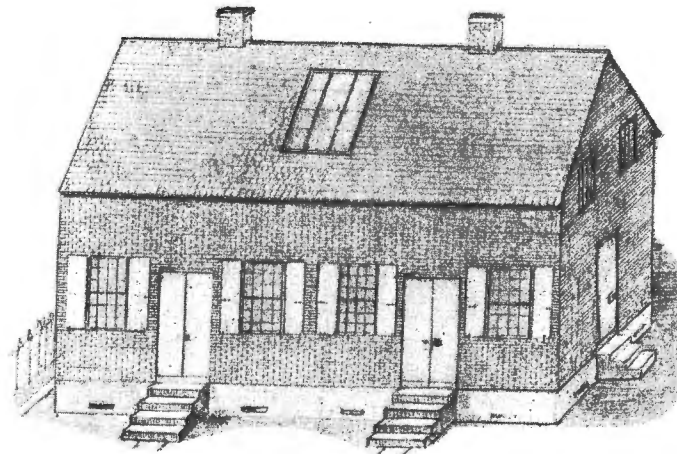
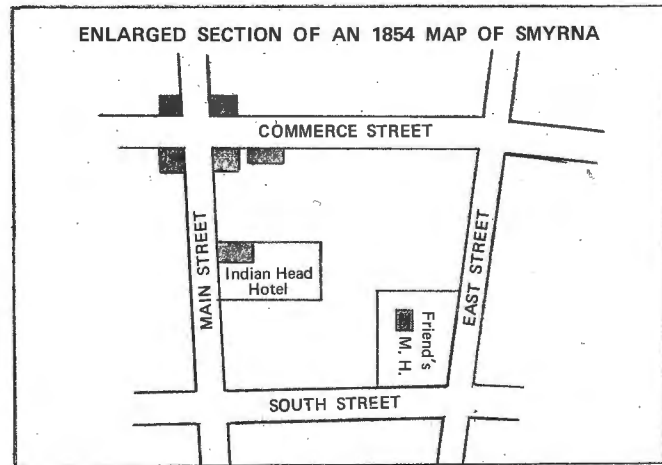
The very first Methodist camp meeting on the peninsula was during July of 1805 at Farson's Hill two miles west of Duck Creek Cross Roads on the pike leading to Lewis' Cross Roads. This description places the site on the land now locally known as the Laphand Farm. Dr. Chandler, the head of the Camp Meeting, was also one of the mighty revivalists who preached the gospel, and during the course of that month between three and four hundred souls were converted. James Herron and Caleb Morris were the pastors.

By modern standards the Camp Meeting was a very crude affair. There were no facilities for eating or sleeping. Each family provided for its own wants. The main tent was a vessel's sail upheld by newly cut and trimmed trees. Todd in his book "Methodism of the Peninsula" dated 1886 refutes the Farson's Hill site. He claims the place to be "in a grove about three miles south of Duck Creek on the Dover Road."

On January 16, 1806 by an Act of the Delaware Assembly, Duck Creek Cross Roads became Smyrna. Its boundaries were fixed at one quarter mile square in each direction from the cross roads, now known as the Four Corners. The number of persons who resided within that area did not exceed one hundred and seventy-five.

One does not know why the name of Smyrna was actually chosen. Two versions are cited as reasons for the choice. The first in the oft told one found in history books. "Commerce on Duck Creek was booming, the grain trade was flourishing and Smyrna was a good Biblical port name." The second and lesser known version has been told by word of mouth. "Francis Asbury in one of his frequent trips through the crossroads and Duck Creek Village preached a soul searching sermon to his hearers. The text of his sermon was from the second chapter of "The Revelation" in which St. John wrote to the struggling congregation of Smyrna, Turkey telling them about trials and tribulations which they were to endure. St. John exhorted his readers to be faithful until death so that God would give them a crown of life.

So forceful was Asbury's sermon and so loud were the exhortations of the early Methodists that many persons, who had come out to hear Asbury that day, were convicted of their



The Old Quaker Meeting House

sins and were saved. Some of those persons were and some became influential in the busy life of the Cross Roads. When the time came for a discussion about a new name for their settlement, they chose Smyrna because of the influence of Asbury's sermon."

Lewis' Cross Roads was also renamed that year. It became Kenton.

During 1806 Asbury's congregation and the newly named Smyrna Circuit had as its pastor a Reverend Richard Lyons—a "vituperous man." He was an autocrat to the ends of his fingertips dispensing his abuses without mercy publicly to his congregations. Sometimes he would expell a member without a trial by his peers. In one of his pulpit tirades he so abused members of the John Cummins family that they took umbrage and withdrew from the church. Even his junior preacher, Reverend William B. Lacey, did not escape malignancy. On one occasion he simultaneously held four separate class meetings in the four corners of the Smyrna church. Finally several men of the circuit held a meeting at which time they agreed to separately keep a record of his savings and doings. When the conference met in Philadelphia these notes were presented. They had been prepared by James Henry, William Lowber, Steward Redman, Isaac Davis, James McDowell, and Israel Peterson, Sr.. So thoroughly had the biography been prepared that the conference removed him from the peninsula and sent him to Pennsylvania as an assistant circuit preacher.

Dr. Cook's Woods, location unknown, was the site of a Camp Meeting which started on September 18, 1806. How long the camp was in operation is not known. However, the next year under the management of George Kennard, Timothy Cummins, A. Ridgely, Joseph Whitby and John Merriot, another such meeting was held in Spruance's Wood, whose location is not known. This meeting lasted for almost a month. Thereafter such outdoor religious revivals were held annually until 1836.

In 1807 Reverends James Ridgeway and Sylvester Hill were the pastors, and in 1808 the circuit was served by Thomas Walker and George Harmon. Smyrna Circuit, in 1809, was placed on the Chesapeake District. Apparently Head of Sassafras, Cecilton and the Line Stone Society (still meeting at the Willson house) were added to its charge with Henry White and Thomas Neal as preachers. Sylvester Hill and William Williams came in 1810. On Sunday, April 25th of that year, Reverend George Pickering who had served the circuit in 1792, accompanied by Bishop Asbury, came to collect funds for a Methodist Chapel in Boston, Massachusetts. All of the churches contributed liberally for the cause.

Christopher Spry, who had ministered to the Duck Creek Society in 1790, retired for that field in 1804. He came to the Duck Creek area to live, and subsequently he died. The date of his death cannot be rightfully ascertained, but the remembrances of Mrs. Sarah Patterson Mason written in the Smyrna Times in 1866 indicated that the year was 1810. He was buried in Old Asbury Cemetery and was the first Methodist minister to be interred there.

Abstinence, slavery and impressment were three major topics of discussion in the church of that day. As early as 1805, a Quarterly Conference adopted a resolution "to oppose

by precept and example the daily use of spirituous liquors." Although there were few slaveholders among the Duck Creek Methodists, much time was taken in considering the relationship of master and slave. This was done because the church required all of its slaveholding members to manumit their slaves at a certain date. The citizens of Smyrna had not been directly affected by the incidents of local sailors being seized by the British Navy. Yet they were deeply concerned about the worsening conditions on the high seas. Therefore, along with the General Church, memorials were written to the brethren of the English Methodist Church imploring them to exert opposition to that practice.

By 1811, when Thomas Smith and Samuel Griffith were the pastors, the country was fast drifting towards war. However, at the beginning of 1812 this community felt so secure that a bank was established on East Commerce Street with Judge Isaac Davis as one of the directors. At General Conference a report was given stating the condition of the circuit—some older societies had passed out of existence or else had merged with each other, while in addition several newer one had been formed. The total number was 16 societies with an aggregate membership (white and colored) of 710 souls. Asbury, 144; Union, 100; Middletown-meeting in private home-42; Lee's Chapel, 56; Webster's, 33; Kenton Society-privately held-55; Farrow's, 43; Blackiston's, 44; Massey's, 19; Head of Sassafras, 34; Johnstown (location unknown), 24; Raymond's, 67; Severson's, 20; and Thoroughfare Neck, 29. Although not attached to Smyrna Circuit, Central Church, near Moortown (Cheswold) composed of Moors, was under the jurisdiction of the Smyrna Circuit. George Sheets and William Ryder became Smyrna Circuit pastors, while Piner Mansfield, one of Asbury's early saints, was licensed as a local preacher. The circuit was returned to the Delaware district.

Smyrna, however did not escape the War of 1812. As it was near the coast and Duck Creek, the inhabitants were rather apprehensive about British action in this area. British soldiers, embarking from British warships in the Delaware Bay and River, frequently came up Duck Creek to raid the farmlands or attack the houses. They continued to such a degree that in 1813 a company of volunteers, primarily recruited from members of the Methodist faith, was organized in Smyrna and sent to Bombay Hook to defend the island. Denny Stevenson an early pillar of Asbury was elected as the captain of this militia.

The War of 1812 continued until 1815. In that interim the churches were served by John Walker and William Ryder in 1813; Solomon Sharp, David Darley, and again William Ryder in 1814, and John M'Combs and John Collins in 1815.

Reverend Solomon Sharp, one of the denominations most forceful personalities, is considered by many historians to have played a major role in shaping the early public image of the Methodist Circuit riding preacher in Delaware and Eastern Shore Maryland. Born in Caroline County, Maryland, April 6, 1771, he became a parson by 1791, and a presiding elder by 1808. Tall and robust with a commanding voice he delivered his powerful sermons with a singular note of authority, as if he were conscious of his divine commission to "go into all the world." Yet he was kindly, well spoken, and loved by his

parishioners. In his latter years, Sharp was one of the most noticeable and patriarchal figures in the Conference, still walking straight and erect. Colonel Wilmer, an ex-Smyrnan, writing about Solomon Sharp in 1880 says, "If he had lived earlier, I believe that Father Sharp would have been a prophet."

Bishop Francis Asbury, apparently accompanied by Reverend Henry Boehm, stopped in the village in 1815 on his way north. Whether he did or did not preach cannot be ascertained, but we do know that at church he sat in his chair on a high table so that he might be able to talk with the flock. An eyewitness of that visit wrote that Asbury was pale, wrinkled, gray and feeble, needing assistance much of the time. It was Bishop Asbury's last visit to Smyrna, for the next year he died.

Lawrence McCombs and Samuel P. Lewis continued the work of the circuit in 1816. They were followed by James Moore, Thomas Miller and Edward Stout in 1817 and 18.

On January 29, 1817 by an Act of Assembly, Smyrna was incorporated under a commission form of government. Three men—James McDowell, Thomas Maberry and Henry Draper were appointed Commissioners to hold an election at Smyrna for three commissioners, a treasurer and an assessor.

The following were elected Commissioners—James McDowell, Robert Patterson, William Kennedy; Treasurer—George Walker and Assessor—Presley Spruance.

In Kenton the Methodists erected their first church building in 1818. It was a frame construction, twenty-four by sixty feet, and stood at the end of the town on the right hand side of the road which led to present Downs' Chapel. The ground was donated, and the structure was erected by Isaac Buckingham, Reverend John Durborough and James Scotten. Previously the society had held their meetings (after the death of Widow Howard) in the homes of Stradley and James Scotten. By that year, 1818, Asbury Church, Smyrna was also in need of expansion. The trustees voted to enlarge the frame building, and the work was completed in 1819 while William Williams and Samuel Grace were the pastors.

Approximately twenty feet was added to the original structure. One door, again, facing South was its only entrance. However another door on the side of the building was cut permitting an exit from the inside front of the church.



FIRST ASBURY METHODIST CHURCH - 1790
Old Drawing of Church Bldg.

Inside there was but one aisle—a center one running from the front door to within a few feet of the altar rail. On each side of the aisle was a block of pews which reached to the wall. They held nine persons to a side or eighteen across. Two tin-plate stoves stood in the middle of the aisle, with pipes and flues running vertically through the roof. The floor was bare, the walls, although unplastered, were sheated with wood, and an end balcony was reserved for the exclusive use of the Negroes—whether free or slave. In the front there was a high pulpit, but it had only a simple bench for the preacher, while two "so called" captains' chairs sat inside the altar. These chairs, supposedly from the log cabin of James Stevenson, had been used many times by Francis Asbury on his visits to the village, and even then they were considered to be valuable relics of the past. At the right hand of the pulpit, behind the amen corner was the aforementioned side door. This faced the alley and was used for egress by the aged who would quietly leave the church after the usual hand-shaking at the end of the service.

Methodism has generally become well established and accepted by 1819. However they were still "looked down on" by some members of other demoninations, and by the non-churchgoers who the Methodist flatly labeled as sinners. Letters and newspapers of that era reflect the attitude, "These Methodists have queer ways—they shout and sing and are happy in church, but once on the outside most of them are glum looking, stern and devilishly pious. They are just plain—plain. They condemn the use by women of artificial flowers, feathers or veils; feel that it is wrong to: wear gold rings and chains, ride in fancy conveyances; live in pretentious houses; labor on the Sabbath, even to cooking meals; chew tobacco; use spirituous drinks, or even drink a glass of wine, wear ruffled collars or cuffs and, if still the custom, silver buckles on their shoes or belts. All of their meeting houses are bare, uncomfortable and they usually sit on some back street. But we must admire them, because they take no offense of their enemies, and they daily seek to raise the sinner from the depths of hell. But we suspect sometimes that these Methodists are in league with the Quakers because the Friends still permit them to use Quaker Meeting Houses, and these Methodists—some of them—still use thee and thou when they speak to their sisters and brothers in the faith."

Although the women were segregated in the worship service, they were just as active as the men in the work of a Union Sunday School begun here in Smyrna in 1820. On April 12th of that year, the Philadelphia Conference was convened for the seventh time in the village. This meeting came to Smyrna as the result of an invitation sent the year before by Robert Patterson and Daniel McDowell. These two gentlemen, did not quite fit the mold of an 1820 Methodist as previously viewed. Patterson was wealthy both in land and money, while McDowell, a well known master cabinetmaker, was comfortably situated. Many of the members criticized these two men for using their influence in having the conference, complaining that there were not enough accommodations in the village. Patterson told them that if they did not wish to assist in the lodging and feeding of the members, then he would

do so himself. However, when the ministers did arrive ample housing had been found, and Patterson was obliged "to entertain" only seven of them.

Judge Isaac Davis, Asbury's most wealthy and influential member, also had quite a stir created in front of his "pretentious" home on the day when conference began. That morning many preachers arrived on horseback, in private carriages, stagecoach, teams and hacks. The latter came from The Landing after meeting the ships. In the midst of all this excitement the villagers noticed an unusual conveyance coming up Main Street. At last it was recognized as a "Gig and Tandum" which was a light two-wheeled pleasure carriage drawn by two horses—one in front of the other. This high-styled conveyance was just then being introduced into this section of Delaware, and was used only by those wishing "to outrage the publick." On and on it came until it stopped before the door of Judge Davis. From it alighted two of the plainest old fashioned preachers of the conference. As they were entering the Judge's home they were questioned as to their using that stylish mode of conveyance. They explained that the roads were in such bad condition that they had used this mode of traveling, for convenience only.

The Friends again permitted the conference to use their Meeting House while the pulpit of the church was occupied three times a day by ministers who preached "profitable sermons." Among the many who were converted were Mrs. Rhoda Corbitt, eldest daughter of Judge Issac Davis, Sallie Bassett and Margaret Kennedy.

Sometime during the intervening months of May and September, the latter two, while visiting friends in Wilmington became acquainted with the plans of the newly organized Sunday School in that town. Although Methodism in 1790 had gone on record for the establishment of such a school not a single one had been started on the Peninsula. When Sallie Bassett, a Methodist, and Margaret Kennedy, a continuing Presbyterian, returned to Smyrna, they immediately undertook the establishment of a Union Sunday School. They went together, both in the village and in the surrounding areas, seeking those who would come. They visited the poor, requesting the attendance of their children; they sought out the "urchins" on the street, and they enlisted the offsprings of the well-to-do.

Finally success was theirs, and the Sunday School was scheduled to open on September 10, 1820 while William Williams and William Torbert, a Doverite, were the pastors. The plans were to inaugurate the School at Mechanics Academy. The Academy was a small frame building near the church, and it too was reached by a lane leading from Ball Street. At the conclusion of the session, the School was to move in procession from the Academy to Asbury Church for the preaching. However, on the day before the opening, a teacher of the Mechanics Academy died, and out of respect that building was not opened. Therefore the classes instead met in a house on East Commerce Street, which was occupied through the week by a charity school conducted by young ladies of the village.

Margaret Kennedy was the first superintendent serving until April of 1821. Sallie Bassett was the second, working

until 1822 when she moved to Wilmington. Mary Patterson, Mary Davis, Rebecca McDowell, Mary Bassett, Matilda Abbot and Ann Curry, along with two young men, Joseph Farrow and James A. Massey were the teachers. This was truly a Union Sunday School, for it had as its teachers and pupils, members of all demoninations and stations of life. All the students had the liberty of choice for catechism, as none was forced upon them. This institution operated spasmodically until 1827 when it merged with the then newly formed Methodist Sunday School.

Some reports from the 1820 Conference are vague which renders their interpretation difficult, but it is believed that the circuit consisted of the following churches or societies: Raymonds, Muddy Branch, Severson's, Thoroughfare Neck, being called Friendship, Lee's Chapel, Union, Asbury Chapel, north of Cantwell's Bridge (Odessa) towards St. Georges, Middletown, meeting in private homes, Head of Sassafras, Cecilton, Massey, Johnstown (location unknown), Websters, Line Stone Society, meeting in private homes, Blackiston's, Kenton, a society west of Dover meeting in private homes, Farrows and Asbury, Smyrna.

Reverend William Ryder was returned in 1821, and had as his junior preacher, Joseph Osborner. These two were again returned in 1822 when the Middletown Society was organized into a church. Azariah Foster, Andrew Dill, Thomas Merritt, John Hays and Thomas Low were elected as trustees to acquire and hold property in the name of that congregation. During the same year a humble structure built of frame and costing about \$900.00 was erected for the religious meetings of the people.

In 1823 Samuel Grace and Joseph Holdich, age 19, came. By the time of the latter's retirement in 1878, he had become an outstanding Methodist personage. Holdich had earned a Doctor of Divinity degree, taught at Wesleyan University, traveled abroad, and authored several noted religious books of his day. James Smith, a native Delawarean, and Edward Stephenson were assigned in 1824, while in 1825 saw the return of Smith along with Walter B. Jones as his assistant; Solomon Higgins and James Long ministered in 1826. During those years the influences of those men of God caused one Levi Scott of the Union Society to be converted in 1821, and to give himself to the Lord's work by becoming an itinerant preacher among them. In 1827, Reverend Scott for the first time attended a Philadelphia Conference. It opened in Smyrna on April 27th, and marked the eighth time that the conference had been convened in the village. So impressed was Scott with those men and their proceeding that in afteryears he wrote:

"I met the Conference for the first time, in Smyrna, in 1827. It held its session in the Friend's meeting house, a small, plain building, in the outskirts of the village, the church being reserved for religious services. Assembled in a plain house they appeared a grave and plain body of men, not rude, but plain, plain in dress, plain in speech, plain in manners. They were the representatives of plain churches and a plain people. Not one of them had ever sat on a cushioned seat, or walked on a carpeted aisle, or stood on a carpeted platform, or kneeled on a cushioned kneeling stool in a Methodist house of public worship. They were clad almost to a man in what has been

called the Methodist preacher uniform of that day. The broad brimmed hats did not, of course, appear, as they were in Conference session. But their coats were either straight or round breasted, or a modification between the two, single breasted also, that would button to the chin. Their neck dress consisted of a plain white cravat, with or without stock, concealing the collar of the shirt, and presenting in front a plain, smooth surface, or a single or double bow according to the varying taste of the parties. The hair betokened nothing in its adjustment, but the most modest and natural plainness, being combed down smoothly over the forehead, and their cleanly shaven faces exhibited neither mustache, goatee, or any other fanciful arrangement. Among the body present were Laurence McCombs, "Father" Boehm, Thomas Ware and Solomon Sharp, a most venerable, but eccentric man who wore his hair parted in the middle and hanging in heavy ringlets upon his broad and massive shoulders."

The sessions were conducted with calm, while again revivals and altar calls were held in Asbury Church. That year saw the implementation of the Sunday School Resolution of 1790, by the establishment of a permanent Sunday School Society at Asbury. John Smith and Joseph Iliff were the pastors in 1828, and in 1829 the venerable Solomon Sharp was again returned to the Smyrna Circuit. His junior preacher was Henry G. King. That year the circuit petitioned the District Conference for authority to purchase a dwelling for the senior preacher. Up until that date the ministers were "entertained" by various members of the circuit congregation. Many of those men-of-God most assuredly must have married and had children, yet there is a dearth of evidence concerning their married state. Nonetheless they and their families were roomed and boarded by the brethren and sisters in the denomination. After 1829, the evidence points to the fact that the junior preachers and their families, if any, were housed with the senior ministers.

In the late 1820's two other chapels were erected by societies which were still holding meetings in private homes. One such group was in operation west of Dover. Sometime before 1829 a church was erected by them, but it was not until October 10th of that year that Joseph Rash sold 125 square perches to Myers Carson, Joseph Clark, John Jones, John Townsend and Robert Hargadine as trustees. The meeting house was immediately known as Rash's Chapel, later it was renamed McEliver's in honor of a circuit preacher who had ministered there, and by 1880 it was known as Asbury. The absolute site is not definitely known, but evidence points to the assumed conclusion that that meeting house might have been the building which is now known as Victory Chapel near Pearson's Corner.

Mr. Willson, at whose home the Line Stone Society had met for so many years, passed to his reward in or around 1820. After his demise the members held their prayer and praise services in other private homes, and by the late 1820 the congregation had grown to the point where they felt that they needed a church building. They therefore petitioned Grafton L. Delaney, of Baltimore, to sell them a piece of land. The Delaneys held extensive acreage in that area both in Delaware and Maryland and many heads of the households (including

the deceased Mr. Willson) were tenants of that family. However Mr. Delaney did not sell them the land but instead he donated it to John Eaton, Thomas Meriam, Robert Bailey, Thomas Lamb and Jesse Moffitt as trustees for the Line Stone Society. A log church, twenty four by thirty feet was soon erected at very little cost, as the men themselves performed most of the tasks. By 1832 the chapel had acquired a new name—"Dulany's."

(Many old references have mistakenly used the name Lime Stone for Line Stone.)

As the result of the circuits petition a parsonage was secured in part of a double house (still standing but much altered) on the northwest corner of Main and South Streets. Whether or not it was owned or rented is not clearly stated, but Reverend Solomon Sharp occupied it first in 1830. William Connelly was his associate. Eighteen thirty also saw the beginnings of a new society—Cantwell's Bridge (Odessa). Reverend Sharp was not too pleased with that body of believers when they sought ways and means by which they could erect a meeting house. Sharp felt that those dozen or more souls could more profitably take part in the prayer and praise services at Union. Nevertheless they were determined and continued in their efforts.

In 1831 and 32 Reverend Richard Greenbank was the pastor, having a different junior preacher each year—William Connelly, 1831, James Nickolas, 1832. At thirty eight years of age, Richard Greenbank was still filled with youthful enthusiasm and fire, for he had been a backslider who had become a rejuvenated, born-again Christian. Born in Yorkshire, England in 1793 of parents, who were among the first members of a society formed in Northern England by John Wesley, Greenbank, after being rooted and grounded in faith, fell from Grace after his arrival in Philadelphia in 1817. However in 1823 while traveling in Maryland, he chanced upon a revival camp-meeting at Rattlesnake Springs, near Baltimore, and was re-converted. He entered the ministry in 1829 in the Baltimore Conference; was transferred to the Philadelphia Conference; and was assigned to the Smyrna Circuit of the Chesapeake District. It was during Reverend Greenbank's tenure that the Cantwell Society erected its meeting house. The building was thirty by forty feet, and was constructed from second-handed bricks obtained from an abandoned barn. Upon its completion the bricks were whitewashed. The interior was plain and bare. Greenbank did not see his work completed because he was transferred to Queen Ann's. However, his talents were many and later in life he worked and earned two Masters' degrees—one in art and the other in medicine. He died in Philadelphia in 1868.

Also during Greenbank's stay on the circuit, the Sunday School, after having had five years of interrupted existence, was officially organized. Dr. John D. Perkins was the president; Pennell Coombe, secretary; Rev. Ephraim Jefferson, treasurer. There were 18 teachers and 188 pupils.

Reverend Solomon Sharp was again returned in 1823. It was he, assisted by Reverend Robert Anderson, who became responsible for the completion of the Cantwell work, begun and carried on by Greenbank. Later that year the meeting house was dedicated. In the meantime the Circuit had

purchased a lot of land on Delaware Street from Judge Isaac Davis. On it a parsonage was built; (site not known) said building served as the residence of the preachers until Smyrna was made a station in 1845.

The use of spirituous drinks has always been the bane of Methodism, and Duck Creek Cross Road and Smyrna was no exception. As early as 1808 Methodist preachers had delivered scathing sermons against its sellers and consumers. On one occasion in the 18teens a sermon against liquor was so effective that John Cummins, who owned the tavern which was located at the northwest corner of Ball and Main Street, returned to the premises, (still standing known as The Milk Store) and in holy wrath dumped the entire spirituous contents of his tavern into the street. Unfortunately, village urchins, who roamed the streets night and day, suddenly appeared and immediately scooped up and drank the mixed venom of Satan.

War against "demon rum" was waged off and on throughout the years, not only by the Methodist preachers, but also by the ministers of the other denominations. Finally in 1833 a great change of tactics was undertaken. Several prominent citizens of the village, through reading and corresponding learned about the establishment of a society who aimed it was to fight spirituous liquor on a national basis. Therefore Judge Isaac Davis, Nehemiah Stockley, Benjamin Coombe and William Ringgold, along with other interested members of the community organized the Smyrna Branch of the Delaware Temperance Society. Article III is quoted "The members of this Society do hereby pledge themselves that they will not (except as a medicine in case of bodily infirmity, or on Sacramental occasions) use distilled Spirits, wines or malt liquors, themselves or procure them for the use of their families, or provide them for the entertainment of their friends or for persons in their employ; and that in all suitable ways they will discountenance the use and Sale of them in the Community."

This organization several years later admitted women to the fold, and under their leadership the society, in one form or another, continued to operate until the 1940's.

Eighteen hundred thirty-four saw the return again of Sharp, who this time had Benjamin Benson as his junior preacher. The following year, 1835, Reverend Sharp, because of failing health, retired from the active ministry and made Smyrna his abode. In that year Reverends Eliphalet Reed and Zerubabel Gaskill were sent to the Smyrna Circuit which had had one more appointment added—Delaware City. Reverend Reed was returned in 1836, but Gaskill was replaced by William Allen, a native of Sussex County. By that year the records seem to indicate that Middletown, Cantwell's Bridge, Delaware City, Sassafras and Massey were no longer attached to the Smyrna Circuit, and that the Asbury Society north of Cantwell's Bridge, as well as the Muddy Branch one were no longer active.

Early in 1836 the Reverend Solomon Sharp delivered a sermon at Asbury. His text was from the fourth chapter of Hebrews. After the conclusion of the service he was heard to say, "Now I feel as if my work was done." On the evening of March 12th, he retired in seemingly good health. During the night his wife was awakened by his hard breathing. She tried

to arouse him, but her efforts were in vain. Alarmed by this she summoned some of the family, but before they could get to his bedside, he had died—March 13, 1836. The cause of his death was due to an attack of asthma. With great sorrow his remains were laid to rest in Asbury Cemetery. For over a decade the congregation felt the loss of his presence from among them.

July of that year also marked the closing of Methodist Camp Meetings in the Middletown-Smyrna-Dover area. Reasons for the ending of those evangelistic services have not been found, and there are not hints given in any sources from which one may attempt to draw assumptions.

While William Allen and Vincent Shepherd were the pastors in 1837, the Leipsic Congregation was organized. That church absorbed and replaced the partially inactive one at Muddy Branch. Joseph Humphreys along with Joseph Mann were stationed in 1838, while in 1839 Humphreys was returned. However, Mann was replaced by William C. Thomas.

Although the boundaries of Smyrna in 1839 were still one quarter of a mile in each direction from the Four Corners, many changes had taken place within the decade. The population had increased, many new homes had been built both within and without the village limits. Asbury, the first religious church of the village had been joined by the building St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal, while the Society of Friends and the Presbyterians had gone on the decline. Several small independent businesses had been started but Samuel Catts and Benjamin Benson outdid them all in gross business and receipts. The manufacturing of carriages was a booming success. Steamboat service from Smyrna Landing to Philadelphia had been inaugurated; the post office had been moved from The Indian Head Hotel; two banks had been in operation with Judge Isaac Davis holding positions in both of them. He was the president of the Bank of Smyrna, and a director in the Commercial Bank. However by 1837 both banks had merged into the Bank of Smyrna which weathered the panic of 1837.

Free western land and, as stated before, liquor were generally discussed, while most citizens either idolized or hated "Old Hickory" Jackson, in or out of office. Most of the villagers, who had personally known Francis Asbury, had died, or moved away—James Stevenson, John Cole, George Kennard, Allen McLane, Abraham and Rebecca Redman, Peter Lowber, Solomon Sharp, Abram Pierce, Rebecca Bennett, Thomas Lamdin, his wife and sons, and Israel Peterson. Their places in the church and in the village were being filled by their children or by newcomers among who were: Denny Stevenson, Joseph Griffith, Samuel B. Wright, George Walker, Herbert Eliason, James and Mary E. Day, John and Susan Millaway, Henry Hoffecker, Alexander and Mary Faries and James Maberry. Reverend Piner Mansfield and Reverend Ephraim Jefferson, along with Judge Isaac Davis and Benjamin Coombe were the remaining links with the past.

In late 1838 the members of Asbury realized that their old frame meeting-house was poorly situated, and that it was out of harmony with the churches which were being built in other communities. For several months the matter was discussed and then in February or March of 1839, before the convening

of the Philadelphia Conference, a congregational meeting was held. The minutes of that meeting follow:

*At a Meeting held at the
Asbury Methodist Episcopal
Church in Smyrna on the evening
of the 23rd March 1839 pursuant
to public notice first given to
take into consideration the propri-
ety and necessity of making
immediate preparations for build-
ing a new Brick Church in
place of the old Frame Building
which is now very much de-
cayed and will very soon
be unfit for use as a church
to worship in. It was then
Resolved unanimously by said
meeting, that a committee of
five be appointed, whose duty
it should be to draw up a
a subscription to be by them,
presented to the friends of
said Church and the pub-
lic generally to raise funds*

No 1

*as soon as practicable for
the above purpose, whereupon
Rev. Joshua Humphreys, Rev. Ephraim
Jefferson, Thomas Maberry,
Denny Stevenson & Benj. Coombe
were appointed said Committee
Therefore we whose names are
hereunto subscribed being will-
-ling to assist in building said
House do hereby severally pro-
-vide and oblig ourselves and
our heirs to pay to the Trustees
of the aforesaid Church for
the time being the several sums
by us subscribed for the purpose
of Building said Church
Smyrna - March 25th 1839*

Reverend Joshua Humphrey was reassigned to the Smyrna Circuit, but Joseph Mann was removed. His place was filled by William C. Thomas. These two then began to chart the course for "this new brick church." The subscription list (modern day pledges) was discussed, but action on it was not undertaken. A serious question arose with its outcome almost completely jeopardizing the building program. No sooner had the list come before the congregation and the October Quarterly Conference than a triangle of propositions were proposed—"Stay where we are, and redo!" "Stay where we are, remove and build!" "Not so, find a new site to build a new church!" These three each gained supporters with no decision being reached.

In 1840 James A. Ayres replaced Humphrey, but Thomas remained. Smyrna Circuit was placed on a newly-formed Wilmington District; however in the following year the district lines were redrawn and Smyrna was attached to Easton. Ayres returned with James L. Houston as his junior preacher. By 1841 both the congregation and the trustees had become static and adamant in their respective positions. Some even threatened to resign their official position if the old church were not used; others uttered the same threat should a new brick one not be erected, while several members stated that they would go elsewhere if the strife did not cease between Christian brethren but to no avail. So, they departed.

In 1842 Reverend Houston came back as the senior minister with Henry Sutton as his junior partner. By the end of their tenure in April of '43 calmer thoughts had prevailed, with a so-called stopgap measure having been adopted. All groups agreed that the new brick church was not only needed, but it was also a necessity; all agreed that the subscription list should be activated (which it was), and all finally agreed that the church should be erected. Judiciously the site location had not been specified. Several trustees, whose names were not recorded had quietly begun to hold conversation with Dr. Fisler for the purpose of choosing and obtaining a parcel of land. Finally in 1843, under the pastorate of Reverends John Lednum and Henry Hudson, the site was settled upon—a new one. By design or by coincident it was originally part of the land that was owned by James Stevenson, at whose cabin still standing, Francis Asbury had proclaimed the gospel to Duck Creek Cross Roads. At the time of its purchase it contained several small houses, one of which had been the home of Denny Stevenson. After the purchase price had been paid, Dr. Fisler, as his contribution to the church, rebated part of the purchase price. By some means, not disclosed, the trustees learned that the clay on the old site could be used for the burning of bricks. They therefore voted to do so, and by that action helped to heal the breach among the three factions.

In early May of 1844, while Reverends John Lednum and John Bell were the ministers, the ground-breaking ceremonies were conducted. On the 24th of that same month the cornerstone was laid after the holding of religious services consisting of songs and prayers. Reverend Lednum, under whose leadership this venture was launched, was the sort of preacher-administrator who was blessed with the faculty for handling difficult situations. He was a diligent gentleman who had been blessed with patience, perseverance and a disciplined mind. Well read in both the religious and secular fields, he could freely and

intelligently converse with peoples from all walks of life. He is remembered and known today throughout the denomination and the literary world for his monumental writing—The Rise of Methodism in America.

Work on the new church progressed at a rapid pace for by February of 1845 it was "under roof." In that month the first floor or the ground floor (then called the basement) was completed and it was dedicated by Reverends Joseph Castle and J. Newland Moffett. The Philadelphia Annual Conference was held in April, and on the 24th day of that month Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church, Smyrna, Delaware was organized as a station—one congregation with one pastor who did not ride a circuit. It had been thought that Reverend Lednum might have been assigned to the new station, but he was not destined to see the completion of the task which he had begun. He was transferred and Reverend Joseph Mason, coming from Port Deposit, Maryland, was assigned to complete the work.

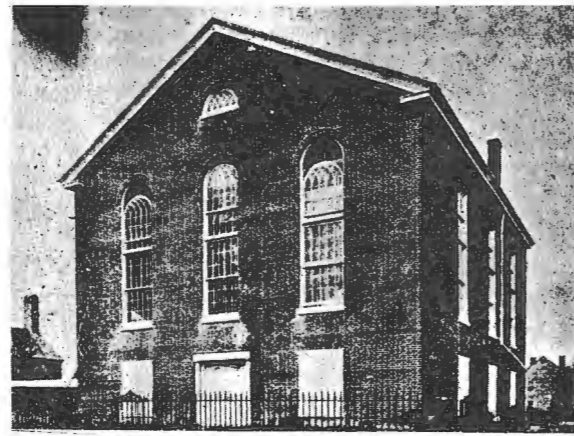


Reverend Joseph Mason

June, 1845 saw the dedication of Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church, Smyrna, Delaware, with Bishop Beverly Waugh and Dr. Robert Gerry as the principal officiating dignitaries.



Bishop Beverly Waugh



Asbury Church - 1844

The brick building was a two-storied structure, late Federal in design, 46 x 60 feet. The basement (ground floor) contained two classrooms and a lecture room, having plain walls and clear glass windows shuttered on the outside. The second floor held an audience chamber with surrounding galleries, both of which were reached by a closed divided staircase. The audience chamber was completely bare, without any adornments whatsoever. Stained glass had been suggested, but they were rejected as "smacking of popery." The entire cost of the building, lot included was approximately \$7,000.

When Mason arrived he found the following persons serving in the church organizations: Piner Mansfield and Dr. John D. Perkins, Local Elders; Joseph Mann, Local Preacher; Piner Mansfield, Joseph Hofferker, Benjamin Enos, James R. Clement, Joseph Mann, Alexander Faries and Benjamin L. Collins, Trustees; Denney Stevenson, James Millaway, James R. Clement, Piner Mansfield, Alexander M. Clement, William R. Cahoon, and Joseph Hofferker, Stewards; Reverend Piner Mansfield, Reverend Doctor John D. Perkins, Israel Peterson, Benjamin L. Collins, Alexander Faries, Charles L. Stevenson and John M. Sparks, Class Leaders. The total membership was less than two hundred including the colored members.

Although the congregation had moved "intoto" into the new church and still retained the custom of seating the women to the right and the men to the left, not all of the members were happy in their new surroundings. Many of them had mixed feeling, and one Mrs. Sarah Patterson Mason expressed her feelings in a poem which appeared in the Delaware Journal on June 26, 1845.

"Farewell to the church where I first learned the truth
Which guided my childhood, instructed my youth;
Farewell to the seats and the pulpit so dear,
I cannot leave these without shedding a tear.
Ah, where is the heart that ne'er sickens to tell,
The pain it has felt at bidding farewell
To scenes we have loved in our childhood and youth,
From which we have learned heavenly wisdom and truth.

New churches are built more convenient, I see,
But this of all others is hallowed to me.
Such preaching I've heard, I can say without fear,

I knew the apostles' successors were here.

And oft have I come with sorrow bowed down,
With faith that was tried by grim fortune's stern frown,

The service commenced—I listened with prayer—
And Jesus was in it, and banished my care.

How solemn the idea that crosses my mind!
The truths I have learned here I ever shall find
Will dwell with my spirit in heaven or hell—
And either in comfort or torture will tell.

My pulse may cease beating, my cheek may grow cold,

The tomb may receive me for ages untold;
My spirit still living with Jesus above,
Will think of the church where it learned God is love.

But if with the lost I should find my own way,
Shut out from my God, and the regions of day;
I'll think of it then, while long ages shall roll,
And duty neglected shall pierce my lost soul.

How many revivals in this church I've seen!
And few were more lasting than what they have been,

The young and the old, the unlearned and the wise,
Have knelt at this altar with penitent cries.

And some soon began to exhort and to teach,
And went in the spirit of Christ's gospel to preach,
And with heads that could learn, and with hearts full of fire,

Itinerants became, and the've souls for their hire.

Oh! much honored church, thee I ne'er can forget,
Here God with his people so often has met!
And though I may worship wherever I will,
My thoughts will revert to old Asbury still."

When the division of the church from the circuit was effected, a question arose as to the disposition of the parsonage. Conference decided that the circuit preachers would remain in it, and that the station would have to provide another dwelling for its preacher. So from 1845 until 1867, the trustees rented the total of eight different houses in eight different locations in the village.

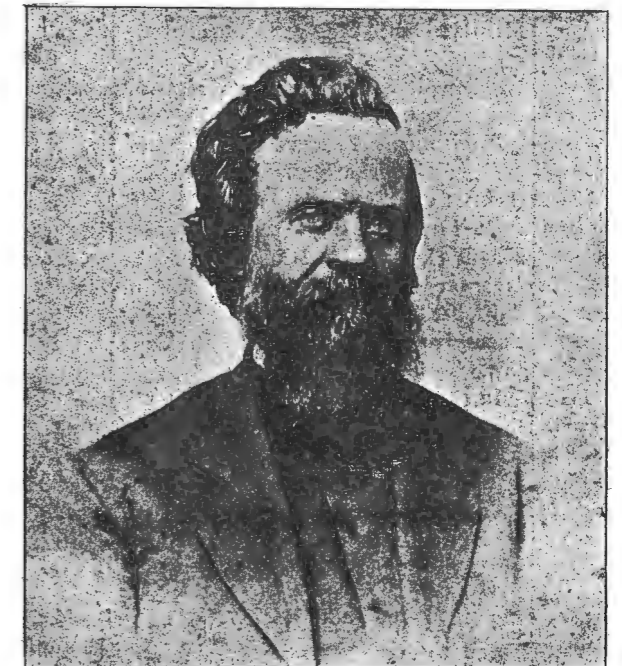
With that problem out of the way, the trustees were presented with other ones all pertaining to the old site. They had to deal with a large cemetery lot; a gapping hole located in part of it, and a vacant building. After several months of discussion a decision was reached. They would keep the white section of the cemetery; ask the villagers to use the hole as a dump, give the colored people their cemetery section (yet unused) which was located on the northern third of the lot and sell the building. (No mention has been found in any of the resource material concerning the deconsecration of the church.) That was the most untenable section of the plan. Nobody wanted a church—so the structure still remained. Finally Mr. Campbell Wells, the church sexton and pump maker purchased "only the new part." He divided the building; moved his section to Ball

Street, and made it his residence. Years later Mr. John E. Collins bought the building from Wells and turned it into a double house. (The location has not been ascertained.) The Negroes purchased the section that remained; moved it back onto their lot; closed in the opened end; and used the building as a house of worship.

From 1845 until 1850 the new station was in a rather precarious situation—for its membership and its monetary status fluctuated to such a great degree that it was thought that Asbury would not retain its separated status. However, through diligent prayer, praise and work, the church weathered the forces which were against its existence, and pressed on growing more and more in Grace.

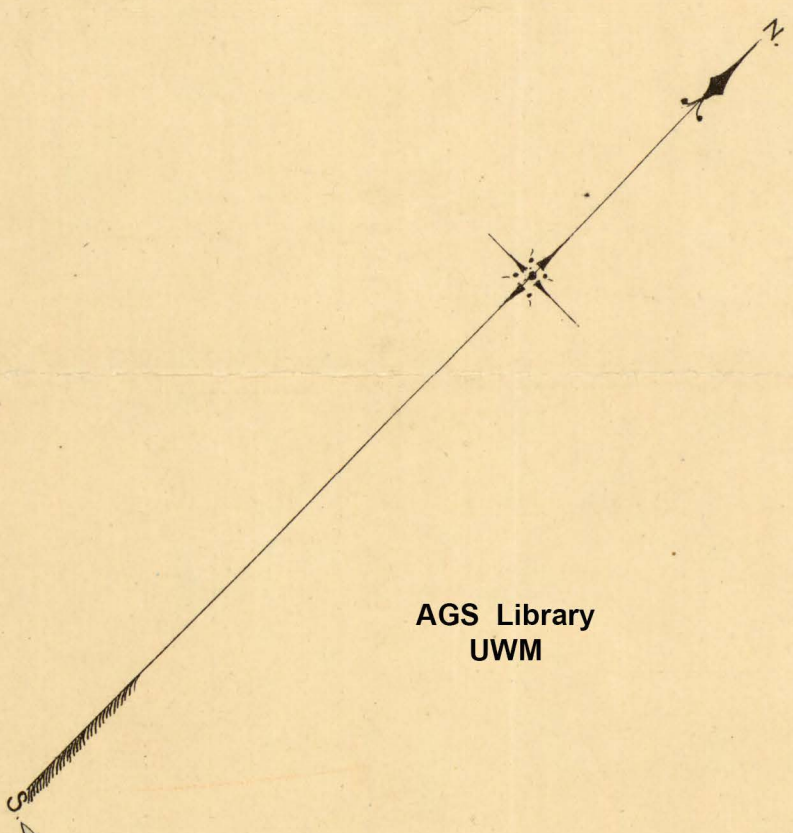
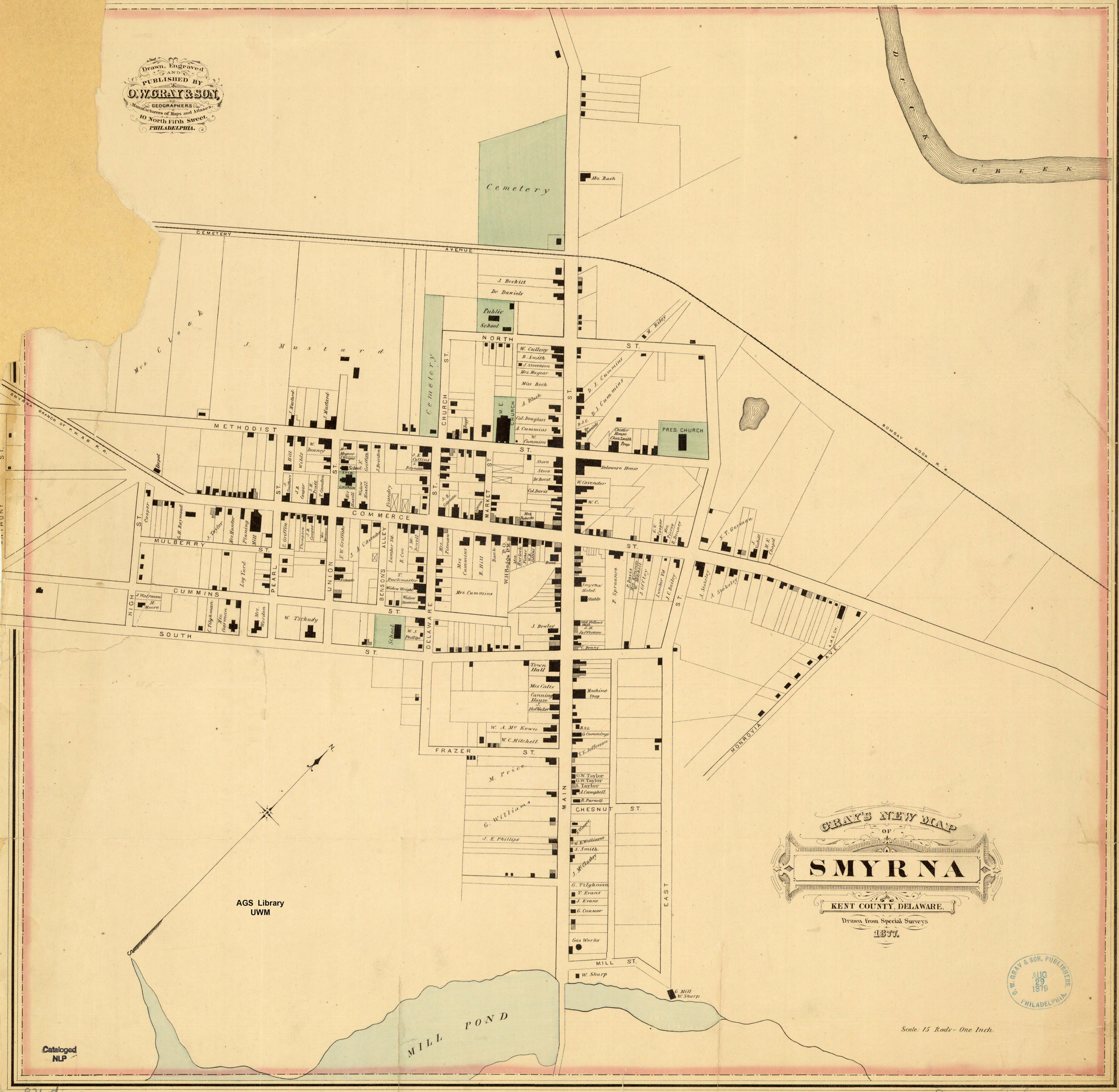
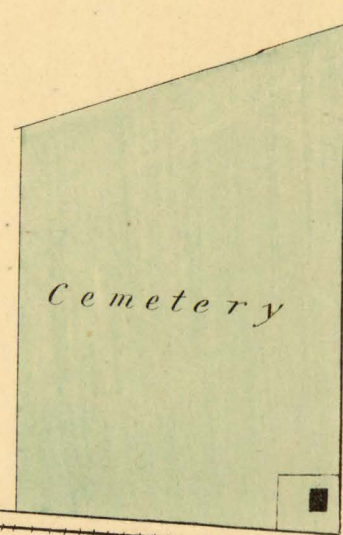
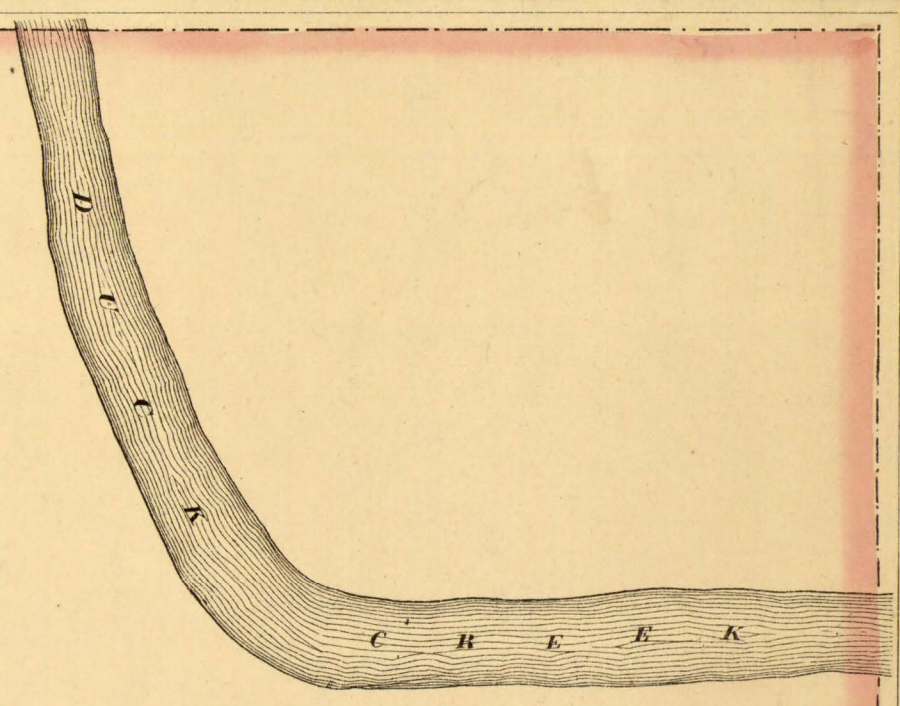
Eighteen forty-six conference statistics reported the membership as 220 whites, 66 coloreds. Reverend Mason was returned. By 1847, Smyrna, as well as the rest of the entire nation was enjoying boom times. Here new families had moved into the village and the surrounding areas; farmers were harvesting record crops which were being sold in Philadelphia and New York City; shipping at Smyrna Landing was taxed to the utmost trying to meet the demands of the shippers; ship-building was going "great guns;" merchants and small businessmen in the community were enjoying great commerce; and both locally and nationally the urge to pack up and move west was prevalent. However, the spiritual outlook was not too bright for church membership was on the decline. It had fallen to such a degree at Blackistons that when the congregation rebuilt their church that year, the size of the building was smaller than the one which it replaced. In Smyrna the congregation numbered 208 whites and 66 coloreds. However, one bright spot did shine and that was at Union. That congregation had held its own, and in 1847 had erected a large substantial brick meeting house.

Reverend James M. McCarter became Asbury's pastor in 1847.



Reverend James M. McCarter

Drawn, Engraved
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GRAY'S NEW MAP
OF
SMYRNA
KENT COUNTY, DELAWARE.
Drawn from Special Surveys
1877.



Scale: 15 Rods - One Inch.

Cataloged
NLP

821-d
E-569
E-1877 am015997

Smyrna, Del 1877

INVENTORY OF THE CHURCH
ARCHIVES OF DELAWARE

by the

HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY

PRELIMINARY DRAFT NOW BEING
CHECKED FOR FINAL ACCURACY

MARCH 1940

Binder #1

WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION

DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL AND SERVICE PROJECTS

OLD POST OFFICE BLDG.

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

erected, about 50 yards north of present building, in 1785. Second church, built 1838, was opposite present site on Maryland side. Present church was incorporated December 31, 1853 and building dedicated in 1874. It was improved in 1915 and again in 1937. It is a one story frame structure. First settled clergyman, Rev. Zach M. Webster, 1887-90; educated at Wesley Collegiate Institute, Dover. Minutes, 1874--, 2 vols.; Register, 1874--, 2 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Arthur G. Thomas. Sunday School, 1935--, 5 vols.; in possession of Mrs. Arthur G. Thomas. Records of incorporation and deeds: Sussex Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. BN86, p. 212; vol. BZ99, p.504; vol. BBO114, p. 43; vol. DIG 289, p. 38. (Any Records which may have been kept 1784-1873 missing).

216. ASBURY METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1786--, Mt. Vernon St., Smyrna.

Organized 1786. Incorporated March 4, 1799. First building, a frame structure on N. Del. St. erected in 1786. In 1843 a brick church was erected on the site of the old church. In 1872 the present building was dedicated. It was remodeled in 1925. It is a one story brick building with steeple, bell, and gallery. First settled clergyman, Rev. Joseph Everett, 1791-1803. Minutes, 1900--, 1 vol.; Sunday School, 1900--, 1 vol.; in possession of secretary, Harvey Jones. Register, 1845--, 4 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. James W. Colona. Ladie's Aid Society, 1929--, 1 vol.; in possession of president, Mrs. H. Sherwood. Records of incorporation and deeds: Kent Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. F2, pp. 134 and 187; vol. V2, p 126; vol. X2, p. 131; vol. B3, p. 138; vol. F4, p. 279; vol. T4, pp. 276 and 272; vol. D5, p. 119; vol. F6, p.198; vol. G7, pp. 255 and 257; vol. S10, pp. 316 and 319; vol. V10, p.105; vol. W11, p. 183; vol. C12, p. 58; vol. B14, p. 64.

217. SALEM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1787--, Christiana and Coochs Bridge Rd., Christiana.

Organized 1787. Services were held in members' homes until 1807, when church was incorporated and present building dedicated. Remodeled 1849 and 1884. It is a two story brick structure. First settled clergyman, unknown.

Minutes, 1787-1925, 2 vols.; 1934--, 1 vol.; Register, 1787-1925, 3 vols.; 1934--, 1 vol.; Financial, 1757-1925, 3 vols.; 1934--, 1 vol.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Richard M. Green. Sunday School, 1934--, 1 vol.; in possession of Helen Johnson, Newark. Record of incorporation : New Castle Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. F3, p. 50.

218. LEWES METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1788--, 4th and Chestnut Sts., Lewes.

Methodist services were held in this locality as early as 1774, the meetings being held in private homes. Congregation was incorporated March 31, 1788 and a small frame church was erected on Shankland's Lane. This was called Ebenezer Church. In 1791 the present organization built a frame church at 3rd and Church Ln., and called it Bethel Church. For a number of years services were alternately held in the two churches until Ebenezer became defunct and the congregation joined with Bethel. In 1828 the church was moved to a site two and a half blocks east of the present church and rebuilt. This was used until 1872 when a new frame building was erected. Present building dedicated 1910. A one story gray stone structure with belfry and bell. Gothic style. First settled clergyman, Rev. Thomas J. Prettyman, 1880-82.

DELAWARE CHURCH ARCHIVES

erected, about 50 yards north of present building, in 1765. Second church, built 1838, was opposite present site on Maryland side. Present church was incorporated December 31, 1853 and building dedicated in 1874. It was improved in 1915 and again in 1937. It is a one story frame structure. First settled clergyman, Rev. Zech M. Webster, 1887-90; educated at Wesley College Institute, Dover.

Minutes, 1874--. 2 vols.; Register, 1874--, 2 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Arthur G. Thomas. Sunday School, 1935--, vols.; in possession of Mrs. Arthur G. Thomas. Records of incorporation and deeds: Sussex Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. BN86, p. 212; vol. BZ99, p. 504; vol. BBO114, p. 43; vol. DIO289, p. 38.

216. ASBURY METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1786--, Mt. Vernon St., Smyrna

Organized 1786. Incorporated March 4, 1799. First Building, a frame structure on present site, erected in 1786. In 1843 a brick church was erected on the site of the old church. In 1872 the present building was dedicated. It was remodeled in 1925. It is a one story brick building with steeple, bell, and gallery. First settled clergyman, Rev. Joseph Everett, 1791 - 1803.

Minutes, 1900--, 1 vol.; Sunday School, 1900--, vol.; in possession of secretary, Harvet Jones. Register, 1845--, 4 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. James W. Colona. Ladies' Aid Society, 1929--, 1 vol.; in possession of president, Mrs. H. Sherwood. Records of incorporation and deeds; Kent Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. P2, pp.154 and 187; vol. W2, p. 126; vol.X2, p.131; vol.E3, p. 136; vol.F4, p. 279; vol. T4, pp. 276 and 279; vol. D5, p. 119; vol. F6, p. 196; vol.G7, pp. 255 and 257; vol. S10, pp. 316 and 319; vol. V10, p.105; vol. W11, p.183; vol. C12, p.58; vol. B14, p.64.

217. SALEM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1787--, Christiana and Coochs Bridge Rd., Christiana.

Organized 1787. Services were held in members' homes until 1807, when church was incorporated and present building dedicated. Remodeled 1848 and 1894. It is a two story brick structure. First settled clergyman, unknown.

Minutes, 1767-1925, 2 vols.; 1934--, 1 vol.; Register, 1787-1925, 3 vols.; 1934--, 1 vol.; Financial, 1787-1925, 3 vols.; 1934--, 1 vol.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Richard M. Green. Sunday School, 1934--, 1 vol.; in possession of Helen Johnson, Newark. Record of incorporation: new Castle Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record: vol. F3,50.

218. LEWES METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1788--, 4th and Chestnut Sts., Lewes.

Methodist services were held in this locality as early as 1774, the meetings being held in private homes. Congregation was incorporated March 31, 1788 and a small frame church was erected on Shankland's Lane. This was called Ebenezer Church. In 1791 the present organization built a frame church at 3rd and Church Sts., and called it Bethel Church. For a number of years services were alternately held in the two churches until Ebenezer became defunct and the congregation joined with Bethel. In 1828 the church was moved to a site two and a half blocks east of the present church and rebuilt. This was used until 1872 when a new frame building was erected. Present building dedicated 1910. A one story gray stone structure with belfry and bell. Gothic style. First settled clergyman, Rev. Thomas J. Trettyman, 1880-82.

(Pg. 1102 - Schurt)

The name of Carlton L. Smith has been added to the Memorial Plaque in the Narthex.

The FLOWERS on the ALTAR are presented to the glory of Almighty God by the Harvey C. Jones Memorial Bible Class in respectful memory of Harvey C. Jones, who formed the class and Edna Russell, who led the class for many years following his sudden death in 1945.

ACOLYTES - MORNING SERVICE: Michael Jenner and Josh Poore
GREETERS - MORNING SERVICE: Roxanne Haley and Nell Reed
GREETERS - AFTERNOON SERVICE: Michael Jenner and Justin Willis

ALTAR GUILD: Betty Campbell and Marie Reed

MINISTRY: Please call the office if you know of a member or friend of Asbury who is ill, in the hospital, needs a visit, or has other needs.

Cribbery & Nursery Available
(Infant to 2 years & 3 years through 1st grade)

Pastor: K. Wayne Grier
Music Director: Elliot Jones
Organist: Elizabeth Goodman
Bell Choir & Carol Choir Director: Marie Reynolds
Cherub Choir Director: Jane Stewart
Church Secretary: Sandy Donovan
Office Volunteers: Ruth Downes & Audrey Green

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Monday through Thursday
Open: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Closed: 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Friday - Closed All Day

CHURCH MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 330
Mail is NOT delivered to the street address.

LARGE PRINT BIBLES AND HYMNALS
ARE AVAILABLE IN THE NARTHEX

The Unveiling of an Historical Marker at the Site of Old Asbury Church

Immediately Following the Conclusion
of the 2:00 Service
Homecoming Day, October 20, 1996
Asbury United Methodist Church
Smyrna, Delaware

Introductions by Samuel V. Mace
Chair of the Asbury Board of Trustees
Chair of the Cemetery Committee

Invocation The Rev. K. Wayne Grier
Pastor of Asbury United Methodist Church

Speakers:

Bruce C. Ennis State Representative
James T. Vaughn, Sr. State Senator
Robert Newnam Mayor of Smyrna
George L. Caley Historian
C. Russell McCabe
Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs with the State
of Delaware

Unveiling of the Marker

Benediction The Rev. K. Wayne Grier

****ASBURY ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK****

TODAY - 10/20

6:30 to
8:30 p.m. U.M.Y.F. MEETING - Large Sunday School Room in
the lower level of the Education Wing

MONDAY - 10/21

8:00 p.m. NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEETING - H.C. Jones Room

TUESDAY - 10/22

6:30 p.m. BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL - Bell Room
7:30 p.m. BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING - H.C. Jones Room

WEDNESDAY - 10/23

2:30 p.m. BULLETIN DEADLINE
7:30 p.m. MARY-MARTHA CIRCLE MEETING - At Vicki Marquez's
home, 531 Marilyn Rd., Smyrna - For directions or
information please call 653-7004.

THURSDAY - 10/24

9:30 a.m. PRINTED PRAYER LIST DEADLINE
7:00 p.m. CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL - Sanctuary

SATURDAY - 10/26

1 to 4 p.m. U.M.Y.F. ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY: Meet in church parking
lot at 1:00 p.m. Wear old clothes and bring
gloves. Need two adult volunteers for assistance.
Please call Emily Boulden, 653-8489.

SUNDAY - 10/27

8:30 a.m. WORSHIP SERVICE - Chapel
9:00 a.m. CAROL CHOIR REHEARSAL - Fellowship Hall
9:25 a.m. CHERUB CHOIR REHEARSAL - Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. SUNDAY SCHOOL - 2 year olds through adults
11:00 a.m. WORSHIP SERVICE - Sanctuary
12:30 p.m. YOUTH CHOIR REHEARSAL - Sanctuary
For students in grades 7 - 12.
6 to 8 p.m. CHURCH-WIDE HALLOWEEN PARTY - Fellowship Hall

**** COMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS ****

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE MEETING: 10/29 - 7:30 p.m. - Matthews Room

CANCELED - FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING - 10/30: The meeting
scheduled for 10/30 has been canceled.

HARVEYS CLASS MEETING: 10/31 - 11:30 a.m. - Wayside Inn

PRAYER LIST - OCTOBER 20, 1996

Additions and changes are in bold print and underlined.

SYMPATHY: The family of Charles Burris.

HOSPITALS:

CHRISTIANA: David Johnson & Nicholas Wagner
MILFORD: **Anna Garber**
SEAFORD REHAB.: Mable Evans
IN MASS.: Dorothy Friend
IN WEST VIR.: Olive Barlow

AT HOME: Barbara Bailey, Carlton Blendt, **Harry Blendt,**
Brenda Cole, Estelle Cox, Cheryl Dailey, Ethel Davis, Dick
Ennis, Audrey Fletcher, **Barbara Freabert,** Audrey Green,
Virginia Hoffecker, Mabel & Parker Hudson, Andy Muelenaer,
Richard Nelson, Wallace Powell, Charles Rebar, **John**
Shetzler, Mabel Staats, Dick Vaughn, Diane Walsh,
George Wicks III, Ray & Viola Wisman & Brenda Wright

AT HOME IN DELAWARE:

CLAYTON: Fred Burke, Florence Dulin, Anna Schwalb &
Howard Virdin
DOVER: Ryan Horsey & R.C. Tritt
MIDDLETOWN: Janet & Azal Mohammed (For a healthy baby)
NEWARK: Jack Griffin & Debbie Pullan
WILMINGTON: Denise Lilley
WYOMING: Jimmy Staats

AT HOME IN OTHER STATES:

MD.: Rev. Charles Barton, Cliff Brittingham, Dorothy
Brittingham, Raymond Edwards, Robert Hill &
Doug Yeatman
NY.: Helen Wong (Lung cancer)
PA.: Stimson Carrow, Jesse Miller & Everett Priestley &
family
SC.: Ruth Wilder

John Burris: Macgee Rehabilitation Center, 6 Franklin Plaza,
Philadelphia, PA 19102-1177 Room 552B

OTHER REQUESTS: For God's intervention in the Middle East.
Family dealing with a very difficult situation. Family
dealing with health problems. Individual dealing with
depression.



YOU ARE NEVER TOO OLD OR TOO YOUNG TO COME AND JOIN IN THE FUN!



THERE WILL BE GAMES, PRIZES AND LIGHT REFRESHMENTS. SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AND FUN FOR ALL!

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME!






**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1996
6:00 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M.**



**ANNUAL CHURCH-WIDE
HALLOWEEN PARTY**

YOU ARE INVITED TO ASBURY'S ANNUAL HALLOWEEN PARTY!
PLEASE JOIN US IN FELLOWSHIP HALL.

  U.M.Y.F. 
HALLOWEEN PARTY & HAYRIDE

**FOR YOUTH
12 - 18 YEARS OF AGE**



NOVEMBER 2ND
5 TO 10 P.M.



AT THE SNOW'S FARM

The U.M.Y.F. invites youth (12 - 18 years old) to a Halloween Party on 11/2 from 5 to 10 p.m. at the Snow Farm, 496 Whitehall Neck Rd., Smyrna. **ACTIVITIES INCLUDE: COSTUME CONTEST, HAYRIDE, BONFIRE, GAMES & FUN!!** **ADULT VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO HELP. PLEASE CALL** Craig Marker (home: 653-0662 or work: 731-9668) or Emily Boulden (653-8489) **BY 10/28** if you can come, for more information or to volunteer to help.

LOCAL MISSION PROJECT

.... I was in prison and you came to me.
Matthew 25:36



The Chaplains' Office at D.C.C. in Smyrna has been depleted of donated "necessities," i.e. personal care products for men without funds. Asbury's Missions and Outreach Committee and Mt. Vernon Fellowship Class are sponsoring a project to help replenish the needed items. Anyone wishing to donate shampoo, bath soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes or shaving cream may bring them to the church during regular office hours or may give them to any member of the Missions and Outreach Committee or the Mt. Vernon Fellowship Class.

If you prefer to make a monetary donation, please make your check payable to Mt. Vernon Fellowship and mail to the church office (P.O. Box 330).
DONATIONS SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO CHURCH BY 11/17.

MISSION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Carolyn Akin, Doris Botsch, Eleanor Davis, Linda Garber, Nancy Liehr, Hazel Voelker and Tom Voelker

CHURCH CHRISTMAS CARD

At a meeting of the Missions and Outreach Committee, it was decided to have a special project to raise funds to purchase beds and mattresses for needy families in Delaware. Mt. Vernon Fellowship Class agreed to be co-sponsor of this worthwhile project.

We are compiling a Church Christmas Card. Instead of sending cards to fellow church members and constituents, for \$5 per 1/4 page, \$10 per 1/2 page, and \$20 per full page, a personal Christmas message of your choice can be printed in the church card. A copy will be mailed to each member and constituent on the church mailing list.

CARD ORDER DEADLINE - DECEMBER 1, 1996

_____	1/4 page (2 X 5 1/2)	@ \$ 5.00	_____
_____	1/2 page (4 1/4 X 5 1/2)	@ \$10.00	_____
_____	Whole page (8 1/2 X 5 1/2)	@ \$20.00	_____

TOTAL ORDER _____

GREETING: *Note: Greeting must fit within the dimensions of the page size you order.

ORDERED BY: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

The completed form with your payment (checks payable to Mt. Vernon Fellowship) may be sent to the church office or given to any of the following committee members: Carolyn Akin, Doris Botsch, Eleanor Davis, Linda Garber, Nancy Liehr, Hazel Voelker or Tom Voelker.

Note: Single & double sheets, pillowcases & blankets are also needed and can be left at the church.

The rectory was built in 1884 on land donated by Mrs. Susan H. Fisler, on June 9, 1883. In 1885, the church was greatly improved.

The chancel window was a gift of the Rev. A. G. Cummins. A new organ was also installed. In 1890-91, a silver communion service was presented as a memorial. During the years 1896-98, six memorial windows and a brass altar cross were unveiled. Major improvements were made in 1902 including a cloister connecting the chapel and the church.

The restored church was reopened on Thurs., Apr. 3, 1902, by Bishop Leighton Coleman. The Bishop conducted a service of benediction at which time he blessed the new altar. Assisting in the services were Archdeacon George C. Hall and the Revs. C. Dexter Weeden, M. L. Poffenberger, W. J. Wilkie, W. J. Hamilton, W. H. Groff and G. Valerie Gilreath, the rector.

On May 12, 1907, Bishop Coleman blessed a peal of four bells in memory of the Rev. Alex. G. Cummins which had been presented by Morris L. Clothier of Philadelphia. In 1908, a pulpit, in memory of Bishop Coleman was installed. On Dec. 8, 1912, Bishop Frederick J. Kinsman dedicated a new organ. The church was redecorated in 1924-25.

The Presbyterian Church at Smyrna. At the southern edge of Smyrna, close to the Municipal Bathing Beach is an old cemetery on what is known as "Holy Hill." This was the site of the Duck Creek Presbyterian Church, presumably built in 1733.

On Feb. 11, 1748, Thomas James, for five shillings, donated to Jacob Allec, Wm. Cahoon and Wm. White, trustees, 42 perches of land on Holy Hill for the use of the Presbyterians. There is no mention in the deed of a church having been built.

Upon the death of the Rev. John Miller, in 1791, the congregation dwindled and it was 1818 before the church was repaired and interest rekindled. In 1846, a church building on Mt. Vernon Street, was purchased from the Methodist Protestants. The old church on Holy Hill was abandoned although the graveyard is still well maintained. The oldest tombstone that the writer could find is over the grave of Jacob Peterson who died on Nov. 11, 1782. Former Governor John Clark, who died on Aug. 14, 1821, is buried here under a flat slab. A new church bell was first used on July 28, 1854.

The present site on Commerce St. was purchased on Feb. 22, 1883, from Geo. C. Simpson and J. S. Huffington. The corner-stone of the present church was laid on Tues., June 26, 1883. It was dedicated on Apr. 6, 1884, by Dr. Mutchmore, the Rev. C. Collins and the Rev. J. T. Umstead, the pastor. A new "Delaware State" organ, manufactured in Wilmington, was used for the first time. The pastor offered a dedicatory prayer previous to the sermon by Dr. Mutchmore. There were many gifts including one from the Ladies' Mite Society and from one of the boys' Sunday School classes.

Built of serpentine stone, so popular at that time, it is one of Smyrna's land-marks. On Mar. 1, 1896, a lot of land was purchased upon which the present manse was built in 1897.

St. Polycarp's R. C. Church at Smyrna. About 1863, the Roman Catholics of Smyrna began holding meetings in private homes under the leadership of Father Dailey of New Castle. At that time there were about six families attending the meetings.

On Wed., Oct. 21, 1868, Father Dailey organized a Sunday School in Odd Fellow's Hall. On Oct. 31, 1868, a lot between Railroad Ave. and Methodist St., was purchased for \$400.00. An effort to purchase the Presbyterian

Church was unsuccessful. Later, a hall in Spruance City was secured, fitted up as a chapel and meetings were held once a month. In 1881, the Odd Fellow's Hall was secured for the services. In 1883, Bishop Thomas A. Becker purchased the old Presbyterian frame church, during the rectorship of Father George S. Bradford, who was also rector of Holy Cross Church at Dover. The dedication service was held on Sun., June 10, 1883. The service was conducted by Bishop Becker assisted by Father Bradford. High Mass was celebrated by the Rev. B. J. Keiley. A concert was given in the evening by St. Peter's choir of Wilmington. The church was named "St. Polycarp's" in honor of a bishop of Smyrna, Asia, who was martyred in the second century. The stations of the cross were erected and blessed on Wed., Mar. 1, 1893, by the Rev. E. J. Mealey.

Until 1911, the rector of Holy Cross Church came to Smyrna twice a month and offered Mass. Then, the burden became too great for the Dover priest so one of the Salesian Fathers of Wilmington came by train and held services twice a month. When this arrangement weakened, arrangements were made for a priest from St. Joseph's Industrial School at Clayton to offer Mass on the first and third Sundays of the month.

Early in 1918, Bishop John J. Monaghan decided to sell St. Polycarp's Church to the Centennial M. E. Church, colored, and to build a new church at Clayton. A site was purchased but owing to war-time conditions the erection of a church was postponed. Bishop Monaghan decreed that St. Joseph's Chapel at the Industrial School should become the Parish Church.

Smyrna M. P. Church. A church site at the cor. of East and Methodist Sts. was purchased on Mar. 18, 1845, from Samuel M. Fisler and a substantial frame church was built. The church became defunct and was sold to the Presbyterians in 1846. This church has had one of the most varied existences of any church in Delaware. It has been consecrated to the service of the Methodist Protestants, the Presbyterians, the Roman Catholics and the Methodist Episcopalians.

A second congregation of Methodist Protestants was organized in 1923. They were incorporated on July 3, 1923. During that month a church site at Frazier and Union Sts. was purchased from Rowland Ford. A frame church was then built. They struggled along with a heavy debt until 1930 after which the building was sold. Later, members of the Pilgrim Holiness Church held a revival here but there were not enough converts to organize a church.

Asbury Methodist Church (M.E.) at Smyrna. In 1780, the Rev. Francis Asbury preached in an orchard between Duck Creek Crossroads and Duck Creek Village. The first Methodist services in Smyrna were held in the home of James L. Stevenson by the Rev. Philip Cox. In 1786, a frame church was built. The land was donated by Allen McLane. It was located on Church St., north of Mt. Vernon St., and was named "Asbury M. E. Church."

Francis Asbury preached here on Nov. 29, 1789, on Sept. 13, 1790, and on May 25, 1801. He attended Conference here on Sept. 11, 1792, and again on Oct. 10, 1797, when yellow fever was raging in Philadelphia and the Conference was transferred to Duck Creek. The church was enlarged in 1819 and in 1823, Benjamin Coombs deeded more land for cemetery purposes.

On June 24, 1843, the congregation purchased from Samuel M. Fisler, for \$300.00, 62 perches of land on the n. w. side of Methodist St., now Mt. Vernon St. The erection of a brick church was started. The corner-stone was laid on May 28, 1844. This building was used until 1869. On Dec. 11, 1869, the

In 1830 a lot on Delaware Street was purchased of Isaac Davis, and a parsonage erected. In 1843 the lot on which the present church stands, on Mt. Vernon Street, was bought of Dr. Fisler. The erection of a brick church was commenced, and the corner-stone laid May 24, 1844. This remained until 1871, when it was torn down, and on August 14th of that year work was commenced on the present edifice. The corner-stone was re-laid on October 7, 1871, and the church dedicated November 24, 1872, by Bishop Foster. The new building is a brick structure, sixty by eighty feet, forty-five feet high, with two slated towers,—one, one hundred and thirty-five feet, and the other fifty-five feet high. The auditorium is forty-five by sixty-two feet, and has eighty pews, which, with the gallery, will seat seven hundred and fifty persons. The cost of the improvement was \$22,000. The building committee was William Worden, J. H. Bewley and John H. Hoffecker, who, with James R. Clements, Joseph Smithers, John B. Cooper and William H. Baggs, composed the board of trustees for that year. In 1860 the church purchased five acres of land for cemetery purposes. It was commonly called the "Budd Lot," and lies between Smyrna and Duck Creek.

In 1845 Smyrna was formed into a separate station and assigned a pastor of its own. A dispute arose as to whether the parsonage belonged to the circuit or the Asbury Church. As a result, it was sold, and is now in possession of Mrs. Mary E. Boyd. The lot on which the present parsonage stands was purchased of James R. Clements. The building was erected at a cost of \$6500. The church is now in an excellent condition, and has a membership of six hundred.

The Sunday-school, started in 1827, has now fifty-two teachers and officers and four hundred and three scholars under the superintendence of John H. Hoffecker. The school has access to a large and carefully selected library. The present trustees are John H. Hoffecker, Joseph Smithers, Robert D. Hoffecker, William Faries, Alfred D. Hudson, Samuel Roberts, J. W. Denney, W. W. Tschudy and J. B. Cooper.

The following ministers have been stationed as presiding elders over the several circuits with which Asbury Church has been connected:

Rev. Joseph Everett.....1791	Rev. Dan'l. Lambdin.....1841-44
" Wm. P. Chandler.....1804-07	" Henry White.....1844-45
" Solomon Sharp.....1808	" John T. Hazard.....1846-50
" Richard Sneath.....1809	" T. J. Quigly.....1850-54
" James Smith.....1810-14	" Wm. McCombs.....1854-58
" Henry Boehm.....1815-19	" Thos. C. Murphey.....1858-61
" Wm. Bishop.....1819-23	" T. J. Quigly.....1861-65
" Thos. Ware.....1823-25	" T. J. Thompson.....1865-73
" Jacob Moore.....1825-27	" John Hough.....1873-76
" Lawrence Laurenson.....1827-28	" Charles Hill.....1876
" Lawrence McCombs.....1828-33	" Thomas E. Martindale.....1876
" Matthew Sorin.....1833-36	" J. H. Caldwell.....1884-85
" David Daily.....1836-40	" John France.....1885
" Henry White.....1840-41	

The following is a list of the pastors who have been stationed here since Asbury Church became a separate charge:

Rev. Joseph Mason.....1845-47
" James M. McCarter.....1847-49
" Jno. A. Roche.....1849-51
" H. E. Gilroy.....1851-53
" T. C. Murphey.....1853-55
" Wm. C. Robinson.....1855-57
" Charles Hill.....1857-59
" Wm. H. Brisbane.....1859-61
" Wm. Bishop.....1861-63
" Charles Cooke, D.D.....1863-68

Rev. Samuel L. Gracey.....1866-69
" A. Rittenhouse.....1869-71
" J. F. Clymer.....1871-73
" G. A. Phoebe, D.D.....1873-75
" Enoch Stubbs.....1875-78
" T. H. Haynes.....1878-81
" J. D. Rigg.....1881-84
" J. B. Quigg.....1884-87
" W. S. Robinson, the present pastor.....1887

The following are the Smyrna circuit preachers:

David Abbott.....1782	James Nicols.....1832
Benj. Abbott.....1782	Sol. Sharp.....1833
Thomas Ware.....1783	S. Anderson.....1833
Ira Ellis.....1786	Sol. Sharp.....1834
Thomas Foster.....1791	Benj. Benson.....1834
Evau Rogers.....1791	Eliphalet Reed.....1835
William Hunter.....1803	Zachary Gascoll.....1835
Jesse Justice.....1803	Eliphalet Reed.....1836
Thomas Walker.....1803	Wm. Allen.....1836
Thomas Everard.....1804	Wm. Allen.....1837
Thos. Stratton.....1804	Vincent Shepherd.....1837
Wm. Herron.....1805	Joshua Humphreys.....1838
Col Jeh Morris.....1805	Jos. Mann.....1838
Richard Lyon.....1806	Joshua Humphreys.....1839
Wm. B. Lacey.....1806	Wm. C. Thomas.....1839
James Ridgeway.....1807	James B. Ayres.....1840
Sylvester Hill.....1807	Wm. C. Thomas.....1840
Thos. Walker.....1808	James B. Ayres.....1841
Geo. Harman.....1808	James L. Houston.....1841
Thos. Neal.....1809	James L. Houston.....1842
John Wilson.....1809	Henry Sutton.....1842
Sylvester Hill.....1810	John Lednum.....1843
William Williams.....1810	Henry Sutton.....1843
Thos. Smith.....1811	John Lednum.....1844
Sam'l. Griffith.....1811	John Bell.....1844
Geo. Sheets.....1812	Robert H. Ray.....1844
Wm. Ridgeway.....1812	Wm. H. Folke.....1845
Thos. Davis.....1812	John Bayne.....1845
Jno. Walker.....1813	James E. Meredith.....1845
William Ryder.....1813	E. R. Williams.....1846
Wm. Ryder.....1814	J. Mann.....1846
David Daily.....1814	Thos. Sumpton.....1847
Solomon Higgins.....1814	John Cummins.....1847
Lawrence McComb.....1815	Thos. Sumpton.....1848
Jno. Collins.....1815	David A. Price.....1848
Lawrence McComb.....1816	Wm. L. Grey.....1849
Sam'l. P. Levis.....1816	Jos. Horner.....1849
Thos. Miller.....1817	Thos. Newman.....1850
Edwd. Stout.....1817	Wm. Russell.....1850
James Moore.....1818	Thos. Newman.....1851
Edwd. Stout.....1818	Jos. Gregg.....1851
Wm. Williams.....1819	George W. Lybrand.....1852
Sam'l. Grace.....1819	Wm. M. Warner.....1853
Wm. Williams.....1820	George W. Lybrand.....1852
Wm. Torbert.....1820	H. T. Johns.....1853
Wm. Ryder.....1821-22	Daniel Lunden.....1854
Jos. Osborne.....1821-22	Jos. Magee.....1854
Samuel Grace.....1823	S. M. Cooper.....1855
Joseph Hobbick.....1823	Jos. Gregg.....1855
James Smith.....1824	T. W. McClary.....1856
Edward Stevenson.....1824	S. M. Cooper.....1856
James Smith.....1825	S. T. Gardiner.....1856
Walter B. Jones.....1825	S. W. Thomas.....1857
Sol. Higgins.....1826	W. F. Torbert.....1857
James Long.....1826	S. W. Thomas.....1858
John Smith.....1827	W. W. Redman.....1858
Joseph Hill.....1827	T. J. Quigly.....1859
John Smith.....1828	J. T. Van Burkulow.....1859
Jesse Thompson.....1828	T. J. Quigly.....1860
Sol. Sharp.....1829	W. O'Neil.....1860
Henry G. King.....1829	J. B. Ayers.....1861
Sol. Sharp.....1830	Jos. D. Ayers.....1861
Wm. Conley.....1830	J. B. Ayers.....1862
Richard M. Greenbank.....1831	Wm. Matthias.....1862
Bronwell Andrews.....1831	J. F. Boone.....1863
Richard M. Greenbank.....1832	Thos. E. Bell.....1863

church was seriously damaged by fire. "The services of a little fire-engine, belonging to the town, proved invaluable on this occasion as the fire could not be reached by water thrown from buckets." Both the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians offered the use of their churches for worship. The Methodists met in the Presbyterian Church while a new brick church was being erected.

The corner-stone of a new church was relaid on Oct. 7, 1871. It was opened with a service on Feb. 4, 1872, conducted by the Revs. R. L. Dashiell and A. Rittenhouse. It was dedicated on Nov. 24, 1872, by Bishop Foster. During the 1870's the Methodists could be baptized by immersion if they so desired. On Mon., Sept. 10, 1877, a class was baptized in the Hoffecker mill-pond, south of Smyrna.

In 1889, major improvements were made including an organ gallery, library room, new pipe organ, rolled cathedral glass windows, altar enlarged, new carpet and hard oil finish on the woodwork. On Apr. 27, 1890, the church was reopened, with the Rev. George E. Reed, President of Dickinson College preaching both morning and evening sermons. In 1934, further improvements were made.

The Willard Wright Memorial organ and the Deagan chimes were dedicated on Sun., Mar. 16, 1947, by Bishop Chas. W. Flint and the Rev. R. E. Green, the pastor. The organ was a bequest from Willard Wright and the chimes were a gift from Dr. and Mrs. C. J. Prickett in memory of the Revs. R. K. Stephenson and J. W. Colona, former pastors. The old graveyard, on Church St., is still used for interments.

The first Methodist camp-meeting in Kent County was held in a grove three miles below Smyrna, on the road to Dover, in 1805.

Jerman's M. E. Chapel at Smyrna. In the 1880's, one of the problems of sincere religious workers was to induce the less prosperous members of a community to attend church. Perhaps it was pride but these persons seemed reluctant to attend church services because they could not afford to dress as well as their more prosperous neighbors. In an effort to reach these persons in Smyrna, in 1880, Joshua T. Jerman purchased an old store building on Commerce St., the site of which is now included in the right-of-way of the Du Pont Highway. Mr. Jerman had the building converted into a chapel, named it "Mission Chapel" and a Sunday School was conducted by Mrs. Jerman, a member of Asbury M. E. Church.

On May 1, 1891, the trustees of Asbury Church purchased a lot in Spruance City and the chapel was moved to the new site, rebuilt, and named "Jerman's Chapel." In 1902, under the will of Mr. Jerman, the building was placed in the hands of three trustees together with a trust fund of \$890.00 for the maintenance of the building with the provision that the chapel be used for Methodist meetings only. A short time later, the trustees, under the will, turned the chapel and trust fund over to the trustees of Asbury Church. Sunday School has always been held, first under the leadership of Mrs. Jerman and then by members of Asbury Church. For a few years it was a preaching station on the Smyrna Circuit. In 1914, during the pastorate of the Rev. Milton McCann, the chapel was entirely rebuilt.

It was dedicated on May 16, 1915, by the Rev. Warren Brown assisted by the Rev. Milton McCann, the pastor. The altar had been built entirely by Mr. McCann. The Methodists ceased to hold meetings here in 1936.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church at Smyrna. This congregation secured the use of Jerman's Chapel and started to hold meetings in 1936.



TRINITY P. E. CHURCH, CLAYTON
(Page 200)



ST. JOSEPH'S R. C. CHURCH, CLAYTON
(Page 201)

OPINION

Benefit state workers and all citizens

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submit the proposed changes to the Labor-Management Committee, which must approve the revisions before they can be adopted. The Labor-Management Committee consists of 20 members with 10 representing the union employees and 10 representing the state. While the unions select the labor members, the state selects members from agency management leaving no representation from the state's non-union labor force.

Representative Dave Ennis and I have requested a meeting with Governor Carper to discuss the feasibility of addressing this oversight in the merit revision process. Our Committee continues to solicit input from state employees both union and non-union in order to adequately revise these merit rules. Comments from any state employee may be oral or in written form and forwarded to Margaret Moore, Office of the Speaker of

the House of Representatives, Legislative Hall, Dover, Delaware 19903, phone 302-739-4267.

Representative Dave Ennis and I formed an informal task force to review a number of personnel issues that came to the Speaker's attention during the first session of the 138th General Assembly. Last January, we introduced House Concurrent Resolution No. 37 which created a 13 member Legislative Committee on Personnel Practices which formalized the previous task force.

Delaware taxpayers deserve efficiency, productivity, and responsiveness from state government offices. This can only be accomplished through a nurtured workforce that is fairly administered. I feel the recommendations to be submitted in our committee's January final report if implemented, will assist greatly in reaching that goal.

Historic marker ceremony at Old Asbury

The public is most cordially invited to attend the unveiling ceremony of a State of Delaware Historic Marker at the site of Old Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery on North Delaware Street

in Smyrna.

The event will take place on Sunday, October 20 at 3:15 p.m., following homecoming services at Asbury United Methodist Church. In case of rain, the ceremony will be held in the

sanctuary of Asbury after the 2 p.m. song fest.

Mr. C. Russell McCabe of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs is in charge of the Historic Markers Program.

Old Asbury Church marker unveiled



The historical marker on the site of Old Asbury Methodist Church on Delaware Street in Smyrna was unveiled October 20 after the homecoming services at Ashbury. Pictured from left: Heather Arnold representing Delaware Public Archives, Smyrna Mayor Robert Newman, Rep. Bruce Ennis, George Caley, Samuel Mace, and Rev. Wayne Grier.