



SMYRNA

LITTLE HEAVEN





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440. MOUNT OLIVER METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH, 1847--, High St., Seaford.

Organized and incorporated February 13, 1847. Originally it was part of

### Kent County, Delaware (continued)

ed in the homes of Mr. Lewis and Mr. Sipple. Their first church was made of logs and stood near the old drawbridge over the St. Jones River. In 1780, Bishop Asbury encouraged them to build a better building. In that year Philip Barratt deeded to Reynear Williams, David Lewis, Waitman Sipple, Samuel Smith, Caleb Furbee, Jonathan Furbee, Andrew Purdin, William Virden, and Daniel James the land upon which the present building stands. The Chapel was at that time the cathedral of Methodism. It was dedicated August 17, 1780, taking its name from the Barratt's, who were so prominent in its building. It occupies a unique place in history due to two great events, first because it was here that Bishop Coke and Bishop Francis Asbury met; second because it was here, for the first time on American soil, the ordinances were first administered legally by an ordained Methodist minister.

**Bethbier Methodist Episcopal Church** was on with the Camden Circuit in 1857. Other than that we know nothing.

**Bethel Meeting-house, Methodist Episcopal Church, Little Creek Hundred** is still standing. It is the brick church to the west of the main highway just north of Cheswold. It was originally called Farrows Meeting-house. The name was taken from one of the prominent families that worshipped there. Other outstanding families that were a part of the organization were the Boggs', Smiths', Jeffersons', and Garrisons'. The church was erected in 1780 and rebuilt in 1853. Bishop Waugh dedicating it on August 6, 1854. It was at this time it changed its name to Bethel. When Cheswold church was built, the organization went to that church. The only services held in old Bethel are the anniversaries.

**Bethel Methodist Protestant Church** in Mispillion Hundred was one of the very earliest Methodist Protestant Churches in America, having been organized prior to 1830. At that time they had a church erected and were worshipping in it. In 1871 they rebuilt the church and are still using it.

**Bethesda Methodist Episcopal Church, West Dover Hundred**, was located a little north of the village of Canterbury. It was the former name of the Canterbury Methodist Episcopal Church. For fuller details see Canterbury.

**Bethesda Methodist Protestant Church, West Dover Hundred**, was built in 1864. The deed for the land was recorded on July 11, 1864. The church was rebuilt in 1888. Before they built the church, they used the Tappahanna Marsh School-house as their home. The ground was given to the church by Mrs. Anna J. Cox, and the first board of trustees consisted of William Virden, J. D. Voshell, P. D. Marvil, and William Slaughter.

**Blackiston Chapel, Methodist Episcopal Church, Kenton Hundred**, was the mother church of all that section. Methodist itinerants had been preaching there since 1774. The homes of Benjamin Hazel and Benjamin Blackiston were the preaching places. Robert Turner and Lewis Alfree organized the society in the home of Mr. Blackiston in 1778. The Chapel had been planned by Bishop Asbury and it was forty by sixty feet. It was the largest Methodist Church on the Peninsula for many years, exceeding that of Barratt's. Some large and powerful meetings were held in it, it being one of the popular places owned by the Methodists. After the other societies had been built, the trustees consisting of Benjamin Blackiston, Abraham Parsons, Luke Howard, Richard Lockwood, William Kirkley, James Hall, Thomas Wildes, James Stevenson, and Richard Shaw, had the grace to face the fact the church was too large, they rebuilt it in 1787, reducing its size. The congregation built another church in 1847. There are no services in the church now except such anniversaries as are held.

**Black Swamp Methodist Episcopal Church** was located on the road leading from Harlonville to Felton, and was built prior to eighteen hundred, the exact date being unknown. The Congregation, discovering they had been

Black Swamp Church was built early in the present century, and stood at "Whitaker's Gate" (now James G. Jester). It was abandoned and sold when Manship's Church was built farther down the road, about one-quarter of a mile east of Hollandsville. The building was dedicated December 2, 1855, and is of frame. It has sittings for four hundred persons. Rev. Andrew Manship preached the dedication sermon. It is supplied with ministers of the Felton circuit and the list will be found in the article upon South Murderkill Hundred.

*Prospect.*—Prospect Church is east of Vernon, and was built in 1834, at a cost of five hundred dollars, the ground having been donated by Isaac Graham. The present building was erected upon the site of the old chapel in 1877, and was dedicated by Bishop Scott. It is thirty by forty feet, and will seat three hundred persons.

*Masten's Methodist Episcopal Church.*—The church at Masten's Corners was built in 1873, and was named in honor of Joseph A. Masten, who donated the ground. It is thirty-six by twenty-four feet, and cost one thousand eight hundred dollars.

*Bethel Church.*—This church, situated three miles northeast of Marshy Hope Bridge, was built in 1830, and was one of the first of the Methodist Protestant Churches built in the country. Among the early members were Emory Graham, Dr. Luther Swiggett, Mary Swiggett, Samuel Anderson, Levi King, David Taylor and Elias Booth. Among the early ministers were Thomas Melvin and Richard N. Merriken. In 1871 the church was rebuilt of frame, and is thirty-two by forty feet. Since the erection of the Harrington church the ministers have been supplied from there.

*Farmington Presbyterian.*—This church was built about 1840, upon the land of W. H. Powell. In 1863 it was moved into Farmington, but has been out of use for some time. A select school was conducted in it for several years by Rev. J. M. Williams, formerly president of Wesleyan College, Wilmington.

*Vernon Baptist Church.*—Zion Church was first a congregation of Independent Methodists, and in December, 1870, Rev. D. B. Purinton began preaching, and finally baptized the congregation March 28, 1871. Rev. Richard H. Merriken was ordained to the Baptist ministry the same day, and became the pastor. A subscription was started for a church, which was dedicated November 19th of the same year. The members have mostly moved into Harrington, and services are held there.

*St. Paul's Episcopal Church.*—The last mention that is made of this church is in a report of 1836, where it is recommended that an effort be made to rebuild it. The old building has entirely disappeared. The original building was erected in 1765. The land was conveyed by John Read, October 31, 1765, to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and recites "all that small parcel of land containing two acres, whereon hath been

erected a house or building called St. Paul's Church, to the only proper use and behoof of the said Society for themselves, successors and assigns."

*SCHOOLS.*—Prior to the passage of the school law of 1829 private subscription schools were in operation in nearly all the Methodist Churches then built. In other places school-houses were built by private persons, and the teachers paid by subscription from the parents of the children.

*District 33.*—The school-house in this district was erected in 1834, the money being raised by subscription among the inhabitants. In 1886 there were thirty scholars in attendance.

*District 34.*—Before the passage of the school law, and down to 1834, a school was held in Hardesty's meeting-house, a short distance from where the present school building stands. In 1834 the present building was erected. Among those who had taught there are John Applegate, William Saulsbury, Waitman Jones, Hon. Eli Saulsbury, Thomas Saulsbury R. D. Cahall and Aleaid Dawson. In 1886 there were fifty-six scholars in attendance.

*District 35.*—Thomas Short, in 1838, gave the land for a school-house in this district, and the same year a building was erected. The early teachers were Sydenham Lewis, Rev. Richard N. Merriken, Stephen Kane, John R. T. Masten and Nathan B. Fleming. In 1886 there were forty scholars in attendance.

*District 36.*—The people of District 36 in 1831, two years after the passage of the school law, built the Prospect School-house; previous to this they had maintained a school in Vernon. It was rebuilt in 1877. Among the early teachers were Jefferson L. Rich and John O. Hornett. In 1886 there were fifty-three scholars.

*District 37.*—What is known as the Tomahawk School-house was built on the branch that bears that name in this district in 1832. James Booth gave the land to the district, and the money to erect the building was raised by subscription. A new building was erected in 1881. Among the early teachers were John Pepper, Jefferson Rich, Waitman Jones and John Jones. In 1886 there were fifty scholars.

*District 38.*—The inhabitants of this district had maintained a school for twenty years before the public school building was built, in 1831. It was burned down in 1864, and a new building erected the next year. Sydenham Lewis, Robert Fulton and John R. T. Masten were among the early instructors. Thirty-six pupils attended during the year 1886.

*Districts 39 and 124* compose the Farmington School District. The original school-house was a short distance out of the present town, and was erected in 1835. Jonathan Tharp and Sydenham Lewis, who taught in nearly all the districts, were among the early teachers. The building was moved into Farmington in 1880, and is a neat structure, with a graded school and two teachers, with an attendance, in 1886, of forty-two pupils.

31, 1888. A Sunday School room was added in 1895. The first service in the addition, was held on Fri., Jan. 10, 1896. A reopening service was held on Sun., Jan. 12, 1896.

This church was of frame construction and was burned on May 27, 1914, when a conflagration swept over part of the town. The Delaware Railroad donated \$2300.00 to the trustees to be used in building a new church. This is the present cement-block church and it was dedicated on May 16, 1915. Extensive improvements were made in 1940.

The Mispillion Presbyterian Church was built between 1825 and 1830, on the farm of Wm. Powell one mile north of Farmington. In 1866, it was moved into Farmington and located across the street from the present Methodist Church. During the year 1868-69, the Rev. James M. Williams conducted a school here at the instance of some of the local women who wanted their children to receive advanced education. Incidentally, Mr. Williams afterwards became the first principal of the Wilmington Conference Academy at Dover.

Church services were held occasionally but the congregation gave up the struggle in 1872. The building was sold and moved away to be used as a blacksmith shop. In 1880, with some of the old members as a nucleus, a new congregation was formed and a new church was built on another site. They were incorporated on Oct. 19, 1880. The church site was donated on May 12, 1894, by Annie P. Reynolds. Services were held for a number of years but the membership became so small that the church was closed. In April, 1924, the building was sold to the Brethren Church.

The Brethren Church at Farmington. This congregation was organized at Greenwood in 1918. In September of that year they purchased the local theatre from Kate Houseman. Their meetings were held in this theatre and they were incorporated on Nov. 23, 1919.

On Apr. 30, 1924, they purchased the Presbyterian Church at Farmington, at a Sheriff's sale. The building was remodeled and dedicated that year. They were incorporated on Oct. 13, 1940. More land was secured on Nov. 15, 1940.

A Seventh Day Adventist Church was organized at Farmington in 1939. The meetings were held in private homes. They merged, in 1944, with Whiteysburg Church to form the new church at Harrington.

Bethel Methodist Church (M.P.) located at Andrewsville was built in 1838. In 1871, a new church was built to the rear of the first church. It was dedicated on Sun., Jan. 7, 1872. Those taking part were the Revs. L. W. Bates, D. J. Murry and T. D. Valiant. The church was entirely remodeled in 1904. The rededication service was held on Jan. 8, 1905. There is a small burial plot to the side of the church, the tombstones dating back to 1854.

Todd's Methodist Church (M.E.) is located less than one mile east of Adamsville close to the Kent-Sussex line. The chapel grew out of meetings held in the home of Levin Todd about 1800. The church was built, in 1808, upon land donated by Olive Jump. Additional land was purchased on Jan. 21, 1858. In 1858, the present church was built of a very distinctive design. It was dedicated on May 30, 1858, by the Revs. W. Kenney and Andrew Man-ship. There is a graveyard. The oldest tombstone that the writer could find is that of Nicholas O. Smith who died on Mar. 9, 1861.

# Bethel Church Closed

Sunday 6-29-1997

(Delaware State News, Tuesday, May 2, 2000)

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## ANDREWSVILLE

**STATE TO DEDICATE HISTORICAL MARKER AT CHURCH** Members of the Andrewsville Historical Society are inviting the community to join them on Sunday when the Delaware Public Archives will dedicate the state's newest historical marker at Bethel Methodist Church in Andrewsville, west of Farmington.

Formally affiliated with the Methodist Protestant Church in 1838, the Bethel congregation was the first of that denomination in Kent County. The church was rebuilt in 1871, extensively remodeled in 1904 and rededicated in 1905.

The celebration is set to get under way at 2 p.m. Guest speakers will be Russ McCabe from the Delaware Public Archives and Debbie Veale. Special music will be provided by Maren Spence

and Lisa Jernigan.

Following the services and unveiling of the historical marker, the church will be open to the public.

For more information, contact Mr. McCabe at 738-5318.

Bethel Methodist Church (MP) located at Andrewville, Delaware is one of the very earliest Methodist Protestant Churches in America having been organized prior to 1830. In the year of 1838, a church was built and used until 1871 when a new church was built at the rear of the first church and dedicated on Sunday, January 7, 1872 by Rev. L. W. Bates, Rev. D. J. Murry and Rev. T. D. Valiant. This church was entirely remodeled in 1904 and new stained glass windows installed. The rededication service was held on January 8, 1905 by Rev. C. E. Dryden, pastor. There is a small grave yard at the side of the church. The oldest Tombstone found dates back to 1854.

Some of the early ministers were:

|               |      |                |      |               |      |
|---------------|------|----------------|------|---------------|------|
| W.W. Maddux   | 1838 | Samuel Clossan | 1870 | H. F. Johnson | 1891 |
| R. Alkinson   | 1851 | A.W. Dick      | 1870 | B. W. Kindley | 1892 |
| R.T. Boyd     | 1853 | W.H. Lem       | 1872 | T. H. Wright  | 1895 |
| W. T. Wright  | 1855 | J.H. Strangher | 1873 | Dorsey Blake  | 1897 |
| H.J. Day      | 1856 | A.D. Dick      | 1878 | A. S. Beave   | 1898 |
| B.W. Balis    | 1860 | J.L. Elderdice | 1879 | E.D. Stone    | 1901 |
| R.Wilmore     | 1860 | G.O. Baccbus   | 1882 | C.M. Cullum   | 1902 |
| J.Elderdice   | 1861 | C.S. Arnett    | 1883 | S. F. Cassen  | 1903 |
| A.S. Eversole | 1865 | J.M. Elderdice | 1888 | C.E. Dryden   | 1903 |
|               |      | C.B. Gruber    | 1889 |               |      |

In 1904 the Ladies Aid Society was organized with the assistance of the pastor, Rev. C. E. Dryden, Bethel Church acquired land from George R. and Laura Barwick for the sum of one hundred and twenty five (125.00) on april 20, 1908 and recorded in Dover, Delaware in record book P Volume 9 page 193 on June 30, 1908.

Due to the efforts of the Sunday School, The Ladies Aid Society (W.S.C.S.) and many individual donations the following improvements were made. In 1918 the interior of the church was painted and in 1921 the exterior was painted and a new communion set bought. In 1925 the walls were newly papered and a new carpet bought. The Pulpit chairs were reupholstered in 1926, in 1933 a piano was purchased for the church and in 1937-38 paper was removed from walls and walls painted and redecorated. The exterior of the church was also painted. In September, 1938 the 100th Anniversary was held with Rev. J.J. VonHagel the pastor. In 1941 new concrete steps replaced a wooden structure. The church was wired for electricity in 1944 and a new roof put on in 1946. In 1947 a new desk light, also a concrete



wall around the cemetery was donated. In 1948 a bronze memorial plaque was given in memory of John M. Butler who made the Supreme Sacrifice and in honor of other's from Bethel Community who served their country during World War II.

The interior of the church was also painted and a new carpet bought in 1948. The chairs were reupholstered, two new flags donated and new oil heaters installed. In 1952 the church was painted again both interior and exterior and the stained glass windows repaired. Two Palm's were donated in 1954 and in 1956 a new bulletin board was purchased. In 1957 the church was painted again both inside and outside. In 1958 the walls were repainted and a ventilating system installed. New velvet dossal drape in pulpit and altar pad donated, Hymnal racks and new Hymnals and two folding tables were purchased in 1959. A new Hammond Electric Organ was installed and choir robes purchased.

#### Ministers since 1903

|                  |         |               |         |                |         |
|------------------|---------|---------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| C. E. Dryden     | 1903-08 | Claude Adams  | 1923-26 | J.J. VonHagel  | 1938-41 |
| A. W. Mathers    | 1908-10 | T. M. Cliff   | 1926-28 | J. L. Jones    | 1941-43 |
| E. S. Fooks      | 1910-11 | Zeba Adams    | 1928-30 | E. C. Graham   | 1943-47 |
| G. H. Stockdale  | 1911-13 | H. G. Hager   | 1930-31 | J. H. Anderson | 1947-49 |
| P. L. Rice       | 1913-15 | J. W. Parris  | 1931-33 | E. C. Thomas   | 1949-52 |
| H. W. D. Johnson | 1915-21 | H. E. Hudgins | 1933-34 | Frank Dennis   | 1952-53 |
| H. L. Murphy     | 1921-22 | G. A. Ogg     | 1934-35 | C. E. Palmer   | 1953-54 |
| M. W. Sutcliffe  | 1922-23 | J. Melvin Kay | 1935-38 | G. H. Moore    | 1954-55 |

In the spring of 1955 Bethel Church was transferred from Greenwood, Grace, Cannon, Bethel charge to Farmington charge with the following ministers:

|                   |         |
|-------------------|---------|
| William Hawkins   | 1955-56 |
| Richard D. Bailey | 1956-58 |
| William H. Smith  | 1958-   |

# 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

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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

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