

# THE CHURCHES OF DELAWARE

by

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

1947



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BETHEL METHODIST CHURCH, S. OF GUMBORO  
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where they had lived at the time of their deaths. Being unable to locate the exact spot Mr. Hearne erected the monument beside St. John's Church at Little Hill.

**Jones' M. E. Church** is located one and one-half miles south of Lowe's Crossroads. The one-acre church site was purchased on Nov. 22, 1856, from Jacob Jones. The church was erected in 1857 and was rebuilt in 1896. The corner-stone states—"Presented by G. E. King." Since most of the congregation transferred, to assist in building Bethany Church in 1913, meetings are held only once a year.

**Line Methodist Church (M.E.)** is located just south of Whitesville at the Maryland line. It was founded Jan. 31, 1785 and a small church was built across the road from the present church. The one-acre plot, called "Pleasant Grove," was donated by Planner Shores, on Jan. 31, 1785, to a board of trustees four of whom lived in Sussex County and five of whom lived in Worcester Co., Md. The deed stipulated that the trustees would build a preaching-house for the use of Methodist preachers or the friendly clergy of the Church of England. Francis Asbury preached here on Nov. 12, 1788.

In 1838, a new and larger church was built. Line Church stands at the Delaware-Maryland line, hence its name. The corner-stone of the present church was laid in 1874. The site was donated on Nov. 6, 1874, by James P. McFadden. The church was rebuilt in 1895. Additional land was donated on Feb. 17, 1932 by Chauncey A. Mitchell.

A large graveyard, on both sides of the road is well maintained. The oldest tombstone that the writer could find is that of Elizabeth Jones, who died on Aug. 25, 1839. In 1938, a social-hall was built on the site of the old church. Across the road from the church is an original Mason and Dixon stone. Closeby is a concrete marker with a bronze plate placed by the U. S. Geodetic Survey, in 1932, showing only a slight deviation from the line as run by Mason and Dixon.

**Bethel Methodist Church (M.E.)** is located on the Line Road, south of Gumboro. It was built in 1841 on a site purchased on Feb. 23, 1841 from Jos. S. Barnard. The first services were held on February 23 of that year. The church was rebuilt in 1892 when the two doors were replaced by one door. The interior fittings are the same as originally built. In 1941, the old camp-meeting tabernacle was converted into a social-hall. In the old graveyard a few roofed-over graves can be seen, one of the few places in Delaware where any of these graves remain. These roofs are A shaped with the gables closed in, rest directly on the ground with the entire frame-work covered with shingles. One can only conjecture as to the reason the graves of a century ago were so covered yet when one considers how shallow the graves were dug at that time it is not surprising that sensitive persons felt the need of added protection for the bodies of their loved ones.

The writer is convinced that these roofs were for protection and not, as some persons claim, grave markers erected by persons who could not afford a tombstone. In proof of this, in the private graveyard on the farm of Ira West, near Trussum Pond, there are several graves over which roofs have been built and each one of these graves has both a headstone and a footstone. The most recent of these were over the graves of John C. West who died in 1858 and Mahala West who died in 1852.

Tombstones, fashioned from concrete, can be seen in a number of cemeteries but in one of the graveyards attached to Bethel are the only ones that