

At The Center Of Two Centuries

St. Stephen's Church  
United Methodist



Delmar, Delaware  
Founded 1872

A Commemorative History and Proclamation of  
"New Voices for a New Age."

Dedication of the Church Sanctuary  
The Seventh Day of October  
Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-Nine

*From Dedication of the Cloisters, New York*

If what has been created here helps to interpret beauty as one of the great spiritual and inspirational forces of life having the power to transform drab duty into radiant living; if those who come under the influence of this place go out to face life with new courage and restored faith because of the peace, the calm, the loveliness they found here; if the many who thirst for beauty are refreshed and gladdened as they drink deep from this well of beauty, those who have builded here will not have built in vain.

by John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

At The Center Of Two Centuries

A Commemorative History  
and Proclamation  
of  
St. Stephen's Church

1872 - 1989

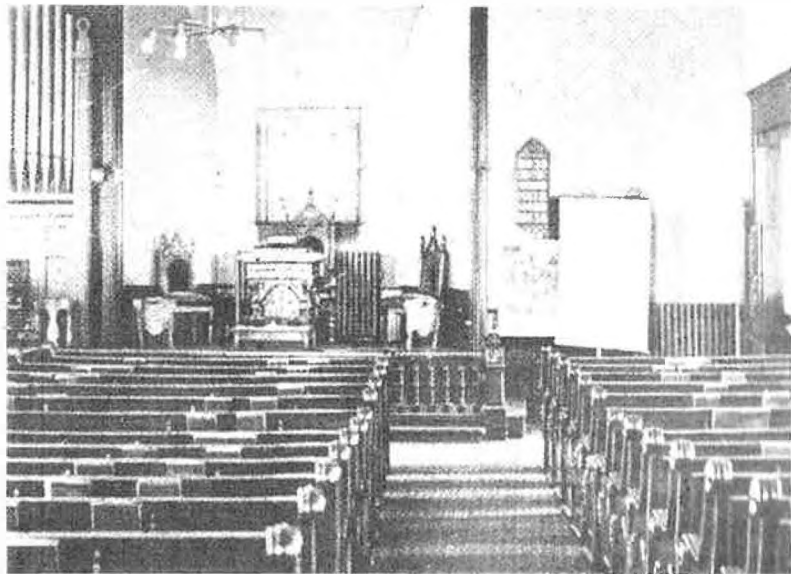
Compiled By  
S. Willard Crossan, III



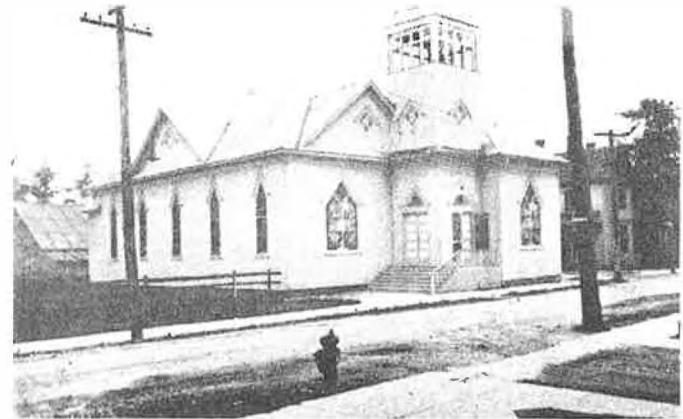
Interior  
Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delmar, Delaware  
Circa 1900



Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delmar, Delaware  
Circa 1900  
Erected 1893



Interior  
Methodist Protestant Church  
Delmar, Delaware  
Circa 1900



Methodist Protestant Church  
Delmar, Delaware  
Circa 1900  
Erected 1893

## Foreword:

We stand squarely in the middle of two centuries. More than a hundred years has been logged since some people with an unquenchable spiritual thirst cried out for a structured ecclesiastical presence in this community. Only three meager years separates us from the centennial of the construction of this imposing edifice we call St. Stephen's Church. As we reflect and celebrate, we realize that a century is a long time in the history of a congregation, yet it is only a moment in God's plan for His Church.

It must be noted that a hundred years is but a beginning in the life of the ministry of this church. Many of the traditional roles which this institution has fulfilled stand as symbols of culture, authority, creativity, ethical conduct, justice and morality. Her voice has motivated, educated, comforted and sustained generations of people. In short, it has echoed the call of Thomas a' Kempis from the 15th century: to be *The Imitation of Christ*. What may transpire in the next century no one knows nor can predict. However, there shall hopefully always be the faithful expression of the good, the honest, the just, the compassionate; by persons dedicated to live in the image of the Son of God.

It is our intention in this booklet to dwell on the history and the artistic expression of faith displayed by this Church. In so doing, we hope to pay homage to those who have brought us this far. Likewise, we pray that our contributions will be a viable, motivational force for future generations. We celebrate at this dedication the *spirit of art*. It is a spirit that abides in this place as well as in the hearts of its creators. We contend the spirit of art is one of many vehicles which brings the spiritual presence of the Almighty closer to humanity. In other words, it promotes worship and all of the accompanying blessings.

The true potential of this spirit, which is evocative in artistic creation, is well captured by Robert Henri, in these lines entitled "The Art Spirit:"

There are moments in our lives, there are moments in a day, when we seem to see beyond the usual. Such are the moments of our greatest happiness. Such are the moments of our greatest wisdom.... It was in this hope that the arts were invented. Sign-posts on the way to what may be. Sign-posts toward greater knowledge.

Our work for Christ and His Kingdom only proves to be of permanent value and of intrinsic worth in the measure that we prove ourselves creators and have our life express itself in the work we endeavor to accomplish. We are the crown of God's creation because in us there is the most complete expression of God. God's life in us should find expression in the work we do. Hopefully, we have not failed in our attempt to express the presence of the Divine God in this place. Hopefully, as we stand at the center of two centuries, we have created some "sign-posts" that will lead new creators to greater knowledge, greater wisdom, greater happiness and greater peace.

*St. Stephen's Church*  
October, 1989

*S. Willard Crossan, III*  
Pastor



## The History of Methodism in Delmar

by Darrell & Kathleen Hagar

### Beginnings:

If we think of St. Stephen's United Methodist Church of Delmar as an estuary similar to our own Chesapeake Bay, then we can imagine a nautical chart before us that would present a graphic representation of both the major rivers and the smaller tributaries that act as sources -- the history -- of our church. That history will have its origin in not one but many springs of faith that led the founders of our community to establish places of worship which eventually converged to form St. Stephen's.

### John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Chapel:

The town of Delmar can trace its history back to 1859 when the Delaware Railroad was extended to the southern border of Delaware, at which time the first streets and a few houses were built by Elijah Freney and Winder Hastings. It was not until the summer of 1867, however, that Thomas Melson, a recent settler in the town of one store and twelve houses, became interested in having religious services held within the community itself. Until then, the residents of Delmar who attended services usually walked more than a mile to Union Methodist Church. With the support of others in the town, Mr. Melson wrote the Reverend Vaughan Smith, the Presiding Elder, inquiring about the possibility of having services in Delmar. Reverend Smith replied that, "If Mr. Melson could get any of the preachers to preach at Delmar, it would be all right." After receiving a request from Mr. Melson, the Reverend Joseph Cook, the minister in charge of the Salisbury Circuit, wrote that he would come himself to preach in Delmar the following Wednesday night, September 4, 1867.

On the appointed evening, Reverend Cook preached the first sermon in Delmar in the front yard of the home of Mr. M. M. Hill who offered the use of it even though he "was not at that time a member of church." Services were held regularly at the home of Mr. Hill until January 26, 1868, when the last sermon there was preached before an overflowing congregation. The membership that had outgrown Mr. Hill's house built a "plank-tent" church that was nineteen by thirty feet on property owned by Elijah Freney on the west side of First Street and 100 feet south of State Street. The church was named "John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Chapel." On Sunday, February 16, 1868, the building was dedicated, and the Reverend Joseph Cook preached on the topic of prayer, taking his lesson from First Thessalonians, 5:17, "Pray without Ceasing."

By 1871, the chapel, which had been built of cast off planks from the saw mill, had begun to deteriorate to the point that rains and high wind one night damaged the building and left in darkness all those attending a prayer meeting being conducted by Thomas Melson, the man responsible for the origin of services in Delmar.

In this year the Sharptown Circuit was divided and the Delmar Circuit was created. This circuit consisted of Mount Pleasant, St. Georges, Hepburn (now Kings), and Delmar.

### Delmar Methodist Episcopal Church:

Reverend Joseph Dare, the first minister to live in the town of Delmar, conducted Camp Meetings in woods owned by Elijah Freney in 1872; within six months of his arrival, a new church which would seat 100 people was started at the northeast corner of First and State Streets, the site of the present church, on land donated by Mr. Freney. The building was dedicated November 30, 1872, with the Reverend Enoch Stubbs preaching at the morning service from John, 10:10, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." The Reverend W. E. England preached at the afternoon service from Psalms 87 and 2, "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob."

The minutes of the fourth Quarterly Conference held at Delmar on March 13, 1875, contained the following notes: "The preacher in charge, Elijah Freney, George W. James and M. M. Hill, were appointed a committee on building a parsonage for the circuit." The effort was made, and a few wagonloads of lumber were actually delivered to the land Mr. Freney had offered to donate for the parsonage. Because of lack of funds from other churches in the charge, however, the project was abandoned and the lumber sold.

The Reverend Albert Chandler arrived on the circuit in 1884; and soon after his arrival, he began planning a tower and steeple for the Delmar church. By June 1, 1884, a tower ten feet square and forty feet high was built in front of the church with a steeple twenty-five feet high, topped with a finial that was four feet -- for a total of sixty-nine feet from sidewalk to finial-top. A bell weighing 390 pounds was placed in the tower. To celebrate all the improvements, a reopening of the church was held June 2, 1884. After this reopening, however, the congregation was greatly dissatisfied with the sound of the bell, complaining that it was shrill and sounded too much like the bells on the locomotives that went through town. The maker of the bell agreed to take the bell back and credit its full cost to that of a new, larger bell. Within a few weeks, the larger bell, weighing 850 pounds, arrived and was installed. It produced a beautiful, soft, mellow sound that pleased "all who were interested."

Within six months every bill against the church was paid and the subject of building a parsonage was again broached. A committee with Reverend Chandler as chairman was appointed to take the matter under consideration. The committee decided to build the parsonage provided that the other churches on the circuit would furnish material for the frame. The pastor was asked to solicit the material, a task which required many hours and much hard work on his part. He begged for trees, sought volunteers to cut the trees and others to haul the logs to the lumber mill, and still others to saw the logs at the various mills in the circuit. He went through a number of different woodlands with an ax to pick out trees and, during some very cold weather, he assisted in felling trees and preparing the logs to be hauled to the mills.

By the middle of March of the following year (1885), the carpenters went to work on the house. It was built on a lot furnished by Elijah Freaney, on the Maryland side of State Street, near the church on the opposite side of the Street. It was a large L-shaped house, eighteen feet high with two stories; the main building was sixteen by thirty-two feet with a wing sixteen by twenty-one feet. The back porch, summer kitchen, and meat house were under one roof adjoining the house, and the coal and wood house could be reached without going from under the roof. A pump installed in the back of the house provided an unlimited supply of water. The property was appraised at \$1,500, and the members hoped to pay for it in a few years. The work was completed in three months, and on the 17th day of June 1885, the minister and his family were safely quartered within its walls.

The church was enlarged to seat over 200 people during the tenure of Reverend A. D. Davis who was assigned to the Delmar Circuit in 1889. During the summer of 1889, Reverend Davis held evangelistic services in a tent pitched on the church grounds and reported 217 professed conversions, with 175 people being taken into full membership in the church.

This enlarged structure was destroyed by fire in 1892, three and one-half months after Reverend L. P. Corkran replaced Reverend Davis. The fire started in the business section of Delmar, in the second floor of a building at the south-east corner of Railroad Avenue and Grove Street and moved south three blocks to Elizabeth Street, destroying every building. Seventeen businesses, eighteen dwellings, the railroad station, and the church were burned as there was no fire fighting equipment in town. The economic loss to the community delayed the rebuilding of the church for a year. Meanwhile, the congregation set up a tent on the church grounds and used the schoolhouse. When winter came, the Baptists, who had erected a church in town, offered the use of their church every other Sunday when their minister was at another church on their circuit. The Methodists used the Baptist church for almost a year until a new frame structure could be built on the old lot during the autumn of 1893. The new church consisted of the present sanctuary.

The work of the church flowed smoothly from this time until October 1901, when the town suffered its second fire. This one began in the barn behind a house owned by Mr. W. L. Sirman who lived on the northwest corner of First and State Streets, opposite the church. The fire destroyed most of the town, but the church was saved by the heroic efforts of some of the citizens and suffered only scorched siding and cracked windows on the west side of the building. Both the Delmar Methodist Episcopal Church and Mount Olive Methodist Protestant Church were used to house school classes until the school could be replaced.

In October 1909, steam heat was installed in the church building; and in March 1910, the Official Board of the church began discussing plans to construct a building for Sunday School and a new parsonage. Both projects were completed after some delay. Instead of erecting a building for the Sunday School, however, the Board decided to excavate a basement under the church for this purpose; at the same time the Board purchased the lot adjacent to the east side of the church to increase the church yard. The project ran into trouble when the floor poured by the contractor cracked because of subsoil water pressure and flooded the basement. When the contractor was unable to complete the task, the Trustees had to secure the services of a second contractor, Mr. W. B. Elliott who was himself one of the Trustees. He completed the job, and the church had a large room which served the needs of the Sunday School and was used extensively by the community.

In July of 1915, another motion to build a new parsonage was passed. A building committee, which included the Reverend F. N. Faulkner, was appointed and authorized to sell the old parsonage building which was purchased by E. L. Freaney for \$400 on the condition that it be removed by July 15, 1916. The committee submitted plans for a two and one-half story building, thirty-feet by thirty-six feet, with a ten foot porch on the front and west side. The estimated cost of construction was \$4,150 for a frame building or \$4,700 for a brick one. The estimate did not include plumbing, heat, or electric fixtures. The board accepted the plan, adding requests for hardwood floors on the first floor and a slate roof which increased the cost.

Reverend Frank Faulkner, who served the church from 1913 until 1921, was particularly interested in music and in the welfare of the youth in the church. He combined these interests by giving instruction in music and by forming a male quartet, adding to those dimensions of the church's programs.

His successor, Reverend John W. Jones, introduced two innovative means for reducing the debt of the church. In 1921, his first year, Reverend Jones faced a church debt of \$2,200. He recommended that the church have bonds printed with coupons attached which could be used by those members who wished to contribute to their portion of the debt using a partial payment plan; a member would clip a coupon and pay a certain amount on a given date. In his second year, he



introduced the envelope system of raising finances; until then, it had been the custom to send out collectors to gather funds to meet the needs of the church. When Reverend Jones left Delmar in 1926, the church was free of debt, even though the congregation had to completely rewire the building and install new electric lights in 1925.

In 1934, Reverend Ralph C. Jones came to Delmar and was the pastor when the Annual Conference convened at this church and the building was rededicated. In 1937, Reverend Jones installed a cooling system in the church. He secured, *gratis*, a discarded ship fan in Lewes, Delaware, and hauled it to Delmar where he installed it in the heater room of the church along with an electric motor to operate it. With the help of a carpenter, he cut a trap door in the floor of the sanctuary and built an air duct from the fan to the trap door. When the fan was operating the trap door was opened and the cool air was distributed throughout the room. When the fan was not operating, the trap door was closed and none of the system was in sight. This cooling system served for over thirty years.

### The First Methodist Church of Delmar:

The three branches of the Methodist Church were united in 1939, making it necessary to rename the Delmar Methodist Episcopal Church. The congregation voted to name the church the "First Methodist Church of Delmar." Reverend Sydney Bradley was the minister at that time.

The District Superintendent, Reverend J. J. Bunting, dedicated the new Mohler organ February 18, 1940. At a cost of over \$4,000, the replacement organ was installed after months of study and fund raising.

The parsonage was repainted in 1941, and a new dining room suite was purchased by the W.S.C.S.

During the war years, there was a shortage of fuel oil which caused the church to close the Sunday School February 1, 1943 and for each winter after that until the end of the war. During the winter period, Sunday School was held in the sanctuary, the classroom, and the basement. The Commission on Education furnished a glass case in the rear of the church for a roster of young men and women of this church who were in the armed forces. There were eighty-three names on the roster when it was installed, and the number increased until there were eventually 117.

After the war the church returned to a more normal life and even began in time to enjoy opportunities for renewal and growth. In November 1948, for example, a campaign was started for a \$4,000 improvement fund to paint the

church exterior and to redecorate the interior. In July 1949, sufficient funds were on hand to begin the work, and the Trustees employed an architect from the Methodist Church in Philadelphia to consult on the project. The interior walls were painted a soft gray; the ceiling, white with mahogany and white trim. The pews were mahogany with the ends of the pews finished in white. The Sunday School building and the fellowship hall were also painted inside and out. The project was completed in November 1949 to the full satisfaction of the members. At this time, the parsonage was again repaired and repainted.

But such embellishments are temporary, and the entire church was repainted and refurbished during the ministry of the Reverend Dr. Charles S. Clarkson between 1958 and 1962. In addition to refinishing the pews, walls, and floors, the members undertook some remodeling. The two rooms on either side of the First Street entrance became a church office and a choir room.

When the Reverend Ferry arrived, he was not pleased with the parsonage; he went to a motel where he stayed until the parsonage could be renovated to suit him. The downstairs lavatory was converted into a complete bathroom. The kitchen was changed into a bedroom, and the breakfast room became a new kitchen. The interior walls were painted or wall-papered, while the exterior walls were cleared of the ivy overgrowth.

When Reverend Rollen Ferry arrived in 1962 some projects -- such as the enlarging of the nursery -- were initiated; but the latter part of his ministry was devoted to the plans for the impending merger with Mount Olive Church. The Annual Conference of 1964 confirmed the merger of the First Methodist Church and Mount Olive Church, and Reverend Ferry was given another assignment.

### The Ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Churches in Delmar:

Samuel Webb and J. A. B. Wilson . . . . .	1868	George W. Townsend . . . . .	1895-1901
Samuel Webb and J. Rich . . . . .	1869	R. W. Sharp . . . . .	1901-03
G. S. Conway and J. Rich . . . . .	1870	Zach Webster . . . . .	1903-09
G. S. Conway . . . . .	1871	S. N. Pilchard . . . . .	1909-13
Joseph Dare . . . . .	1872-73	Frank Faulkner . . . . .	1913-21
J. Conner . . . . .	1874	John W. Jones . . . . .	1921-26
G. W. Burke . . . . .	1875	Leonard White . . . . .	1926-29
T. R. Creamer . . . . .	1876-78	E. H. Dashiell . . . . .	1929-31
S. T. Gardener . . . . .	1879-81	George Bounds . . . . .	1931-34
G. W. Wilcox . . . . .	1882-83	Ralph C. Jones . . . . .	1934-39
Albert Chandler . . . . .	1884-85	Sydney Bradley . . . . .	1939-41
C. S. Baker . . . . .	1886-88	John L. Johnson . . . . .	1941-44
A. D. Davis . . . . .	1889-92	John W. Townsend . . . . .	1944-58
L. P. Cockran . . . . .	1892-95	Charles S. Clarkson . . . . .	1958-62
		Rollen Ferry . . . . .	1962-64

### **Bethesda Methodist Protestant Church:**

The Methodist Protestant Church was organized in Delmar in 1889 by Reverend George B. McCready, pastor of the Union Circuit. The first meeting was held in the hall over James T. Wilson's clothing store on Grove Street. In 1890, a little church was built on the north side of W. State Street on the edge of town and was named Bethesda Methodist Protestant Church.

### **Mount Olive Church:**

Three years later when the April 1893 Maryland Conference was held in Laurel, Delmar was set off as a Mission with Providence Methodist Protestant Church to be known as the Delmar Charge. The Reverend John A. Wright was appointed as the pastor of the new charge, and he moved into a rented house on Jewell Street. The growth of the congregation was phenomenal; so a lot was purchased on the northeast corner of Second and State Streets for the sum of \$600 and a new church, named Mount Olive, was built and dedicated in November 1893.

A parsonage was built in 1894 on the south side of State Street.

During Reverend Wright's ministry, over \$7,000 was spent on improvements, and membership increased from 44 to 209, with an increase in Sunday School from 25 to 300.

Again, in 1908, overcrowding necessitated enlarging the church. The Reverend E. P. Perry had a room built onto the east side. The main entrance was altered, and the belfry was rebuilt. These changes left the congregation deeply in debt, and when Reverend Wright returned in 1909, he set about to eliminate an inherited debt of over \$7,500, which he did before leaving in 1913.

In addition to paying that debt, the Reverend Wright also paid for several significant improvements to the parsonage. New furniture was purchased; cement walks were installed; and water and gas were piped into the parsonage.

During the tenure of Reverend George A. Morris (1914-17), the belfry was again repaired, new steps were built, and the interior of the church was painted. Additional minor projects were undertaken in succeeding years. When Reverend Benjamin A. Bryan came to Delmar in 1924, he proposed an envelope system of financing which was approved; he also initiated a campaign among the members to fund the new furnace which was installed that year.

In 1933, the church was enhanced with a brick veneer; and on December 11, 1938, Reverend W. A. Donoway held a note burning ceremony, at which the oldest and the youngest member of the church participated, to celebrate the clearing of the debt for the veneering. The next year, the Ladies Aid Society purchased a used pipe organ. The year 1940 brought extensive improvements in the form of a beautiful divided chancel. The background was paneled with a lighted alcove in the middle for the communion table and the cross. The pulpit was on one side and a lectern on the other side of a raised platform with the chancel rail in front. From each end of the chancel rail a semi-circular paneled wing extended for a short distance into the sanctuary creating choir lofts on each side of the chancel. The interior was rededicated March 2, 1940.

The members began looking forward to the time when they could build an educational building, and in 1944 began an improvement fund with only \$19.30. By October 1946, the fund had grown to \$1,703. The members had also built a cabinet containing all the names of their congregation who had served in the armed forces in World War II; the cabinet, with eighty-one names, was installed in the rear of the church.

Ralph E. Nichols had contacted sixty heirs of the Ellis family to clear up the title to the church lot with the hopes of building an educational building adjacent to the church, a project the members had long prayed for. In a surprise move, the Reverend Charles Banford on June 29, 1952, launched a building fund campaign by contributing \$5.00 to each of twenty volunteers with the understanding that they were to increase the amount one hundred fold in five months, making their Thanksgiving report November 30, 1952. On that date, they reported that they had raised \$8,400. A second building campaign which ran ten weeks in 1954 raised another \$13,000. The educational building was begun in August of that year, and another campaign raised an additional \$10,000. The building was officially opened May 25, 1955, and the complete debt was cleared by November 1960.

Beginning in the summer of 1958, the sanctuary and chapel were renovated, and all the pews, walls, and floors were refinished.

In 1963 a new roof was put on the church; a new furnace was installed to replace one that had blown up; and \$2,100 was spent to paint the belfry and to repair its roof.

January 5, 1964, was set as the date to vote on the merger with the First Methodist Church of Delmar.



**The Ministers of the Methodist Protestant Churches in Delmar:**

G. R. McCready . . . . .	1889-90	Benjamin Bryan . . . . .	1924-25
A. H. Harriman . . . . .	1889-91	John T. Bailey . . . . .	1926-31
W. W. White . . . . .	1891-92	H. B. Jester . . . . .	1932-33
C. S. Arnett . . . . .	1892-93	E. E. Coleman . . . . .	1933-35
John A. Wright . . . . .	1893-97	W. A. Donoway . . . . .	1936-40
J. L. Straughn . . . . .	1897-99	Raymond Hallman . . . . .	1941-42
J. E. Ewell . . . . .	1899-1900	James A. Lord . . . . .	1942
L. A. Bennett . . . . .	1901-03	Leon Ross . . . . .	1943-45
E. S. Fooks . . . . .	1904-05	Frank Volk . . . . .	1946-50
G. J. Hill . . . . .	1905-06	Harry Conner . . . . .	1950-51
E. P. Perry . . . . .	1907-08	Charles Branford . . . . .	1952-56
John A. Wright . . . . .	1909-13	Louis Randall . . . . .	1956-61
George Morris . . . . .	1914-17	Harvey B. Flater . . . . .	1961-64
E. H. Jones . . . . .	1918-23		

**St. Stephen's United Methodist Church:**

The Annual Conference of 1964 confirmed the merging of First Methodist Church and Mount Olive Church and appointed the Reverend Robert P. Whitlock as pastor. The combined churches in turn appointed Mrs. Virginia Scott to be Director of Christian Education.

By ballot, the combined congregation selected "St. Stephen's Methodist Church of Delmar" as the name of the new church. It was decided to hold regular worship services in the former First Methodist Church, because its sanctuary was the larger of the two, and to keep the former Mount Olive sanctuary intact for special services. At the same time, it was determined that the pastor would live in the First Methodist Parsonage and Mrs. Scott would live in the Mount Olive parsonage on Chestnut Street. The church's two cemeteries became St. Stephen's Cemetery Park, begun around 1885, and St. Stephen's Cemetery, begun around 1901.

In the newly named St. Stephen's Church, the sliding doors were opened to the classroom on the west side of the sanctuary and the pews from Mount Olive were moved to the classroom, thereby making room for another fifty people at worship service. Numerous other renovations were undertaken at this time to expand the nursery, classrooms and other facilities to make the best use of the space available.

With the assistance of Mrs. Scott, the Church Schools were reorganized. Various classes were formed for children and adults of all ages so that there was a place in the church for everyone.

During the ministry of Reverend Whitlock the church acquired several additional properties. Two lots at First and Grove Streets, adjoining the church property and improved with a four-office professional building and a house, were purchased. New sidewalks were laid; the house was razed; and the lots were filled in and made into an urgently needed parking lot. The church also purchased the Veasey Building to the east of the church, and it became known as the St. Stephen's Community Center. A youth center was projected for the second floor, while the first floor contained the parlor, church offices, a banquet room and a kitchen. The building is now called Camelot Hall.

In 1974 a meeting was held and it was voted to discontinue the use of and dispose of the Second Street Building -- formerly Mount Olive Church -- and the Chestnut Street parsonage.

Between 1972 and 1982, the only major project undertaken was the installation of air conditioners in Camelot Hall.

The Reverend Dr. S. Willard Crossan, III, became the minister in September of 1982 and soon began a series of renovations designed to restore the church physically, financially, and spiritually. In 1983 several men and women of the church painted the education building, and the United Methodist Women replaced all the drapes, and the men and the women helped replace the floor in Camelot Hall which had caved in to the point that one stove in the kitchen was precariously suspended over a hole eight feet deep and twelve feet wide. The renovated kitchen and hall is used by civic organizations and private groups for many events during the year; and the second floor of Camelot Hall has been donated in the spirit of community outreach to the DelMarVa Model Railroad Club, a tribute to the railroad origins of the community, which was founded when the Delaware Railroad extended its line to the Delaware-Maryland border.

Soon after their arrival, Dr. Crossan and his wife, Debrae, began projects to refurbish and improve the parsonage and its grounds. Working with the Parsonage Committee and others, they have managed to refinish all the floors, re-plaster most of the rooms, install new carpets, repair all the windows, and refinish the porch, as well as a new roof and customized trim on the garage. They also cleaned, regraded, and landscaped the side and back yards of the parsonage property.

The major project during this period -- and the one we are still celebrating -- was the complete restoration of the church building; but before that could begin it became necessary to replace the roof on the church and the Sunday school and re-tar the roof of Camelot Hall. Planning for the major project took several years, during which time the memorial fund and the future fund were created and the budget was unified. As a result of the emphasis on "Stewardship" since 1982, there has been a 30% increase in giving.

When the renovation of the exterior actually began, Dr. Crossan and the congregation soon understood that the project was going to be complicated. The path to its completion would be neither straight nor narrow. The first step in the plan was to remove the old steps to the church; but once that was begun, the bell tower began immediately to lean precariously. State Street had to be closed to traffic, and all trains going through Delmar were slowed to five miles per hour as the workers tried to stabilize the tower and determine the reason for its leaning. They learned that the old steps actually supported the tower, that the steps were on a foundation of sand, and that the sand covered the original sidewalk of Delmar. A worker also discovered that there was an 850 pound bell in the leaning tower compounding the problem because of its weight. The second bell of the church -- the bell with the soft, mellow tone -- had apparently passed out of the collective memory of the congregation, but was now found again.

The tower is now supported by steel and concrete, and there are plans to put the bell back in service.

Before the renovation of the interior was begun, over a year was devoted to studies and review of the purpose of the setting for worship. An architect from New York was consulted; and with the full support of the congregation, the interior was designed to create the appropriate setting for worship. Many decisions reflecting the focus on the purpose of the worship setting were made. For example, the communion rail was placed nearer the congregation and an exact replica of John Wesley's pulpit was built symbolizing the historical importance of the preached word in the ritual of the Methodist Church. The goal of the planners was to preserve the integrity of the Victorian Gothic Revival interior. The elaborate tin work, for example, is unusual in a church as large as St. Stephen's.

Before the sandblasting began, everything was removed from inside -- everything but the pipe organ which was protected by a plastic and wood encasement.

The entire renovation has been paid for with funds raised by the minister and the congregation. Originally, as the plans began, several pieces of property were sold to establish the endowment fund; and the property on Route 13 was

sold with the intent of contributing to the economic revitalization of the general community as well as contributing to the growth of the endowment fund. The sale of that property is in process; when completed, the transaction will provide financial security for the church for years to come.

Now that the tin work has been appropriately repainted, the pews and floor refinished, and all the furnishings and appointments have been placed, one can sit before service and appreciate how each part contributes to the whole setting -- how the wood carvings, the Belgian tapestry, the marble floor, the mahogany paneling participate in the creation of a mood and attitude that prepares one to hear the word of God.

### The Ministers of St. Stephen's Church in Delmar:

Robert Whitlock . . . . .	1964-70
Donald J. Hurst . . . . .	1970-75
Charles Poukish . . . . .	1976-78
William T. Archer . . . . .	1978-82
Dr. S. Willard Crossan III . . . . .	1982-



State Street, Delmar, Delaware Circa 1902  
Showing both the Methodist Episcopal Church (foreground)  
and Methodist Protestant Church (background)

## Did You Know...?

- The first Sunday School was formed February 23, 1868, with Mr. Nathan West as Superintendent.
- The minister's salary in 1891 was \$465 a year.
- The hymnals that we used until this year were purchased in 1966.
- From November 12, 1884, until March 12, 1885, Reverend Chandler married 21 couples, including the marriage of three sisters within five weeks -- and the marriage of three couples within a single evening.
- Reverend L. A. Bennett performed the only double wedding ever held in Mount Olive Church; on December 24, 1902, he married John L. Beauchamp and Minnie C. Hearn and John F. McNelia and Barbara Beauchamp, John L. Beauchamp's sister.
- The first church built on the present site cost \$2,200.
- Mrs. Mame Lynch served as the church organist for fifty-nine years, from 1892 until she attempted to resign in 1951. The Official Board refused to accept her resignation, appointing her "Organist Emeritus" instead, and honored her with a day of special services.
- The entire church was repainted in 1883 at a cost of \$72.00.
- The former W.S.C.S. was organized September 24, 1940, with 187 members divided into ten circles.
- Reverend J. A. B. Wilson's first sermon in John Wesley Chapel lasted only eight minutes. "He had prepared but forgot." He was young and somewhat embarrassed, but the membership stood with him faithfully and encouraged him. He later became a Presiding Elder.
- In 1906, the church membership was 298, Sunday School enrollment 472, average attendance 225.
- When Reverend Leonard White came to Delmar in 1926, he was considered the best orator in the conference.
- Although the name of Delmar Methodist Episcopal Church had been changed to The First Methodist Church of Delmar in 1939, the outside bulletin board was not corrected until 1944.
- The District Conference was held in Delmar in November 1950, and the Men's Communion Breakfast for the Salisbury District was held here in March 1953.

- The Apportionment for Delmar Circuit in 1871 was \$78.00.
- The mahogany paneling in the new sanctuary -- while called Honduras mahogany -- actually comes from the diminishing rain forest of Brazil and has doubled in cost since it was originally ordered.
- Mount Olive Church in 1913 had nineteen Sunday School classes with a total enrollment of 333.
- Until today, the largest congregation for a single worship service was 263. Will we break that today?
- The Annual Conference was held here in 1934. The building was rededicated that same year, and a photograph of the sanctuary at that time appears in this book.
- There is a 1930 Bulletin that states, "We Are Building Our New Church Now." On the cover is an architect's drawing showing a building entirely different from the present structure. What happened?
- The Coronation and Verona tapestry materials are imported from Belgium and are the thickness of thirteen individual layers of thread. They contain real metallic gold thread.
- Dr. Crossan's father had dinner in what was then the social hall -- beneath our present sanctuary -- while attending a Pennsylvania Railroad summer outing in 1924.
- There are only two other pipe organs of the same model and construction as ours still in existence; one is in the Cathedral Church of St. Vincent Ferrer, in New York City.
- The parsonage was originally built to house live-in help; the Crossan family wishes to know where said help has been for the past eight years.
- It cost approximately \$5,800 to construct the original version of the present church in 1893. It has cost over \$225,000 to restore it to the present style and configuration. Some things truly appreciate with the passage of time and are obviously worth restoring.
- The Wesley Pulpit: The top part of John Wesley's pulpit in London is the original piece. It was carried about the English countryside in a horse-drawn cart, enabling John Wesley to preach the Gospel throughout the land to the common-people. When a church was finally constructed, the original portion of the pulpit was placed upon a pedestal base and given a permanent home. Ours is a reproduction of how it presently appears in Wesley's Chapel, London, England.

# Methodists Merge Here After Sunday's Vote

**THE MOUNT OLIVE** and the First Methodist Churches here will merge as of May 1, the Rev. Alton Miller, district superintendent, as announced.

Congregational meetings were held at the two churches Sunday when the merger was approved by a vote. The Rev. Mr. Miller announced the merger at the close of the services.

**IT HAS BEEN DECIDED** that while both buildings will be utilized to their full capacity, the congregations will be one, worshipping in one church. A name for the new church will be decided by the membership between now and the annual conference.

The official board of the newly-founded church will be set up in the near future for the purpose of organizing and planning many of the legal steps that must take place now.

**THE PROGRAM** of the new church will be set forth at the time of the annual conference in May. The membership of the new church will be more than 800 and the church will be active in every field of endeavor of Methodism.

The history of Methodism in Delmar goes back some 75 years, and while two Methodist churches have been active in this area, it can be noted that each church is inter-related by families.

**THE OUTREACH** of the new church will cover the entire area of Delmar and is looking forward to having a special appeal to young adults and youth.

The present pastor of Mount Olive Church, the Rev. Harvey B. Flater, has been pastor for three years, and the present pastor of First Methodist Church, the Rev. Rollan E. Ferry, has been here two years.



**CHURCH OFFICIALS** of First and Mount Olive Methodist Churches of Delmar which have agreed to merge are shown Sunday on the steps of Mount Olive Church. Shown, left to right, first row, are: Ross M. Smith, Mount Olive lay leader; Leroy Lockerman, First Methodist lay leader; the Rev. Rollan E. Ferry, First Methodist pastor, and the Rev. Harvey B. Flater, pastor of Mount Olive; back row, left to right, the Rev. Alton Miller, superintendent Salisbury District; Ralph E. Nichols, chairman of the board of Mount Olive; and Mrs. Jean Ellis, chairman of the board of First Methodist Church.

## **St. Stephen's United Methodist Church**

On September 4, 1867, Rev. Joseph Cook preached the first church service in the small community that became Delmar. Services were held at the home of Mr, M.M. Hill until 1868. The membership then built a "plank-tent" church on property owned by Elijah Freeney. It was named "John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Chapel." It was damaged by rains and high winds.

In 1872 the Rev. Joseph Dare was the first minister of what was then called the Delmar Methodist Episcopal Church which was erected on the northeast corner of First and State Streets, the site of the present church. This land was donated by Elijah Freeney.

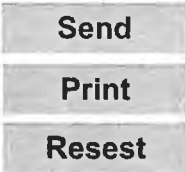
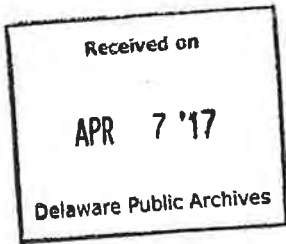
The church, as well as much of the Delmar business district, was destroyed by a major fire in 1892. The new church was constructed in 1893 and it consisted of the present sanctuary.

In 1939 three branches of the Methodist Church were united, making it necessary to rename the church The First Methodist Church.

The Bethesda Methodist Protestant Church was organized in 1889. In 1890 a small church was built on the north side of West State Street on the edge of town. The growth of the congregation was phenomenal; so a lot was purchased on the northwest corner of Second and State Streets and in 1893 Mt. Olive Church was built and dedicated.

In 1964, the current St. Stephen's United Methodist Church resulted from the merger of the First Methodist Church and the Mt. Olive Church.





**Historical Marker Application**

**1. Proposed Marker Information**

Suggested Marker Topic: Church

Location: County: Sussex City/Town: Delmar, De 19940

**2. Applicant Contact Information**

Contact Name: Phyllis Walton Daytime Telephone: 302-846-9501

Email Address: pkwalton@comcast.net

Applicant Organization (if applicable): United Methodist Church

Street Address: 101 E. State St.

City: Delmar State: DE Zip Code: 19940

**3. Statement of Significance**

On an attached sheet please explain in a thorough but concise typed statement why the proposed subject is important and why it should be commemorated with a marker. Refer to the guidelines and criteria when writing your statement.

**4. Proposed Marker Location**

Preferred Location (*Provide Exact Address, Directions, or GPS Coordinates*):  
On the south side of the church between the sidewalk and the ramp.

Why was this location chosen:  
This area is highly visible for those walking or driving by.

Is the location on: Public Property:        Private Property X

If on private property do you have permission from the owner? Yes X No



## **5. Background Information**

Please provide on a separate sheet of paper a typed list of relevant facts, notes, and/or information pertaining to the proposed marker subject. This information will be helpful in beginning the research process and writing the marker text. (Please note that the Delaware Public Archives Staff will write and has the final say on marker text and will edit and revise to conform to research and format standards, including space limitations.)

## **6. Funding**

Historical markers are funded on an individual basis by local legislators. Financial support must be obtained from a local Senator or Representative only after the marker application has been approved by the Delaware Public Archives. Once support is gained the legislator will notify the archives staff and we will move forward with the production of a marker.

\*Please complete all fields. Incomplete marker applications will not be reviewed or considered. If you have any questions please contact Kevin Barni at (302) 744-5015 or via email at [Kevin.Barni@state.de.us](mailto:Kevin.Barni@state.de.us).

*Revised 07/16*

DELAWARE CHURCH ARCHIVES

ton, Story and Co.); articles in Wilmington newspapers: Morning News, Nov. 26, 1920; Every Evening, Feb. 18, 1924, Mar. 8, 1924; Evening Journal, Feb. 18, 1924.

Minutes, 1910--, 3 vols.; Register, 1866--, 4 vols.; Financial, 1866--, 1 vol.; Sunday School, 1934--, 1 file cabinet; in church office. Records of incorporation and deeds: New Castle Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. A8, p. 191; vol. B8, p. 171; vol. Q8, p.425; vol. K9, p. 117; vol. A10, p. 269; vol. X21, p. 507; vol.Z25, p. 83; Private Acts Record, vol. B1, p. 49; vol. D1, p. 228; vol. X8, p. 272.

284. SILOAM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1868--, 4 miles SE of Milford.

Organized and building dedicated in 1865. It is a one story frame building. First settled clergyman, unknown.

Minutes, 1930--, 1 vol.; Financial, 1930--, 1 vol.; in possession of Randolph Davis, R. F. D. Milton. Register, 1930--, 1 vol.; in possession of pastor, Rev. J. M. Harlen, R. F. D. Milton. Sunday School, 1930--, 1 vol.; in possession of William Hudson, Milton.

285. Wyoming Methodist Episcopal church, 1865--, Broad St. Wyoming.

Organized 1865 and called the Methodist Episcopal Plank Church of West Camden; (Wyoming was known as West Camden until 1866). Incorporated under present name 1883. first church, a plank building on Water St., was used from 1865 to 1883. Present building dedicated 1883. A one story frame structure with belfry and bell. Parsonage built 1885. First settled clergyman, Rev. J. J. Pierce, Minutes, 1884--, 3 vols.; Register, 1884--, 3 vols.; in church office in custody of pastor, Rev. Waldo L. Dise.. Sunday School, 1933--, 3 vols.; in possession of superintendent, Wilmer Benson. Ladies' Aid Society, 1930--, 2 vols.; in possession of president, Mrs. Wilmer Benson. Records of incorporation and deeds; Kent Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. A5, p. 233; vol. C6, p. 235; vol. M6, p. 138; vol. W6, p. 233; vol. U10, p. 274; vol. V10, p.206.

286. METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ATOREMENT, 1866--, Philadelphia Pike, Claymont.

Organized 1866. A donation of \$ 2500 by Thomas Kimber, a Quaker made the building possible. The present building was dedicated in 1866. Additions were built in 1927. It is a one story stone building, of English Gothic style, with a spire above the entrance. First settled clergyman, Rev. William Dalrymple, 1866-68. See: Rev. William N. Nesbett, A History of Claymont M. E. Church (Marcus Hook, privately printed, 1936).

Minutes, 1896--, 1 vol.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Frederick J. Pieplow, Philadelphia Pike. Financial, 1900--, 1 vol. loose-leaf; in possession of Miss Lena Casey, Manor Ave. Sunday School, 1864--, 1 vol.; in possession of secretary, Mrs. Richard Dunlevy, Palace Ave. Records of incorporation and deeds: New Castle Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. H6, p. 307; vol.C10. p. 34; vol. R11, p. 504; vol. L30, p. 562.

287. DELMAR METHODIST EPOSCOPAL CHURCH, 1867--, State St., Delmar. First Methodist Church.

Organized in 1867 as John Wesley Church. First church a frame building,

DELAWARE CHURCH ARCHIVES

was erected 1867 and used until it burned in 1892. Present name adopted and present church was dedicated in 1893. It was rebuilt in 1935. It is a red brick building with a belfry and bell. First settled clergyman, Rev. Joseph Dare, 1872-77; educated at Wesley Collegiate Institute, Dover. See: Rev. Ralph C. Jones, A History of Delmar Methodist Episcopal Church (Delmar, Bi-State Press, 1928); article in Wilmington Journal- Every Evening, Feb. 29, 1936.

Minutes, 1892--, 2 vols.; in possession of M. C. Nelson. Register, 1892--, 4 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Ralph C. Jones, Financial, 1892--, 1 vol.; in possession of A. W. Ellis. Sunday School, 1935--, 1 vol.; kept in church. Records of incorporation and deeds: Sussex Col Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. BRS118, p. 235; vol. DDQ168, p. 309; vol. DEI187, p. 408; vol. DRF272, p. 446; vol. DRB274, p. 220; vol. DIN206, p. 437; vol. RIC311, p. 273.

288. STANTON METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1868--, Main St., Stanton.

Organized 1868, services being held in loft on Main St. Present building dedicated 1877. It was remodeled in 1924. It is a one story frame building with a basement and a tower. First settled clergyman, Rev. Henry E. Bodine, 1868-70.

Minutes, 1868--, 5 vols.; Register, 1868--, 5 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Edward E. Collons, Kiamensi Road, Marshallton. Sunday School, 1868--, 1 loose-leaf vol.; in possession of Ashton Eastburn, Main St. Records of incorporation and deed: New Castle Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. C11, pp. 163 and 383.

289. SUMMIT BRIDGE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1868--, Highway 7, Summit Bridge.

Organized 1868 as a result of informal services started about 1867 by Rev. William B. Walton, then pastor of St. Georges Methodist Episcopal Church (entry 265). Services were held first in brick structure near present site, known as Boulden's Meeting House. These services were continued until 1877 when a one story frame structure was erected on the present site. This was destroyed by fire in 1913. Present building dedicated 1914. A one story frame structure with gabled roof, tower, and bell. Cornerstone bearing name of church and date of erection. First settled clergyman, Rev. William B. Walton, 1866-70. See: Mrs. Katherine Kane, History of Summit Bridge M. E. Church Middletown. Privately printed, 1925).

Minutes, 1868--, 3 vols.; Financial, 1868--, 1 vol.; Sunday School, 1922--, 1 vol.; in church office in custody of Mrs. Katherine Kane. Register, 1868--, 2 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. John L. Sparklin, St. Georges. Record of deed: New Castle Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. B10, p. 290.

290. <sup>Lincoln</sup> LINCOLN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1869--, 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Lincoln.

Organized 1869 at which time the first church was built. Present church opened and dedicated in 1925. One story frame structure with bell and cornerstone. First settled clergyman, unknown. Minutes, 1925--, 1 vol.; in possession of Albert Donovan. Register 1869--, 3 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Samuel L. Danby. Financial, 1925--, 1 vol.; in possession of Mrs. J. Messick. Sunday School, 1925--, 1 vol.; in possession of William Donovan. Records of incorporation and deeds: Sussex Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. BDH107, p. 50. vol. BC76, p. 2; vol. HMF184, p. 327; vol. BBC102, p. 511.

DELAWARE CHURCH ARCHIVES

ing called Johnson's and was used until present building was dedicated in 1921. Present structure is a one story frame with belfry, bell, and stained glass windows. First settled clergyman, unknown. Minutes, 1921--, 2 vols.; in possession of Lincoln Harmon, R.F.D., Millsboro. Register, 1921--, 2 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Gilbert Ross, Milton. Sunday School, 1921--, 1 vol.; in church.

453. HEBRON METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH, 1888--, Bridgeville Rd., Georgetown.

Organized 1888 at which time present church was built. It was first a charge of Milton, then of Georgetown, then of Cannon. It was a charge of Dagsboro for one year previous to closing in June 1934. Reopened in October 1935 and since has been served by minister from Georgetown. One story frame building. First settled clergyman, Rev. Franklin H. Mullineaux, 1888-89. Register (including financial and all records), 1936--, 1 vol.; in possession of pastor, Rev. Russell W. Sapp, Market and King Sts. Records of incorporation and deed: Sussex Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. BBM112, pp. 203 and 204.

454. MT OLIVE METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH, 1889--, State St., Delmar.

Organized 1889 as Bethesda Methodist Protestant Church. Services were held in a hall until 1891 when first church was erected. It was a one story frame building. Present church was dedicated in 1893. Name changed to Delmar Methodist Church in 1897. Present name adopted sometime prior to 1918. Church was remodeled in 1933. It is a one story brick veneered frame building with belfry and bell. First settled clergyman, Rev. J. A. Wright, 1893-97; educated at Western Maryland College and Seminary, Westminster, Md. Minutes, 1889--, 1 vol.; Financial, 1889--, 1 vol.; in possession of treasurer, Ernest F. Williams. Register, 1899--, 3 vols.; in possession of Rev. Walter A. Donaway, 2<sup>nd</sup> and Chestnut Sts. Sunday School, 1921--, 1 vol.; in possession of Sunday school secretary, Hazel Tinley. Deed and Charter, 1899, in vault of Bank of Delmar. Records of incorporation and deeds: Sussex Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. BBR117, p. 156; vol. BBY124, p. 515; vol. DFG211, p. 373; vol. DHV278, p. 173.

455. DAGSBORO METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH, 1890--, Main St., Dagsboro.

Organized and building dedicated 1890. Originally called Vines Neck Methodist Protestant Church. Services were held in private homes for a few month until the church was erected. In 1907 the church was moved from its location, one and one-half miles outside Dagsboro., to its present site and rebuilt. A one story frame structure with belfry. First settled clergyman, Rev. A. Betts, 1890-95. Minutes, 1907--, 1 vol.; in possession of Mr. Ray Steelman. Register, 1907--, 3 vols.; in possession of pastor, Rev. W. T. Archer. Financial, 1907--, 1 vol.; in possession of George Baker. Sunday School, 1935--, 1 vol.; in church safe. Records of incorporation and deed: Sussex Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. CCI134, p. 340; vol. DEO193, p. 394.

456. DOVER METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH, 1890--, Governor's Ave., Dover

Organized 1890, services being held in school building. This later became a part of the present church, which was opened and dedicated in 1893. Rebuilt

A church site was purchased on July 16, 1898, from Robt. Ellegood. The corner-stone was laid on Thurs., June 29, 1899, at 6:30 P. M., by Bishop Leighton Coleman. He was assisted by the Rev. Dr. Spaulding and the Rev. E. K. Miller. The church was consecrated, by Bishop Coleman on All Saint's Day, Nov. 1, 1900. In 1905-06, a new organ was purchased. The belfry was built in 1908 and a bell was purchased by the women of the congregation. It was dedicated by Bishop Frederick J. Kinsman.

In 1908-09, a Bishop's chair was purchased by the All Saint's Guild as a memorial to Bishop Coleman. On Nov. 3, 1910, Bishop Kinsman dedicated a window and an eagle lectern of oak, presented as a memorial to Bishop Coleman, by Miss French, of Boston. The first Easter service to be held in All Saint's was conducted by Bishop Kinsman, in 1912.

Ground was broken for the parish-house on Apr. 26, 1915. The corner-stone was laid, by Bishop Kinsman, on June 5, 1915. It was dedicated on Oct. 15, 1915. The parish-house is connected to the church by a vestry-room. The rectory at 8th and State Sts. was purchased on July 15, 1922, from John W. Culver. In 1941, the church was redecorated and repaired. This church was known locally as the "little gray church" although it is now sheathed with white asbestos shingles.

**The First Methodist Church (M.E.),** at Delmar. The first sermon, in Delmar, was preached on Sept. 4, 1867, in the home of M. M. Hill. A plank church was built in 1868. The last sermon, in Mr. Hill's home was preached on Jan. 26, 1868. The new church was dedicated on Feb. 16, 1868, by the Rev. Joseph Cook and was named "Wesley."

A new church was built in 1872. It was dedicated on Nov. 30, 1872, by the Revs. Enoch Stubbs and W. E. England. The church site was purchased on Nov. 28, 1873, from Elijah Freeney. In 1884, a tower and steeple were added. The church was improved in 1891, and it was rededicated on Sun., Oct. 25, 1891, by the Revs. J. D. C. Hanna, H. S. Dulaney and A. D. Davis, the pastor.

On Aug. 17, 1892, in a conflagration that destroyed one-half of the town, the church was burned. After this, meetings were held in the cannery and then in the Baptist Church. A new church was built immediately.

Land was purchased from Nathaniel Hitchens on Feb. 15, 1893, from S. J. Hitchens on May 21, 1908 and from Fannie E. Elliott on Aug. 7, 1913. The church was incorporated on Mar. 11, 1929. In 1932, the steeple was replaced with a tower and the entire building was brick-veneered. The work was completed in 1933. A new organ was installed in 1939. The name "First" was adopted in 1940. The church maintains a large cemetery on e. State St. Additional land for this purpose was purchased from Chas. C. Jones, on Oct. 20, 1934 and from John P. West on July 2, 1937.

**Mt. Olive Methodist Church (M.P.)** at Delmar was organized in 1889. Services were held in a hall until 1890 when the first small church was built. It was located on State St., west of the railroad and was named "Bethesda M. P. Church." The site was purchased on Feb. 26, 1891, from S. J. Hitchens. A site at the corner of 2nd and State St. was purchased and the second church was completed and was dedicated on Nov. 12, 1893. At this time it was made a separate charge and the name "Mt. Olive" was adopted. It was incorporated on Feb. 25, 1897.

The church was improved and was rededicated on Feb. 6, 1898, by the Rev. T. P. Revelle. It was enlarged and was rededicated in May, 1908. Land

was purchased on Sept. 25, 1918 from Frank E. Lynch. Improvements were made, including brick-veneering the building, and a rededication service was held on Dec. 17, 1933. After extensive improvements to the chancel, rededication services were held on Mar. 2, 1940. This church maintains a large cemetery on e. State St.

**The First Baptist Church** at Delmar was organized in 1883. The church site at Main and Park Sts. was purchased on Mar. 27, 1883, from Elijah Freney and the church was built during that year. It was dedicated on Sun., Nov. 25, 1883, by the Rev. Dr. G. J. Johnson, of the American Baptist Publication Soc. The church was officially recognized on Apr. 17, 1884. A rededication service was held on Apr. 20, 1884. Among those taking part were the Revs. J. T. Craig, James Hope and I. M. Haldeman. The evening sermon was preached by the Rev. M. Chandler of the Delmar M. E. Church. The church was rebuilt in 1925. A rededication service was held with Dr. Joseph T. Watts, Gen. Sec. for Maryland and the Rev. J. E. Berkstresser, the pastor, officiating. The church was incorporated on May 1, 1935.

**Delmar Primitive Baptist Church** was organized in 1882. The meetings were held in private homes and in a nearby grove. The church was built in 1883. The church site at Second and Jewel Sts. was purchased from Levin S. Hastings on Aug. 30, 1883.

**The Roman Catholic Mission** at Delmar was opened in 1941.

**Metropolitan M. E. Zion Church**, colored, at Delmar was built in 1919. The church site was purchased on Nov. 26, 1920, from Mary A. Hastings.

**Old Forge A. M. E. Church** was located beside James' Branch a short distance s. w. of the old Broad Creek Bridge. Near this point, a forge, a saw-mill and a grist-mill were erected in the late 1700's. The forge was the first to be abandoned, the saw-mill was closed about 1880 and the grist-mill was closed some time later.

On Sept. 16, 1848, James Horsey donated a half-acre church site to a group of free Africans headed by Samson Matthews. Old Forge Church was built and a graveyard was laid out. An active camp-meeting was conducted each year in the woods beside the church. The church was closed about 1909 and the land reverted to Wm. De Shields who had purchased the Horsey farm. There were no tombstones in the graveyard and there is nothing to mark the old site.

**Christ P. E. Church**, located three miles east of Laurel beside Chipman's Pond, was built in 1771. It was incorporated on Feb. 2, 1808. It is believed to have replaced a church built here at an earlier date.

Any definite information as to any deed or land grant to Christ Church before 1793 appears to be lost in the mists of history. As is generally known the ownership of the "Three Lower Counties," now Delaware, was in dispute between Lord Baltimore and Wm. Penn for many years. During this time, grants of land in Delaware were made by both Lord Baltimore and Wm. Penn. This applied especially to Sussex County and to the section close to the western boundary of the State. It is possible that a church site was granted to Christ Church by Lord Baltimore at the time the first church was built, but this is very doubtful.

This chapel at Broad Creek was a chapel-of-ease for Stepney Parish. Stepney Parish Church was Green Hill Church located at what was then Green