

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.*

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the Rev. J. E. Martin. He was assisted by the Revs. Robert Linthicum, Raymond Taylor and Virgil Peters, the pastor. The title to the church site was secured from Edward B. Rust on Jan. 13, 1943. The dedication service was held on Jan. 30, 1944, by the Rev. J. E. Martin, assisted by the Rev. Zenas B. Bean, the pastor.

The colored people of Georgetown maintain three churches. Prospect A. M. E. Church was built in 1866 and rebuilt in 1907. St. James' M. E. Church was built in 1840. On Jan. 13, 1840, they purchased the "schoolhouse old field" from Wm. E. Harris for the church site. The church was remodeled in 1867. The First Mt. Zion Baptist Church purchased one acre of land on Mar. 22, 1921, from Chas. A. Wing in the section known as "Campbell Town."

Bethesda Methodist Church (M.E.) was originally located at a spot adjoining the northern end of Delaware Colony, south of Georgetown. Joshua Morris, who owned the Morris or Dodd Mill, on June 28, 1831, purchased the Morris or Anderson Mill which included a saw-mill, a grist-mill, a dwelling and ten acres of land. In February, 1832, Joshua Morris donated a half-acre of land on Mill Road upon which a Methodist Church was to be built. Bethesda Church was built during that year.

The erection of a new church was started in June, 1859. It was dedicated on Nov. 13, 1859, by Dr. Cook and the Rev. Mr. Willey. One hundred perches of land were purchased on Apr. 14, 1883 from Benton W. Thompson.

The site is marked by the old graveyard, badly overgrown with brush, in which the oldest legible tombstone is that of Wm. B. Timmons who died on Feb. 5, 1867.

In 1895, the church was moved to a new site at Stockley and rebuilt. This new site was secured from N. W. Prettyman on Jan. 25, 1896. The Benton Thompson tract was sold to Wm. L. McIlvaine on Jan. 14, 1896, for \$16.00. There is a graveyard beside the church, the dates on the tombs beginning about 1900.

Grace Methodist Church (M.E.) at Millsboro. When settlements were made at the head of the Indian River, the village east of the river was called Rock Hole and the village west of the river was called Washington. When a postoffice was established at Rock Hole, it was given the name Millsboro. Gradually, this name was also adopted by the village of Washington.

In 1827, a Methodist Society was formed at Washington and on Feb. 16, 1828, a church site was purchased from Wm. Jefferson for \$21.00. A church was then built and named the "Washington M. E. Church."

A new church was built and it was dedicated on Aug. 18, 1874 by the Rev. Anthony Atwood. On Sept. 20, 1894, they were incorporated as "Grace M. E. Church." In 1896, the building was sold to the Baptists, who moved it to Washington St. Additional land was purchased on Apr. 27 and Nov. 11, 1896, from Mary B. Salmons. The frame of a larger church was raised on Sept. 18, 1896. The dedication service was held on the evening of Apr. 11, 1897, by the Rev. T. E. Terry assisted by Pres. Elder Avery and the Revs. T. E. Martindale and J. D. C. Hanna.

On Aug. 12, 1905, the building was destroyed by fire. The present structure was completed and was dedicated on Dec. 16, 1906. The parsonage lot on State St. was purchased, on May 26, 1924, from Edwin C. Ryan. A property on Morris Ave. was purchased, on Dec. 18, 1928, from the State B. of E. This is the proposed site for a new church which it is planned to build.

The church was remodeled in 1933 and an oil-heating system was installed