

History of Orlean United Methodist Church

A. History of Methodism and Orlean

Most of Fauquier County residents were from the Church of England and many of the identified laborers and a few of the immigrants to the area prior to the Revolutionary War had been under the influence of the Wesleyan movement in England. The Church of England established the first organized church in Fauquier County, but the Methodist Church was the first organized congregation to be formed within the township limits of the town of Warrenton.

As early as 1785, the County Court records of Fauquier County show evidence of itinerant Methodist preachers who traveled and preached in Fauquier. Benjamin VanPelt presented his credentials of ordination to the Court of Fauquier County as a Methodist Preacher in 1785. In 1788, Michael Ellis produced credentials of ordination in the Methodist Church, and filed them with the County Court. In 1801-1805, Daniel Hitt was from Fauquier and was Asbury's traveling companion for a time. Through out history records are very sketchy as to the work of these two and other preachers who came into the area in these early years, there seems to be evidence enough to warrant a conclusion that there were numbers of Methodist families in the area.

By 1834, slavery largely controlled the economy of the county. The gentry were settled in princely estates which became the center of social life and hospitality. In spite of the Revolutionary War, the Church of England largely controlled the religious life of the gentry. The year of 1834 is significant in Methodism. At the Baltimore Annual Conference in Alexandria, Virginia, under the leadership of Bishop Emory, with one hundred and seven members present, the Warrenton Circuit was organized on the Potomac District.

The deposition of William Hume on August 21, 1852, for the Wolfe vs. Carter litigation, stated, "some years ago before the division in the Methodist Church, there was a society at Pipers Church, but the church in which this society worshipped has been deserted for some 8 or ten years and the class has been moved to the Orlean Academy and then to Cliff Church." It appears, based on Pastor Thomas E. Diggs deposition in the Court Case of Wolfe vs. Carter on June 25, 1852, that the Orlean Methodist Society was formed in 1834, although this date has not been substantiated in the archives of the United Methodist Church.

A deed was written in 1881 for property on Leed's Manor Road in the town of Orlean. Dr. Amos Payne and his wife Elizabeth Barton Payne sold this property to David Cooper, B. S. Fleming, Amos Payne, Jr. and others, the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

The deed states: "For and in consideration of the love we bear for the cause of Christ, and from an earnest desire to promote His heritage on earth, and for the further consideration of \$5.00 we have given and sold for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a certain parcel of land situated at Orlean, Virginia (then a description of boundaries)...In trust that said premises shall be used, kept, and maintained and disposed of as a place of worship for the use of the ministry and membership,

of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, subject to the discipline, usage, and ministerial appointments of said church and the annual conference within whose bounds the said premises are located.” [Recorded in Deed Book 74, page 54; June 19, 1883].

It appears that Orlean United Methodist Church was built between 1881 and 1883 by local carpenters and volunteers. A pulpit Bible was presented to the church by the Warrenton Methodist Church South on February 1, 1883.

Methodists who lived in this community were working people. Dr. Payne was perhaps the most prosperous. There were weavers, blacksmiths, wheel wrights, millers, merchants, and farmers. The people who owned the big estates were primarily Episcopalians. Therefore, it took years to build the membership of the church. Stories have survived which tell about the excellent attendance for the Christmas Tree and Children’s Day programs.

Families that were interested in building the church included Dr. and Mrs. Amos Payne and Judge John Barton Payne, the famous son of a Orlean family. Judge Payne became a lawyer, statesman, Secretary of the Interior during Wilson’s Administration, Chairman of the American Red Cross, and a judge of the Circuit Court.

The General Conference of 1844 in New York City on May 1st brought about the division of the Methodist Church partly over the issue of slavery. Slaveholders had only three legal means to divest themselves of slave property. (1) They could sell slaves to another party. (2) They could send the slaves abroad. (3) They could physically transport the slaves to a free state (*Slavery and Methodism*, by Donald G. Mathews’ Ph.D). As the result of this conference and the anti-slavery issue the Methodist Episcopal Church, South was formed in 1885. The Plan of Separation was implemented. A Border War of Methodism developed in which the churches and preachers had to choose between the two jurisdictions one being the Baltimore Conference and the other the Virginia Conference.

Fauquier County lies along the northern side of the Rappahannock River and thus was at the edge of the 1844 border between the Baltimore Conference and the Virginia Conference. Orlean, being one of the border churches, played a significant part of history as it choose to adhere south with the Virginia Conference.

This issue lead to rebellion. There was a series of official and challenged quarterly conference meetings at most of the other churches on the Warrenton Circuit at which affiliation was discussed.

The plan of Separation allowed a church or station in a bordering conference to determine which section of the Methodist Episcopal Church it wished to adhere. The Orlean situation resulted in a lawsuit which was eventually decided in favor of the Southerners, probably a reflection of Virginia political support for the southern side. Once Orlean choose to adhere South, it seems, the border was itself in a different place.

In the midst of this series of local church votes, several persons were actively engaged in what can best be characterized as propaganda. They called it revival preaching. One of the crucial figures was William A. Smith, the new President of Randolph Macon College. Smith has been a figure of significance in Methodist history. He began a series of revival meetings in the Fauquier County churches

during the weeks when they were voting on affiliation. Smith's racist slavery views were published.

In the midst of the campaign for affiliation votes, Bishop William A. Capers was invited to preach in this area in the Spring of 1847. Smith, Capers, and the Virginia conference presiding elders persuaded many of the Fauquier County congregations to adhere South. The first result was that new, more northerly districts were organized for the Virginia Conference, and eventually in 1867 a new (Southern) Baltimore Conference was organized, directly competing with the (Northern) Baltimore Conference.

In this conflict between the Baltimore Conference and the Virginia Conference. Preachers sent to Fauquier County included some who had served or would serve in areas unfriendly or neutral on the slavery issue. Methodism played a crucial role in the development of attitudes during the period of the Civil War.

After the Civil War a young minister from Loudoun County, John T. James, was assigned to the Warrenton Circuit in 1866. The circuit at this time was composed of Warrenton, Bethel, Salem (now Marshall), Wesley Chapel, Buckland, and Sudley.

In the early 1900's Mr. and Mrs. John Wright were generous supporters of the church. Other members were Mr. and Mrs. Sam Hall, Sr., Mrs. Grace Russell, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Blackwell, Mrs. John Ellis, Mrs. Nellie Wright, Mrs. Mary Ramey, and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Barron.

During the 1920's Orlean and Wesley Chapel were part of the West Fauquier Charge. This was during the Depression and there was no parsonage. In 1928 the church became part of the Marshall Charge. For the first time, a treasurer's book was started by Mrs. Lena Blackwell who was treasurer. During this time regular worship services began, and offering envelopes were used. Sunday School was active and vacation Bible School was held. The Epworth League was organized for young people and a Woman's Society was formed.

In the early 1930's, during the Depression, it was a common practice to 'Pound the preacher'. Church members wanted to supplement the pastor's financial income by providing food. One member of the congregation would bring in one pound of sugar, another one pound of butter, and so on. The members of the church were fortunate that they had their farms and families did not go hungry.

In 1942, the Reverend Earle Henley started an Easter Sunrise Service in the Orlean Cemetery. This was a community endeavor, the only one in the community. The Baptists and Methodists still join together each year for this service.

On May 4, 1975 renovations had been completed at the church and a Re-Dedication Service was conducted by the Reverend Esdras Gruver, District Superintendent.

On September 13, 1981 the church celebrated its Centennial by having an all day service. The Reverend William D. Parrish, Winchester District Superintendent, was the guest speaker.

In 1991, the Orlean-Wesley Chapel Charge was formed while Reverend Barbara Alloway Minter was serving. Hume United Methodist Church was merged with Orlean United Methodist Church. The Hume Church was sold and the money from the sale of this building was given to the Orlean congregation. A full basement was erected at Orlean with the proceeds from the sale. The dedication of the new

addition took place on May 10, 1992 with Dr. Thomas Coffman, Winchester District Superintendent, present.

In 1997 Reverend Donna Mott was assigned as pastor. Currently there are 66 members with the average attendance of 40. The United Methodist Women are active in the life of the church. Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and Bible studies are still offered.

There are many loyal members who have contributed many hours to their church over the years. Four special people are recognized, Louisa and Dan Payne for decorating the church on special occasions, especially during the Easter and Christmas season. Bob and Irene Ball have also contributed their services since they became members. In 1997, Pastor Donna Mott began to recognize the many loyal members of Orlean church. Each quarter an individual is given the Angel Unaware Award. The first angels to be acknowledged in July, 1998 were: Connie Scott, R.O. Updike, Joan Blackwell, and Rudasill Hume.

Mrs. Roberts, wife of Reverend William Roberts, presented the church with a check for \$1,000. This check came from his estate and was to be given to Orlean in memory of his pastorate. The money was used to refurbish the old pump organ. The consecration service was held on November 8, 1998 with Mrs. Roberts and two of her sons present. Breakfast preceded the service.

The members of the Orlean-Wesley Chapel United Methodist Charge raised approximately \$69,000 and purchased a home at 338 Dover Road in Warrenton, Virginia to serve as a parsonage. The exterior of this bi-level is brick with aluminum siding. The house has a living room, dining room, kitchen, two baths, family room, four bedrooms, and a laundry room. The total living space is approximately 2500 sq. feet.

Pastor Donna and Jim moved into the new parsonage on Monday, March 15, 1999. The contract was finalized on Friday, March 19, 1999. The Service of Consecration was held on Sunday, May 16, 1999, 2:00-4:00 PM at the new parsonage. There was a short dedication with the District Superintendent, The Reverend Jay Hanke, present. The choirs of both churches sang the song, "Bless This Home". Following the service there was plenty of food and good fellowship.

Bell Chimes were purchased for Orlean United Methodist Church. Money had been donated by members of the Russell family and by George (Buz) and Carol Payne. The Service of Consecration was held on June 6, 1999. The musical instruments were presented in memory of Mary J. Russell, Katherine Maphis Payne, Herbert and Polly Whitesell. A luncheon followed the worship service.

The Reverend David Craig preached his first sermon at Orlean United Methodist Church on July 4, 1999.

B. Church Structure and Furnishings

The architecture of the Orlean United Methodist Church is a typical example of a religious building of that era as it is a conglomeration of various styles popular during that period.

The heavy cornice work along the eaves of the roof is a characteristic of 19th Century Georgian architecture. The half-moon window above the front door is derived from the wheel or rosary window of the European Renaissance. The large side windows, which allow natural light for daytime services, were typical examples of the beginnings of prairie style architecture, made so famous by Frank Lloyd Wright.

The steeply pitched roof and the long span of the ceiling were accomplished by the use of an early truss structural system. This principle is still used today and is especially prevalent in residential and other smaller buildings. [Written by Lusby Blackwell, a member of the church and graduate in Architecture from V. P. I. in 1977.]

The building itself (36' x 42') has remained virtually the same over the years. The exterior was originally finished in wood weather-board siding. In 1928, to help protect from the weather, the exterior was stuccoed with a light brown cement plaster by Mr. Guilder Gill, a building contractor who was serving as the pastor. New wall board was put on the inside and painted. This work was done by volunteer labor of the members. Electricity was put in during the 1930's.

In the early 1900's, Mrs. Julia Parr was instrumental in acquiring an organ.

In 1949, a Repair Fund was started as the church was hard to heat. There was only one chimney stack, so only one stove could be used. Most of the congregation would sit on one side of the church. An oil stove was bought, but the heating problem still remained because of the insulation of the church.

During the 1950's a piano was given by Mr. and Mrs. R. O. Updike. With the help of Herbert Whitesell, a retired government landscape architect who became a member of the church, the church yard was graded and grass was planted, along with shrubbery which was placed around the porch. A stone walk was laid in the front of the church and stone steps.

In 1953 the church was in need of repair and Reverend B. L. Locke acquired approximately \$300.00 from the District over three years. Windows were repaired, a new porch and steps were built, asphalt tile was laid on the floor, and the church roof was painted. A door was put in the back of the church to be used by those who could not climb the steps.

In 1956, volunteers worked on the church benches trying to restore the natural pine finish. Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Tohlin, in 1959, presented a cross in memory of Mrs. Tohlin's Mr. and Mrs. E. N. Jeffries, her parents. Candlesticks were presented by the Russell family in memory of members of the Russel family.

In the 1960's, the inside walls were painted, ceiling tile was put up, the chimney was removed, and a new oil stove was given by Sam Hotchkiss Hall. Mr. and Mrs. Geo Bier gave a new communion table and parchments in memory of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. S. Hall Sr.

The old pulpit was moved to the back of the platform to serve as an altar, through efforts of Mrs. Updike. A new pulpit was given by Mrs. Edith Tohlin in memory of her brother, Robert Jeffries, and nephew, Garland Russell Jr. New kneeling pads were made by Joan Blackwell, Mrs. R. O. Updike, and Ethel Hume.

In the 1970's, new dry wall was hung and painted. Stained glass windows were put in 1974 through the efforts of Mrs. Ethel Tohlin. Her home church in Philadelphia was torn down and the church was moved to the suburbs. These windows were saved and placed in the Orlean United Methodist Church. Reverend James Becker was Pastor at this time. April 1975, a large walnut cross, which is located behind the altar and between the stained glass windows were given by Ted and Jean Hume, children of Rudasill and Ethel Hume. A piano was given in memory of Mrs. Kate Hall by her daughter, Elizabeth Hall Bier.

In 1977, a new sill was put under the back of the church and beautiful red carpet was laid over the whole church floor. In the 1980's a well was dug and rest rooms installed in the back of the church.

In 1984 offering plates were donated in memory of W. Jackson Williams by his wife, Thelma, and son, Bruce. During the late 1980's Sunday School Rooms were built in the rear of the sanctuary above the Rest Rooms and Closet. Albert Hinkley Jr., a local architect donated the plans. Air conditioning was also installed for the entire building. At this time there were only a few active members attending the Hume United Methodist Church. The Virginia Conference merged the Hume and the Orlean Churches. The church in Hume was later sold.

The money that was given to the Orlean congregation in 1991, was used for a full basement. This was made possible by raising the church. The dedication took place on May 10, 1992 with Dr. Thomas Coffman, Winchester District Superintendent and Reverend Barbara Minter, Pastor present. A new gas heating system, three class rooms were erected with a social hall, kitchen, and bathroom. Billy Miller, of the Miller and Blackwell Construction Company, donated his time to supervise this project. The company provided the remaining labor and material at cost. The Blackwell Family gave a donation to equip the kitchen in memory of their father and husband, Wesley Blackball. Later a piano was donated for the Social Hall by Susan Orrison Chaney.

In 1996 new gray carpet was installed in the sanctuary. In 1998 a generous donation was received from Mrs. William Roberts, wife of our former minister. This money was used to refurbish and refinish the woodwork of the old original organ.

C. History of the Conference, District, and Circuit

1. Conference:

Virginia	1844-1866
Baltimore	1866-1940
Virginia	1941-Present

2. District:

Charolettesville	1844-1853
Washington	1854-1865
Alexandria	1865-1865
Washington	1866-1868
Winchester	1869-1870
Washington	1871-1905
Winchester	1906-1912
Alexandria	1913-1932
Winchester	1933-Present

Note: 1933-1938, Winchester District, Baltimore Conference.

1939-1940, Winchester District, Baltimore Conference. 1939 Methodist Episcopal South merged with the Methodist Episcopal Church. During this time the Methodist Protestant Church merged with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

1941-1968, Winchester District, Virginia Conference. 1968, the Methodist Episcopal Church merged with Evangelical United Brethren Church to form the United Methodist Church.

1968-Present, Winchester District, Virginia Conference.

3. Circuit/Charge:

1844-1893	<u>Warrenton Circuit/Charge</u> . The circuit at this time was composed of Warrenton, Bethel, Salem (now Marshall), Wesley Chapel, Buckland, and Sudley.
1894-1914	<u>Marshall Circuit</u>
1915-1920	<u>Warrenton Circuit</u>
1921-1927	<u>West Fauquier Charge</u> . Wesley Chapel, Soldiers Memorial, Orlean, Hebron.
1928-1947	<u>Marshall Charge</u> . Marshall, The Plains, Rectortown, Cool Spring, Orlean, and Wesley Chapel.
1948-1989	<u>Linden Charge</u> . Linden, Markham, Hume, Orlean, Howellsville and Happy Creek. (Happy Creek and Howellsville removed 1959).
1990-Present	<u>Orlean-Wesley Chapel Charge</u> was formed with the union of Orlean Wesley Chapel Churches.

D. Partial List of Former Presiding Elders and District Superintendents:

John A. McKenny, Jr.	Paul D. Martin, Jr.
R. Orman Bryant	Esdras Gruver
W. E. Thomas	Lee B. Shaeffer
F. B. Oglesby	Randolph Arrington
J. C. Dugger	Jack A. Minnick
L. O. Wilburn	
H. E. Cromer	
Harry B. Eaton	

E. Pastors that Served Orlean 1844- Present

Warrenton Circuit (1844-1893)

[1834-1843, There are no records in the Archives at Randolph Macon College.]

Leonidas Rosser	1844-1847	Virginia Conference
R. T. Nixon & Esmond Gibbs	1848-1849	
R. T. Nixon & Jason Duncan	1849	
Martin Q. Dunn	1850-1851	
John D. Blackwell	1854	
W. E. Judkins	1855-1856	
W. M. Cross & Andrew Beckwith	1857	
Robert Nash & John Payne	1858	
William Ward & Lewis Greybill	1859	
William Ward & J. Lester Shipley	1860	
Robert Watts & John Williamson	1861	
John Williamson	1862	
Jacob Proctor	1863	
James Fitzpatrick	1864	
John D. Blackwell	1865	
John T. James	1866-1867	Baltimore Conference
John P. Blackwell	1868	
H. E. Johnson	1869-1870	
I. R. Finley	1871	
Lewis Miller	1872-1873	
O. C. Beal	1874	
James Higgins	1875-1876	
James Higgins & L. Russer Green	1877	
James Higgins	1878	
W. G. Hammond	1879-1881	
I. W. Canter	1882-1884	
J. A. Kern	1885	

J. C. C. Newton	1886
William A. Wade	1887-1889
J. W. Grubb	1890-1893

Marshall Circuit (1894-1914)

H. M. Stricker	1894-1895
(No information)	1896-1897
G. T. Tyler	1898
E. H. Henry & S. Grady	1899
W. P. Coe & W. R. Karr	1900
W. P. Coe	1901
W. P. Coe & G. W. Staples	1902-1903
J. M. Hawley & G. W. Staples	1904-1905
O. W. Lusby	1906-1909
W. B. Dorsey	1910-1911
A. A. P. Neel	1914-1914

Warrenton Circuit (1915-1920)

George Hazel	1915-1916
J. A. Johnson	1917
H. L. Bivens	1918-1919

West Fauquier Charge (1921-1927)

W. H. Gray	1920-1922
J. J. Sangster	1923-1924
G. M. Bell	1925-1926
C. B. Larrick	1927

Marshall Charge (1928-1947)

G. T. Cooper	1931
J. C. Dugger	1933
W. P. Saunders	1938
F. M. Lucas	1939
W. S. Grant	1941
E. E. Henley	1942
W. A. Lyons	1947

Virginia Conference

Linden Charge (1948-1989)

James R. Stevenson	1949
Stuart Johnston	1950
B. L. Lock	1953
Charles S. Cook, Jr.	1956
Byron R. Wilkinson	1962
S. W. T. Hedrick	1964
Norman F. Hunt	1967
Harold E. Werley	1969
James M. Becker	1973

Richard R. Helveston	1976
William Burrough	1978
William Roberts	1983

Orlean-Wesley Chapel Charge (1990-Present)

Barbara Alloway Minter	1986
Donna Shutes Mott	1997
David E Craig	1999

Pastors that Served Wesley Chapel 1844- Present

Leonidas Rosser	1844-1847
R. T. Nixon & Esmond Gibbs	1848-1849
R. T. Nixon & Jason Duncan	1849
Martin Q. Dunn	1850-1851
John D. Blackwell	1854
W. E. Judkins	1855-1856
W. M. Cross & Andrew Beckwith	1857
Robert Nash & John Payne	1858
William Ward & Lewis Greybill	1859
William Ward & J. Lester Shipley	1860
Robert Watts & John Williamson	1861
John Williamson	1862
Jacob Proctor	1863
James Fitzpatrick	1864
John D. Blackwell	1865
John T. James	1866-1867
John P. Blackwell	1868
H. E. Johnson	1869-1870
I. R. Finley	1871
Lewis Miller	1872-1873
O. C. Beal	1874
James Higgins	1875-1876
James Higgins & L. Russer Green	1877
James Higgins	1878
W. G. Hammond	1879-1881
I. W. Canter	1882-1884
J. A. Kern	1885
J. C. C. Newton	1886
William A. Wade	1887-1889
J. W. Grubb	1890-1893
H. M. Stricker	1894-1895
(No information)	1896-1897
G. T. Tyler	1898
E. H. Henry & S. Grady	1899
W. P. Coe & W. R. Karr	1900

W. P. Coe	1901
W. P. Coe & G. W. Staples	1902-1903
J. M. Hawley & G. W. Staples	1904-1905
O. W. Lusby	1906-1909
W. B. Dorsey	1910-1911
A. A. P. Neel	1914-1914
George Hazel	1915-1916
J. A. Johnson	1917
H. L. Bivens	1918-1919
W. H. Gray	1920-1922
J. J. Sangster	1923-1924
G. M. Bell	1925-1926
C. B. Larrick	1927
G. T. Cooper	1931
J. C. Dugger	1933
W. P. Saunders	1938
F. M. Lucas	1939
W. S. Grant	1941
E. E. Henley	1942
W. A. Lyons	1947
James R. Stevenson	1949
Stuart Johnston	1950
B. L. Lock	1953
Charles S. Cook, Jr.	1956
Byron R. Wilkinson	1962
S. W. T. Hedrick	1964
Norman F. Hunt	1967
Harold E. Werley	1969
James M. Becker	1973
Richard R. Helveston	1976
William Burrough	1978
William Roberts	1983
Barbara Alloway Minter	1986
Donna Shutes Mott	1997
David E Craig	1999

F. Music Directors (Pianist and/or Organist) Early 1900's Until the Present

Mrs. Julia Parr	1900
Mrs. Grace Russell	1920
Mrs. Lena Blackwell (Substitute)	
Mrs. Arthelia. Updike	1927
Miss. Lorraine Hackett	1989
Mrs. Jean Hume Miller	1991
Mrs. Connie Scott (Substitute)	
Mrs. Patricia Taylor	1996
Mrs. Lorraine Updike	1997
Miss. Emily Payne	