

## Churches in the Shenandoah Valley

**Maurertown Brethren Church  
24916 Old Valley Pike  
Maurertown, VA 22644**



### A brief History

The story of Maurertown Brethren Church begins in the 1885 with the original name of Shiloh Brethren Church. The founder was E.B. Shaver along with others who branched out from the Valley Pike Church of the Brethren. They sought to organize a new church based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ alone (Progressive Brethren) and not on the traditions of men (Traditional Brethren). The congregation met in the school houses, tents and union churches until the congregation grew in numbers. A new meeting house was completed and dedicated in April 1887.

Church website:  
Telephone: (540) 436-3469

## Churches in the Shenandoah Valley

Maurertown Brethren has had a total of only eight pastors in the church's history. E.B. Shaver, the first pastor, led the congregation for 39 years. His Grandson describes him as a "fun loving person, dressed in a black suit with a long tailed coat, who wore a wide brimmed hat and usually walked with a cane." He was known as "Moses of the Valley" due to his traveling through the valley preaching and planting churches. He was also called "War Horse" or the Leader and Pioneer of the Progressive movement in the South East District.

Ed Miller, the second pastor, was an evangelist at the church before being called to fill the shoes of E.B.Shaver. He was aware of the difficulty of following such a man but was eager to do so. He did all he could to make families feel welcome in the worship service but strongly emphasized reverence in the worship and reverence for the house of God. Some of the highlights of Pastor Miller's ministry include: John Locke, the great grandson of George Shaver (the first pastor of the Woodstock German Baptist Church) was called into the ministry in 1928; In 1930 a new parsonage was constructed on land donated by Turah Locke: Due to a large increase in Sunday School attendance in 1940's and 1950's a two story addition and basement was added. In the fall of 1957 a revival was held at the church. People recall Pastor Miller singing loud and well "Supper Time". He died the following Sunday after serving 33 years.

Pastor Robert Hoffman followed Pastor Miller. He and his wife along with church leadership emphasized reaching out to the youth. They encouraged the youth to set goals. One of the most impressive highlights from his ministry focused on a young man named Frederick Finks. In the eighth grade he informed his counselors he intended to go to Ashland College and Seminary to prepare for his life in the ministry. He certainly did obtain his goals. He is now Dr Fred Finks, president of Ashland University in Ohio.

The Hoffman's were at Maurertown for 4 years. They felt they were being called to a new field of ministry. Clyde Baumgardner and wife followed Pastor Hoffman.

Pastor Baumgardner had a short but eventful stay at Maurertown. A radio ministry was started to reach out to a wider area of the Shenandoah Valley. He preached on controversial subjects such as divorce and remarriage. He emphasized missionary work and tithing.

Pastor Wilber Thomas and wife came to the Maurertown Community in 1952 after Pastor Baumgardner. There were some confusing times at the church following the departure of the previous pastor. Pastor Thomas preached on reconciliation and calmed troubled waters. The Maurertown people were able to let bygones be bygones. After 4 years Pastor Thomas moved to another field of service.

The next leaders in the church were missionaries from Africa named Doc and Jean Shank. Doc emphasized the mission of the local church beyond its own walls. He urged reaching out to other churches and in the community. He was involved in the Fire Department, Hospital and Ruritan Club work. It was also during this time that a Singing Group called the Harmonaires was formed. This was an exciting time in the church. However the Shank's began to feel the effects of such a busy life and Doc decided to retire after serving the church for 7 years.

Church website:  
Telephone: (540) 436-3469

## Churches in the Shenandoah Valley

Pastor Kent Bennett and his family came to the Maurertown Brethren for the next 5 years. He was an excellent Pastor/Teacher who shared his spiritual gift with the people of Maurertown. The people of the church began to share their faith with others at their work places and in daily contacts. The church body grew and was incredibly busy. In 1978 the new John Locke educational wing was added to the church. With this growth Maurertown became the Mother church to the Waterbrook Brethren Church in 1982.

Pastor Richard Craver and wife Maxine and 3 children came to serve the Maurertown congregation in 1982 and is the current pastor. He leads the people of the church in a compassionate and concerned way. He is very dedicated and accessible to the congregation. Pastor Craver is active in the community as a Hospital Chaplain, Ruritan member and serves on the board of Response (women's shelter). The church is active in supporting local charities and helping those less fortunate. During Pastor Craver's time we have added a picnic shelter and paved the parking lot and have continued to maintain God's church. Pastor Craver and his family have set an outstanding example of how God wants us to live our lives, both to the congregation as well as the community. We feel blessed to have him as our Pastor. Maurertown Brethren Church, under the leadership of our pastor, has become a strong positive symbol of Christian leadership in our community. Our church is still trying to realize what our second pastor, Ed Miller, hoped and prayed for when he wrote:

### The Open Door

"God make the door of this house we have raised to Thee wide enough to receive all who need human love, fellowship and the Father's care and narrow enough to shut out envy, pride and hate. Make its threshold smooth that it may be no stumbling block to childhood, weakness or straying feet, rugged and strong enough to turn back the tempter's power. God make the door of this house a gateway to thy eternal kingdom

*Submitted by Steven Snipe, November 2012*

Church website:  
Telephone: (540) 436-3469

# Churches in the Shenandoah Valley



**Maurertown Brethren Church**

**1885 – 2010**

**125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**



1885



1975



1923

Church website:  
Telephone: (540) 436-3469