

## Churches in the Shenandoah Valley

### Mt. Olive United Methodist Church

12180 Back Road,  
Toms Brook, VA



#### A brief History

There are few records concerning the early history of our church. The diaries of Mr. Levi Pitman which span the years 1845-1892, give us some valuable information regarding the establishment of the church. Mr. Pitman lived just across the road from the church. His first entry about the church is on April 22nd, 1866. He tells in a number of entries of preaching and meetings in Wm. Sibert's woodlot and at the Mt Olive School over the next several years. On Sunday August 9<sup>th</sup> 1868 Mr. Pitman tells of a large meeting at the Sibert woodlot concerning building a church there. On April 19<sup>th</sup> 1869 work was started on the church and it was completed in late Oct. 1869. The new church was dedicated on October 31, 1869 with 1000 people present and a collection of about \$500.00.

Mt Olive has always been on a Church Charge with as many as 7 churches in 1941, although for the past 36 years only a two church charge. We

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are presently with Shiloh United Methodist Church located west of Strasburg. There have been 52 different Ministers to serve at Mt Olive over the years since 1878 when we first have a record.

The Trustees purchased what we call the Parrish Hall on December 15<sup>th</sup> 1951 for \$2500.00 from Mr. David Wymer & wife. This building had been the Mt Olive School from when it was built in about 1874, to replace an earlier school on the same site, until it closed in 1941. We used it as our social hall, kitchen, bathrooms and classrooms for many years.

A one acre parcel of land adjoining the church was purchased in July 2002 from Mr. Tommy Estep and is being utilized for our main parking lot.

In the 1990's we began to plan on a new social hall and after much planning and discussion finally contracted Helsley Builders to construct the building in the spring of 2007. This was by far the most ambitious undertaking in the life of our church other than building the church itself. The Building Committee was formed in 2005 with 18 members & Pastor Bill Erbach. Terry Denton was Chairman during the planning stages and Vaughn Orndorff was Chairman during construction. Gary Walker served as treasurer and worked securing the loans needed. Betty & Bob Wakeman served as fund raising Chairpersons & Carol Williams served as Secretary. The building is 3400 sq. feet and has a large social hall, commercial kitchen, church office, storage rooms and restrooms. The cost is at approximately \$530,000.00 to date and we are going to add several improvements in the near future. Thanks to money saved over the years, many fund raisers and the proceeds from a house given to our church by Mary Lee Keller in 1992 we were able to pay off the final loan balance on October 12, 2010. The building has been well utilized since completion.

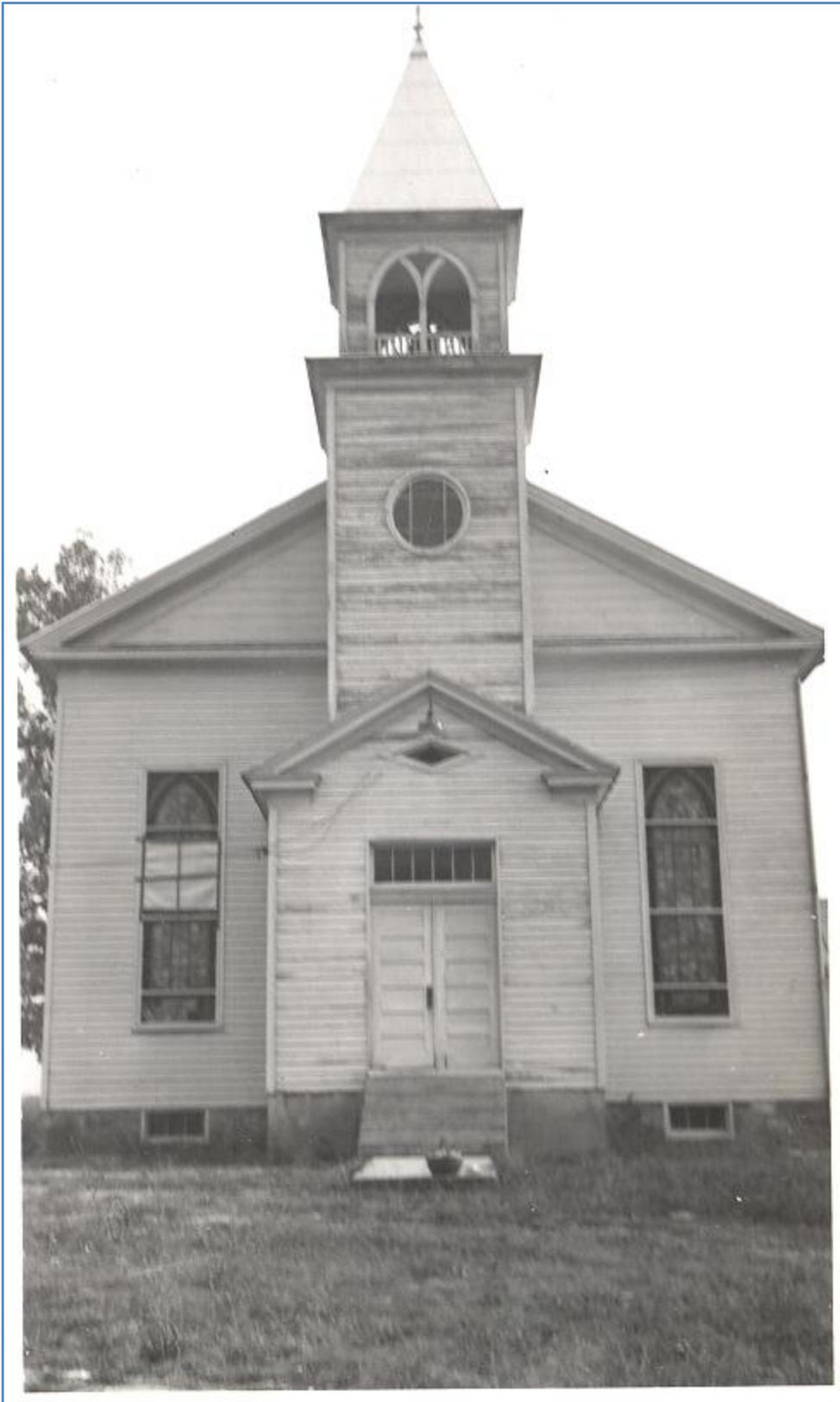
We currently have 160 members on our roll with an average attendance of about 70.

This short history was condensed from several histories compiled over the years.

Written by Vaughn Orndorff, Lay Leader

*October 2011*

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*Photograph taken ca 1942*

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