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TOGETHER

*Christ United  
Methodist Church*

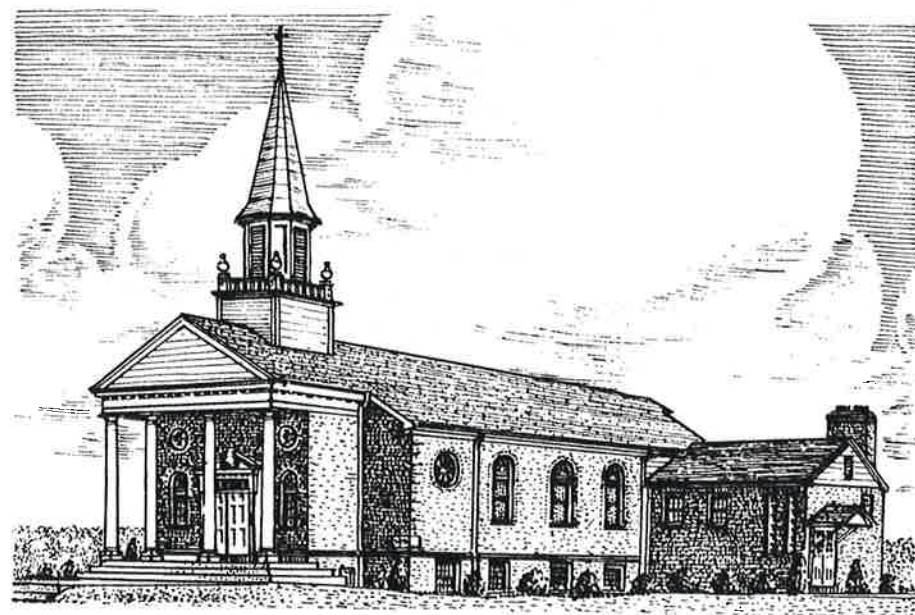
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CHRIST UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH

*25th Anniversary*



1975-2000

## GROWING TOGETHER

Uniting two churches into one church is much like the marriage of two people. There are old traditions, ideas, and opinions that have to be worked out before there can be harmony. Christ Church is the result of the "marriage" of two churches -- each with their own history.

The first movement toward Methodism in Tullytown was set on foot by George W. Cullen, a resident of the borough, who organized a Methodist Sabbath School which boasted as many as two hundred members in 1871 and was a source of great spiritual power in the community.

In 1872, O.R. Cook was appointed to Tullytown and commissioned to build up a congregation there. From late 1872 to early 1873, over eighty persons confessed conversion during a revival. A church was established and immediately planning began for a church building. Until the church was completed in 1874, services were held in a hall over the town general store. At the time of the dedication of the new building, the entire cost of \$4,733 was covered by subscriptions. In 1883, two heaters were purchased at the cost of \$99.94. This was paid through a special offering, donations, and the balance was taken from the treasury.

In 1883, a committee was appointed to examine the belfry and secure the bell. While we don't know the exact date that the bell was purchased, we do know it predates 1883.

In 1888, netting was placed over the front windows to prevent breakage that was reported almost every month. (And we think the kids of today are worse than they used to be?)

Forty-four tickets were sold for an "excursion" to Ocean Grove and Long Beach at 50 cents each. The church received a commission of 30 cents each.

In 1904, the foundation of the building was condemned and the walls rebuilt. In 1914, John Manning paid the balance of the mortgage, and the Trustees changed the name of the church to the Manning Memorial Episcopal Church. In 1915, the interior of the church was renovated and electric lights installed. A parsonage was built in 1919 at a cost of \$7,300 -- including furnishings.

Minutes from the Trustee meetings from 1878 to 1911 (there are some gaps in the records) reveal many details of the life of the congregation during its early years. For example, in 1878 the trustees agreed to pay a sexton \$4 per month. In 1883, the sexton received \$4 per month. By 1910, the sexton was earning (you guessed it!) \$4 per month.

Information on the pastors' salaries is spotty, but the highest payment was \$50 and the lowest \$4.10. The minutes also indicate that during this period, the Ladies Aid often came to the financial rescue with loans to the general fund.

Over the years, the name of the church reverted to Tullytown Methodist Episcopal Church. Following denominational mergers, it became the Tullytown United Methodist Church

Meanwhile....

The "old" St. Paul's Evangelical Church came into being in the Rising Sun section of Philadelphia in 1858. Before the church building was built in 1885 at a cost of \$8,500, the congregation met in a school house and then at a small church. During the late 1940s, Richard Kunz, a young seminary student, played the organ to help support his education.

On November 16, 1946, The Evangelical Church and the United Brethren in Christ united to form The Evangelical United Brethren (E.U.B.) Church.

In 1952, because of a changing neighborhood and the decline in attendance, it was decided to close St. Paul's Church. The assets were to be used to build a new church which would bear the St. Paul's name.

In 1957, at the Uniting Conference of the East Penn, New England, and Atlantic Conferences forming the Northeastern Conference, Virgil Megill was assigned to St. Paul's in Fairless Hills.

The "new" St. Paul's had its beginning in the home of Lorraine and Stanley Guogas. The church was to be built on land donated by the Danhurst Development Corporation.

The group met first in the Guogas home and then in the William Penn Junior High School.

The old St. Paul's Fund of \$45,745.26 was released to the new church. The parsonage was built first at a cost of \$13,552.82. At this time there were 35 persons on the Charter roll. In 1960 the church was built. The cornerstone was laid on April 24, 1960. At that time there were 164 members. Thirteen are still members of Christ Church.

The first congregation came from many different parts of the state and were happy to find an E.U.B. Church. "This is how we did it back home" became a common phrase as the church traditions developed.

In 1968 the Evangelical United Brethren church merged with the Methodist Church to form the United Methodist Church.

In the summer of 1974, Harold Peiffer, district superintendent and Allan Honigman, pastor of Tullytown, approached W. Richard Kunz, (the organist at the "old" St. Paul's had become pastor of the "new" St. Paul's Church) proposing a merger of the two churches. In September, each charge conference voted unanimously to look into the possibility of a union.

There were many issues to be resolved before a vote of union could be taken. Which property would be used? What would the church be named? What about a communion rail? Who would be the pastor? By now Fairless Hills had become home to the St. Paul's people. So now the catch phrase was, "at St. Paul's..." or "at Tullytown..." After a lot of prayer and discussion, most issues were resolved; and on April 13, 1975 the congregations of both churches agreed by a majority vote to unite.

On Sunday June 1, 1975, a combined service was held in the Tullytown Church. At the close of the service, a candle was lit and carried back to St. Paul's where it burned all afternoon. After a covered dish supper at St. Paul's, the altar candles were lit from the candle and a service of union was held. It is interesting that Christ Church was not on the original list of suggested names.

Sunday June 8 marked the first service together. Rev. Richard Johnson began his ministry on June 15, 1975. The Tullytown Church building was sold, and is currently the home of a Charismatic Episcopal congregation. The Tullytown bell was moved to the belfry at the new church, and was first rung there on July 4, 1976.

The past 25 years have been busy ones for Christ Church. The church has been served by the following pastors: Richard Johnson, Richard Glenn, John Wright, Mark King, David Ryan, and our current pastor Robert Strauss. Each pastor brought his own ideas, which helped us to grow as a church family. Only the real "old timers" remember who was at Tullytown and who was at St. Paul's -- we are all one now.

Old traditions have been blended and new ideas introduced. We still have the Ham & Oyster Dinner, Mother & Daughter Banquet, Calendar Parties, and Men's dinners. We have been sharing recipes since 1977. The team members have changed, but we still have a bowling team. The Seed Project began in 1982 and continues still. Our prayer chain started in 1975. Praise God for the many, many prayers that have been answered! Two cookbooks have been published, and we have enjoyed many of the recipes at our covered dish suppers. We have GREAT cooks at Christ Church!!

In 1991, the Easter Sunrise Service was moved to Pennsbury Manor after the geese at Silver Lake turned vicious.

We have enjoyed Lemon Sunday, Pretzel Sunday, Eye-glass Sunday, Western Sunday, Birthday Sunday, St. Swithens Day, Beach Party Sunday, Mardi Gras Night Chili Supper, Italian Night, & "No Excuse" Sunday. We have held an antique show, a penny party, and two dog shows. We have also had Chocolate Lover's Fantasy Night.

In 1982, a local girl made good when Lynn Pennell became our organist and choir director. Lynn has done a great job with the choir and hand bell choir. New choir robes were purchased in 1991. God's Little Angels, under the direction of Pastor Strauss, always bring a smile to everyone's face. Christ church is a singing church. Last year a visitor remarked that he hadn't had that much fun in church in years.

Last year we had our "Growing Together" campaign. Almost everyone in the congregation was involved. our special event was just that -- SPECIAL. The pledges were terrific.

Over the 25 years, we have gotten new carpets, new pew cushions, the ladies room has been spruced up (I haven't seen the men's

room!) and there have been many painting jobs.

There was a problem with the boiler several years ago, but that was discovered before any major problems occurred. Everything was covered with black soot, but the mess was cleaned up professionally within a few days. We had our Lady Bug infestation, but that too was taken care of. Weighing this against all the good things that have happened, Christ Church has had a very successful 25 years.

We were sorry when some of our members, due to work or retirement, moved away. We are happy for the new members who join our church family. We have cried and mourned the passing of our members and good friends. We have been happy for the couples who have been married. And we rejoice at the baptism of babies. This is the future of Christ Church.

The mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We make disciples as we

- proclaim the gospel, seek, welcome, and gather persons into the body of Christ.
- lead folks to commit their lives to Christ.

- nurture members in Christian living through worship, baptism, prayer, and Bible study.
- sending people into world to live lovingly as servants of Christ, feeding the hungry, and caring for strangers.
- continue the mission of seeking, welcoming, and gathering others into the community of Christ.

As we "Grow Together for Christ at Christ," we have upheld the mission of the Methodist Church.

There are many challenges, adventures, thrills, and happy times for Christ Church as we begin the new century. May the Lord continue to lead us and bless us as we continue to Grow Together for Christ.

## WE ARE THE CHURCH

Many a church history stops with a recounting of buildings and events through the years. But the church is really its members -- children of God who come together to worship and learn and share. The history of our church would not be complete without telling the history of some of our members.

Unfortunately, there is not enough space for everyone, so the following is a sampling of members responding to the question of when and why did you join, what do you like about our church, and what is your vision for our church.

Ellie Raphun joined the church in the 1990s after Ron Piazza brought her. What does she like about our church? "It makes me feel close to God. It makes me feel light hearted and clear. I love my pastor and his family." Her vision for the church? "Onward all Christian people! We will grow and serve the Lord. the King is coming -- Happy Day!"

Joy Coons joined Tullytown Church in 1972. She likes everything about Christ Church.

Betty Wills was also a Tullytown member who came with the merger. She likes the friendly spirit and the Women's Group. She especially remembers how friendly Judy

Letukas was to her when she first came to Christ church. She hopes the church will continue to grow and that "it's here to stay."

Tom Shannon's wife, Marsha, brought him to Tullytown Church. He likes the feeling of family and the ministers. He hopes to see growth from the number of children coming.

Ronald & Gloria Seacrist were Charter members of St. Paul's church. They like the message, the spiritual feeling, and the love and concern for each other. They would like to see continuing spiritual growth, a youth group, and community outreach.

Charlotte Weintraub is a brand new member, having just joined on May 14, 2000. She transferred from another Methodist Church and came to Christ church because she lives close by. She says, "I enjoy the Sunday service. I find Pastor Strauss' sermons very inspiring. It seems to be a happy church. I find the love of the Lord here through the people, the activities, and the services." She looks forward to growth and the new addition.

Grace Henderson joined the church in 1995. She was looking for a church that had children and friendly people. She likes everything about the church and there is nothing she dislikes. Her vision for the church is to bring more people to Christ from our



neighborhood by letting our light shine -- especially our young people.

Gloria Bizup came to St. Paul's sometime in the 1960s. Her neighbor and friend, Rita Warrick, brought her. She likes to warm atmosphere, the pastors, and the strong support from members of the congregation -- especially in times of emotional need. She wants to see the church grow larger and would also like to see the children and youth involved as members.

A friend brought Trudy Trischuk in 1978. She likes that the church is Christ-centered and family-oriented. She also likes that there are many areas to serve God and each other. She would like our church to become a center of faith and service in our community -- with new facilities and outreach -- and still retain a close family atmosphere.

Joan Houser mailed her survey form from up-state Pennsylvania. She joined St. Paul's after Charlie and Joan were married and moved to Levittown. She made so many good friends here, and she feels God's presence here. Christ church will always be her home. Her vision for the church is to see the building project completed and to fill the church with many new members and to watch her little grand-daughters grow in Christ here too.

Dot Gerhart went to Tullytown Church because it was the closest Methodist church to her house. She likes the warmth of the people, the sincerity of the pastor, and all the opportunities for involvement. She doesn't like having Sunday School in the lobby of the church and having to rearrange everything downstairs for dinners, etc. She would like to see some growth and outreach -- maybe through our new building.

Glenn Gerhart was raised in Tullytown and attended Sunday School there when he was a child. He likes the closeness. He also dislikes rearranging things for dinners. (Editor's note: It looks like too many of us think those tables and chairs move themselves!) Glenn's vision is for growth.

Penny Glavis was traveling in Europe with a friend who had cancer. The friend wanted Penny to go into all the churches with her to pray for a quick and easy death. A couple of the woman's children were expecting, and Penny told her she would pray that she would live to see the new babies. If that would happen, Penny vowed to start attending church. On their return home, the friend was found to be free of cancer. Penny said, "I ran to church!" Penny's daughter had been a bridesmaid in our church and told Penny how friendly the people were. Also, when she delivered flowers as part of her job, Pastor Ryan always helped her. She likes the

friendliness of the people, and she sees the church being bigger and better in the coming years.

Kay Zimmerman was a member of St. Paul's. She likes the friendliness of the people and the feeling of family. Her hope is that it will always stay the same.

Mary Greene has been a member for 6 years. She came to Beckie Teenie's daughter's wedding and was struck by how much the church looked like the one she had attended years ago. She likes the friendly, family-oriented atmosphere. She sees the church growing.

Laura Letukas began attending St. Paul's church with her mother when she was 4 years old. She attends because it's "a family thing -- you feel like you're home even if you've been away a while." She can still "see" her grandmother, Helen Barr, sitting in her usual seat even though Helen has passed away. Laura's vision for the church is a welcoming place for all of Christ's' loved ones.

Ruby Waddle joined St. Paul's church in 1964 after a neighbor brought her. She likes the friendliness and looks for growth, more room in the church, -- and air conditioning!

Ginny Richmond has been a member since 1990. She was raised as a Methodist

and began bringing daughter Lauren to Sunday School. Dot Gray invited Ginny to join their adult Sunday School class, and "I was hooked!" Ginny feels this is a very loving and warm church. She appreciates the fact that while the church is not huge, there are lots of personalities here. Her vision is to continue to grow and she thinks it's nice to see more children in the congregation.

Bob James joined in 1992. He was taking his daughter to Armstrong School next door and saw the church. When he visited on a Sunday, Dot and Glenn Gerhart really welcomed them. Everyone made them feel so welcome. Bob likes the friendliness, the outreach, bible studies, serving on committees, and helping with Habitat for Humanity -- doing God's work. His vision includes the new addition with classrooms that will allow for quality teaching of students. He would also like to see the church as a beacon for the future of the children.

Mary Ellyn Kunz was confirmed and became of member of St. Paul's during her father's term as pastor. She reestablished her membership when she moved back to the area in 1982. She likes the church for it's commitment to serving the Lord through a variety of ministries, the love that the members show to each other and the community, and the great food (especially chocolate lover's night!). Her vision for church? "Keep praying

for the church and each other -- and stay open to God's leading. Our vision can't begin to conceive of what God has in store for us!"

Ed and Brenda Adams were not happy in the church they were attending. Grace Henderson invited them to Christ church. She said, "just come one Sunday and see how you like it." They came for just one Sunday in 1996 -- and they liked it!! They like the warmness of the people and the size of church. They would like to see a youth group.

You might say that St. Paul's church was born in Lorraine & Stanley Guogas' living room. The district superintendent got their name from their former pastor, James Harring, in Wilkes Barre. Lorraine was active from the start and still is. She likes the fellowship. The church family is warm, caring, and loving. She would like to see the church grow and hopes we can offer more to the community. She would also like to see more works for missions.

Donna Puchino came to the church about 20 years ago with a neighbor who was a member. The neighbor no longer comes, but Donna is here to stay. She likes the friendliness and the fact that there are no cliques. She would like to see the church more involved in the community.

Terri Gulliver has been coming to the church for two and a half years. She is a

neighbor of the Gerharts and Thelma Frankenfield. She likes the way the church family cares about each other. She hopes it continues and reaches out to the community.

Lorraine and Joe Richardson were brought to the church by Brenda Adams (who, as you'll remember, was brought by Grace Henderson). They like everything about the church and hope to see lots of good things happening.

Patty Hibbert has been coming for over six years. Howard Lammerding brought her. And she likes everything about the church.

Howard Lammerding was introduced to Tullytown Church by Shirley & Jerry Wills in 1972. He says things have been great ever since. He likes the people and the power of prayer. He wants to see continued growth.

Kathy Evans came to St. Paul's as a child. Alice and Donald Bumford brought her along with her best friend Twila Nicol. She likes that the people are so friendly and that we are growing together.

Jack and Hannelore Swangler came to a Ham and Oyster Dinner. Jack talked with Pastor Mark King and liked him, so he started attending. Lore joined him about a year later. They like the feel of family and that the church

is small enough so you know everyone. They hope it won't change too much.

Dick and Avis Fetrow came because the Pennell's had brought their daughter Joy to Sunday School. They like the friendly people. Dick likes the way the ladies cook. They like the Strauss family. They are looking forward to the new addition.

Frances Jean Russell came from a Methodist Church in Iowa. Her husband Reuel brought her to Christ Church. Jean has always been a Methodist. Her vision: "I know it will forever be and grow."

Margo (Warrick) Wayda's parents were charter members of St. Paul's. Margo feel that the church people have always been her extended family. Her vision is growing together. She thinks it's wonderful how many new families have joined the church in the past 2 years.

In 1991 Beckie Teenie came "to visit once" -- and never left. She likes the friendly people, the family feeling, and concern for each other. She also likes the concern for youth and the opportunity to get to know God better. Beckie says, "with our physical growth, I foresee a new spiritual growth and an expanded youth ministry. I see our congregation reaching out to our community on a larger scale."

Dean Brettell joined in 1998. Brenda Adams brought him, too. He likes Pastor Strauss's sermons and the services. He just wants to see more of the same.

Lynn Pennell's parents were charter members of St. Paul's. She vaguely remembers attending church at the school. Christ Church is her home church, and she is a home town kind of person. She likes our style of worship. Even though the ministers have changed, the congregation is the church. She sees change coming as we become more of a community church. As we become more involved in community issues, we will be noticed and people will know we are here.

Dick and Eleanor Kunz returned to Christ Church in 1982 when Dick retired after 40 years of ministry, and "it was as if we were never away. We greeted old friends and made new ones. It was a difficult time for us with Joanne's illness, but we never felt alone. Our church family was always there for us." When Eleanor sees all the children gathered around Pastor Strauss, she prays they will stay gathered in the church. They are the future of our church.

Joyce and Earl Nickerson lived in an apartment in a home owned by Margie Killian. The Killian family was very active in the Tullytown Church. Joyce likes Christ Church because it's small, family-oriented, caring, and

friendly. She sees growth and reaching out in the future.

Dottie Gray was a Presbyterian before Shirley Wills took her to Tullytown Church. Rob, who was quite small at the time, asked if it was all right for them to go to the "Medicine Church." Dottie likes the intangible spirit of the church. She hopes we will be more Christ centered and will do what the Lord calls us to do.

George Sheaffer joined St. Paul's in 1960 or 1961. He attended while services were being held in the school. He did not join because he was still traveling back and forth to Harrisburg. George has been a faithful worker in the church. Even though his work took him away a few times, we were always happy to have him come back. He likes the size of our church. He does not like a megalopolis church where people feel lost. He wants the church to be family oriented and a church that cultivates people. It should be a church where we come to serve the Lord and not just come to be entertained.

Laurie Strauss came in 1996. She likes the way the people have accepted her for herself and how they have embraced the family. She likes the food fellowship. She appreciates how supportive the congregation has been to Bob and how they are willing to change.

Bob Strauss also came in 1996. He likes the spirit of the people and their support. He wants to see continued growth in discipleship and new ways to reach out to the community.

Doris Wilson joined Tullytown Church in 1954. She attended another church after the merger. Her niece, Beth Ann Helble, cried because she wanted Doris at the church with Beth's mother, Betty. So Doris joined Christ Church in 1979. She likes the friendly people, the education in the Sunday School, and the Sermons. She, too, wants to see more of the same.

Thelma Frankenfield joined Tullytown Church in **1924!** She came along to Christ Church with the merger. She likes Pastor Bob and the loving fellowship. She wants to see the Christ Church family serving in faithfulness and love for decades to come.

Brian Strauss isn't sure when he started coming, and he doesn't know what he likes about the church or what his vision is for the church. But he knows why he comes: "My Dad's boss told us to come."