

HISTORY – Lithopolis UMC

The first record of the Lithopolis Methodist Church is found in "History of Fairfield County" - 1795-1876 by Henry Scott.

A group of Methodists held meetings in private homes as early as 1822. The Lithopolis Circuit was formed in 1838 with the Worthington Circuit and in 1839 Canal Winchester became a part of this Circuit.

In 1871 the Ohio Annual Conference held a meeting in Washington, C.H., and a circuit was formed composed of Asbury, Brice, Powell Chapel, Canal Winchester, and Lithopolis. It was placed under the Columbus District with Rev. B. N. Sparks as presiding Elder and Rev. H.H. Ferris, Pastor.

The first Methodist Episcopal Church was built about 1840, and this Church faced the main street. The present Church was built in 1887, the address being 80 North Market Street.

In 1933 Asbury left the Circuit, as did Brice and Powell Chapel, leaving Canal Winchester and Lithopolis as a charge. Rev. Russell Bayliff and wife served these Churches for two years and the Epworth League was formed with 14 members. 1935 was the last year we were on the charge with Canal Winchester, thus dissolving the original circuit formed in 1871.

In 1939 the name of Methodist Episcopal Church was changed to Methodist Church and the year following, or 1940, the Ladies' Aid became the Women's Society of Christian Service.

In 1951 a Hammond Electric Organ was installed. In 1952 the Church interior was redecorated.

In 1953 the new carpeting was installed and new altar was completed. In the fall of 1953 the Methodist Youth Fellowship was organized and composed of 20 members.

In 1954 the new chandeliers and stained glass windows were installed. It was in this year that many members began to realize the need for additional educational space to accommodate the fast growing area. In 1960 this became a reality and the new educational wing was erected and dedicated at the service with former ministers taking part.

In 1961 there were 7 Church School Classes, one Bible Study Class (Calvary), one Philanthropic Class (Willing Worker's), the Women's Society of Christian Service, and the Methodist Youth Fellowship, all active in promoting Christian ways of life and working for the good of the Kingdom of God.

In 1980 a larger section was added which contained offices, a kitchenette, narthex, two more Sunday School rooms, and a covered portico.

The church grew so rapidly that by 1991 a new sanctuary (seating 400), seven classrooms and additional restrooms were built. This was dedicated on Sunday, May 12, 1991. Several former ministers, Pastor Larry Brown, District Superintendent Cooper and Bishop Edsel Ammons took part in the dedication. A Rodgers organ was contributed and dedicated at that time.

The old sanctuary became the fellowship hall, and in 1997 movable room dividers were added to provide four more classrooms in the fellowship hall..

The parking area was paved in 2002 and in 2003, the parsonage received some important attention with some important remodeling taking place there.

2004 was a busy time for construction at LUMC. The education wing was refurbished with special work being done in the nursery area. All of this took place with help from our very own LUMC construction crew.

The chancel area of the sanctuary was redone with wood flooring. A sound and video booth was constructed in the rear of the sanctuary.

Also in 2004, the construction of the MMC (Multi Ministry Center) took place. It has allowed us to hold many functions and activities. Our Friday evening Alive@7 program for youth has 70 to 90 area youth attending each event. Another of these is the Upward Basketball program. This program has touched the lives of many in our community. Others include Wedding Receptions, Funeral Meals, Senior Dinners, CCN Broadcasts, Trash and Treasure, American Red Cross Blood Drives and the multiple youth activities lead by our dedicated youth leaders. We also have High School / Adult Basketball, Adult Volleyball, the Young Life annual banquet, Bethlehem Breakfast, Parents "Faith Weavers" Sunday school class, ALPHA and many other events that help develop a common bond within our community and Christ.

A total renovation of our 1887 original sanctuary was done to create a beautiful chapel and Wesley Fellowship Room. In addition, repair and replace took place for the original entrance with new limestone steps.

Lot 146 on North Street was purchased for additional parking. The lot at 50 E Columbus Street, with a building of 2,700 square feet holding 2 garage spaces, and approximately 25-30 parking spaces, was purchased. Two of the garage spaces provide important storage for LUMC and the other 4 are rented for additional income.

We also completed a renovation and refurbish of the Narthex (Welcome Center), Pastor's office and MMC (paint and chair rail). Most of the labor for these projects was from volunteers.

In 2009, a new standing seam metal roof is being installed that will last for a very long time and help avoid future wind damage that was a problem with the previous shingles.

And the growth goes on - - -

Many of the congregation will remember some of the former ministers serving Lithopolis, many of whom were student ministers. J.A. Weed, L.C. Shaver, E.E. Roberts, P.A. Bright, H.S. Bailey, Horace Weaver, Harold Weaver, Russell Bailiff, Oscar King, J.W. Orr, Clyde Pennell, Donald Niswander, Robert Woods, John DeVol, John Redman, Jack Noble, James W. Moore, Harry Hill, Walter Whitaker, Tom Slack, Larry Brown, Clark Hess and Benjamin Foulk.