

A Brief History of Highland Church

In the 18th century Scotch Presbyterian settlers of lower York County and northern Harford gathered at a small church near Muddy Creek known as “Log Church in the Barrens.” Presbyterians from this area traveled the long and rough roadways to this rustic church because there were no other Presbyterian churches until the mid-1800s when Slate Ridge and North Bend churches were built.

By 1885 the prosperous farming families of Highland began to consider pooling their resources to build a new church at Highland. In just two years enough people were committed to the project that adequate funds were raised and a charter was secured. James P. Street, John W. Galbreath, George A. Davis, and Hugh T. Heaps were appointed as trustees, serving as the building committee.

The name of Drucilla Streett should be familiar to everyone who attends Highland – her name is honored by her family in the beautiful round “rose window” above the pulpit.



She is honored by all for giving the land across from the church we use as our picnic grove but used in the early years as a place to hitch and shelter horses. She had given the land for the church, but the church location across from Mrs. Streett’s gifted land was deemed more suitable for the building and cemetery, likely due to its greater size.

The construction of our beautiful Gothic sanctuary, including the stained glass windows that many agree are among the loveliest in the county, the roof made of slate cut into a pleasing pattern, and the 65-foot bell tower was begun in 1888 and finished the following year. The first service was held in January 1890.



By 1932, Highland's congregation had grown, and more Sunday School space and a social hall was needed, so the congregation worked hard to raise the money needed to build the addition that includes our assembly room where we meet after service, two classrooms that are now offices, and a small stage. On the basement level a kitchen, social hall and nursery were added. About 20 years later, in 1954, an office and study for the pastor, with its own entrance, was added.

By 1969, the congregation had grown even larger and more space was needed for our social events and for classroom space, as well as new restrooms. The addition that was planned was ambitious and would double the size of the church, but the congregation took on the project and raised the funds needed to accomplish its goal.

Our Fellowship Hall today remains ample in size, but now, more than 40 years later, the use of Fellowship Hall by the congregation and community is hampered because our restrooms are not conveniently located or handicapped-accessible. The absence of convenient and comfortable facilities has become a burden for the church and the community we serve.

The proposed improvements will add immensely to the usability of Fellowship Hall, used so often by older persons and young parents who will greatly benefit from same-level restroom facilities during luncheons, dinners and other events.