

## Brief Histories of Immanuel Union Methodist & Little Union Churches

The Immanuel Union Methodist Church had its origin in 1830 when a church was built near the present site and was called Sutton's Meeting House. In 1876, a new building was erected and the name was changed to Manship (after the itinerant preacher, Methodist circuit rider Andrew Manship). On March 1, 1886, for the sum of one hundred dollars, the trustees of Manship Church purchased one quarter of an acre of land from James W. and Elizabeth M. Emerson. In 1890 the church was rebuilt.

Little Union Church, located on Denney's Road near Dupont Station, a railroad stop, and founded in 1850, started in a small slab 'shanty' with Rev. Silas W. Murray as the first pastor. Later, a new church was built and still stands near the original site.

By the late nineteenth century, Manship Church and Little Union Church belonged to the Delaware Conference. They were served by the same pastor and there was now an apparent need for a parsonage. On December 22, 1892, the trustees of both churches purchased from David J. and Mary A. Hoar for the sum of sixty dollars a lot of land situated in Kenton Hundred on the south side of the town of Cheswold, Kent County, Delaware. Upon this land a parsonage was built which was in use for several years.

For many years the two churches, Manship and Little Union, maintained separate facilities, but in the late 1940's, membership and attendance at Little Union Church had declined to the point that it became increasingly difficult for them to meet their obligations. A few members felt the time had come for the two churches to merge. They proposed that Little Union should close and its members become affiliated with Manship. At first, this suggestion met with resistance from both churches as each church wished to maintain its own identity. However, with a lot of faith from both churches they merged, and at this time the name of the church was changed to Immanuel Union Methodist Church.

On December 18, 1948, additional land was purchased from M.P. Smith & Sons, Inc., for the sum of fifteen hundred dollars. The church was then moved to its present site and was rebuilt in 1951. The Church now contained a basement with kitchen facilities and space for other activities.

In 1964 Immanuel Union joined the Peninsula Conference and shortly thereafter another building program was launched. This time a fellowship hall including bathrooms and modern kitchen facilities was annexed to the Church.

In the last five years we have had three ministers. The Rev. Dale Pruitt, The Rev. Carol Rogers and The Rev. Harvey Sturgis. Rev. Pruitt and Rev. Rogers have both left us with many memories. Rev. Sturgis has been making memories since he came a few months ago.

During the period of over 150 years with dedicated members and able leadership Immanuel has shown significant growth and has expanded its service to better serve the spiritual needs of the community.