**Bunker Hill Presbyterian Church**

Bunker Hill Presbyterian Church was founded in 1849 in the old Bunker Hill Schoolhouse across the road from where the church once stood on Greentree Road near Hurffville Cross-Keys. People met for worship in the school house for twenty years. In 1869, they bought one half acre of land from James McClure and built this building. The idea of building a separate church came about in order to rest the farm horses, which had worked all week. The people of the Bunker Hill area didn’t want to ask these hard working animals to take them to Blackwood or Williamstown for church services.

The Cornerstone was laid and the church officially opened on June 14, 1869. It was built by August Thies who lived in Chapel Heights where Thies Road begins. The church cost $1,800.00 to build and furnish and was fully paid in October when the first service was held. Bunker Hill became the second dedicated church building in Township. Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church, on Delsea Drive in Hurffville, was founded in 1770 and incorporated the 17th day of February, 1819. John Henry, Sr. was the first Elder of the Church and held that position for about 50 years. William Filmore Chew was Superintendent of the Sunday school. Both of these gentlemen are memorialized in the stained glass windows.

The pews are original as are the pulpit and chairs, donated by the Pitman Methodist church, but the wood panels were added in 1924 when the church was remodeled. The original windows were frosted, but during the remodeling, the eight windows were replaced by stained glass. Each is a memorial to original or early members of the church. At that time, they cost $45.00 apiece to make and install.

Originally services were held on Sunday afternoons, once a month. Ministers were students from the Presbyterian Seminary at Princeton, NJ. The congregation didn’t get their own permanent minister until 1980. Services were increased to each Sunday by the end of the 19th century.

Rarely were musical instruments heard in the meeting houses, although in most of them the singing of hymns was an important part of the worship experience. The Quakers, who predominated in the 18th century, shunned the use of any music, vocal or instrumental, in connection with religious services. In Presbyterian meeting houses, psalms from the Geneva or Scottish Psalters, or the hymns of Isaac Watts, were sung without accompaniment.

Among the dominant families in the church were the Richards family, of the Green Tree Inn. He was a relative of Charles Quay, born in the Quay Farmhouse and president of the 20th century Township Historic Society. The McClure family lived in the house that is now Ott’s Tavern and it was this family that sold the church the land. Other families include the Henrys and the Chew family. William Fillmore Chew was Superintendent of the Sunday School.

The church building is used once yearly for services on Founder’s Day. It is also rented out for weddings or baptisms. In 2017, the WTHPC had the windows refurbished and reinstalled due to deterioration at a cost of $1200.00 apiece. Later, storm windows were added to protect the windows from damage at a cost of $8500, and the center window at the top was also rehabilitated in an historical correct manner. Currently, the church is in need of repairs to the soffits and both interior and exterior painting is planned.