

216 HUNT'S METHODIST CHURCH - 1826-1933 - No. 1901 West Joppa road, Riderwood. The original church was built of logs c. 1772 when Methodism was in its infancy in Maryland. Located at intersection of Joppa and Old Court Roads, on land owned by Phineas Hunt, who had come to Baltimore County in 1761 and married Elizabeth Chew. Hunt's property included parts of Brooklandville,

**DISTRICT 9 (CONTINUED)**

Riderwood, and Ruxton. Second church built 1826 and rebuilt on old foundation in 1874; enlarged 1905. Scharf reported a cornerstone laying on October 21, 1874, HBCC, p. 882. Following a fire, it was rebuilt in 1933 as Hunt's Memorial Methodist Church. Stone church in simple design, spire; old parsonage. The exterior is similar to the pre-fire appearance. The contractors in 1874 were David M. German, Stonemason, and Thomas Burns, Carpenter and Superintendent.

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Form 10-445  
(5-62)

<p>1. STATE <u>Maryland</u>          COUNTY <u>Baltimore Co.</u>          TOWN <u>Riderwood</u> VICINITY <u>Dist. IX</u>          STREET NO. <u>Joppa &amp; Old Court Rds.</u>  <small>1901</small></p> <p>ORIGINAL OWNER          ORIGINAL USE <u>church</u>          PRESENT OWNER          PRESENT USE <u>church</u>          WALL CONSTRUCTION          NO. OF STORIES</p>	<p>HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY          INVENTORY <u>BP-216</u></p> <p>2. NAME <u>Hunt's Methodist Church</u></p> <p>DATE OR PERIOD <u>1826</u>          STYLE <u>colonial</u>          ARCHITECT          BUILDER</p>
<p>3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE</p>	
<p>4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION <span style="float: right;">OPEN TO PUBLIC</span></p> <p>Original church built of logs about 1772 when Methodism was first established in Maryland. Built on land owned by Phineas Hunt, who came to Baltimore County in 1761 and married Elizabeth Chew. His property included parts of Brooklandville, Riderwood, and Ruxton. The church was partly burned in 1933, and the 2nd church was built in 1826, added to in 1874 and 1905. It was rebuilt in 1932 as Hunt's Memorial Church.</p>	
<p>5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE    <u>Endangered</u>                      <u>Interior</u>                      <u>Exterior</u></p>	
<p>6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional) <span style="float: right;">7. PHOTOGRAPH</span></p>	
<p>8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)          INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.</p> <p><u>Sidelights of the History of Baltimore County.</u> Edwin K. Gontrum, 1966, p. 13.</p>	<p>9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER  <u>Baltimore Co. Hist. Soc.</u>  <u>Agriculture Bldg.</u>  <u>Texas, Md.</u>  <i>(Second HABBS report)</i></p> <p>DATE OF RECORD <u>March 20, 1968</u></p>

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTO APHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

carpentry work. David German was the stone mason. The trustees at this time were Lewis J. Roberts, Amin Bowen, William C. Woods, Thomas Burns, and Alfred G. Lee. On Sunday, 19 July 1874, the last service was held in the old log church. The building was then torn down, and the members worshipped for a month in a house in "Mill Hollow," removing thereafter to a board tabernacle erected on the church lot until the new church was ready.<sup>132</sup>

The cornerstone was laid on 20 October 1874 with both religious and Masonic ceremonies. A tin box was placed in the cavity of the stone containing an interesting assortment of items: a copy of the Holy Bible and Church Discipline; copies of the newspapers of the day, including the *Christian Advocate*, the *Christian Standard and Home Journal*, the *Baltimore Daily Sun*, and the *Baltimore County Herald*; two silver quarter dollars, five pennies, and one piece of German coin; a paper containing the names of the presiding elder, pastor, trustees, stewards, building committees, and officers of the lodge of Masons; and a program of the exercises.<sup>133</sup>

The church was dedicated on 5 August 1877 with the Reverend Dr. James A. McCauley, formerly a preacher at Stone Chapel and at Hunt's Church and now president of Dickinson College, preaching. The new structure was built on the foundation of the old log church and faced the present Old Court Road, this section of which was formerly known as Hunt's Lane.<sup>134</sup>

Among the most active members of the church in the nineteenth century was Thomas Wright, owner of the Bleach and Dye Works near Rockland. He gave liberally of his money to various church enterprises, and at his death bequeathed \$2,500 to Hunt's Church. The church had been presented with a pulpit Bible in 1875 by J. M. Watkins of Towson, whose mother was a direct descendant of John Wesley's family. About 1896 Mrs. Sarah Evans donated a large church bell.<sup>135</sup>

In 1905 Hunt's underwent extensive improvements costing approximately \$3,000. These included the installation of electric lights, painting the interior, and installing new pews and carpeting. Three years later Hunt's Church was finally made a station by Bishop Earl Cranston. On 25 and 26 September 1909 this event and the church's 136th anniversary (dating from 1773) were celebrated.<sup>136</sup>

During the ministry of the Reverend Howard E. Thompson a parsonage was built. Before it became a station such accommodation had not been necessary as none of the preachers were married men. Today this residence serves as an annex to the church and houses offices, a nursery, and meeting rooms. In 1961 under the Reverend Forest Forris a new parsonage was obtained in the Longford community.<sup>137</sup>

On 12 February 1933 Hunt's Church was totally destroyed by fire, apparently caused by an overheated furnace. According to a newspaper article describing the event, the fire also destroyed a portrait of Phineas Hunt and three memorials to him presented by his descendants (an illuminated cross, a baptismal font, and a stained glass window over the chancel). The article stated that "the records of the church, dating from 1785, are preserved in the parsonage" and thus were not destroyed by fire. Unfortunately, few of these records can be found today, nor have any records of the church prior to 1785 been found. One newspaper source claims these were lost, but it may well be that no records of meetings, births, deaths, or marriages were kept before 1785. Before the Revolution, vital statistics were recorded in the parishes of the Church of England.<sup>138</sup>

Once again a building committee was formed. The Lutherville Fire Department offered its building as a temporary church until a new church could be built. This contained many new features: an organ chamber; a front platform, pulpit, lectern, and altar rail; a stained glass window in the sanctuary; and classrooms and offices. The present stone building was completed and dedicated in 1933.<sup>139</sup>

Another fire occurred on 19 April 1962, necessitating a rebuilding program and another dedication in September of that year. Changes have continued to mark progress at Hunt's Church. A temporary addition was built which houses various meeting rooms & occupies the site of the old stables.

Thomas Wright and Edward Rider. Thomas Burns was appointed superintendent

BA-216



Hunt's Memorial United Methodist Church  
Photograph by Thomas W. Mele II

In 1968 the church became known as Hunt's Memorial United Methodist Church, and this is its official title today, though members and friends call it simply Hunt's Church. A bicentennial celebration was held in October 1973 to pay tribute to the history and continuity of Hunt's Church.<sup>141</sup>

This chapter has been devoted to those churches in existence in the Green Spring Valley before 1800, but others, some branching off from these early churches, appeared in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Among them are the following.

### —\*METTAM BAPTIST CHURCH\*—

The Mettam Baptist Church near Old Court Road was the first church to be built in the then small community of Pikesville. The building is no longer used as a house of worship; instead, it serves as an office for the Lions Club of Pikesville which restored it.<sup>142</sup>

The history of Mettam Church began with the arrival in 1832 of Joseph Mettam and his family.

Samuel Merryman (reputedly the first convert to Methodism in this locality) near Reisterstown Road (here Methodists were meeting from 1763 on), or at the home of Daniel Evans near Baltimore City ("one of the first preaching places in Baltimore County, dating from about 1764"). It is known that as early as 1773 Phineas Hunt's home was a preaching appointment, along with twenty-nine other places on the Baltimore circuit. In the present living room of this house, enlarged over the years, is a half-size funeral door through which it is said coffins could be moved in and out of the house.<sup>121</sup>

According to the writings of the Reverend Henry Smith, pastor of Hunt's Church in 1806 and from 1833 to 1834, "from this appointment (Evan's) we went to Hunt's Meeting House, also an old stand, having been a preaching place before the M. E. Church was organized. Here Strawbridge and nearly, if not all, the first preachers who traveled in Maryland, had preached. The Hunts were among the first who 'believed and turned to the Lord' when they heard the Methodist preachers. If I do not mistake, Phineas Hunt had preaching at his house long before they built a meeting-house. . . ." Francis Asbury writes of preaching at Hunt's house on 3 September 1773. He also made three visits in 1777.<sup>122</sup>

During these early years the Methodist preachers would visit a neighborhood and preach from one to three days. It might be months before they came again; so they would appoint someone as class leader to meet with the new society of believers at designated periods and act as their leader in spiritual matters. Phineas Hunt was made a class leader of the society which gathered in his home, a position he held throughout his life. He was affectionately known as Father Hunt by the members.<sup>123</sup>

Various histories of Methodism contain praise of Phineas and Susanna Hunt's religious character and interests. "He was a counsellor of the youth, an exhorter to the sinner, an example to the Christians, a minister of peace to the sick and the dying." "P. Hunt was a man thoroughly imbued with Maryland hospitality and brotherly kindness. Sister Hunt was one of the neatest house-keepers, and all attention to the preachers, and their house could not fail of being one of the preachers' best homes.

Brother Hunt had the affections and confidence of his class, and indeed of all the neighbors. I never knew a man that loved to talk about experimental religion more than did Father Hunt."<sup>124</sup>

No portrait of the Hunts exists, but a description was offered in 1909 by Mrs. Rebecca A. Rider, a church member who remembered Hunt. She stated that he wore knee breeches, allowed his curly hair to grow long and fall about his shoulders, and that he was a man "noted for his piety, usefulness and liberality."<sup>125</sup>

Since the congregation had grown too large for his house, Phineas in 1780 gave part of his land for the erection of a log chapel. On 4 September 1785 Hunt's society, formed according to the directions of the Christmas Conference of 1784, officially bought the ground on which the chapel stood. Hunt conveyed the 3/4 acre of Beall's Discovery to the trustees, William Stone, Samuel Hunt, Michael Kraner (or Kramer), Joshua Bowen, and Daniel Isgrig, in exchange for twenty shillings current money. In the deed, Phineas requested that the chapel be known as "Zoar," but apparently since he was so closely identified with the church his own name was used instead.<sup>126</sup>

Francis Asbury wrote of preaching at Hunt's Chapel twice in September 1787. The log building was actually just one large room which contained a back gallery used by slaves. The church faced Joppa Road and at this time was officially known as Hunt's Methodist Episcopal Church.<sup>127</sup>

Phineas' brother, Samuel Chew Hunt, also took an active role in the church, and both men worked with the Sunday School. A confirmatory deed of 15 December 1826 shows the brothers conveying one acre to the trustees of the church, Samuel Chew Hunt, John Kelso, Philemon Coale, Thomas Watts, and Wesley Coale. It was about this time that a second building was to be erected to take the place of the old log chapel which by then was unsuitable for the growing society, and the deed was probably drawn to correct an error in the original 1785 deed.<sup>128</sup>

Phineas Hunt died in 1837. his brother Samuel two years later his wife in 1847 All three were buried in the Hunt family cemetery beside the Hunt house, not far from the Church.

ing began in his home. Phineas may have been among Robert Strawbridge's listeners at the home of

BA-216

BA-216



By 1789 the Methodist city churches were separated from the county churches, and Hunt came one of many on the Baltimore circuit. From 1773 to 1839 the church was served by 119 different preachers. Many of the same names are found on the list of pastors at Stone Chapel [Owings], John Haggerty, William Ryland, and Enoch George, among others). Over the next 60 years the rapid growth of Methodism necessitated the division of the larger circuit into smaller ones. At different times we find Hunt's included in the Summerfield circuit, the North Baltimore circuit, Brooklandville circuit, and Hunt's circuit, with more than 50 different pastors at Hunt's. In 1808 Hunt's Church was finally authorized as a station.<sup>130</sup>

Much happened to this church in the period between the Civil War and the twentieth century. In 1857 it had only 17 members, but 1858 saw a revival that added 38 new probationers. By the spring of 1867, however, membership was failing again. The church building was in need of repair; the congregation, church membership, and Sunday School were small as a result of the unsettled condition of the society made so by the Civil War. About 1870 there was preaching only every other Sunday. About that time the interest revived, and the minister of that time, the Reverend William A. Koontz, wrote that the church was crowded at all the services and the conversions were numerous and of fine quality.

In 1872 a building committee was formed to construct a new church. The chairman was the Reverend William E. Bird; Lewis J. Roberts was secretary; other members included Thomas