



## MORE INFO

We thank you for your interest and if you have any additional questions see the individual historical societies.

### Boonsboro Historical Society

**E-mail:** [info@boonsborohistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@boonsborohistoricalsociety.org)

**Web:** [www.boonsborohistoricalsociety.org](http://www.boonsborohistoricalsociety.org)

In March 1970, the Boonsboro Historical Society was officially chartered with the purpose "to preserve for posterity the heritage of the Boonsboro area." In the latter part of 1970, charter member Charles R. Smith gave the Society a house formerly owned by John Bowman, an early Boonsboro potter. The house located at 323 North Main Street has been restored and now serves as the headquarters of the Society. The Society has built a carriage house and a potter's shed on the site.

### Keedysville Historical Society

**Phone:** 301-432-5795

**Web:** [www.keedysvillemd.com/historical\\_Mar2010.asp](http://www.keedysvillemd.com/historical_Mar2010.asp)

The Keedysville Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the history of our village, our community, and our county. We are equally interested in the great events that have found their way into history books and the little known histories of the families who have called Keedysville home during the almost 250 years of its existence. We welcome photographs, memories, and memorabilia, and are always eager to recruit speakers for our monthly meetings.

### Sharpsburg Historical Society

**E-mail:** [vernellld@aol.com](mailto:vernellld@aol.com)

**Web:** [www.sharpsburghistoricalsociety.org](http://www.sharpsburghistoricalsociety.org)

The Sharpsburg Historical Society members work to recover, preserve, and promote the history of Sharpsburg, its people and the immediate area.

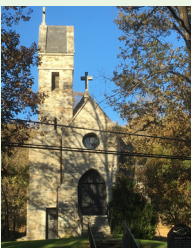
# HISTORIC

## SOUTH COUNTY CHURCH TOUR





**1 6133 Old National Pike - Dahlgren Chapel:** This Gothic Revival stone chapel was built in 1881 by Madeleine Dahlgren, daughter of Congressman Samuel Vinton and wife of Admiral John Dahlgren. The marble altar was imported from Italy. Mrs. Dahlgren purchased the former tavern at Turner's Gap as a summer retreat. The chapel was built across the National Road from the house. When Mrs. Dahlgren died in 1898, she was interred in the chapel's family crypt.



**2 First Christian Church - 14 Saint Paul St.:** Also known as Disciples Church, it was constructed in 1860, the principal exterior architectural feature is a deep two-story Colonial Revival portico. It was available for use as a hospital during the battles of South Mountain and Antietam. Several soldiers were buried behind the church. The large porch columns were added in 1928.



**3 Trinity Lutheran Church - 64 South Main St.:** Lutherans were among the first settlers in Boonsboro, worshipping at Ringer's Church (Peter Ringer's homestead) beginning in 1750. In 1812, the Lutheran and Reformed congregations jointly used a church on Potomac Street (then called Church Street). In 1870, the Lutherans purchased their current property on South Main Street. The cornerstone was laid that year and the church was dedicated in 1871. In 1954, the current Moller pipe organ was installed, replacing an earlier Moller organ.



**4 Mt. Nebo United Methodist - 134 S. Main St.:** Mt. Nebo can trace its history back to a log building outside the town limits where worship was held as early as 1750. However, 1832 is the date of organization generally given. In 1832, the old church was abandoned and in the same year the United Brethren erected a new church at its present day site. It was built of logs, roughcast on the outside and situated to the rear of the present building. A shrill blast from a shepherd's horn called the congregation to services. The present brick building was erected in 1868.



# BOONSBORO CHURCHES



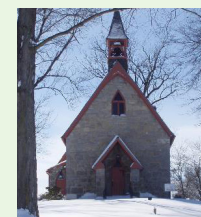
**5 St. James Catholic Church - 121 N. Main St.:** The founding of St. James is unique in that it was sponsored by Dr. Otho J. Smith, his brother Dr. Josiah Smith and his son Otho B. Smith who bought land and erected a small brick church in September, 1868. The church closed in 1898 and worshippers attended mass at Dahlgren Chapel, across from the South Mountain Inn and occasionally at the home of Dr. Edgar T. Smith. In 1938, St. James reopened to serve the 200 young men of the Civilian Conservation Corps who were encamped at Boonsboro. Torn down in 1968 after deteriorating scissor truss construction, bequests from the Smith family built the church once again with the first mass held June 22, 1969.



**6 Trinity Reformed Church - 33 Potomac St.:** The congregation of Salem Church was established long before the founding of the town. It met as early as 1750 in a log school house located one-half mile from town off the present Route 66, where a graveyard remains. The first church building on this site was completed in 1810 and dedicated as the Salem Church where both the Reformed and Lutheran congregations met until after the Civil War. Reformed members tore down the old church to build the current structure in the Gothic Romanesque style, completing it by 1870.



**7 St. Mark's Episcopal Church - 18313 Lappans Road:** St. Mark's was founded and the historic Church was built in 1849. The students and faculty of nearby St. James School built the church as a missionary effort and it was used as a hospital following the battles of Antietam and Gettysburg. The balcony in the historic church was restored in 2014 as a place of prayer and pilgrimage to honor the lives of our nineteenth century African American members, both enslaved and freed. The Fellowship Center was completed in 2011 and hosts worship and gatherings for the community. St. Mark's is part of the Diocese of Maryland, a member of the Episcopal Church and the world-wide Anglican Communion—those Churches born out of the Church of England. Of the world's 2.2 billion Christians, they are the third largest body.



### 1 Salem United Methodist Church - 25 South Main St.:

In the mid 1700's, teacher George Adam Geeting built a small log cabin on Mount Hebron Road as a school. In 1760 Phillip Otterbein, a visiting preacher, used the school for a place to hold worship services. In time, Geeting began preaching to his neighbors using prepared sermons between Otterbein's visits. To accommodate a growing congregation, a church was built on Mount Hebron Road and was named the Geeting Meetinghouse. It was a simple

log structure with no steeple or copula. By 1840, the log church was replaced with a stone structure across from the Meetinghouse. The cornerstone read "Mount Hebron Church of the United Brethren in Christ, May 1, 1845". After the Civil War, the Boonsboro-Shepherdstown Turnpike and a spur line of the B&O Railroad drew development away from Mt. Hebron into the town of Keedysville. The United Brethren purchased a lot in the center of town for \$150. In 1870, a new cornerstone was created establishing the name as Salem Church of the United Brethren. The Salem Church was destroyed by fire on October 16, 1943. The church was rebuilt and has been remodeled several times. In 1968 the Evangelical United Brethren married the Methodist Church, creating the United Methodist Church, with Salem recognized as the founding congregation of the combined denominations.



### 2 Mt. Vernon Reformed United Church of Christ - 64 South Main St. :

In 1835, a stone building was erected which was used both as a church and a school. In 1852, a new Reformed Church was built on land donated by Samuel Cost. In September, 1862, during the Battle of Antietam, the church was used by Federal troops as a hospital. A large hole was dug outside one of the rear windows, into which amputated arms and legs were thrown. The foundation of the church was weakened as a result and the walls cracked. Iron rods were used to brace the walls so the church could be used. In 1892, just 30 years after the first church was built, the congregation decided to erect the present building. The cost of the building and furnishings was \$7,000.



## KEEDYSVILLE CHURCHES

### 3 St. Peter's Lutheran Church - 53 North Main St.:

Locate at 53 North Main Street in Keedysville, MD, St. Peter's Lutheran Church laid its cornerstone in 1871 and dedicated the church the same year. It was purchased for \$250 from Susan Kitzmiller. Rev. George Beckley was the first minister. He erected three in what was known at the time as the Boonsboro Charge; one in Boonsboro, one in Keedysville, and one in Rohrserville. In the mid 1700's German settlers migrated to Pennsylvania. They were not

welcomed in William Penn's settlement, they moved further south into Maryland and Virginia. Before St. Peter's Lutheran Church was built in Keedysville, it was most likely parishioners met in one of the older stone homes located within the town or attended church at what was known as "Ringer's Charge". This was composed of the Lutheran churches of Boonsboro, Sharpsburg, Bakersville, and Locust Grove. However, "Ringer's Charge" actually changed pastorates several times. St. Peter's continued to grow, and joined with St. Matthew's in Beaver Creek to form a joint parish in 1964. In 2017 St. Peter's, St. Matthew's, and Mt. Zion in Rohrserville formed a cooperative arrangement known as the Washington County Cooperative Lutheran Ministry. The present pastor is Rev. Regina Beard.



## KEEDYSVILLE MAP



1

**Dunker Church:** This structure was built in 1852 by Dunker farmers on land donated by Samuel Mumma. During the Battle of Antietam, the church was the focal point of a number of Union attacks against the Confederate left flank. After the battle, the Confederates used the church as a medical aid station. The church was heavily damaged, but by 1864 the Dunker Church was repaired and rededicated. By the end of the century the congregation had built a new church in Sharpsburg. Lack of maintenance weakened the abandoned structure and in 1921 a violent storm flattened the church. The property exchanged hands several times. It was purchased by the Washington County Historical Society in 1951, who then donated the site to the National Park Service. The church was restored for the 100th Anniversary of the 1862 Battle of Antietam on the original foundation.



2

**Methodist Church and the First Church of God - 125 West Main St.:** The family of Christian Beeler formed the Methodist congregation in 1811. They shared the old Reformed Church on Chapline Street. In 1818 they purchased land and built a brick church on North Hall Street. The congregation then built the current structure on West Main Street. The cornerstone was laid October 20, 1856. After the Battle of Antietam, the church was used as a Union hospital. The First Church of God's cornerstone was laid on North Potomac Street in 1879. The congregation moved to the Methodist Church on Main Street after the Methodist congregation dissolved in 1939.



3

**Saint Paul's Episcopal Church - 209 West Main St.:** Around 1815 the Rev. Benjamin Allen conducted the first Episcopal service in Sharpsburg. In 1819 they laid the cornerstone for their own building on Lot 132. The stone structure had a ladder pulpit and galleries on three sides of the sanctuary. During the Battle of Antietam, the building was used by the Confederates as an observation post and a hospital, later it served Union wounded. The present church is largely the achievement of Rev. Henry Edwards. The cornerstone was laid October 30, 1871. The new church was built closer to the street using stones from the old structure. The old bell, hidden during the war, was remounted and still calls parishioners to worship.



# SHARPSBURG CHURCHES

4

**Sharpsburg Church of the Brethren - 123 East Main St.:** This new Dunker Church was dedicated at its first service on January 1, 1899. The church on the battlefield property was now too small and too far from town for its growing congregation. The church was built with a \$4,000 donation from Urilla Hout. The building featured plain glass windows, wainscoting, a tongue-and-groove vaulted ceiling, and a slate roof. The backs of the pews are hinged to swing up to form tables for Communion. Reflecting a change in the Dunker tradition, the church has one front door for men and women.



5

**Holy Trinity Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church - corner of East Main and Church Streets:** The German Lutherans built their first church in 1768 on the hill across Main Street. The original log structure featured a copula. During the Battle of Antietam, Confederate forces used the copula as signal tower. The church was used as a hospital after the battle. Wood from the pews was used for coffins. In 1863 the church was torn down. In 1866, construction began on the current corner site. Mount Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church was dedicated in 1868. It was torn down in 1891 because of poor construction, and the rebuild was completed in 1898. A fire destroyed the building in 1942. The rebuilt church was completed in 1944.



6

**Christ Reformed United Church of Christ - 117 West Main St.:** A local congregation of the German Reformed Church was organized in Sharpsburg in 1764. The German Reformed Church building was on Chapline Street at the site of the Old German Reformed Cemetery. In 1832, the present church at 117 West Main Street was built, and the old church was torn down. After the Battle of Antietam, the present church was used as a hospital. Stained glass windows in the church were donated by members of the congregation and by comrades of those who found shelter in the church after the battle. After several denominational mergers, the church became a member of the United Church of Christ in 1957.



7

**Tolson's Chapel - 111 East High St.:** The Tolson's Chapel in Sharpsburg is a log Methodist chapel built in 1866 by the Sharpsburg African American community. The building also doubled as a Freeman's Bureau School from 1868-1870 and as the county-run Sharpsburg Colored School until 1899. The church was closed in 1998 after the last congregant passed away. Essentially unchanged from its original appearance, the building has been restored by the Friends of Tolson's Chapel (FOTC). Tolson's Chapel will be open for tours from 10 AM-4 PM. Please also join us for our annual Christmas by Candlelight, a community celebration of the Christmas season held the second Saturday in December beginning at 7 PM. For more information contact [tolsons.chapel@gmail.com](mailto:tolsons.chapel@gmail.com).

