

Pleasant Valley United Methodist Church

Celebrating 129 Years of Ministry

The first Methodist property in America was deeded May 11, 1766 to a Methodist society in Leesburg, VA. The church built there was for years known as the Old Stone Church. In 1778 the Methodist Conference for all America was held at this site. Methodism grew throughout Loudon County.

Gum Spring Methodist Protestant Church was organized in 1831 and later became known as Arcola Methodist Church.

As the Pleasant Valley community grew, the Gum Spring congregation in 1894 gave birth to Pleasant Valley Methodist Church.

Miss Fannie Whaley and Alonzo O'Bannon gave approximately ½ acre of land for the original sanctuary which was dedicated in 1895.

In July 1945 a parsonage was built at a cost of \$10,250 plus donated labor. Not long after that, a brick education and fellowship building was added to the church at a cost of \$11,000 with donated lumber and labor.

An evangelistic mission held in the Washington area in the Spring of 1952 led to approximately 100 people becoming new members of Pleasant Valley Methodist Church and this rapid growth led the church in 1955 to become a "station" appointment. This meant it no longer shared a pastor with other Methodist churches.

The church site has grown over the years. In 1945 Mr. and Mrs. B. G. Benton, members of the church, donated a strip of land 50 feet deep across the back of the church lot which provided space for parking and a parsonage garden. In 1963 the church purchased an additional 4.774 acres from Mrs. Benton at a cost of \$9000.

By the 1980s, it was clear that larger and more spacious facilities were needed. A generous gift of \$400,000 from Joseph and Haseltine Shockey made this possible. Groundbreaking for a new sanctuary and social hall occurred on March 10, 1991.

Friends and members contributed the stained-glass windows, the pews and the furnishings, and other special gifts. The dedication service was held October 27, 1991, with Pastor Robert E. Wolff leading the service.

In February 1990 Scout Troop 682 began a long partnership with Pleasant Valley Church that continues to this day.

The Pleasant valley "village" has changed dramatically since its earliest days when it consisted of a general store, post office, voting precinct, blacksmith shop, public school, and a few houses.

With the widening of HYW 50, construction of Dulles Airport, Interstate 66 and the Dulles Toll Road, dairy farms have been replaced by industrial lots and subdivisions. The Chantilly area grew rapidly, and the South Riding community was developed to the church's west.

A new parsonage was purchased in South Riding on April 30, 1997 for \$236,569.

In 2013 the church purchased property which became the Community Outreach Center and Preschool. However, this ministry became unsustainable by the coming of Covid 19 epidemic in March 2020.

Money from the sale of this property enabled the congregation to add parking, add a new nursery, and refurbish the social hall, chapel, bathrooms. It was also used to add a new sewerage system.

For one hundred and twenty-nine years the Pleasant Valley United Methodist congregation has been a beacon of light on the Little River Turnpike, A "Place to Worship, Serve, and Belong."

Our special services include Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Maundy Thursday, and Easter Sunrise Services. Pot-luck dinners are a regular feature, as are the bi-annual Men's Club Fish Fries. Each Sunday Service is followed by a coffee and treats in the Fellowship Hall. Services also feature musical specials, fervent prayer, and a joyous "passing of the peace."

We are a people of faith, supporting one another in our Christian walk; and welcoming all who hunger for vital faith and new life in Jesus Christ.