



CIRCA 1890



CIRCA 1900



CIRCA 1910

WALKING TOUR OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

While Middletown's congregations tended to be interdependent in the early years, they eventually formed more distinct theological entities. For example, after years of worshipping alongside the Lutherans southwest of town near the area now known as "Picnic Woods," the Reformed congregation bought land on what is now South Church Street and erected their own church around 1770. The Lutheran congregation soon followed suit, constructing their first dedicated church in about 1775.

The United Brethren in Christ congregation organized around 1800. They worshiped together with the English-speaking adherents of the Methodist Episcopal faith until constructing the first Otterbein Chapel, known as "The Martin Box," on land purchased near the North Commons (c. 1854). This occurred shortly after the Methodists built their large brick seminary on West Main Street in 1853.

The Asbury AME Church held services in their own church, constructed in 1829 on South Jefferson Street. Many of their weddings and funerals were also held at the Reformed and Lutheran churches when the Methodist circuit rider was out of town ministering to other congregations.



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#MAINSTREETMIDDLETOWNMD

OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

FOUNDED IN 1767

MAIN STREET MIDDLETOWN

This building began in 1868 as a one-and-a-half-story log structure built as a Roman Catholic mission by St. Johns Church. The building was purchased by the Frederick County Board of Education in 1893, and the front section was added to accommodate the first public high school in Middletown. It became a private residence in 1907.

30 EAST MAIN STREET (c. 1850, 1868, 1907)

This church was constructed for the Otterbein United Brethren after they vacated the "Martin Box" at North Church and Green streets. It originally had a steeple. In 1968 the United Brethren and the Methodist Episcopal Churches merged into United Methodist Church, again worshipping together at their new campus east of town.

2 EAST MAIN STREET (c. 1882)

After sharing the log church constructed in 1740 with the Zion Lutheran congregation, the German Reformed congregation built their own log church and established a cemetery on this site around 1770. As the congregation grew, the present church was constructed in 1818 with services in German, and in 1825, services were transitioned to English. Other additions to the property include adding a parish house and in 1902, the cornerstone was laid for the Sunday School Chapel. The cemetery is the resting place of several generations of Middletown families., including 13 Revolutionary War soldiers and Civil War veteran. Like most serviceable buildings during the Civil War, both the church and school were used as hospitals. The church steeple has the added distinction of being used as a signal tower by the Union Army and lookout station for General George McClellan. In 1957, the congregation became part of the new United Church of Christ, and today is Christ Reformed United Church of Christ.

12 SOUTH CHURCH STREET (c. 1818)

7 & 14 Washington Street – Before Church Street opened, this block of Washington Street was situated along the most direct route between Zion Lutheran Church and Christ Reformed Church. Thus, it was a good location for the succession of early parsonages.

7 & 10 Washington Street (c. 1810, 1830) was built of logs, probably in the 18th century. It was rented as the Christ Reformed Parsonage in 1829. In 1830, the congregation moved its parsonage to the new brick house across the street at 10 Washington Street. Poet Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., searching for his son wounded at Antietam and thought to be in one of Middletown's many wartime hospitals, stayed with the Christ Reformed Church's minister and his family at 10 Washington Street.

14 Washington Street (c. 1790) was built of stone and served as the Lutheran parsonage until 1848 when a new parsonage lecture hall was constructed at 13 West Main Street. The original Lutheran Lecture Hall stood on this property, serving as the Sunday School for both the Lutheran and Reformed congregations.

7, 10 & 14 WASHINGTON STREET

OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

FOUNDED IN 1767

MAIN STREET MIDDLETOWN

The Asbury A.M.E. Church (ca. 1829) served Middletown's African-American community for over 130 years until it was demolished about 1959. The congregation shared a circuit minister with other A.M.E. churches in Braddock Heights and Sunnyside, located on Mountville Road southeast of Jefferson. When the minister was away at other churches, weddings and funerals were often performed by ministers from other churches in town, especially the Reformed Church. Though mostly residential today, in the 19th- and early 20th centuries, South Jefferson Street was a thriving African American community. Businesses included a butcher, dairy, stone mason, small general store, blacksmith shop, and coopers. The mid-19th century log structures were homes for painters, carpenters, and other tradespeople. When South Church Street was constructed, joining Main Street to the Petersville Road, South Jefferson Street was largely eclipsed as the main thoroughfare to points south. Today, South Jefferson Street's significance to Middletown history continues to be studied.

300 BLOCK SOUTH JEFFERSON STREET

This was the parsonage of the A.M.E. minister who was based in Middletown but also served A.M.E. churches in Braddock Heights and Sunnyside on Mountville Road.

326 SOUTH JEFFERSON STREET (c. 1880)

In 1845 construction began on a new brick Lutheran Parsonage to replace the old stone structure at 14 Washington Street. On the southeast corner of the same lot, a two-and-a-half-story lecture hall with a belfry was also constructed. The lecture hall, also known as the Female Academy, was dismantled in 1910 and the bricks used in the construction of the house at 308 East Main Street. There are no known photos of the pastor's study, but a brick study is shown on an 1873 atlas just behind the lecture hall. The last pastor to use the parsonage left the parish in 1906; it was sold in 1993.

13 - 15 WEST MAIN STREET (c. 1848)

1859; cemetery c. 1775, 1927 – This congregation was one first in the Middletown Valley, dating from about 1740. Together with the Christ Reformed Church congregation, they constructed a log church and school southwest of present Middletown on 67 acres of land deeded to them by Philip Kefauver. This area is now known as the Picnic Woods.

After the Reformed congregation moved into Middletown and built their own church in 1770, the Lutheran Trustees secured lot No. 6 for "One Penny Sterling." While the actual date of the construction is not known, the new church was a six-sided log structure with a bell tower—the bell obtained from a man-of-war ship... >>>

107 WEST MAIN STREET

...>>> This building was razed and replaced in 1814 with a brick structure. In 1815 the congregation adopted its formal name it uses today: Evangelical Lutheran Church Zion. The present Greek Revival church building was built in 1859 and dedicated the next year with 2,000 people attending.

Sunday school and chapel additions were made in 1929, with further additions in 1994. The church served as a hospital for hundreds of wounded from both sides after the battles of South Mountain and Antietam in 1862. The hospital was decommissioned in 1863 and the church returned to the congregation along with \$2395.00 for damages.

107 WEST MAIN STREET

OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE



NORTH CHURCH AND GREEN STREETS (c. 1854)

The Otterbein Chapel, known as “The Martin Box,” stood at the northwest corner of Church and Green streets (historically the North Commons) adjacent to the old Methodist Burying Ground. Both sites are now part of the Zion Lutheran Cemetery. The Otterbein Chapel is named for Pastor Philip Otterbein, one of the founders of the Frederick County United Brethren in Christ Church. In 1854, the United Brethren in Christ congregation received one-half acre of land to construct a church. In 1882 the congregation sold the land to the Middletown school board and moved to a new church one block south. Zion Lutheran Church purchased the plot north of Green Street and abutting Church Street in 1927 to expand their cemetery. After the battles of South Mountain and Antietam, this property, the Lutheran Academy, and the adjoining Methodist Burial Ground served as temporary cemeteries. The soldiers’ remains were eventually moved to Antietam National Cemetery.

This was the town’s first Methodist Church and Seminary building. Built in Greek Revival style with a large belfry, it was one of the most imposing structures of its time. It served the congregation until about 1900, when the building was remodeled and used as a temporary school, library, and masonic lodge. In 1927 the Middletown Improvement Association purchased the building and further remodeled it into the Wesleyan Apartments.

207 WEST MAIN STREET (c. 1853)

The west half of this brick house was purchased by the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Seminary in 1868 to house their ministers. It remained the Methodist Parsonage until it was sold in 1890, after the decline of the congregation diminished its necessity.

217 WEST MAIN STREET (c. 1859)