

## *Brief History of Mt. Olivet School and Church*

At the top of a hill, on Walker Road, overlooking the fields and creek, once stood The Christian Church, a congregation of the Society of Christians, a non-denominational congregation. At some time in its early history the site became known more commonly as Mt. Olivet Church and School.

Farmers (and brothers) Joseph and John Montgomery each donated a parcel of land for the Church and brother David Montgomery donated an additional parcel for the graveyard.

The structure was two-storied and featured triple brick walls on a stone foundation with oak mortise and tendon beams. The upstairs was the sanctuary and the lower level was the school. The building was damaged beyond repair when a large Linden tree fell onto it. All that remains today is the foundation and some ruins of the building.

Records indicate that since the early 1900s a series of trustees have been responsible for the property. First, Albert Walker (think Walker Road). He passed the stewardship on to Less Cundiff, who maintained the property for many years. Township residents Charles McVaugh and his son Charles McVaugh, Jr. are the current trustees for the site.

The McVaughs have worked at the site to

uncover about 20 of the gravestones in the graveyard. They think there may be more graves at the site but the markers are no longer visible or have been removed by vandals. There is no way to know for sure because the church's records were lost.



*A photo of Mt. Olivet Church and School from Franklin Township's photo collection.*

Among the people buried at this site were Joseph Jackson (oldest grave), Gillie Meconkey, Harlan family members, Montgomery family members, Delilah Powell, and Margaret Jones (newest grave, dated 1925). The McVaugh's also found a few unnamed pauper graves along one edge of the site.

Charles found Joel Harlan's will in Chester County's records. According to his will, a friend was to place granite curbing around this family's gravesites and maintain the site. The granite curbing still exists at the site.

The church was available to any congregations that needed a place to worship. Itinerant preachers from around the community would take turns preaching at the church. Local newspapers would announce the services.

Mt. Olivet School served children in the southwest corner of Franklin Township until 1957 when Kemblesville Elementary School was completed and all the one-room school houses in the area were closed.