
RIDGE VALLEY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

- 0036-** Christ lives! Christian Church begins.
- 1517-** Martin Luther publishes 95 theses, word spreads due to invention of the printing press.
- 1536-** Calvinist Reforms begin to take place within the Church.
- 1683-** First settlers arrive in Germantown PA.
- 1725-** Skippack Reformed Church founded.
- 1743-** Indian Creek Reformed Church founded. A few members moved north to settle by the Ridge Valley Creek.
- 1750/58-** Ridge Valley (RV) settlement & log school/church is erected.
- 1776-** The Declaration of Independence is signed.
- 1792-** Ridge Valley Churches officially deeded the land on which the old cemetery and log school/church sit.
- 1833-** Stone addition added to log school/church.
- 1854-** Cornerstone is laid for Ridge Valley Union Church with Mennonite, Lutheran and Reformed owning 1/3- total cost \$2000. (stone building, first floor auditorium with balconies on 3 sides, and a high pulpit on the east wall). A Krauss pipe organ built locally graced the west balcony.
- 1861-** The Civil War starts.
- 1883-** RV Schoolhouse is constructed, purchased by the Church in 1986.
- 1899-** New Lutheran Church begins construction.
- 1901-** The Reformed Church begins reconstruction of the 1854 building. A steeple and 2 ton bell are added. Auditorium moved to second floor with a new west balcony and frescoed ceiling/wall paintings. Windows elongated with arch and stained glass added.
- 1904-** Highest recorded membership 421 people.
- 1914-** World War I begins and German culture becomes unpopular.
- 1920's-** Kerosine lights electrified. Services transition from German to English.
- 1930's-** Union shared Horse sheds are dismantled to make way for automobiles, two still remain in 2020!
- 1948-** Work begins on remodeling the Sanctuary to its present look to celebrate and commemorate the end of World War II.
- 1955-** Church kitchen/bathroom addition.
- 1957-** The United Church of Christ denomination forms.
- 1969-** First person walks on the moon.
- 1982-** Church renewal, large membership increase.
- 1989-1991-** An Allen organ is installed and the sanctuary is redecorated.
- 1992-** Church Bicentennial & deeded division of union owned parking.
- 2019/20-** Deed is rediscovered and conserved for future generations.



HERITAGE DAY “DEED RESTORATION”



**Ridge Valley United Church of Christ
Sellersville, Pennsylvania**

Sunday, September 26, 2021

I was glad when they said unto me, "Let us go into the house of the Lord."

Psalm 122:1



“I grew up, for the most part, in different areas of the Midwest. In that region, historical sites of our European ancestors are considered old if they date to the mid-to-late 1800’s. When we discovered our original deed, dated 1792, I was astonished. Given time to adjust as the document was restored, I am no less astonished today. It doesn’t seem possible to own something so old.

I would like to welcome you to Ridge Valley’s Heritage Sunday, as we unveil the restored property deed. We welcome you for worship and/or our open house, as we celebrate the good-fortune of having found and saved such an important piece of Ridge Valley United Church of Christ’s history.”

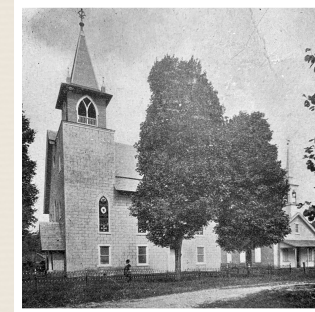
Pastor Steve Myren

“As we reflect on our historical past, we are grateful to our forebears for their vision and dedication in establishing a faith community here in Ridge Valley. We wanted to preserve vestiges of our wonderful heritage while looking ahead to expand our outreach as a congregation and meet the challenges of the future. It is our goal to be a welcoming presence for all people who wish to join us in worship and fellowship, now and in the time to come.”

The Restoration Committee



Ridge Valley Union Church 1854-1901



From William Penn to John Guittleman, and then his heir Henry Guittleman, came the land deeded in 1792. The recently restored deed conveyed land to the Lutheran and Calvinist (Reformed) societies. The congregations paid 5 pounds (\$25) for the land, equivalent to \$669 in 2020. This land included the old community cemetery directly across the street, the land on which Ridge Valley UCC sits, and land north into the “old picnic grove”.

The “Rich Valley” settlement formed around the Creek and Mill a few feet south of the old cemetery. This was a saw mill powered by the creek, which harvested old growth hardwood forest, some of which was used later in building the Ridge Valley Churches. As German Reformed settlers moved north from our “mother church” at Indian Creek, they probably first practiced their faith in homes. They later erected a log building for school and meeting space. The congregations existed before the formal conveyance of land. There is a date in UCC records indicating 1758, but we may never be sure of the exact date.

The log cabin (with one addition in 1833) served the congregations until our current native stone building was built in 1854 as a Union Church. Although modified in 1901 to transform the building (with steeple and arched windows) as we see it today, the stone walls and roof line are original.

