

**A Bit of History
of
Christ UM Church**



**Extracts from a Brochure
Produced on the Occasion
of the
50th Anniversary of Dedication
1901 -1951
September 16 to October 17
1951**

FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF
DEDICATION
1901 — 1951

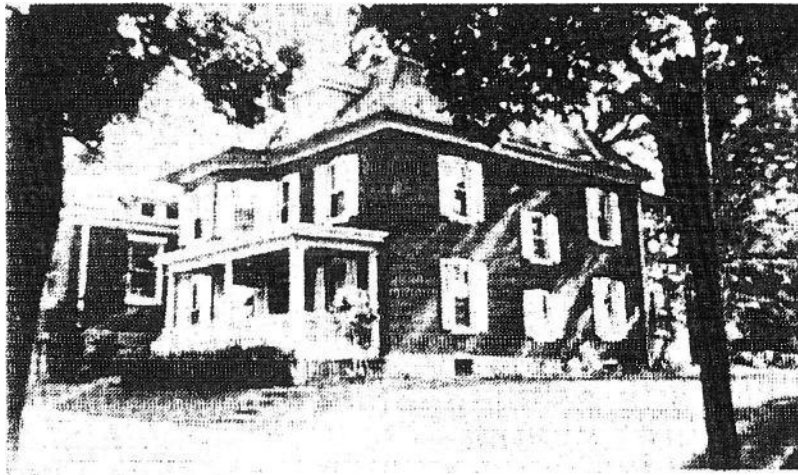
September 16 to October 17

METHODIST CHURCH
Waynesboro, Penna.

"Christ in Gethsemane"—The cover
page picture is that of window in
arch over the pulpit.

THE OLD

The Henry Shonehouse property on South Church street was acquired by the church for a parsonage in 1865. It was the first parsonage.

- AND THE NEW

The "new" parsonage was built adjoining the church on West Second street at approximately the same time as the church. Much improved and modernized it is a comfortable home. The picture is a snapshot taken by Mrs. L Elbert Wilson recently.

HISTORY OF CHURCH

***NOTE: The history of the Methodist Church of Waynesboro which appears in these pages is a condensation of a history written by Miss Matilda Detrich, who engaged in much research to establish dates and facts. Her history is complete until 1935. A few additional paragraphs are appended to bring the history up to the present month of September, 1951.**

Early in the 1800's, less than ten years after John Wallace had laid out the town of Waynesburg, Nathaniel Wilson bought land in the new town and came with his family to make it his home.

Through this same Nathaniel Wilson we have the earliest record of Methodists in Waynesboro.

In 1805 love feast tickets were issued to him, his wife Phoebe (Powell) Wilson, and their twin daughters Margaret and Hannah. The Methodist Society was formed. Subscriptions were received for a church building.



The church as it was until replaced in 1901 by the present edifice. It was erected in 1857.

The exact date of the building of the first church is not known, but the first burial in the grave yard was in February, 1826 and the church was in use in 1827. It was a one-story building of brick with a "bake-oven addition for the pulpit." It occupied the site of the present building. Trustees were James Smith, Nathaniel Wilson, Michael

Stoner, John Keagy, Daniel Sherfy, George Coughran, Hugh Logan, James Reilly, Henry Smith.

The building was used until 1857, when in February, a committee was appointed to inquire into the expediency of building a new church. Bids were asked. David Rider and Pius Zindorf proposed to do the work for "\$4900 including the old material." The other bid of "\$3650 and the old material" by David S. Stoner was accepted and the contract signed May 4, 1857 when John H. C. Dosh was the preacher. Signers were members of the building committee: Alexander Hamilton, Henry Smith, Henry Stone-house, George Bender, E. S. Troxel for the Trustees, and David S. Stoner, contractor.

The cornerstone was laid Saturday, August 22, 1857, and sermon preached in the Union Church by the Rev. T. H. W. Monroe, presiding elder.

The building was 45 x 65 feet and two stories high, described by the Village Record September 24, 1857 as "a gigantic looking structure." In 1887 the Franklin County History remarked it ranked "among the most substantial and attractive churches in the county."

No musical instrument was used in the church until 1861 or 1862, partly because many of the members objected to their use in churches. Then an organ belonging to a daughter of Mr. Henry Stonehouse, two houses away on Church Street, was carried over to the church Saturdays. Miss Virginia Stonehouse played it for church service and it was carried back again Monday morning. The Stonehouse property was acquired for a parsonage in 1865, the Stonehouses moving farther away. Soon after the trustees bought an organ.



**THE REV. GEDRGE M. HOKE
Minister at Dedication**

Extensive improvements were made in 1884 during the pastorate of the Rev. A. S. Bowman. Kerosene lamps were discarded and gas was installed.



This picture shows the interior of the church today. Note the beauty of the window over the pulpit.

The main Sunday School room and the class rooms were made communicating; the church was painted inside and out; the walls of the audience room and the vestibule were frescoed; a new carpet was placed and other improvements added, at a total cost of \$1300. It was about this time that sawdust filled boxes were placed on either side of the main vestibule at the

foot of each stairway. A printed sign above each box read: "Please leave your tobacco here."

Need for a new church was felt as the twentieth century dawned. In 1901, the present building was erected on the site of the former ones. The graveyard was abandoned, the bodies being removed to the various cemeteries. A parsonage was built which connected with the church building.



General Assembly Room on Main Floor. This room was done over in the last year. New lighting fixtures were installed, new chairs placed and draperies hung.

The building is 121 x 75 feet. The church and furnishings cost \$25,000. A movement had been started about 1895 by a class of young *men* and women, called Wesley Class, to secure a piano for the Sunday School. It was not until the new church was in use that the piano was bought. The Methodist Sunday School was the first in town to secure a piano. Electric lighting and the pipe organ for the church were all new features in church equipment in Waynesboro.

Dedication of the new church took place October 27, 1901. Bishop C. C. McCabe, D. D., preached the Sunday morning sermon, the Rev. H. B. Mosser, former pastor, gave an afternoon address, and the Rev. E. H. Yocum, D. D., preached in the evening at which time Bishop McCabe conducted the dedicatory ceremonies.

The building committee responsible for the new church consisted of Alvin M. Foltz, Ezekiel Elden, F. Jesse Beard, Aaron H. Deardorff, D. Singer Geiser, John H. Deardorff, Americus E. Waynant, A. Welty Ruthrauff, John G. Corbett, William E. Bender, Val Smith and the pastor, Rev. George N. Hoke, who was chairman.

The Board of Stewards in 1901 was small compared to the Board today. Two of the members of that Board are living today in Waynesboro, Mrs. Margaret Boerner (then Miss Margaret Adams) and Snively G. Stoler.

In 1875 the church had a few less than 200 members. At the time of dedication in 1901 the membership was 356. As of now—September, 1951 — the membership is 1001.

When the new edifice was constructed the cornerstone of the old was placed on the southeast corner of the church and the new one at the north-east corner. The building as it stands today, with furnishings, has an estimated value of \$250,000.

One of the turning points in the history of the Waynesboro Methodist Church was the evangelistic campaign conducted by the Rev. W. E. Biedewolf early in 1914. This was not exclusively a Methodist meeting, but was brought about through the efforts of the Rev. T. S. Wilcox, then pastor. The community was profoundly affected. Through the campaign can be traced at least 210 full memberships in the Methodist church. The marked influence it had on the congregation can be felt to this day.

During the second ministry here of Dr. Wilcox (1912-1915), the organ which graces the sanctuary was designed by T. Scott Buhrman, and installed by the Moller Company. To this day it remains one of the largest and best church organs in the entire Cumberland Valley, even though it shows the wear and tear of time. A major project of the next few years may be a complete reconditioning of this fine instrument.

Instrumental in providing the organ were Mrs. Lizzie Brown Oellig, Miss Henrietta Brown, Miss Mary Brown, Mrs. Jennie Brown Buhrman, Miss Fannie Brown, and Miss Anna Brown.

Whether we as a church or as individuals, approve or disapprove of war," it was written in a brief history of the church, "we must admire the spirit of our people when our country needed their services."

Paul Yingling and Elmer Baker, both members of our Sunday School, were the first to volunteer from Waynesboro in the first World War. Almost every member of the Rue Cadets, the class to which they belonged, was in the service. The church also had some young women in service: one, a Red Cross Nurse, served in France, others were yeomen in the Naval Reserves.

A large memorial tablet in the front of the sanctuary contains the names of those who served in World War I and World War II, also names of those who have been called into service because of trouble in Korea.

During the ministry of the Rev. E. L. Eslinger in 1926, a program of extensive improvements and renovations was undertaken, costing \$27,000. A new floor covering was laid in the sanctuary, also in the basement, and numerous other improvements made.

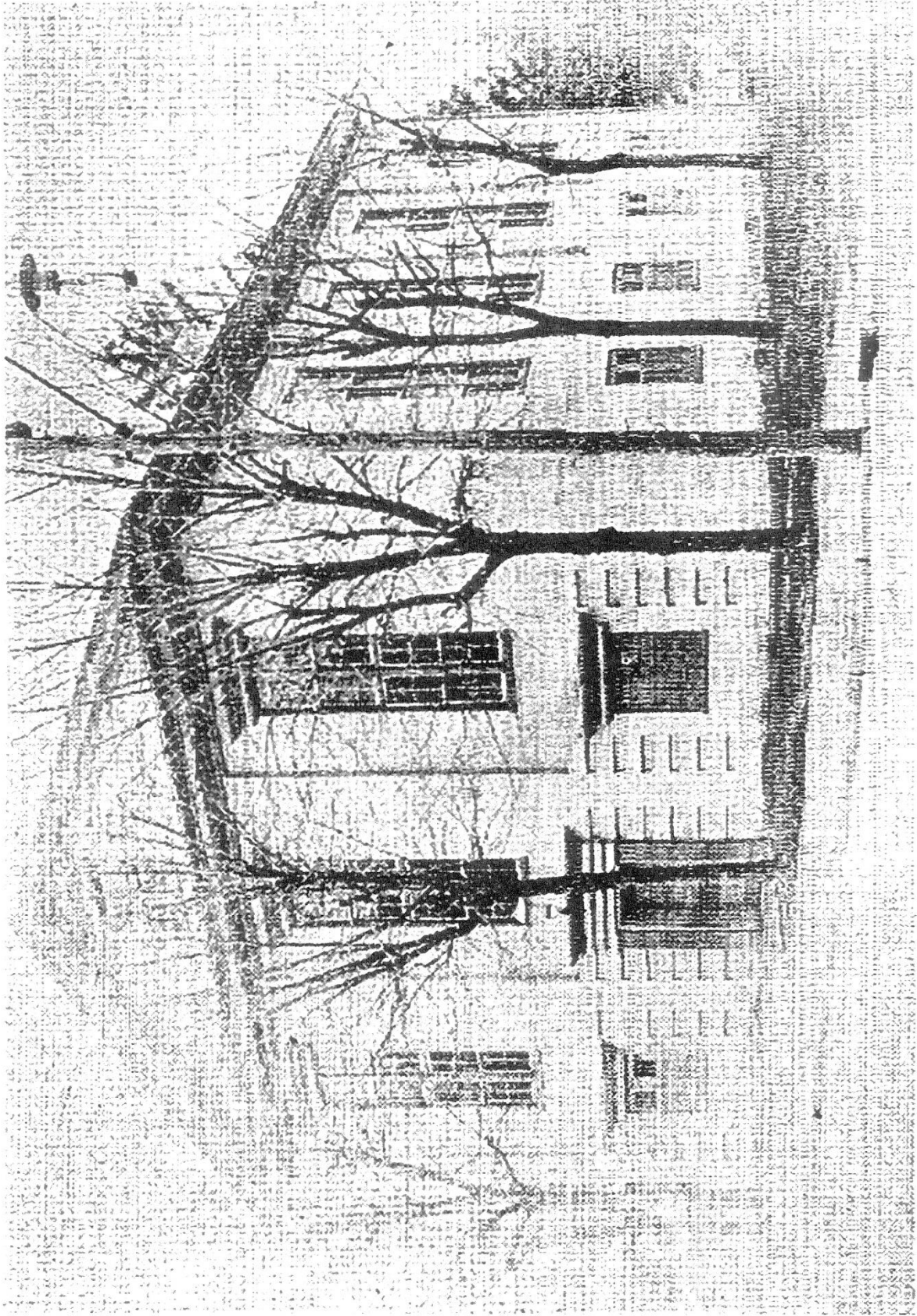
Some \$4,000 was spent at the time of the 40th Anniversary during the pastorate of the Rev. W. L. Crowding.

These improvements and alterations lasted until the present year, when a project estimated at \$16,000 included new floor coverings, installation of new lights in the main Sunday School and Assembly room, and renovations in the basement. New rooms were opened for classes and assemblies.

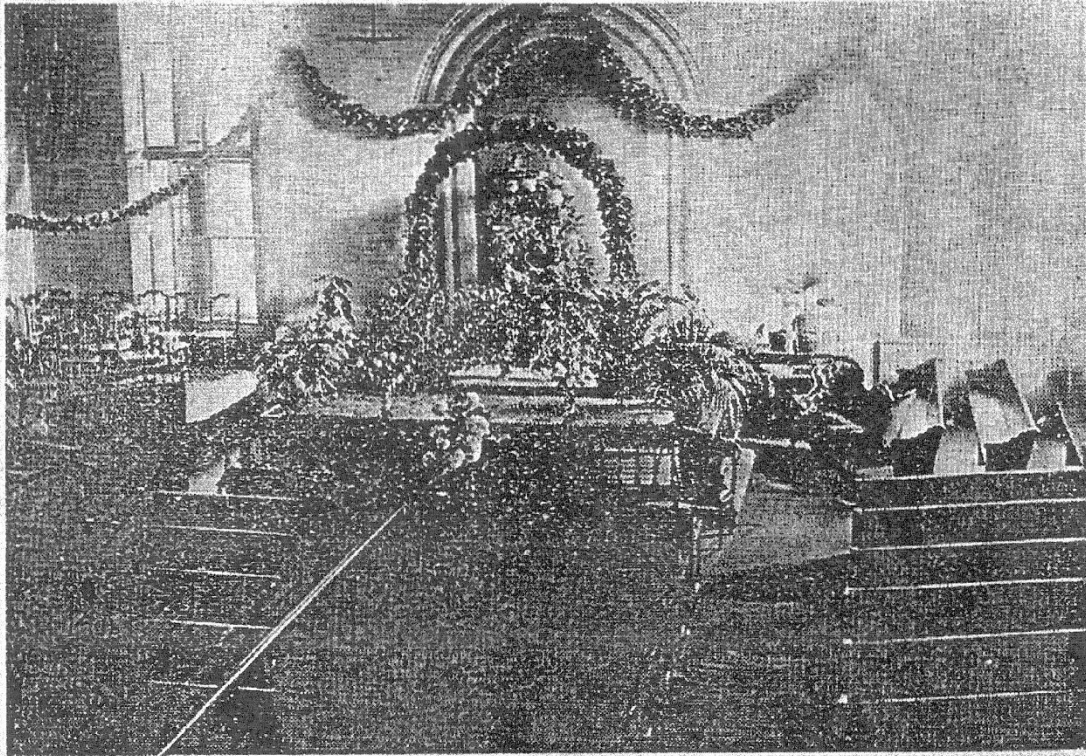
During the years following World War I, the church kept to the fore with other churches of the denomination and in interdenominational affairs. These enterprises have engaged the church in the work of Christian education, evangelism, missionary, philanthropic and ecumenical concerns. The church ranked high in contributions to the Methodist Centenary movement in 1919, and to the work of the Inter-Church World Movement, both of which were notable postwar events.

The history of the Greencastle Methodist church is curiously intertwined with that of the Waynesboro church. But that is another story. Mrs. Eva Kolda is at work assembling data concerning the former. About 1940 the Greencastle church consolidated with the Waynesboro church, through transfer of memberships. There now are thirteen former members of the Greencastle church who are members here. These constitute one of the most faithful and loyal groups of worshippers in our church.

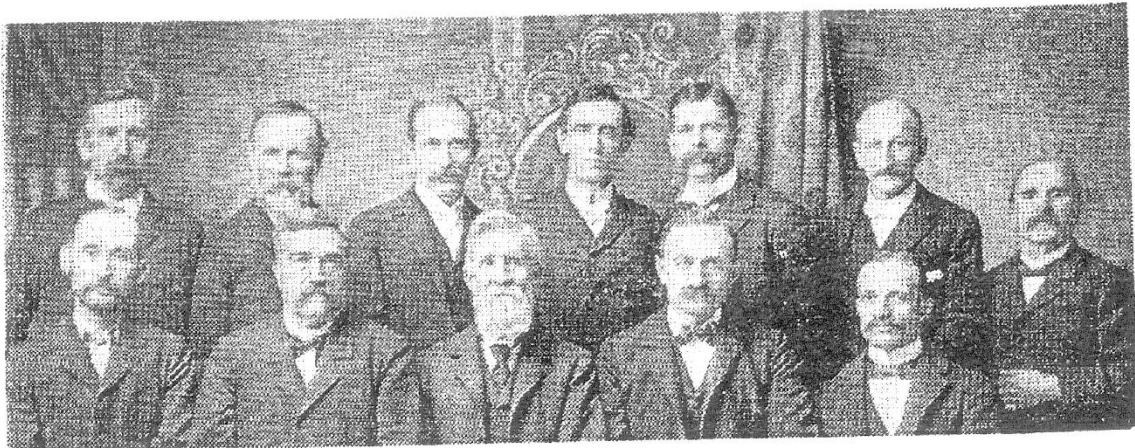
Special campaigns for Methodist institutions of higher learning, Homes for the Children and Aged, Ministers' Pensions, the Wesley Foundation, have all been warmly received and supported through the years. More recently the post World War II movements of the Methodist Church, namely the Crusade for Christ and the Advance for Christ and His Church have called forth many thousand dollars in gifts, as well as cooperation in the work of evangelism and Christian education. The church now stands among the ten leading churches of the Central Pennsylvania Conference in the matter of membership and contributions to the causes of the Church.



The church as it was until replaced in 1901 by the present edifice. It was erected in 1857.



The Church at the turn of the century decorated for Children's Day, 1900.



BUILDING COMMITTEE OF 1901

Front row, left to right: Alvin M. Foltz, Ezekiel Elden, F. Jesse Beard, Aaron H. Deardorff, D. Singer Geiser.

Back row: John H. Deardorff, Americus E. Waynant, A. Welty Ruthrauff, Rev. George M. Hoke, pastor and chairman; Val Smith, John G. Corbet, William E. Bender.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

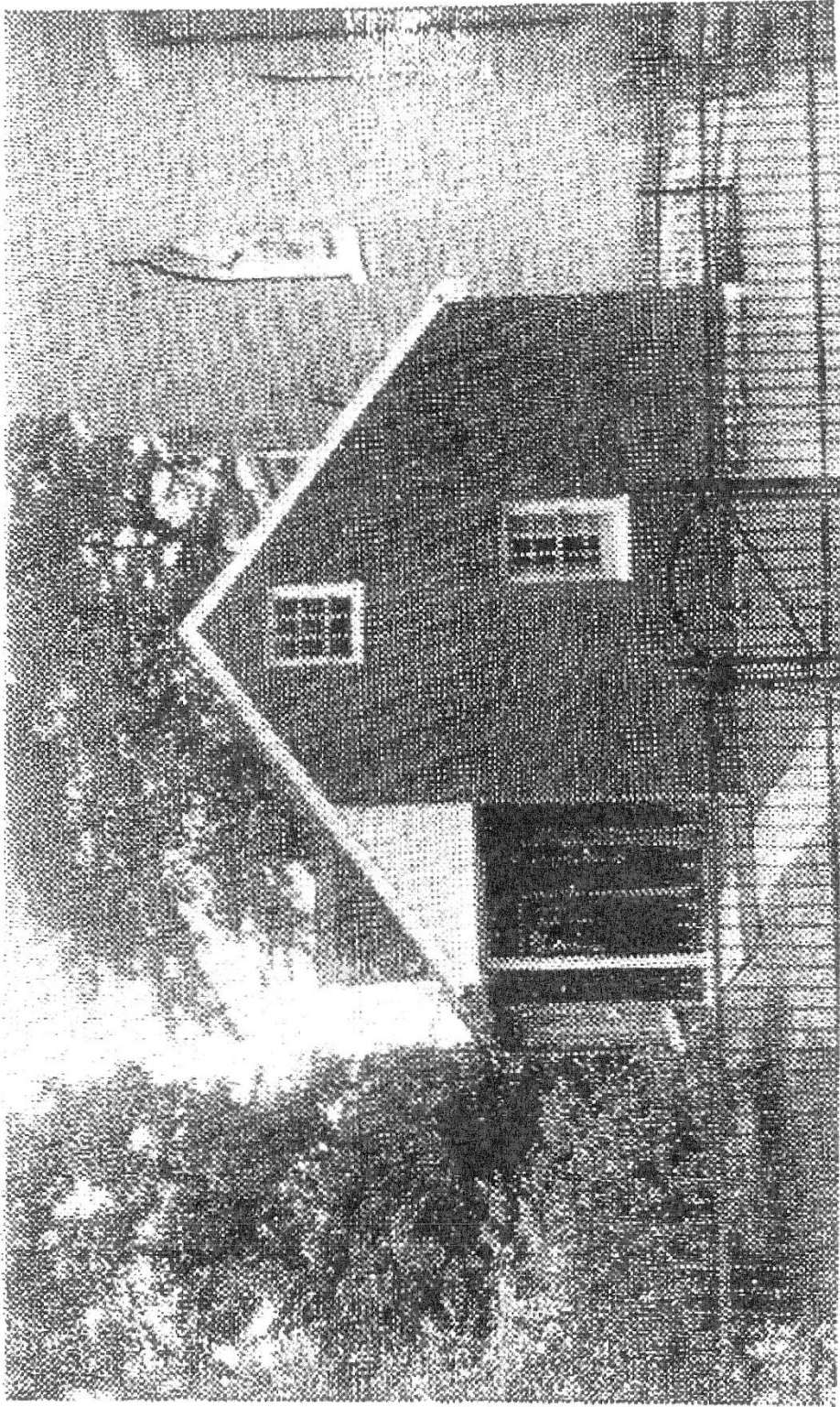


This picture shows the Methodist Church of Waynesboro as it appears today. The building was dedicated October 27, 1901, replacing the edifice erected and dedicated in 1857. When the new building was constructed the cornerstone of the former church was placed at the southeast corner where it now remains as a solid block linking the old with the new.



This picture shows the interior of the church today. Note the beauty of the window over the pulpit.

THE PARISH HOUSE



"The Parish House," now used by our Methodist Youth Fellowship and Boy Scout Troop No. 29 for worship, study and fellowship is one of Waynesboro's oldest houses said to be 175 years old.