



# **TOUR – Fredericksburg Historic Churches**

**1 October 2015**

**Sponsor: Karen Scanlon**

**Pictures: Randy Fennemore**



We will visit two of the many beautiful and historic churches located in the Old Town area of Fredericksburg: Fredericksburg United Methodist Church and Shiloh Baptist Church (New Site). A member historical committee from each church will present unique architectural features and important historical information about that church. We begin at Fredericksburg United Methodist Church, 308 Hanover Street. We then go to Shiloh Baptist Church (New Site), 525 Princess Anne Street, where the tour continues at 11:05. Park on city streets.



Fredericksburg United Methodist Church





Fredericksburg United Methodist Church



Chuck Johnson Alan Zirkle, Jack Sulima



Jack Allison



Fredericksburg United Methodist Church

For more than 200 years, there has been Methodist activity in Fredericksburg. As early as 1801, the congregation had erected its first building, a frame structure on George Street, and in April 1802, received the appointment of its pastor. After a tenuous existence for its first twenty years, the small congregation began to grow. This change was due in large measure to the leadership of John Kobler and his wife, Mary, who moved to Fredericksburg from Culpeper in the early 1820's. In 1841, the growing congregation moved to Hanover Street and constructed a new brick church. It was used until 1862 when it was extensively damaged during the battles of the Civil War, which raged in and about the city.



Fredericksburg United Methodist Church

**In 1848**, the congregation split over the slavery issue and a group left to form a new church which became part of the newly formed Methodist Episcopal Church South. At the close of the war, the two congregation became united once again as a charge of the Washington District, Baltimore Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church South. They worshiped in the new building at the corner of George and Charles Streets, which somehow had escaped serious war damage.



Fredericksburg United Methodist Church

**However**, this building was too small and in 1882, being pressed for room, they tore down the damaged brick church on Hanover Street and constructed on its site a new brick building. This building with its later additions is still being used today. As the city grew and prospered into the twentieth century, the church grew with it and served as the host for three annual conferences. In 1963, it became the first Methodist Church in Virginia in contemporary time to become integrated.

**Major renovations were made in 1950, 1988 and 2008.**

Fredericksburg United Methodist Church today is a large church with 2500 members. We would like to invite you to join us in the many worship, fellowship, mission, children, youth, and growth opportunities available at Fredericksburg United Methodist Church.



Shiloh Baptist Church – New Site







Shiloh Baptist Church – New Site



Chuck Johnson and Peggy Johnson





Shiloh Baptist Church – New Site



Shiloh Baptist Church – New Site

Prior to 1854 Shiloh Baptist Church, located at Hanover and Sophia Streets, had two congregations worshipping together: the White Baptists and the Colored Baptists. Members of the Colored Baptist Church occupied the galleries of the White church; free Blacks worshipped in the end gallery and the enslaved Blacks in the side gallery.

In 1854, the white members moved to a new location on the corner of Princess Anne and Amelia Streets (Fredericksburg Baptist Church) and later sold their former site on Sophia Street to the colored members in 1857 for \$500.00.



Shiloh Baptist Church – New Site

The Black congregation named its worship site, African Baptist Church. According to law, at that time, Blacks were not allowed to congregate without a white person present. Consequently, Rev. George Rowe, a white minister, was appointed as the first pastor and he served from 1856-1863.

Due to rigid fugitive laws at that time in our country, free Blacks were constantly harassed and antagonized. As a result, many free Blacks sought relocation to other places. Several relocated in Detroit, Michigan and assembled into the Croghan Street Baptist Church. During urban renewal and redevelopment of this church's neighborhood, the building was demolished. Some members moved to Washington, DC and founded the Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington, DC. This church continues to thrive and in March of 1998 rededicated its expanded and renovated facility located at 9th and P streets, NW.



Shiloh Baptist Church – New Site

In 1995, Shiloh (New site) became the first African American site to be included on the Candlelight Tour of Historic Fredericksburg Foundation. Over 4,000 people visited our sanctuary and were introduced to our rich heritage. One of the many features of the Candlelight tour included the viewing of our magnificent stained glass windows. These windows depict biblical symbols and scenes as well as a New Site member.

In 1996, the Shiloh Cemetery became the first cemetery to be included on the tour. A portion of the proceeds were awarded to our church in the form of a Brick and Mortar Grant. The funds were used towards the reconstruction of the original bell tower which was completed in 1997. Looking toward future growth, a Five Year Plan was implemented in 1994. The parsonage (named the M.L. Murchison Christian Center in 1971) was reconverted for use as a meeting and office space on the first and second floors in 1995. Many projects of the Five Year Plan were completed in just three years, to include, the burning of the mortgage, on November 13, 1998.