

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TUCKER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

IT COULD BE CALLED "THE LITTLE CHURCH BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD" OR IT MIGHT BE REFERRED TO AS THE "TUCKER MEETING HOUSE" OR EVEN THE "OLD STONEPILE".

THE HISTORY OF THE TUCKER METHODIST CHURCH DATES BACK TO THE DAYS BEFORE THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR. ALTHOUGH, THE BUILDING ITSELF WAS NOT ERECTED UNTIL THE YEAR 1824, METHODIST MEETINGS WERE HELD REGULARLY FOR NEARLY 40 YEARS PRIOR TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP.

JOHN TUCKER AND HIS 2ND WIFE AND HIS FAMILY ARRIVED HERE IN HANOVER TOWNSHIP ABOUT 1775. ON A PREVIOUS VISIT HERE, HE MARKED OUT A TOMAHAWK CLAIM OF 400 ACRES. THIS HE NAMED "GRACE TRACT". IT IS BELIEVED THAT HE SELECTED THIS PARTICULAR SPOT OF GROUND BECAUSE OF THE HARDY GROVE OF CHESTNUT TREES WHICH GREW UPON IT, INDICATING FERTILE LAND. HE HAD EVEN DECIDED UPON A LOCATION FOR HIS CABIN ON THE NORTHERN SIDE OF THE WATER SHED, ABOUT 3/4 OF A MILE FROM THE TRAIL WHICH LATER BECAME ROUTE 22. THERE THEY WOULD BE COMPARATIVELY SAFE FROM THE OBSERVATION OF THE INDIANS.

THE PATH, WHERE THE SMALL FAMILY MADE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE BRUSH UPON ARRIVING AT THEIR NEW HOME, IS NOW THE LANE LEADING TO THE THOMAS PERKINS HOME, NOW CALLED TUCKER LANE.

JOHN TUCKER HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS "A LARGE MAN AND THE RASCAL" AND WAS AN HONEST QUAKER. HE CARRIED A STAFF THAT WAS ABOUT TWICE AS TALL AS HE WAS. HE CALLED IT A "VAULTING STICK", AND BY CLUTCHING IT NEAR

THE TOP HE COULD FLING HIMSELF FOR A DISTANCE OF AT LEAST 10 FT. LEAVING ONLY A FEW TRACKS, THUS CONFUSING THE INDIANS.

HE WAS DEEPLY DEVOTED TO HIS WORK AND TO HIS RELIGION. HE SET UP HIS OWN FAMILY DEVOTIONS, AS DID THE OTHER SETTLERS AND CONDUCTED WORSHIP SERVICES IN HIS OWN HOME. LATER, VARIOUS FAMILIES GATHERED FOR THE DEVOTIONS, MAKING A SMALL GROUP OF WORSHIPPERS IN THE LITTLE CABIN.

DAY AND NIGHT SOMEONE HAD TO KEEP WATCH FOR THE INDIANS. AS A FUTURE PRECAUTION, SLEIGH BELLS WERE KEPT ON THE HORSES BECAUSE A QUICK JINGLING OF THE BELLS INDICATED THAT PROWLERS WERE NEAR AND THE PROWLERS WERE PROBABLY INDIANS.

NO MATTER HOW THEY RECEIVED THE MESSAGE THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING TO DOFLEE TO VANCE'S FORT.

VANCE'S FORT WAS 10 MILES FROM THE TUCKER CABIN AND WAS NEAR WHERE THE VILLAGE OF CROSS CREEK NOW STANDS. ONE OR TWO LITTLE GIRLS HAD BEEN ADDED TO THE TUCKER FAMILY AND TOGETHER THEY MADE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE DARK FOREST, WALKING ALL NIGHT.

DURING THE YEARS OF RAISING A FAMILY, CLEARING, AND CULTIVATING THE LAND, AND CONDUCTING FAMILY WORSHIP IN THE VARIOUS CABINS, ONE OF JOHN TUCKERS' MOST CHERISHED DREAMS WAS THE ERECTION OF A HOUSE OF WORSHIP. HE HAD ALREADY MET THE CIRCUIT RIDERS AND HAD BEEN INTRODUCED TO METHODISM.

IN THE YEAR 1823 A STONE BUILDING WAS BEGUN. FOUR BROTHERS FROM ISLAND CREEK, OHIO, BY THE NAME OF MINISINGER, WERE THE LEADING STONE MASONS OF THE DAY. THEY WERE HIRED TO ERECT THE STONE BUILDING WHICH STANDS TODAY AND IN WHICH MANY GENERATIONS OF THE PIONEER FAMILIES RECEIVED THEIR SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE. ONE

ACCOUNT STATES THAT THE COST OF THE BUILDING WAS \$75.00
AND ANOTHER SAYS \$85.00

THE STONES WERE QUARRIED ON THE GROUNDS BELOW THE
CHURCH, CUT AND SQUARED BY HAND. IT WAS COMPLETED
THE FOLLOWING YEAR IN 1824. THE GROUND ON WHICH IT WAS
ERECTED WAS PART OF THE ORIGINAL TUCKER TRACT WHICH
JOHN TUCKER HAD SET ASIDE FOR THAT PURPOSE.

JOHN TUCKER DIED ON APRIL 6, 1830, ONLY 6 YEARS AFTER THE
COMPLETION OF HIS BELOVED "MEETING HOUSE". AT THE AGE
OF 100 YEARS HE WAS LAID TO REST IN THE CHURCH YARD
NEARBY. PLAIN SANDSTONE SLABS MARK THEIR GRAVES
TODAY.

ON MAY 2, 1999 THE CHURCH WILL BE CELEBRATING IT'S 175TH
BIRTHDAY AND HAS HAD CONTINUOUS SERVICES ALL THESE
YEARS.

THE CONGREGATION EXTENDS TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES A
WELCOME TO JOIN US ON THAT DAY . THE CELEBRATION WILL
BEGIN AT 2:00 P.M.