

EBENEZER

ASSOCIATE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
(THE OLD BRICK CHURCH)

EBENEZER is often called or referred to as the birthplace of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in South Carolina, for it was in this historic little building that its first pastor, the Reverend James Rogers, acted as moderator and organized the Associate Reformed Synod of the Carolinas in 1803.

The building was erected in 1788 by the people of the Lower Little River section of the county. They were predominantly Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, highly religious, and staunch and fervent in their beliefs.

The sanctuary is small and rectangular in design, very plain, and covered with a gabled roof. It is well lighted and ventilated with long, unornamented windows. The bricks for the thick masonry walls were made by members of the congregation who also constructed the church and built the simple but well-appointed furniture. There is also a slaves' gallery where the house servants worshiped with their masters and were taught the fundamentals of Christianity.

During the war, in 1865, Fairfield County was invaded. Ebenezer was in the path of General Killpatrick's Union Calvary. Near the church there were skirmishes with the Confederates who had the advantage of being located on the ridge. When the Union Calvary reached Little River they found that the Confederates had burned the bridge. In order to avoid the bullets of the sharpshooters in the hills above them, the Yankees took advantage of the little church and ripped out part of the flooring and woodwork to hastily construct a bridge over which they might cross the swollen stream and move on beyond the ridge.

After they left, a note of apology was found inscribed on some of the woodwork that remained intact. It read thus:

"To the citizens of this county -
Please, excuse us for defacing your house of worship.
It was absolutely necessary to effect a crossing over the Creek.
(Signed) A Yankee."

(Taken from A Fairfield Sketchbook by Bolick)

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Historical Celebration The Old Brick Church

1788 - 1995

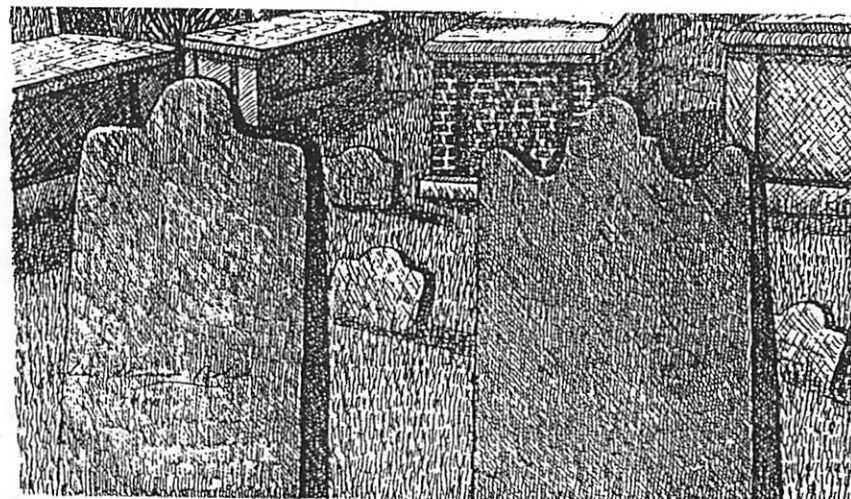
October 15, 1995

4:00 p.m.



PAHY, 10-16-95
I saved a program for you.
Thank you for all of your assistance
& also thank Ruth Stevens & "Bootsie"
Livings. "Bootsie" never told me her first
name.

Scott Cohen



EBENEZER CHURCH

LXXXV

A Note of History

We are assembled today in a house of worship which was built in 1788. In other periods of history this place of worship was known as Ebenezer Meeting House and also Little River Church, but for a long time Associate Reformed Presbyterians and others have affectionately spoken of it as the Old Brick Church.

Although no congregation has regularly worshiped in the venerable brick sanctuary for more than 70 years, tremendous significance is attached to it by Associate Reformed Presbyterians. It was here on May 9, 1803, when the building was comparatively new, that a handful of ministers and ruling elders gathered to organize the Synod of the Carolinas. In 1822 this body made itself independent of Northern ties, eventually evolving into the present denomination.

The story of Ebenezer Meeting House began with the arrival in the 1770s of Presbyterians from Scotland and Ireland who settled on both sides of Little River. They were people who had been neighbors in the old country and who would continue the relationship in a new land. These families had hardly begun work on their own homes when they turned their attention to building a suitable house of worship. The first one or two were temporary buildings but soon the desire came to build a more permanent edifice. These early worshippers could not have dreamed how permanent it would be or that more than 200 years later a congregation such as we would be worshipping, and remembering, within the sacred walls of the house they built.

They made the bricks themselves. After their crops were laid by, the men would go to the brickyard, tramp the mud into mortar with their bare feet, put it into molds with their hands, and carry them out into the sun to dry. It was said they kept the kilns burning night and day, and it took a long time to build. But they completed the building in 1788, and they did their work well.

This revered and picturesque old church has seen much history, and in the two centuries of its existence has withstood good time and bad, war and peace, and the ravages of both time and weather.

The Old Brick Church, under the official name of Ebenezer Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, was restored to the rolls of Catawba Presbytery on November 18, 1973. There is no active congregation but periodically many come together, as we have today, to be reminded of the role this church once played, and continues to play, in the life and mission of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

John Bigham

WELCOME!

We have gathered today to Worship the living God and to give thanks for all His goodness to us. Many thanks to all who have come and may God bless and use you to share His love, to proclaim Jesus Christ as the only Savior of mankind, and to live a life of faithfulness.

THE SPEAKER

The Reverend Chris Snelgrove is Pastor of New Hope United Methodist Church and Capers Chapel United Methodist Church, both in Chester County. He is a former Colonel of the Palmetto Battalion, the South Carolina state organization of War Between the States Living Historians.

THANK YOU

A special note of thanks to the Officers and members of the Bethel Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Winnsboro, South Carolina for the upkeep of the building and grounds here at the Old Brick Church. We are especially thankful to the Session of Bethel Church for serving as custodians of the property. Any who wish to make a donation to the maintenance of the building and grounds is asked to speak to a member of the Session. Thank you.

Also, a note of thanks to W. L. D. Marion of Chester for serving as chairman of the committee to arrange for this service today.

Thanks to the Fairfield County Museum, The Palmetto Battalion Living Historians and Reverend Chris Snelgrove for their support for this event.

Finally, a note of thanks to Glinda and Scott Coleman and Gina and Russ White, of Chester, for all their work in making this historical celebration a significant time of worship for all of us.

THE BULLETIN

Many thanks to Russell Printing & Office Supplies for the bulletin and artwork. Russ White is a Deacon in the Chester Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.