

# HISTORIC RED HOOK

## United Methodist Church, Village of Red Hook

According to church publications, the origins of the local Red Hook Methodist Church, now the United Methodist Church of Red Hook, reach back to the late 18th Century. At a 1788 Methodist conference in New York City, Bishop Francis Asbury appointed nine young men “to extend the march of the Church up the Hudson River.”

The travel northward involved stops in Poughkeepsie, then Rhinebeck and Clermont, home of the prominent Livingstons. At that time, Red Hook was part of Dutchess County’s Rhinebeck Precinct. A leader of the march, Freeborn Garrettson, married in 1793 Catherine Livingston in the Methodist Church in Rhinebeck. Her family had initially opposed their union but then relented. He was by birth a slave holder in Maryland but freed his slaves and became known as a strong abolitionist. Garrettson eventually took charge as Presiding Elder of the district in Dutchess County.

In 1812, Red Hook became a township. Red Hook was originally part of the church’s Milan Circuit and increasingly became a location where itinerant preachers held services wherever they could. Services were held in homes, barns and schoolhouses. By 1840, Faucher’s Hall became a place of worship. Later a small building for worship was erected on Division Street (now Graves Street) near where the Methodist Cemetery is now located. The small membership included Samuel Faucher, Hannah Cookingham, Catherine Barringer, Cordelia Jackson and eventually Mrs. W.B. Astor and Mrs. Edward Livingston.

About 1848 or a bit before- the exact date is not known- Gilbert Fraleigh and others sold to the church for \$1.00 the land on Cherry Street that was to become the Methodist Cemetery. It was around this time that land was acquired for the church building on West Market Street.

At the reported cost of \$1,700, a Gothic-style church was erected in 1849, followed by a parsonage and a chapel for the Sunday school. Due to the growing congregation, a new church was built in 1894 on the grounds of the old one for a grand total of \$10,004 with the help of pledges including from Edward Martin of over \$6,000.

Throughout the existence of the church in Red Hook, there were numerous needs

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for building repair and renovation and for funds to pay for them. In 1951, for example, West Market St was widened by Red Hook, necessitating the sale of a portion of the church land for \$1,475—money then used to pay for extensive building repairs.

In 1965 the church in Red Hook was referred to as the Red Hook Methodist Church as indicated by their anniversary publication. By 1968, different branches joined together nationally to form the United Methodist Church.

Sources indicate that the Red Hook Methodist Church demonstrated community and international awareness in outreach and other programs. In the 1960's, for example, services were held for migrant worker groups, and the church supported a Korean orphan and a Cuban family that escaped from Castro's Cuba. Currently, this church among other endeavors runs a food pantry, and supports relief efforts in troubled areas of the world.