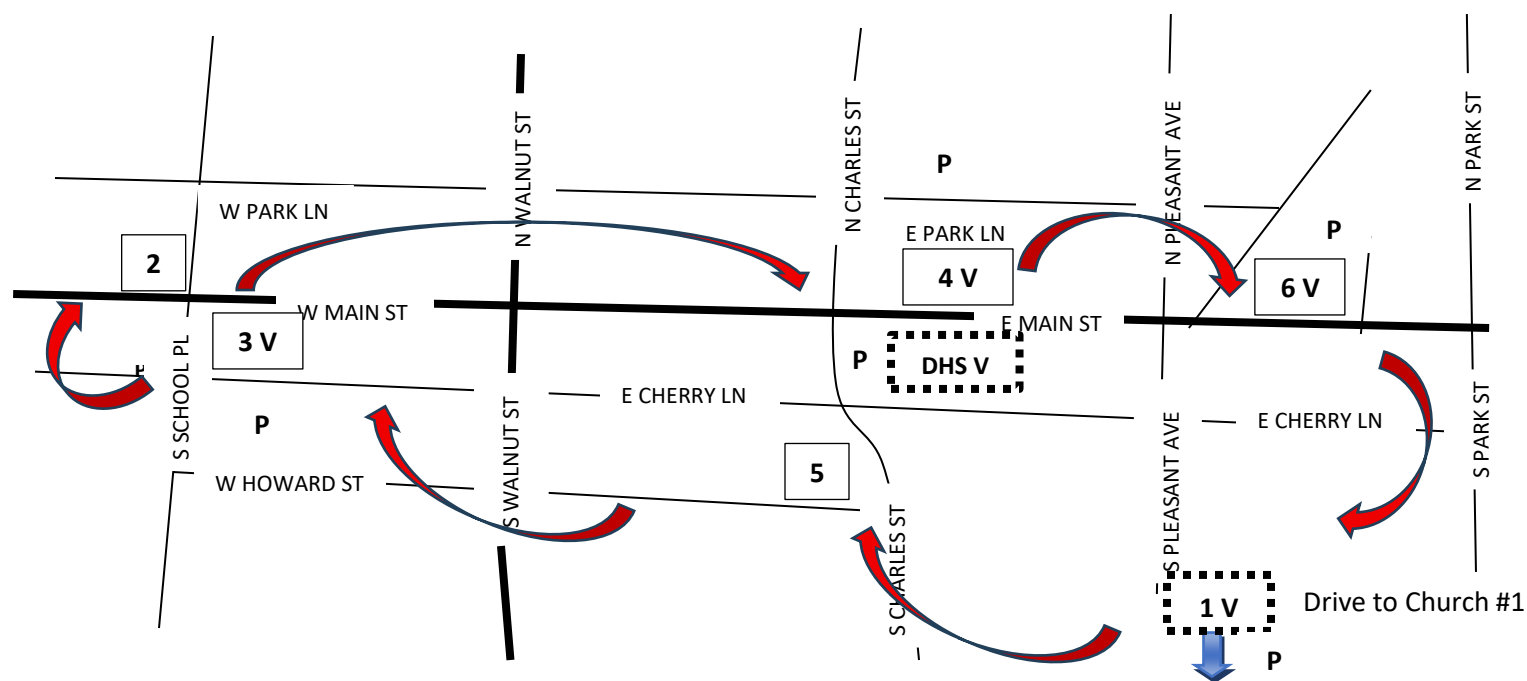


Dallastown Area Historical Society 2025 Historical Churches Tour



Churches are NUMBERED in sequence to match (for the most part) their historical development as listed below. CURVED ARROWS represent the most efficient travel route. Participants can start at any point and walk or ride to the next stop or available parking lot.
P = Parking available
V = Visitors welcome inside.
 Maps are available.



DHS: Dallastown Area Historical Society 118 E Main St P,V

#1: St. John's Blymire's United Church of Christ 1009 Blymire Road P,V

#2: St. Paul's United Church of Christ 205 West Main Street

#3: Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church 126 West Main Street P,V

#4: Bethlehem Life Church 109 E Main Street P,V

#5: Trinity Evangelical United Brethren Church 16 S Charles Street

#6: St. Joseph's Catholic Church 251 E. Main St. P,V

Religion and faith were important to early German settlers who arrived in Pennsylvania as early as the 1680s. People of Lutheran and Reformed faiths travelled together and settled together in this area. Even though there was little interaction between the two churches in Europe, some groups built one building to supply both faiths. Due to the scarcity of pastors, these Union churches often shared pastors for worship and rites of marriage and baptism. This partnership continued till around 1915. Such was the case of the earliest church established in Dallastown, St. John Blymire's.

CHURCH #1 St. John's Blymire's United Church of Christ 1009 Blymire Road (From Main St, drive 1 mile South on Pleasant Avenue. Turn left on Blymire)

The first church in Dallastown exists today as St. John's Blymire's UCC. This Union Church was built on 10 acres of a large tract of land owned by Martin Blymire and Michail Bitner and purchased for the purpose of founding a church, a school, and a burial ground. The church began in 1758 as a log structure, which was used as both a house of worship and a school. That building was later replaced by a wood-frame building. In 1855 a red brick structure was dedicated, used for 125 years by the church, and still stands today. In 1980, the congregation constructed a new, modern facility incorporating the church bell, stained glass windows, organ, piano, and some chancel furniture from the Red Brick Church. Both church buildings will be open for the tour.

CHURCH #2 St. Paul's United Church of Christ 205 West Main Street

In 1854, the year before the red brick church was built, 16 members of St. John's Blymire's planted a new Union Church in the town of Dallastown. The new congregation, named St. Paul's Church, built a brick church in 1856. In 1887 the Lutherans bought their share of the church to begin their own congregation. In 1959, St. Paul's Evangelical and Reformed Church purchased the land of the former neighboring Dallastown Elementary School to construct a new building called the McDowell Memorial Church and shortly thereafter built a new parsonage. In June 1957 they adopted the name, St. Paul's United Church of Christ upon participation in the merger of the Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church. In 2023, the church disbanded and sold their building to the current congregation, Truth Tabernacle Seventh Day Adventist Church.

CHURCH #3 Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church 126 West Main Street

When the Lutheran congregation separated from St. Paul's in 1887, the new congregation constructed a church building and parsonage on the current site. The oldest living member, 81-year-old Heinrich Miller, was given the honor of naming the church, Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church. A Sunday School Chapel was added in 1911 and a new parsonage in 1914. Rev. S. L. Hench, who served from 1915 to 1953 inspired the 1931 construction of the current building with an English Gothic style and its exterior made of "Butler" granite quarried in Towson, Maryland. In 2010, the congregation affiliated with the Lutheran Congregations in Missions for Christ denomination.

CHURCH #4 Bethlehem Life Church 109 E Main Street

Bethlehem United Brethren Church traces its history back to an 1827 camp-meeting held in Hartman's Grove, about one mile southwest of Dallastown, and a church was organized in 1838. United Brethren Church pastors preached and met in the homes of their members until 1850. The congregation was served by York Circuit ministers until 1884, when a brick building was constructed, which is at the site of what is today the Dallastown Historical Society's home. In 1907, the building currently in use was built, and in 1908, another congregation built Trinity Church on South Charles Street. The Evangelical United Brethren merged with the Methodist Church

to become the United Methodist Church in 1968, and in 2002 Trinity United Methodist merged with Bethlehem United Methodist. In 2016, the church added an ambitious new wing to serve the community. The church disassociated from the United Methodist Church in 2019 and is now known as Bethlehem Life Church.

CHURCH #5 Trinity Evangelical United Brethren Church 16 S Charles Street

Trinity had its beginnings at a tent meeting in the early fall of 1906, held on the site of the present church. A congregation was formed and met at the Band Hall on Main Street in Dallastown until 1908. A frame church from near Yorkana was purchased, dismantled, and moved to Dallastown where it was rebuilt and encased with brick at the present site. In 1957 the sanctuary was renovated and a new Sunday School unit added. In 2002 Trinity United Methodist merged with Bethlehem United Methodist. In 2020 the church building was purchased by the Archangel Michael & St Karas Coptic Orthodox Church.

CHURCH #6 St. Joseph's Catholic Church 251 E. Main St.

Catholics in the area traveled to New Freedom or York to worship until 1850 when St. Joseph's Parish was founded as a mission church. A visiting priest could provide services from the Society of Jesus, under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Philadelphia. In 1868, the Diocese of Harrisburg was established and a full-time priest was appointed to the parish. The parish building was expanded several times, including a bell purchased in 1890 and the building of a rectory in 1895. The same 1,200-pound bell remains in the present building, which was built in 1963.

In 1927, St. Joseph's parish opened an elementary school, which was staffed entirely by the Sisters of St. Francis, who lived in a house that had been purchased from a local family. That school provided Catholic education for children in pre-Kindergarten programs to sixth grade until closing in 2019.

Sources: *Brief History of Dallastown Churches*, 2016 newspaper column by Rev. Chris Rodkey; 1966 100th Anniversary Book, **The Dallastown Story**; and *St John's Blymire's Church History* by Susan Knaub.