

RANCK'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



GROSH FARM HOME
FIRST SERMON 1802



FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL
ORGANIZED 1841



REMODELED 1950



RANCK'S CHURCH
REMODELED 1922



RANCK'S CHURCH
REMODELED 1872

A collection of images showing various meetings places
of Ranck's United Methodist Church

Ranck's United Methodist Church: Two Centuries of Service

The oldest former United Brethren congregation in Lancaster County is Ranck's United Methodist Church of New Holland, Pennsylvania, which celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2002. The first recorded preaching service was held May 20, 1802, when future bishop Christian Newcomer preached at the farmhouse of Christopher Grosh. The society that formed there continued to meet at the Grosh farm for more than 40 years. In 1844, Joseph Ranck donated a plot of land for a meetinghouse and cemetery. Building began at once, and the new church was dedicated in the spring of 1845. The 32 x 36 foot structure was enlarged by ten feet in 1874, at which time a steeple and bell were added. Major renovations on this structure occurred in 1922-23, under the leadership of Rev. C. R. Longenecker.

On October 9, 1949, D. G. Weidman, the great-grandson of founder Christopher Grosh, broke ground for an addition and remodeling; a cornerstone ceremony was held February 26, 1950, led by Rev. J. Allan Ranck, a ministerial son of the congregation. The sanctuary was lengthened 11 feet on the pulpit side, and 9 feet on the entrance. The sanctuary now had an arched ceiling, and a round memorial window installed above the pulpit. A new addition included a basement with social room, kitchen and rest rooms, with new classrooms, and a chapel on the first and second floors. In 1977, a picnic pavilion and facilities were constructed across the road, and consecrated as "Faith Hill."

Congregational growth in the 1980s prompted the erection of a new, air-conditioned church that seats 250 people, constructed adjacent to the old sanctuary, which was transformed into a fellowship hall. New educational space, a library, elevator and choir rooms were added, and the new facilities were dedicated October 6, 1985. Among the participants that day were District Superintendent David Myers, the pastor, Rev. John H. Lynch, former pastors Warren Mohr, Julia Shearer and Ira Fortna, and Rev. Ezra H. Ranck, a son of the congregation.

Today, Ranck's is a vibrant congregation of more than 260 members, averaging about 150 in worship each week. The congregation supports a variety of community outreach ministries, has a robust youth program, and a vibrant Sunday school that typically sees 100-120 in attendance each week. The pastor since 2000 is Rev. Kevin Readman.