

Resolution #2021-07

Relating to the Discontinuance of Norristown: Asbury United Methodist Church Submitted by the East District of the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference

WHEREAS Asbury United Methodist Church, located in Montgomery County at 1441 Pine Street, Norristown, PA 19401 and has a proud history of ministering to the community in the borough of Norristown, PA.

WHEREAS the first church built by Methodists in Norristown was constructed in the mid 1830's on the south side of Main Street below Arch Street. In 1854, when there was a division within the congregation over erecting a new building, half of the members split off and built the Oak Street Methodist Church at Oak and Church Streets. Three years later the remaining Main Street congregation moved into a new building constructed on Dekalb Street between Marshall and Airy Streets. It was named the First Methodist Episcopal Church

WHEREAS, in 1875 the Oak Street Methodist Church established the West Norristown Mission at Marshall Street and Haws Avenue. Over time this mission grew to become the Haws Avenue Methodist Church. Its success resulted in a setback to the growth of the Oak Street congregation.

By 1912 the lack of growth plus its close proximity to the First Methodist church prompted the District Superintendent to call for the closing of the Oak Street church, but the congregation decided instead to move to the steadily developing north end of the borough, so they purchased the lot at the corner of Pine and Freedley Streets. In 1920 they built the Oak Street Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, which is the original part of our building.

WHEREAS there was a persistent desire among members of the congregation to reunite with the First M.E. Church. Through the leadership of pastors William May of Oak Street Memorial and William Shaw the two congregations merged on December 13, 1928 to become Asbury Methodist Church. From that time until 1934 Asbury Church held services at the old First M.E. building on Dekalb Street, and the Pine Street building was rented to the Christian Science Church and the Church of the Nazarene. Land was purchased at the corner of Dekalb and Fornance Streets with the intent of building a new large church there, but it was not possible in these Depression years. The church also lost the Dekalb Street building. The result was that the Asbury congregation moved into our Pine Street building in November 1934.

WHEREAS the District Superintendent has recommended the discontinuance of Asbury United Methodist Church of Norristown and transfer of membership to local United Methodist Churches in the area.

WHEREAS the consent to discontinue has been granted by the presiding Bishop; the district superintendents, and the East District Board of Church Location and Building; and all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Asbury United Methodist Church of Norristown be discontinued effective April 1, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Trustees of the Eastern PA Conference distribute any assets as result of the sale of the property of Asbury United Methodist Church of Norristown be distributed by Conference Trustees accordingly: 50% toward Cemetery Maintenance of churches in the boundary of our conference and 50% to be held in reserve by Conference Trustees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that historical records be forwarded to the archives of the St. George's United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, PA.