

A HISTORY OF
Wills Creek Charge

of the

EVANGELICAL AND
REFORMED CHURCH

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Wills Creek Charge

CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHARGE

Three of the four congregations composing this Charge have a long and varied history dating back to about the year 1800. They are: St. Mark's (formerly Greenville); written records date back to the year 1810. This indicates that the congregation existed there a number of years before that date. Grace (formerly called White Oak, and before that Reichards) was in existence as early as 1819, for on that date a promise was made by a John Wells to give a tract of land for church and school purposes to sundry citizens of Greenville and Southampton townships. This would also indicate that a congregation, or congregations, existed there for some years previous to that date. Mt. Lebanon's (formerly called Fichtner, and before that Mull's) written records date to the year 1834. History records the fact that a church building was erected two miles northeast of the present site in 1829. History also states that previous to the erection of the church building, services were held in various homes in the community as early as 1805. The fourth congregation of the Charge, Glencoe, is an offspring of the Mt. Lebanon congregation. During the history of these congregations they have been a part of five Charges as follows:

THE BERLIN CHARGE—1795-1833

When Rev. Henry Giese took up the work in the Berlin Charge in 1795, it was composed of the following congregations: Berlin, Glade, Shanksville, Stoystown, Friedens, Somerset, Samuel's, New Centerville, Sanner's, Salisbury, Wellersburg, and possibly others. (See "History of Somerset Classis"). He served this Charge for a period of thirty-eight years. It was during this period that the above named congregations of the Wills Creek Charge came into existence.

There can be no doubt that Rev. Giese was the founder of these congregations, although there is no documentary evidence substantiating this. Two undisputed facts point to him as their founder: first, they came into existence during his pastorate in the Charge, and second, he was the only Reformed pastor in all the region now covered by Somerset Classis. A third might be added: these congregations lay along the route of travel to and from Berlin to Wellersburg, which were two important congregations in the Charge. Rev. Giese served regularly in both these congregations; and being the pastor he was, he would not have passed up the opportunity to establish new congregations whenever and wherever possible.

