

HISTORY OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OAKLAND, DECKER'S POINT, GRANT TOWNSHIP.

Shortly after the union of the Associate and Associate Reformed churches, before the Associate Reformed Presbytery of Blairsville and the Associate Presbytery of Clarion were united in the U. P. Presbytery of Conemaugh, the Presbytery of Blairsville appointed a commission to be held at Decker's Point by Rev. Samuel Brown with James Hamilton, Robert Pollock, James Johnstone and S. H. Thompson ruling elders, with a view to establish a congregation there if practicable. Accordingly on Sabbath, September 19, 1858, the Lord's Supper was dispensed by Rev. S. Brown, assisted by the above named ruling elders.

From this time there was occasional preaching by supplies from Presbytery, and the attendance was so encouraging that the Presbytery of Conemaugh composed of the Associate Presbytery of Clarion and the A. R. Presbytery of Blairsville, appointed Rev. Matthew Wilson, with James McCreery, William Kinaan and S. W. Thompson, ruling elders, to organize a congregation at Decker's Point, which was done June 10, 1859, with the following members from Mahoning U. P. Church: J. R. Brown, Margaret Brown, Mrs. Margaret Clyde, William Riddle, Eliza Riddle, eleven in all; from Pine Grove, U. P. Church (now disorganized): William Kinaan, Nancy Kinaan, John McAllister, Mrs. McAllister, Margaret Decker, Samuel Barr, Isabella Barr, Samuel Miller, Mary Miller, nine in all; from Smyrna U. P. Church: Jane Richardson and by examination Nancy Kinaan – twenty-two in all. William Kinaan and John McAllister were elected ruling elders, and having been formerly ruling elders in Pine Grove they were installed July 1st, 1859. The congregation was called Oakland.

The congregation had supplies of preaching from Presbytery until June 2, 1861, when Mr. J. T. Wilson was ordained and installed pastor of Oakland in connection with Greenville and Taylorsville. He continued his labors one year with the acceptance, when he resigned. During his pastorate a church building was erected, fifty feet by forty. It is a good frame, with a deed of the property forever.

In December, 1861, Thomas C. Kerr and John R. Brown were elected ruling elders, ordained and installed.

From this time the congregation was supplied with preaching by Presbytery until Mr. G. P. Raitt was elected pastor of the same charge, and commenced his labors June 1st, 1866, and was ordained and installed July 17, 1866, who labored for three years with a goodly degree of success, when he resigned. Rev. J. C. Greer was then stated supply for about three and a half years. On September 8th, 1873, Hugh S. Pollock, James A. McAllister and George F. Hensleigh were elected of the office of ruling elders and ordained and installed December 22, 1873. During the years 1874 and 1875 the congregation was supplied with preaching by Presbytery, when at a meeting of the Brookville Presbytery, which was composed of part of the Presbytery of Conemaugh, a call was presented on April 11th, 1876, to Rev. James Given of the Presbytery of Westmoreland for one-fourth of his time in connection with a call from Richmond and Susquehanna congregations for the remainder of his time, which was by him accepted. He commenced his work of preaching to them the fourth Sabbath of April, 1876, and was installed their pastor October 16, 1876. He is at present their pastor. The number at present is thirty-five.