

## CHURCHES

### EARLY CHURCHES IN COLERAIN TOWNSHIP

After General Wayne's victory and the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, settlements spread rapidly throughout Hamilton County, followed closely by churches. **The earliest churches were first established by the Baptists, then Presbyterians, followed by the Methodists.**

On March 14, 1810, Solomon Slayback deeded one acre to the **"Regular Baptist Church of Pleasant Run"**. The deed was signed by Solomon and his wife, Sarah, witnessed by William and Abel Slayback, recorded by Zebulon Foster on April 2nd 1810. This church was built in the northwest corner of Section 25 in Springfield Township at the Butler County line. A few stones remain in the little church cemetery on present day Mill Road at the end of John Gray Road. Records copied from the stones show burials from 1827 to 1855. Names of families buried there include Edwards, Farmer, Fitchett, Floyd, Hall, Newell, Shipley, Trim and Walden.

Also in 1810 **another Baptist church was started on Compton Road**, west of Mt Healthy on lands of Samuel Johnson. It was constituted on October 28, 1810 by a council composed of William Jones, Ross Crosby and Henry Morton of the Columbia church; Richard Ayers, Cyrus Crane and Thomas Higgins of Carpenter's Run; Isaac Sellers of Pleasant Run and Richard J. Compton of Muddy Creek. The site of this first church was in **Arlington Memorial Gardens Cemetery**, but no trace of either has ever been found.

Sometime in the 1820's **this church moved to Springdale Road east of Pippin** on lands purchased from Jacob Williamson, a member of the church. A brick church was built, but was destroyed by a tornado in 1833. A second brick church building was erected in the same year. The church is gone but the cemetery – **West Branch Cemetery** – remains in the care of Colerain Township. In 1965 114 stones were copied by Polly Stout and Ruth Wells, the earliest being that of Harbour Hughes, who died in 1827. Early settler names found there are Compton, Cox, Hughes, Joyce, Martin, Miles, Monfort, Norris, Skillman, Stout, Struble and Williamson. Many of the early settlers were Baptists.

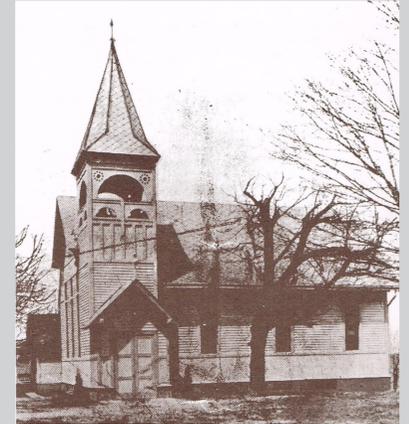
The **First Presbyterian Church of Colerain Township** was located on Kemper Road, west of Pippin and next to the water tower. On April 4, 1814, William Hunter sold the tract to the Presbyterian Church in Colerain Township "for the sole use and purpose of a burying ground".

The Trustees of the Presbyterian Ground were James Charters, John Ramsey, Jr. and William Gardner. It was made by Judah Willey, J. P. and witnessed by Ephraim Brown and Abizer Miles. It is shown on the 1869 map of Colerain Township as the **"Peoples Church"**. The Presbyterians didn't want to build another church in the graveyard so in 1854 Christian and Ann Schluniger sole 2/3 of an acre at the corner of Hamilton and John Gray Roads to Paul H. Hunter, Benjamin F Fessenden, John H Messler and other Trustees of the Pleasant Run Presbyterian Church. The old cemetery on Kemper Road is still there now known as the **Huston Cemetery** because of the number of that family buried there. The earliest stone is dated 1805. In addition to Huston, other names include Gray, McCrea, Pottenger, Ramsey, Sedam, Smith and Warman. This cemetery is also in the care of the Colerain Township.

**The earliest record of a Methodist church is found on Blue Rock Road near Sheits.** June 2, 1823 Daniel and Rhoda Dean sold the tract of ground to the Trustees of the Methodist Society; John Dean, Henry Lore and Michael Isgrigg. This became known as the Franklin Methodist Church and Cemetery.

Also on Blue Rock Road near the end of present day Galbraith Road was established the Olive Branch Methodist Church, a log church building. It was deeded in 1823 by Henry and Hester Lora to Trustees Joseph Hart, Thomas Heath, Joseph Sparks, Henry Loar, and Thomas Hubbard. **This church became the forerunner of the present Groesbeck United Methodist Church.**

In the 1830's the Gampbellite movement caused a breakup of the Olive Branch church, part of the group splitting off to form a Christian Church. The remainder of the Methodists continued meeting in homes and later in the Round Top School house, at the sharp turn on Round Top Road near Colerain. Some members of the Asbury Chapel Methodist Church on West Fork Road in Green Township joined with them. Samuel J. Pouder and Charles West were leaders in this group. Charles West gave land on the east side of Colerain Road opposite his home for a site for the new Methodist Church. In 1849 this new Methodist Church, the **West Union Chapel**, was built. The first building was of brick later replaced by a somewhat larger frame building and can be seen today in the sanctuary wall of the present church. The first two buildings stood on the site now occupied by the Mayflower Savings and Loan. The West Union Chapel was so named because of Charles West, leader and donor of the land and for a union of two congregations – Olive Branch and Asbury Chapel Methodists. The name was also given to the community until a post office was established, when it became necessary to change the name of the village as there was another West Union in the state of Ohio. The name "Groesbeck" was chosen for one of the two brothers well known in the Civil War.



The earliest Methodist Church in was located in 1823 on Blue Rock near Sheits. The forerunner of Groesbeck Methodist Church. Photo circa 1910 shows the church built in 1882 at Colerain Avenue and Compton Road.



This building, located at Colerain and Dry Ridge (across from Lowes) was home to what is believed to be the oldest continuous church in Colerain Township. **The Bevis United Brethren Church**



The Trinity Lutheran Church was founded near 7315 Gaines Road in 1851. An old stone church was constructed in the early 1850s. The church was replaced in the early 1920s by the church pictured. Almost all churches in those days had a cemetery nearby. This church was replaced by a beautiful new church in 1958 at 5921 Springdale Road.

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