

Exterior, Church Entrance



Left: Portrait of Harriet McPherson Brien, attributed to Jacob Eichholz, c. 1810 (private collection); Right: church cornerstone.

Even before this structure was built, visiting Moravian clergy, occasional Lutheran ministers, and others offered services for Catoctin Iron Furnace laborers, both free and enslaved. In 1827-28 Furnace owner John Brien built a small meeting house for the community, at this urging of his wife, Harriet. Sadly, Harriet Brien died before the church building was complete. For several years Moravian clergy offered regular services here, but when that was no longer possible John Brien arranged for the church to be consecrated in 1833 as a church in the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland.

Our church originally looked like early Protestant meeting houses in this region, with a gabled roof, of coursed stone (a bit shaped and arranged), and sashed windows that were originally six over six panes. The belfry may be original but the bell wasn't installed until 1920, using the bell from St. John's in Walkersville when it closed.

Welcome!

*O God, whose glory fills the whole creation,
and whose presence we find wherever we go:
Preserve those who visit here; surround them
with your loving care; protect them from every
danger; and bring them in safety to their
journey's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

We are delighted you discovered Catoctin Episcopal Parish, also known as Harriet Chapel. Built in 1828, the community here is, as always, a place of prayer and worship, service and solace, joy, laughter and peace.

We hope you will return for a Sunday service to experience more of the life of the Harriet Chapel family.

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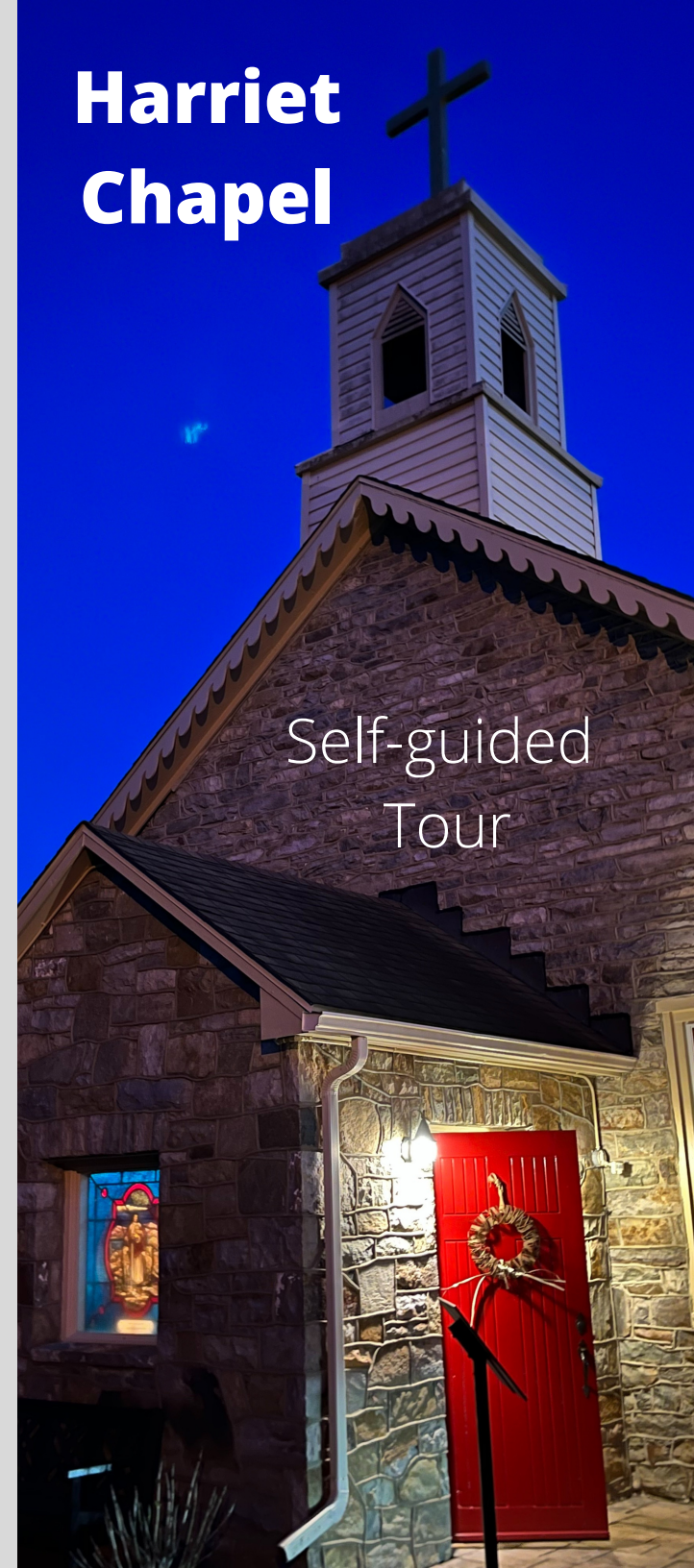
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To donate:
<https://tithe.ly/give?c=2426883>

Services at 9 a.m. Sundays

Harriet Chapel

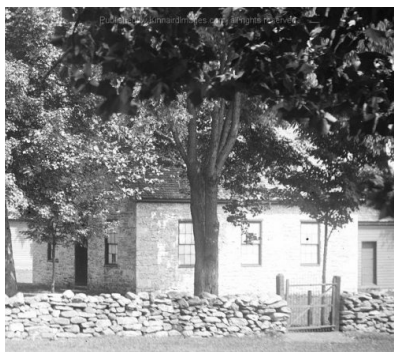
Self-guided
Tour



Enter by the Red Door

Consider our red door an invitation. Red doors are given many meanings - protection and salvation via the Blood of Christ, symbols of the Israelite door lintels on the night of Passover, tongues of Pentecost flame, or simply reflecting an early American custom of welcome to travelers.

However, the narthex through which you enter is a late 1940s addition. The c. 1910 image below (left) shows the box-like original stone meeting house design.



The image at right, above, shows the chancel addition of 1924. Using stone from a disassembled furnace stack, three gothic arches, the chancel and a sacristy were added.



Step past the altar rail into the chancel

Feel free to take a good look at the beautiful and interesting features around the altar. A parish-wide 150th anniversary project in 1983 resulted in a variety of special handmade textiles. Children contributed imagined scenes of the historic village. Adapted to depict different seasons, the scenes appear on three altar frontals.

The stained glass windows in the chancel may be the work of the Tiffany Glass Company, which was in high demand during the church building boom of the late 19th century. Made for St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (founded c.1892 in Thurmont - then called Mechanicstown), the windows were relocated here in the 1960s when St. Stephen's closed (a third is installed in the church office).

Parish Life Today

Worship and Spiritual Life

Our sanctuary, and memorial garden are always open for prayer and reflection. Eucharist (Holy Communion) is celebrated each Sunday with a blend of tradition, folk, and contemporary elements that describe our Harriet Chapel family. Seasonally, we offer special services such as contemplative, candlelit Taize gatherings. Parish-wide retreats are offered regularly.

Fun, Fellowship and Formation

Our festivals are historic - tracing to the early 1870s! Today they often happen alongside Thurmont's Colorfest and programs of the Catocin Furnace Historical Society. Special concerts and parish-wide picnics are offered periodically. Diners come from all over for the not-to-be-missed Pancake Supper on Shrove Tuesday. Opportunities to learn and grow abound for all ages..

Loving and Serving our Neighbors

We continue a nearly 200-year tradition of serving where need is great. We support the local food bank, offer meals and summer programs for area children, adopt families at holiday time, and more. Our Anglican prayer bead ministry has a global reach - feel free to take a bead set for yourself or to pass along to a friend.