

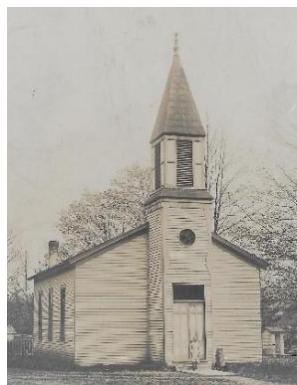


“Oh, Holy Night” By Carol (Klenk) Heck

Madeira has five Christian-based churches. Churches add a community spirit and a religious home, as well as outreach programs that have enriched our village of the past as well as the city of today. Among some extra benefits that churches offer are youth activities, missionary quests, financial help, community growth and cohesiveness.

The first worshipping group in Madeira, circa 1827-37, was small and non-denominational, but were mostly Methodist and Presbyterian. The women of the group started to meet in the log schoolhouse on the southwest corner of Miami and Euclid, where Daniel Hosbrook taught. One cold, December Sunday they got locked out because the chairman of the school board thought they shouldn't be meeting there. The story goes that the women stayed, knelt down on the snowy ground and continued their prayers. Soon after that, they worshipped at 7137 Shawnee Run Road at the McCullum stone school building as it was just built (1839) and a nice place for social meetings. They became known as the **Union Sunday School** and from this group emerged the Madeira Methodists and the Madeira Presbyterians.

In 1868-69, the Methodist's had formed an alliance with an Episcopal church and they became known as the **Madeira Methodist Episcopal Church**. This new group found space on the second floor in the historic Muchmore Hall, the large two-story building southwest of the railroad tracks on Miami Avenue. It was the home of Madeira's post office, the freight office, Odd Fellow's Lodge and E. G. Muchmore and Son's general store.



By 1873, the first Madeira Methodist Episcopal chapel was erected on Laurel and Center which was across from today's current Post Office. The 30' x 40' frame building had a belfry and housed a large bell. The bell was hoisted to the top by mules, a pulley and a couple of men who climbed up to secure it in place. A circuit minister traveled to surrounding areas which included leading a biweekly service here, and the members held Sunday School classes weekly. This first church served the congregation for about 50 plus years.

By 1927, another building was needed. It was built on the corner of Miami and Euclid. It was a larger, yellow brick building with stained glass windows and a tower on the right. Speaking of coming around full-circle, this is where just a century before, stood the log schoolhouse in which the women of the prayer group got locked out. Around 1955, the name changed to **St. Paul Community Methodist Church**. This building has been torn down but not until being remodeled and serving Madeira as its



Municipal Building for many years. The Methodists got their third church building in 1958 and held their first service in the new fellowship hall at the present location at Miami and Galbraith.



The sanctuary was completed some years later in 1967. The same bronze bell from the 1873 church has been moved and is still sounding the call to worship. The present name is



St. Paul Community United Methodist Church.

After the Methodist Episcopal Church branched off and got their little chapel on Center Street in 1873, the remainder of the Union Sunday School took over the space in Muchmore Hall. On the first day in June in 1882, a portion of them became an organized **Madeira Presbyterian Church** with twenty-eight charter members. Some of those, and the reverend, had been traveling members of the Montgomery Presbyterian Church.



A Madeira Presbyterian Women's Building Society was established two years later for raising money. Successful efforts allowed them to purchase land about one block north of the Muchmore Hall on the corner of Laurel and Miami where now stands Fifth Third Bank. The Presbyterians built the first section of their church on this corner in 1886. It was a Gothic style and was built of wood and stucco. The ladies of the church were a great force behind the scenes and kept the church going year after year. In 1906, the remainder of the Union Sunday School, which had been affiliated with the Presbyterian

congregation, was officially designated as the Sunday School of the Madeira Presbyterian Church. "In 1910, the Madeira Land and Building Company donated a lot, free of all costs and charges. (I believe the lot was to the right of the church.) The company also guaranteed the laying of sidewalks on the condition that no sale or manufacture of spirituous malt or liquors take place on the property." *¹

Several Sunday School rooms were added along the way. A gymnasium annex was built on the west side of the building around 1926. The gymnasium was a community project and was used for Madeira High School Mustangs' home basketball games. By 1958, Madeira was experiencing much growth and a new church building was called for. By December 1959, the new structure became reality on the corner of Greenbriar Lane and Miami; their current site.

There's more information about the Presbyterians. "There was a Silverton Presbyterian on Plainfield Road. The church building was made out of red bricks and it is still there and is currently a Baptist Church. The building was adorned with a large 1894 Austrian-made stained-glass window of Jesus and a flock of sheep directly on the front of the building. When Silverton Presbyterian merged with Kenwood Presbyterian in 1965, they bought land and a house on the

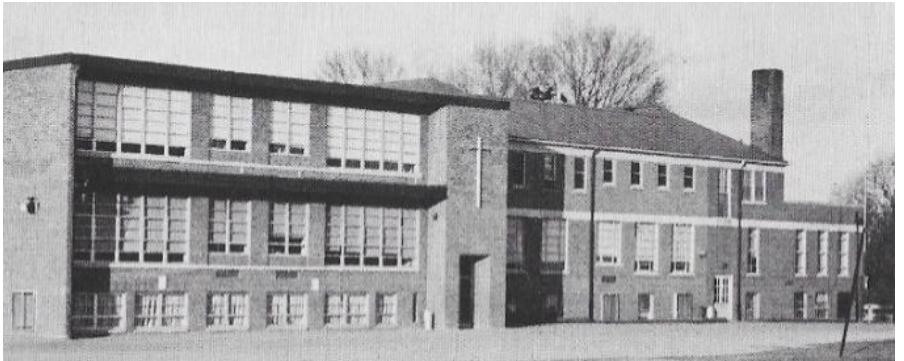
northwest corner of Galbraith and Kenwood Roads. The beautiful stained-glass window was allowed to be taken out from the Silverton church and brought to this new Silverwood Presbyterian Church. Then, there was yet a third merger in 1999 with Madeira Presbyterian and the Silverwood Presbyterian Churches.

Silverwood disbanded their church and the site was torn down. They joined Madeira Presbyterian at Greenbriar and Miami. Their first worship service as this newly merged group was on July 13, 1999. The stained-glass window was again preserved and moved with the congregation. It is now displayed in the rotunda by the choir room." *² Also in the rotunda, there is another stained-glass window on display. This was an original window from the first

Madeira Presbyterian Church on the corners of Laurel and Miami. The current name of this Madeira church is the **Madeira Silverwood Presbyterian**.

St. Gertrude's Mission first started on November 25, 1923 in a private home owned by the Willenbrink's on the corner of Naomi and Miami. Soon after that, parishioners could attend one of two Masses there every Sunday. Before 1923, Madeira's Catholic men and women attended St. Anthony's in Madisonville. So much did they want a church of their own in Madeira, they set to work and held many socials, fundraising events, and special collections to

accumulate enough money to acquire land and build their church. They did a lot of the building work themselves. An endearing story goes that the pews for the original church were ice-skated across the



frozen Miami River from the old St. Andrew's Church in Milford. The church was completed in 1925 almost exactly where St. Gertrude's church is today on the corner of Miami and Shawnee Run. The parish school was established in 1934. There was a section built then, and later more additions. The picture above shows the school with the three additions as of 1958. There were



housing quarters for the Dominican sisters, a cafeteria, library, teacher's lounge, and a nurse's room. In 1944, St. Gertrude outgrew the status of "mission church". In 1958 the go-ahead was given for a new church and was dedicated on April 16, 1961; **St. Gertrude Church and School**. Today there is a large campus with a Priory, a Parish Center, restored church and a 2006 school building. The church is built of stone and brick with a looming tower containing three bells which were cast back in 1868.

The **Madeira Baptist Church** had its beginnings in August 1955 when services were held in the recreation hall of the Madeira mobile home park on Dawson Road. By October, just a few months after, the local Baptist membership was able to rent and beautify an old farm house at 7860 Euclid Road. The congregation grew rapidly and in two years the services had to move to the gymnasium of Camargo Primary School. Soon, ground was broken for the present Fellowship Hall at 7860 Euclid.

When this was outgrown, they built the present auditorium which was completed in 1962. Adjoining land was purchased in 1997, but in 2024, Beulah Baptist Church sold the land.



"**Madeira Church of Christ** is the youngest of the Madeira churches; its organization dates back to June 1957." *³ It is now called **Connections Christian Church**. In the beginning, the group met on Thomas Drive in a private home under the help of Madisonville Christian Church. In 1956, a lot had been purchased at 7421 Galbraith. They worshipped in the red house on that purchased property.

Ground was broken for the first new unit including a basement, sanctuary, and classroom with the first service being held there in 1960. An educational unit was opened in 1968. A merger took place between Madisonville Christian and this church in 1979, causing the Madisonville congregation to come to Madeira. Another expansion took place and the first service in the new building was May 15, 1983." *⁴

Be sure to take note of these fine churches in Madeira. They have a lot to offer, and a lot more history to explore.

¹ Madeira Presbyterian Church, booklet, circa. 1992, page 11.

² Conversation with Betty Lee Perkins, member of the past Silverton Presbyterian Church.

^{3 & 4} Unknown author taken from archive file at Madeira Historical Society.

Photos courtesy of Madeira Historical society, Hamilton County Auditor's website and Carol (Klenk) Heck
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Also see "The Birth of the Madeira Church of Christ".