

SOVUMC Historical Timeline

- 1790 Methodist Circuit Riders serve area gatherings of the faithful.
- 1791 Bishop Asbury speaks at the home of General Christopher Lippitt in the Lippitt Hill section of Hope Avenue.
- 1800 General Lippitt builds a Meeting House near his home, which was used for 25 years and then abandoned.
- 1827 A group of people in Phenix and Lippitt band together to form the Lippitt and Phenix Sabbath School Society.
- 1837 Local Methodists rent the Baptist "Elder Tatum Meeting House" and use it continuously until 1856 (precursor to Phenix Methodist Church).
- 1856-1859 With the support of Governor Harris the Phenix church grows and is formally dedicated on September 1, 1859 under the Rev. Mr. Carlos Banning.
- Spring 1869 The Evangelical Church, precursor to Hope Methodist Church, is organized by Rev. John A. Perry and meets in a newly constructed building in South Scituate, a few miles from the village of Hope.
- 1873 The Evangelical Church votes to become a Methodist Episcopal Church under Rev. John Q. Adams, who on June 14, 1873, announces: "I preach once a month at Hope Village where I have a very good congregation and attentive hearers. They have a very good Sabbath School at Hope, and I think the prospect is good for church organization there at no distant day."
- 1874 The Rev. Mr. F. D. Goodrich organizes the Hope Methodist Episcopal Church, which meets in "The Old Picker Room" in the yard of the Hope Mill.
- May 13, 1875 The Hope Church building is dedicated along with a new pastor, the Rev. Mr. William Kirkby.
- 1873-1968 Hope church is served by 49 Ministers of the Gospel.
- 1940-1947 Rev. Thomas W. Bowmar serves as pastor of Phenix Methodist Church. He had served as a missionary to Malaysia 1915-1934 and alongside wife Bertha H. Bowmar 1922-1934.

- May 27, 1968 As a result of the merger of Hope Methodist Church with the Evangelical United Brethren, the official name is changed to Hope United Methodist Church.
- June 1968 Robert Firby is appointed pastor of both Phenix Methodist Church and Hope Methodist Church.
- November 19, 1968 “The first actual act of merger was brought about by the joining of the two Church Schools, under the co-Superintendency of Mrs. Nancy Clark and Mrs. Susan Bestwick.” (1969 Annual Report)
- January 6, 1969 “On this date another great stride was made with the selection of the site for the new church building, at the corner of Scituate Avenue and Seven Mile Road in the Town of Scituate, a retainer was authorized to hold the land.” (1969 Annual Report)
- April 10, 1969 The official boards of the two churches agree to merge and vote to construct a new church on the proposed site (the Phenix vote was 33 yes and 1 no; the Hope vote was 28 yes and 6 no).
- August 25, 1969 Formal Agreement of Consolidation of Phenix Methodist Church and Hope Methodist Church into Hope-Phenix United Methodist Church.
- August 10, 1970 Trustees authorize taking \$150,000 loan (20 years at 8% interest) to build new church.
- February 9, 1970 From Annual Report: 314 Members (Hope 168; Phenix 146); 21 Baptisms; 2 Marriages.
- March 21, 1971 “Deconsecration” Services were held at Hope and Phenix churches followed by “Opening of the Doors” Ceremony at the new church on Seven Mile Road in Hope, District Superintendent Morrill Martin and Rev. Robert Firby presiding.
- May 4, 1971 Name changed from Hope-Phenix United Methodist Church to Shepherd of the Valley United Methodist Church.
- 1973 Dedication of Building and Bell Tower.