



FRANKLIN BOULEVARD METHODIST CHURCH was one of the two historical Methodist congregations which, on 11 May 1947, merged to form [WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH](#). Franklin Blvd. Methodist, the older of the two, also resulted from the merger of 2 churches: Hanover St. Methodist and the York St. Church. In Sept. 1833 10 members of the Cleveland Methodist Society living in [OHIO CITY \(CITY OF OHIO\)](#) formed a class at Nathaniel Burton's home on the east side of Pearl St. The class, first led by Rev. John P. Smith, later met for services in a school building on Hanover St. (sometimes given as Vermont St.). In 1834, under the leadership of William Warmington, land was purchased on the northeast corner of Church and Hanover streets. Ground was broken on 30 June 1836 by Diodate Clark. A severe storm in Nov. 1836 leveled the walls. With the generosity of Samuel Tyler, they were rebuilt and the congregation, led by Rev. Horatio N. Sterns, worshipped in the basement from Nov. 1837 until the sanctuary was completed in 1846.

In Apr. 1866 it was resolved that a new church was necessary. In May 1866 York St. Church, located at the corner of York St. and Bridge, merged with Hanover forming the Union Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church. On 16 Apr. 1867 after property was purchased at the corner of Franklin and Duane streets, the name was changed to Franklin Blvd. Church. The cornerstone was laid 27 Aug. 1867. For a brief time the name was changed to Christ Church, but in Dec. 1867 it became Franklin Blvd. Church again. The new church was dedicated on 30 Jan. 1870, with Bp. Matthew Simpson and Rev. B. I. Ives preaching the dedicatory sermons. Rev. James Erwin served as first pastor. The church featured a 2-ton replica of the Liberty Bell, which once crashed through 2 floors to the basement. It was rehung in time to announce the armistice ending World War I.

On 26 Mar. 1947 a fire completely destroyed the Franklin Blvd. Church. The congregation was invited by St. Paul's German Methodist Episcopal Church to worship with them. When the two congregations merged later that year to form Wesley Methodist Church, Rev. Wilbur B. Meiser, Franklin Blvd.'s pastor, became pastor of the united congregation, which worshipped at the site of St. Paul's.

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