

History of Mt. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

250th Anniversary Edition 1761—2011



**1343 Long Lane Road
Kutztown, PA. 19530
Phone: 610/ 756-6210**

History of Mt. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church 1761– 2011

In celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the church's origin, the History Committee began its research. In addition to information found within the premises of our church, additional research was performed to provide as complete a historical picture as possible.

"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mt. Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King!" – Psalms 48:2

Church Leadership

Reverend James R. Hammond, Pastor

Jeffrey Wetzel, Council President
Blair Free, Council Vice President
Sharon Billger, Council Secretary
Gregory Schappell, Treasurer
Jeffrey Wetzel, Financial Secretary

Office Secretary: Annette Stimeling
E-mail: mtzion6210@verizon.net
Website: www.mtzionkutztown.org

Church Council

Michelle Batz
Diane Laub
Stacy Russo

Janice Clemmer	Andrew Frederick
Nancy Miller	April Osterstock
Susan Stemko	Eloise Tucker

Adult Choir Members

Sylvia Keller, Director / Organist

Soprano

Lorrie Arndt
Jean Dietrich
LeAnne Kolson
JoAnne Lewis
April Osterstock

Alto

Linda Grim
Janet Hammond
Nancy Sanner

Tenor

Jeffrey Wetzel
Rev. James Hammond

Bass

Lester Miller

Altar Guild

Diane German, Diane Gaumer, Arlene Schmeck

Christian Education

Michelle Button, Chairperson/ Teacher
Michelle Fegely—Teacher
Jen Gehris—Teacher
Stacey Russo—Teacher
Valerie Rutherford—Teacher
Arlene Schmeck—Teacher
Jeff Wetzel—Teacher

Evangelism

Blair Free—Chairperson, Vicky Free, Rev. Jim Hammond,
Janet Hammond, Eloise Tucker

Finance

Blair Free, Diane Laub, Lester Miller, April Osterstock,
Gregory Schappell, Jeff Wetzel

Mutual Ministry

Daniel Batz, Douglas Dietrich, Vicky Free, April Osterstock,
Tom Tamagnone

Property

Martin Billger,- Chariman, Kenneth Garrett, Ed German

Social Ministry

Rev. Jim Hammond, Janet Hammond, Linda Pfeifly,
Naomi Ring, Sharon Sewell

Stewardship

Diane Gaumer, Diane German, Rev. Jim Hammond,
Naomi Ring

Summer Fest

April Osterstock—Chairwoman

Committee Heads

Michelle Batz— Food & Beverage
Martin Billger – Layout
Janice Clemmer—Bake Sale
Janet Hammond / Linda Pfeifly— Basket Raffle
Lester Miller—Entertainment
Helen Wessner—Flea Market
Jeffrey Wetzel—Advertising

Worship & Music

Michelle Batz—Chairwoman

Committee Members:

Sharon Billger, Debbie Dietrich, Blair Free, Vicky Free,
Rev. Jim Hammond, Sylvia Keller, April Osterstock,
Gregory Schappell, Arlene Schmeck, Sharon Sewell,
Susan Stemko, Helen Wessner

Youth Group

Advisors: Blair Free, Vicky Free, Rev. Jim Hammond,
Janet Hammond, Jeff Wetzel

250th Anniversary Committees

Cultural / Social

Lorrie Arndt—Chairwoman

Committee Members:

Andrew Frederick, Linda Pfeifly, Bonnie Scott, Dean Scott,
Sandy Tamagnone, Tom Tamagnone

History

April Osterstock—Chairwoman

Committee Members:

Sharon Billger, Jean Dietrich, Wayne Dietrich,
Naomi Ring, Eloise Tucker, Jacob Wessner

Music

Sylvia Keller—Chairwoman

Committee Members:

Blair Free, Lester Miller, Nancy Sanner

Publicity

Jeff Wetzel—Chairman

Committee Members:

Diane Laub, Gregory Schappell

Restoration and Fund Raising

Martin Billger—Chairman

Committee Members:

Janice Clemmer, Marie Garrett, Nancy Miller,
Sharon Sewell, Susan Stemko, Helen Wessner,
Jeffrey Wetzel

Worship

Michelle Batz—Chairwoman

Committee Members:

Vicky Free, Rev. Jim Hammond, Stacey Russo,
Dean Scott

THE HISTORY OF MT. ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

The brave pioneers, driven from their fatherland by oppression, found a home in Pennsylvania. Germans settled in the vicinity of Grimsville in Greenwich Township to till the soil. In order to remain faithful to the teachings of the Christian religion that they obtained in Germany, they brought with them the Bibles, hymn books, and prayer books which they considered essential for their salvation. Thus, they continued teaching their religion in their homes. Occasionally, services would be held by traveling missionaries, among the earliest in 1742, being Count Nicholas L. Zinzendorf. He preached to the settlers of this vicinity from the balcony of Levan's Mill at Eaglepoint. It was soon realized that in order to keep their faith and properly transmit it to their children, they must have an organized congregation and a regular pastor to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments, as well as instruct their children.

Four other congregations were established within a radius of 5 or 6 miles by foot or horseback, namely: Dunkel's—near Lenhartsville; New Jerusalem (Red) - to the north in Albany Township; Ziegel's - to the east in Weisenberg Township, and Maxatawny - to the south in the same named township. An additional church was justified at the hub by the increasing population, but was delayed by the French and Indian War. Then, in the Spring of 1761, the Evangelical Lutherans of Greenwich resolved to build a church.

In 1761, possibly before any effort was made to build a church, Rev. Daniel Schumacher, then pastor of Allemangel Church, now New Jerusalem's Church, near Wessnersville, confirmed a class of catechumens at Grimsville. In 1761 on September 8, the forefathers purchased two acres and four perches of ground from George Kamp, for two pounds or nine dollars and seventy-two cents, for Church purposes. (King George III was the ruler of England and the country was still a colony of England.)

The cornerstone of the church was laid May 18, 1762 by Reverend Bernhard Hausihl of Reading., i.e. 14 years before the Declaration of Independence.

On June 19, 1762, Georg Kamp, a delegate of the congregation, called on the Reverend Henry Melchior Muhlenberg armed with a letter requesting admission to the Synod and the service of Reverend Johann Schaum as pastor. The first church was consecrated on October 3, 1762 by Rev. H. Schaum.

Our research included looking for churches that may have resembled Mt. Zion during the 18th Century. Below is a depiction of one such church which we believe could have resembled the first church that was constructed on our sacred grounds.

Possible example
of original 'Bethel' church.

1761 – 1803.



While the neighboring churches mentioned were all of log construction, this new church was the first one of solid stone masonry and popularly known as "The Stone Church".

Although the church was exclusively Lutheran and called 'Bethel Church', the Reformed denomination who were living in the vicinity were given the privilege to use the church for occasional services, and bury their dead in the cemetery. An agreement was signed in 1762 and renewed in 1778.

On February 19, 1763, the congregation through their trustees, Georg Kamp and Christian Ungerer purchased a second tract of land, from Michael Schmiedt (Smith), containing fifty acres of land for fifty pounds or two hundred and forty-three dollars for school purposes to preserve the Christian doctrine on a Lutheran foundation, which also was shared with the Reformed congregation.

After the first church served its purpose for 41 years, because of the increase of the congregation and the dilapidated condition of the building, it was deemed necessary and advisable to build a new church.

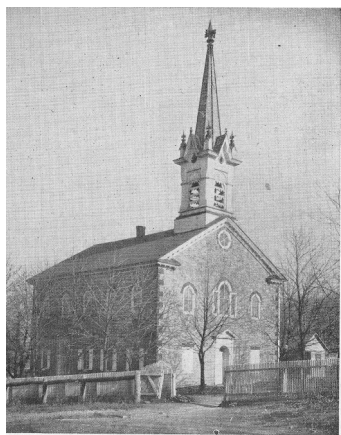
Stone for the second church was broken in January 1803, on land nearby. The cornerstone was laid on Whit-Monday, May 30, 1803, by Rev. John Frederick Oberhausen, who was then the Pastor. At this time the name was changed to "New Bethel Zion's Lutheran Church" and the same concession made to the Reformed 4 years earlier was renewed.

The new church was finished in October and in the short time of five months, this church was consecrated on the twenty-second Sunday after Trinity, November 6, 1803. The consecration took place when Thomas M. Kean was Governor of Pennsylvania. At the consecration ceremony, Rev. D. Geisenheiner preached the Lutheran sermon and Rev. H. von der Scloob, Reformed, preached a second sermon during the church consecration by the Pastor, Rev John Frederick Obenhausen. The building committee was composed of Michael Croll, John Derr, Heinrich Kohler and Andrew Kampf.

On September 22 1844, after the congregation had existed for 83 years as exclusively Lutheran, it was resolved to make it a Union church. The Reformed were required to pay one hundred dollars per year for their rights to all the property and this amount was to be used for renovating and upkeep of the building. From this time forward, a Union church constitution was adopted and it became a Union church with equal rights to both Lutheran and Reformed congregations.

Below is a photograph of the second church built on our grounds.

New Bethel Zion's Church
Grimsville, PA.
1803—1923



On the Seventh Sunday after Trinity, September 22, 1862, while Rev. G.F. Jaeger was the Lutheran Pastor and Rev. J.S. Herman, the Reformed Pastor, the congregation celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of its organization. In the morning, Rev. Thomas T. Jaeger, a son of the Pastor, preached the sermon. In the afternoon Rev. Daniel Brendel, Reformed of Bethlehem, J.H. Raker; and Rev. Dr. Schoedler, Reformed, of Allentown occupied the pulpit.

In 1882 the church was thoroughly remodeled, a steeple built and a bell purchased. The cost of these improvements was over \$5,000. This was done during the pastorate of Rev. B.S. Smoll, Lutheran and Rev. J.S. Herman, Reformed.

September 13, 1903, the centennial of the erection of the church building was celebrated. At this time, Rev. O.S. Scheirer was Lutheran Pastor and Rev. R.S. Appel, Reformed.

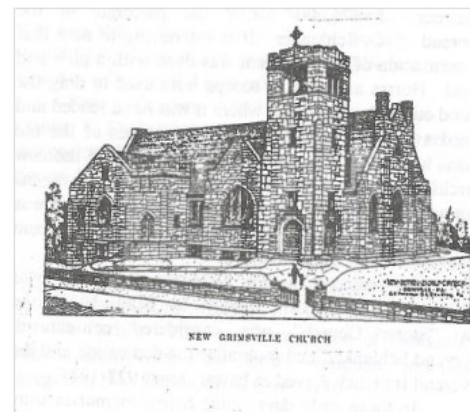
There were morning, afternoon, and evening services with the following Lutheran ministers preaching: Rev. C.C. Boyer, Ph. D., Rev. F.K. Bernd, Rev. D.D. Trexler, Rev. J.H. Raker, and Rev. Dr. Schoedler, Reformed of Allentown.

After 120 years, a new church, our current structure, was deemed necessary. In February, 1923 the old church was razed by dynamite, and preparation was made for a new structure, a new "Stone" church.

According to the local newspaper article from The Reading Eagle in 1923, the placing of the cornerstone occurred when the weather was extremely hot and completely opposite of the February day when the former church was razed.

Construction of the present church took place from 1923 – 1925, at a cost of \$75,000 and during the pastorate of the Reverend J.O. Schlenker. Reverend Schlenker died soon after the dedication and the Reverend Ira Klick served as pastor from 1927 – 1947.

New Bethel Zion' /
Mt. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
1923 – Present



1923 - 1957

It is interesting to note that the excavation of the basement was done with a pick and shovel. Horses and ground scoops were used to drag the ground out of the basement, where it was hand loaded and hauled away by wagon. Some of the stones of the old church were used to build the basement walls of the new church. The rest of the stones were hauled by wagons from a quarry. During the period when the new church was being built, the congregation worshipped in the one room school house that was located across the street at the time.

The corner-stone of the new church was laid on July 22, 1923. The usual articles were placed in the stone. A very large number of people were present. The names of 1335 persons who contributed \$1,746.50 were written on a record which was placed in the stone. The local pastor had charge of the service.

True to the tradition of our forefathers who settled in this region prior to the 18th century, the greater part of the service was rendered in the German language, which was the native tongue of the first congregation founders. The choir sang and the two pastors, Rev. J.O. Schlenker of the Lutheran branch and Rev. A.L. Brumbach of the Reformed congregation, spoke in part in this language.

Although this presentation was found to be interesting by the younger members, the older members of the congregation greatly appreciated the resemblance to the service held by their ancestors.

The service began with a number performed by the Grimsville Orchestra, led by A.A. Fister, director. After the invocation, an English hymn was sung by the congregation. Rev. Brumbach did the Scripture reading and Rev. Schlenker followed with a prayer spoken in German. The choir, led and accompanied by Richard Kistler, performed an anthem. The congregation joined in singing a hymn in German and the contents to be laid in the copper box, were prepared for placement in the new cornerstone.

The articles collected and prepared for the cornerstone were placed by Rev. Brumbach and Rev. Schlenker by taking turns. These pieces include the Bible, Reformed and Lutheran catechisms, names of the present officers of both congregations, church papers, copy of the Reading Eagle, a book containing the names of those contributing \$1 or more to the church fund, a silver dollar, half-dollar, quarter, dime, nickel and cent, and the program of the day.

The ceremony of laying the cornerstone was carried out according to the combined rituals of the two congregations with two local pastors officiating., Rev. R.S. Appel and Rev. John A. Bender. The sermon, preached in the German language by Rev. R.S. Appel, of Hamburg, teamed with religious thoughts concerning the founders of the congregations.

Rev. John A. Bender of Scranton, preached the English sermon. He used "The Corner Stone of Life", for his theme. In referring to the men who were responsible for the laying of the first corner stone in 1803, when the first church was erected on the site, Rev. Bender claimed "they builded well" not only along religious lines but its artisans as well.

After an anthem by the choir, Reverends Schlenker and Brumbach delivered short addresses in German, explaining the work already performed in the building of the new church, and closed their talks with references to the funds needed for the erection of so modern a structure.

The new church was to be built with native stone and iron and was completed to the first floor which was covered with planking to provide a platform on which the exercises were held.

According to the newspaper article about the laying of the cornerstone, the previous church was made of logs as an answer to the needs of the Lutheran congregation until 1803, when the first 'Stone Church' was built. Some other resources described the original structure as being made of stone. Hence the material used in the construction of the first church is somewhat controversial. However, because it has always been known as the 'Stone' church, we are more inclined to believe the latter.

The original dedication mentions the laying of a cornerstone and many references to 'The Stone Church'. Unfortunately, no actual drawings exist of the first church.

There were happy memories of the Sunday School picnics held in those early days. These picnics were usually held in June by the New Bethel members. Before the outdoor stage was built, entertainment took place on wagon beds which farmers brought to the church for that purpose. People sat on planks supported by cement blocks and the soda stand was a large wooden trough. The highlight of the picnic was a cake walk featuring a nut cake or other special type cakes. Much of this tradition continues today, although the picnic and outdoor service are held on one Sunday in June.

From October 1947 until his death on December 4, 1948, the Reverend Addison C. Planz served as a pastor. Reverend Craig J. Dorward was called to be pastor on July 10, 1949 and served until August, 1957.

1958 - PRESENT

Due to the shortage of pastors from the earliest days, this congregation was part of what was called the Grimsville Parish. This parish consisted of Dunkel's; Frieden's, Stony Run; New Bethel, Kempton; and this congregation— New Bethel Zion, Grimsville.

On May 11, 1958, Reverend Paul H. Spohn was called as pastor. He was the pastor of the four church parish until 1962 when the four parish arrangement was discontinued. The two northern churches, namely Frieden's in Stony Run and New Bethel in Kempton became a two church parish; while Dunkel's and New Bethel Zion in Grimsville became another two church parish.

By 1969, the two church parish ended and some of Dunkel's Lutheran members joined New Bethel Zion. In 1971, the Lutheran and Reformed union arrangement was dissolved. The Lutheran congregation became incorporated as Mt. Zion Lutheran Church and the Reformed congregation erected a new church in Krumsville, known as New Jerusalem Zion United Church of Christ.

The new name comes from Psalm 48:2 "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mt. Zion... the home of the great king!"

After serving our congregation for almost twelve years, Reverend Wert resigned in February 1974. In September 1974, Reverend Israel Yost became our pastor but was never installed. Reverend Yost resigned March 31, 1975.

Reverend Ernest Flothmeier was called to this congregation on September 14, 1975. Pastor Flothmeier retired on December 31, 1983, after serving eight years.

On June 17, 1984, Reverend Jeffrey Bortz became our pastor. He resigned on August 22, 1991. Reverend David S. Fritch took office in April 1994 after serving in Woodstock, Virginia for eleven years. Pastor Fritch retired two years later on May 31, 1996, due to illness.

On October 6, 1996, Reverend Guy Grube began his pastorate at Mt. Zion after serving eleven years at Lehighton, PA. Reverend Grube retired in 2002.

Reverend James Hammond was called to our church and installed as pastor in 2002 and has served this congregation faithfully ever since.

Two hundred and fifty years after the establishment of our congregation and 89 years after the construction of the Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, the congregation continues to grow and thrive. Under the leadership of Rev. James Hammond, and despite some financial struggles, the congregation has been able to maintain a strong faith and deep bond with each other.

The families of Mt. Zion Lutheran Church are honored with the heritage and history of our congregation, and we continue to spread the good news of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Grimsville Parish is proud of the number of men it furnished for the Christian Ministry. It is a matter of regret that little more than their names can be given here. The following is the list: Rev. D.K. Humbert, died at Bowers, September 21, 1913; D.D. Trexler, died at Bernville in 1914; Franklin S. Dietrich, a missionary to India, where (Dowlaiswaram) he made the supreme sacrifice on June 11, 1889; Edwin H. Smoll of the Schuylkill Haven Parish; J.O. Schlenker of the Grimsville Parish; W.F. Bond of Bowers Parish; A.L. Ramer, Ph. D., Superintendent of the Immigrants Mission Board of the U.L. & C.; Morris W. Krause of the Ringtown Parish.

THE ZIMMERMAN ORGAN

In addition to a beautiful church with its large, detailed stain glass windows, Mt. Zion's members are extremely proud of the Zimmerman Organ. The Zimmerman organ was made by the Austin Company, Hartford Connecticut in 1934. The organ is an Opus 1849 with twelve rank pipes plus chimes which totals six hundred seventy-four pipes. This type of organ is an action electro-pneumatic universal wind chest.

The Zimmerman organ was presented by Mr. & Mrs. Nathan Zimmerman on May 20, 1934 with a donation cost of \$6,000 in agreement with the church leadership would provide perpetual care and maintenance to their gravesites.

NEW BETHEL ZION CEMETERY

One final area of interest worth mentioning is the "New Bethel Zion Cemetery Association, Incorporated". The first burial on record in the original cemetery was of Catherine Christ, who was born in 1741 and died in 1765. This original cemetery has two hundred seven lots with five hundred sixty-five burials. Eleven of these burials date back to the Civil War from 1861 – 1865.

The first board of directors in 1792, were elders and deacons of the church. This board consisted of Jorg Kamp, Adreas Tressler, Carl Uhl, Johannes Schlenker, Christian Braucher, and Mary Rischel.

The New Bethel Zion Cemetery Association incorporated in 1959. The board of directors always consisted of three Lutheran members from Mt. Zion and three Reformed members.

At a special meeting on February 3, 1963, the New Bethel Zion Cemetery Association, Inc. accepted a deed from the Lutheran and Reformed congregations of the church containing 50.7346 acres of land for the cemetery. The new cemetery area located behind the church, consists of six hundred nineteen lots with one thousand ninety-five burials.

Important and quite interesting, is the history of the founder, the Pastors, and the School Masters.

For your reading pleasure, the following is a portion of the translation of the 1763 Lutheran Congregation records according to Court records that were duplicated.

THE FOUNDER

JOHANN GEORG KAMP, born in 1711, came to 'America' in 1749, arriving September 19th at Philadelphia on the ship 'Patience' at the age of 38. He settled in Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania. (Daniel and David Kamp arrived with him and settled in Windsor and Richmond Townships.)

Georg Kamp was recognized by the pastors as the 'anfanger' (beginner) and supporter of the Lutheran Congregation in Greenwich, and throughout his life was usually accorded honorary first place in the Council and at the Altar. He purchased the Church Record book, was the first signer of its Opening in 1763 and the Articles of Government in 1764. He also signed the interdenominational agreement with Reformed congregation in 1778.

The two tracts of land referred to in the records, a two acre parcel and an additional 50 acres, were part of a Penn warrant granted in October 17, 1753 to Michael Schmiedt (Smith) for 200 acres adjoining lands of Georg Kamp and Christian Ungerer, and were titled to Kamp and Ungerer, trustees.

However, the Congregation broke ground for the church in the spring of 1761 and probably had the use of the school land and building much earlier, or conducted their religious functions elsewhere.

Georg Kamp owned 150 acres of land, forty of it cleared, and was a wheelwright by trade according to the tax list of 1765. He lived to see his son Andreas (1755-1847) elected to the Church Council in 1794; his son-in-law Christoph Kremer on a committee of two for the erection of the second schoolhouse in 1796. His son Andreas, one of four "baumeisters", was appointed for the construction of the second church in 1803. On the 2nd of July in 1803, when the second church was being 'auf-geschlagen', Georg Kamp attended the celebration thereof at the grand age of 92 years, according to church records.

In 1798, he made his will. By then he had five living sons, Andreas, Georg Heinrich, James, Friedrich (1761 – 1834), and Georg Adam, and a daughter Catherina, wife of Christoph Kremer. He bequeathed his large bible to his daughter. Letters testamentary were granted to his son Andreas on January 14, 1805. This would indicate that Georg Kamp died early in 1805 or late in 1804, at the age of 93 years. His wife Anna Maria (Koriner) preceded him in death in 1795.

On January 4, 1807, Andreas Kamp accounted to the church a bequest from his father's estate. There is no trace of any tombstone for Georg or Anna Maria Kamp. These pioneer Americans now rest in unmarked graves.

THE PASTORS

JOHANN HELFRICH SCHAUM was the pastor of the Greenwich Lutheran Congregation at the time of the construction of their first church, which he dedicated in 1762. He opened the first Church Record in 1763 in his own handwriting, and likewise opened the first annual-accounting record in 1771, which he signed as pastor. He received pay as Pastor in 1772. Thus he put himself on record as the first regular Pastor of this church and of serving for a considerable period.

He was born at Geissen in Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany, and completed his education at the University of Halle and arrived at Philadelphia in 1745, where he served as a teacher. He began his ministry in Somerset, N.J. in 1746 - 1747, having been licensed, was sent to York, PA in 1748, ordained in 1749, went to Tohickon in 1755, and to New Hanover in 1759.

He moved to Berks County in 1762 and served Oley Hills, Mertz, Moselem, and Maxatawny, as well as Greenwich. He died January 16, 1778 on the 33rd anniversary of his arrival in 'America', leaving a widow and six children, and was buried under the pulpit of the old Mertz Church. This was almost two years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The second pastor was BERNHARD MICHAEL HAUSIHL, who officiated at the corner-stone laying ceremonies of the first church on May 8, 1761. He most likely served this congregation on previous occasions. He was born in Heilbronn, Germany, graduated at the University of Strasburg, ordained by the Consistory of Rotterdam, and arrived in 'America' in 1752, a young man of 25.

The Lutheran synod first sent him to Frederick, Maryland. From 1758 he served Alsace / Trinity of Reading until 1763, and Moselem when he reported vacating the position and transferring to Easton. He went to New York in 1770. Being a Royalist, he was compelled to leave the country in 1785. He was re-ordained in London and settled in Nova Scotia where he died in 1799.

JOHANN FRIEDRICH ERNST recorded communications and an election of elders and deacons in the record book of this church, and installed the elected into office, in 1789. He was ordained by the Lutheran ministerial in 1780 to serve Easton, Dryland, Moorestown, and Greenwich, the latter in New Jersey, in addition to which he served Schoenersville. He attended the Ministerial Conventions annually to 1791, the latter year from Maxatawny. He served Manheim – Maytown from 1802 to 1805 and Hummelstown in 1804 – 1805, after ministering in New York State, 1792 to 1798. He died November 28, 1806 and is buried at Elizabethtown. His widow was pensioned in 1807.

There were then two Greenwich congregations not so very far apart. First, the subject church, and later, one in what is now Warren County, New Jersey, then called the Straw Church. This has been a source of confusion even to some of the original recorders. Nevertheless, we can submit photostatic copy of Reverend Ernst's full name signature as pastor of this congregation in Berks County, Pennsylvania, during the time mentioned.

JOHANNES SCHWARBACH made an entry in the Church record of an election of deacons signed by him as pastor of the Lutheran congregation in 1792. He was born in 1721 and came from Margroffschaft, Baden, Germany.

He served numerous congregations in Virginia from 1763 to at least 1772 when he attended the Lutheran Synod Convention in Lancaster and complained of getting to be too old to attend to his membership up to 100 miles apart. Later he served congregations in south-eastern Pennsylvania, probably as an independent.

HEINRICH HERTZEL, born in 1738, is the only Reformed minister identifying himself in this church record as pastor, entering several baptisms in 1790. He probably served this church to some extent during the ten years that he was pastor at Longswamp, 1785 to 1795. He also served Dunkel's, Rosenthal, Jacob's and Ebenezer. He was an independent.

JACOB WEYMEY, 1734 – 1790, not named in this church record, however appeared before the Reformed Coetus in 1769 and reported serving four congregations in Northampton, now Lehigh County, namely Heidelberg, Lynn, Lowhill, and Greenwich.

Greenwich, however is in Berks County, yet the subject church was fairly close to the then Berks-Northampton boundary and drew membership from the adjoining congregation at the time that Reverend Weymer's report referred to Dunkel's. Thus his report is open to interpretation.

JOHN WILLIAM BOOS, 1740 – 1814, also not named in the church record, was a Reformed minister in Reading, and performed the wedding of Michael Croll to Margretha Geiger on March 1, 1785, according to an entry in another record book of this church.

As for Mr. Croll, he was a prominent member of this Church and Reverend Boos a very active minister. It can well be that Greenwich was on the churches served by him, besides Schwartzwald, his main charge.

UNIDENTIFIED by name, the record contains the handwriting of at least a half dozen other ministers. The omission of their identities may have been more habit, or in respect of obligations to other churches, or to independence from a regular synod.

DANIEL SCHUMACHER, was a popular Lutheran minister. He was ordained by Conrad Andreas, independent of Muhlenberg’s Ministerium, previously reported in connection with this Church, and made his home in nearby Weisenberg from 1758 until he died.

He originally came from Hamburg, Germany to Nova Scotia where he served several congregations for three years, came to Reading in 1754, and to Allemaengel in 1755. He organized a number of churches in this area, and with one or more associates at one time had a circuit of no less than sixteen congregations. His records are beautiful and his reputation for ability and character superior. He died about 1774 and is buried in the old Weisenberg church yard, grave now unmarked.

The success of his Pastorate here was evidenced by the erection of a new schoolhouse and new church. His qualities can be evaluated from his very remarkable memorial writing for the dedication of the schoolhouse in 1796. Besides the usual extra duties befalling a Pastor in the promotion and construction of a new church, he contributed thereto the sum of 20 pounds Pennsylvania currency, which was exceeded by only two other cash contributions. He had the honor of dedicating the second church in 1803.

He attended the annual Ministerial Conventions to 1804 and preached at the 1801 meeting. His original assignment included Greenwich, Ziegel Kirche in Weisenberg, and New Allmaengel. He also served Lehigh Zions, Heidelberg, Lowhill, and Easton. He performed 431 baptisms and 101 confirmations. In 1805, he went to Perry County, relinquishing the ministry.

LIST OF LUTHERAN PASTORS FROM 1762—PRESENT

Johann Helfrich Schaum.....	1762—1778
Johann Friedrich Ernst.....	1789—?
Johannes Schwarbach.....	1792—?
John F. Obenhausen.....	1794—1806
Daniel Lehman.....	? - 1811
John Knoske.....	1811—1839
G. F. Yeager.....	1839—1873
B. S. Smoll.....	1874—1890
F. K. Bernd.....	1891—1896
O. S. Scheier.....	1896—1914
J. O. Schlenker.....	1914—1926
Ira W. Klick.....	1927—1947
Addison Planz.....	1947—1948
Craig Dorward.....	1949—1957
Paul Spohn.....	1958—1962
Donald Wert.....	1962—1974
Israel Yost.....	1974—1975
Ernest Flothmeier.....	1975—1983
Jeffrey Bortz.....	1984—1991
David Fritch.....	1994—1996
Guy R. Grube.....	1996—2002
James R. Hammond.....	2002—Present

PASTORAL SERVICE BREAKDOWN



Count Nicholas L. von Zinzendorf
Original Missionary

First Church Building (Made of Wood) "BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH" 1761 - 1803

- 1762 - 1778 - Johann Helfrich Schaum (Dedicated 1st Church; died)
- 1789 - ? - Johann Friedrich Ernst (Uncertain start and ending)
- 1792 - ? - Johannes Schwarbach (Uncertain start end ending)
- 1794 - 1806 - John F. Obenhausen (Dedicated 2nd Church building)

Second Church Building (Made of Stone) "NEW BETHEL ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH" 1803 - 1925

- ? - 1811 - Daniel Lehman (Died while serving)
 - 1811 - 1839 - John Knoske (Served 28 years)
 - 1839 - 1873 - G. F. Yeager (Served 34 years)
- (* On Sept. 22, 1844, the Union Church Constitution was adopted)

"New Bethel Zion Union Church" 1844 - 1925



Rev. B.S. Small
1874 - 1890



Rev. F.K. Bernd
1891 - 1896



Rev. O.S. Scheirer
1896 - 1914



Rev. J.O. Schlenker
1914 - 1926
(Dedicated 3rd Building)

Third Church Building (Made of Stone) "NEW BETHEL ZION UNION CHURCH" 1925 - 1969



Rev. Ira W. Klick
1927 - 1947



Rev. Craig Dorward
1949 - 1957



Rev. Paul Spohn
1958 - 1962



1947 - 1948 - Addison Planz
(Died while serving)
(* The Union Church agreement
ended in 1969; the name was
changed in 1971)

Rev. Donald Wert
1962 - 1974

"MT ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH"
1971 - Present

1974 - 1975 - Israel Yost (Served 5 months; never installed)



Rev. Ernest Flothmeier
1975 - 1983



Rev. Jeffrey Bortz
1984 - 1991

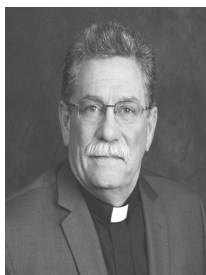


Rev. David Fritch
1994 - 1996

(*Mt. Zion had no permanent pastor from August, 1991 to
April, 1994)



Rev. Guy Grube
1996 - 2001



Rev. James Hammond
2002 - Present

THE SCHOOLMASTERS

JOHANN HEINRICH HEYL, schoolmaster, signed the annual accounting of the Church Council in November 1775 and again in September 1786. He was 82 years old when the second church raising was celebrated on July 2, 1803. He listed in Weisenberg.

He came to America on the ship "Snow Ketty" at Philadelphia on October 16, 1752 at the age of 31. On April 2, 1804 he made his will, making the Church his beneficiary after providing for his wife Maria Sibilla in case of her surviving him.

ADAM STENGER was schoolmaster in 1777-1778 when he owned 175 acres of land in Greenwich. He arrived in America at Philadelphia on October 26, 1768 on the ship "Betsey". (Nevin Balthaser, present member of this Church now holds the deed.)

BENEDICT NEIDLINGER is mentioned as schoolmaster in the first church record, in 1790. A communication from him as schoolmaster was read at the annual Lutheran Ministerial convention in 1802.

He came to America on the ship "Louisa" arriving at Philadelphia on October 3, 1753 at the age of 24. He was a member when the second church was built in 1803 and lived in Weisenberg.

NICHOLAS FISCHER was the last of the schoolmasters in the period of the first church. He was also a member of the Church Council and signed the annual accounting in August 1802, organized in 1860 under the leadership of Tuve N. Hasselquist, and establishing a college and seminary in Rock Island, Illinois.

He lived in Greenwich, where he was probably born. His wife Catharine was a daughter and grand-daughter of Matthias and Abraham Delong of Lynn Township.

The following is taken from a 1789 School Manuscript.

“The Church has in its possession parts of an original manuscript being the Composition Book of Abraham Leshner, a scholar. When it was copied in 1935 it consisted of 39 pages 13 X8-1/4” and made 20 typewritten sheets of prose and 9 of verse, including arithmetical problems, all in German. “

The text begins in the vein of a dream, is admonitory to youth and his elders and remarkably imaginative and creative, written in part by the scholar, beginning January 1, 1789, and in part by the UNIDENTIFIED SCHOOLMASTER, the sheet that may have borne his signature was missing.

Wm. J. Hinke, Ph. D., D.D. stated that it was the only work of its kind and period he had seen in a lifetime of research and appraised it highly.

It is impossible to tell the story of Mt. Zion without looking at the history of our faith and church.

The BEGINNING OF LUTHERANISM

The beginning of Lutheranism cannot be separated from the story of the man Martin Luther. Born in Germany in 1483, he became one of the most influential figures in Christian history when he called into question some of the basic tenets of Roman Catholicism. He abandoned his studies as a law student in 1505 to become a monk of the Augustinian order. Seeking personal salvation through the religious life, he devoted himself totally and intensely to the discipline and was ordained a priest in 1507.

His superiors recognized Luther's intellectual capacity, however, and he began studies leading to the degree to Doctor of Theology. A short time later, in 1511, he was called to the recently established University of Wittenberg as a professor and pastor of the Castle Church. Intensive study of the Psalms and the Epistle to the Romans in preparation for lectures there, led him to an understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith.

Finally, he realized that the key to spiritual salvation was not to fear God or be enslaved by religious dogma but to believe that faith alone would bring salvation.

The Roman Church's practice of the sale of indulgences for the forgiveness of sins seemed to be in direct conflict with the free Grace of God which Luther had rediscovered. He issued an open challenge to debate this and other issues by nailing 95 Theses, or propositions, to the Church door on October 31, 1517, little realizing that this was to be the start of the Reformation.

His teaching, preaching, and writing against what he believed to be corrupt practices of the Roman Catholic Church brought Luther into direct conflict with the hierarchy. Desiring to reform the Church from within, he found himself outside of it, excommunicated in 1520.



Portrait of Martin Luther from the ELCA archives

He was given the opportunity to retract his teachings by Emperor Charles V at the Diet of Worms, a general assembly of secular authorities, in 1521; his refusal to do so made him an outlaw.

Under the protection of Duke Frederick in Wittenberg, Luther continued his teachings and writing, convincing many of the truth of his doctrine. One of these, Philip Melanchthon, a young fellow professor at the university, began to work with Luther and later became Luther's successor in the Reformation. It was Melanchthon who took Luther's place when the German princes met with Emperor Charles in Augsburg, 1530.

Outlawed and under ban of excommunication, Luther was unable to attend the meeting at Augsburg to which the Emperor had summoned the princes in an attempt to unify the Church and the Empire. Melanchthon's effort to reconcile theological differences failed.

The Augsburg Confession, a Lutheran statement of faith, was drawn up, signed by the princes, and presented to the Emperor. Officially, the Lutheran Church had begun.

Lutheranism in the United States

The story of Lutheranism in America is an account of transplantation from many European countries. The first Lutherans were from Holland. In 1623, a handful of them settled in the Dutch colony along the Hudson River, near what is now Albany, and in New York City. Swedes settled near the mouth of the Delaware (1638); Germans established homes in Pennsylvania and New Jersey (1682), and in Georgia (1734).

Philadelphia became the early center of American Lutheranism for two reasons: the religious liberty in the colony, and the great leadership of Henry M. Muhlenberg. He organized and presided over the first Lutheran Synod in North America, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, in 1748. It set the pattern for the later formation of other synods: New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Maryland, and Virginia; and made possible the establishment of the first Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg, in 1828, for the training of Lutheran pastors.

A new wave of German immigrants came to the United States in 1829, settling in St. Louis, Missouri. The earlier Lutherans had become somewhat "Americanized" by this time, so these new arrivals found language and doctrinal differences. Under the leadership of a young pastor, Carl F. W. Walther, they formed a new synod and founded a seminary in St. Louis. This was the beginning of what is now known as the "Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod".

The greatest wave of Lutheran immigration came in the last half of the 19th Century. Many came from Germany, but a great number came from the Scandinavian countries; Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. Their differences in language and national background prompted them to organize separate, independent synods. Typical was the Swedish Augustana Synod, organizing in 1860 under the leadership of Tuve N. Hasselquist, and establishing a college and seminary in Rock Island, Illinois.

Through the leadership of such men as Schmucker, Walther, Hasselquist, Passavant, and Heyer, the Lutheran Synods grew in members and effectiveness during the 19th Century. The work of education, health and welfare, and "Missions", grew considerably during this period.

More and more, however, it became apparent that the small independent synods often lacked sufficient size and resource to operate most effectively. By the turn of the century, the process of merger and consolidation had begun.

In 1906, there were 30 Lutheran bodies in the United States. In 1964, there were 10. Three of these are by far the largest, with over 90% of the United States Lutherans holding membership in: The American Lutheran Church, formed in 1960; the Lutheran Church in America, 1965; and the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. There are those who look forward to a continuation of this process of merger and consolidation, as the various Lutheran synods continue to work together in Christ's love.

Meanwhile, the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) 1957 resolve to study contemporary Roman Catholicism with the possibility of entering "inter-confessional conversations," and the reforms proposed by the Second Vatican Council, led to a series of theological dialogues. Lutherans also accepted the invitation of Reformed churches (Presbyterian) in America to begin discussions of possible pulpit and altar fellowship. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), not a member church of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) or the LWF, participated in these ecumenical dialogues at the national level, and joined the NLC churches in 1967 to form the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. (LCUSA).

The LCMS, firmly rooted in confessional conservatism and relatively unchanged since its organization in 1846-47 as "The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States," held to a belief in the inerrancy of the Bible. "Historical criticism," an understanding that the Bible must be understood in the cultural context of the times in which it was written, was gaining ground in both Europe and America. Trouble was brewing in the LCMS as some seminary professors began to adopt historical critical methods in their classrooms. A new seminary president with experience in inter-Lutheran and ecumenical affairs was challenged by the new conservative synodical president. Meanwhile, a moderate movement in LCMS called Evangelical Lutherans in Mission (ELIM) was formed.

In 1977 the LCMS decision to place fellowship with ALC "in protest" along with the AELC's "Call to Lutheran Union" nudged the three church bodies, ALC, LCA and AELC, toward merger. The 1978 ALC and LCA conventions adopted resolutions aimed at the creation of a single church body. The AELC joined them, and the ALC-LCA Committee on Church Cooperation became the Committee on Lutheran Unity (CLU) in January of 1979. Presiding Bishop David Preus (ALC), Bishop James Crumley (LCA) and President and later Bishop William Kohn (AELC) met with the CLU over the next 16 months, and the 1980 conventions of all three church bodies adopted a two-year study process.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was finally born at its constituting convention in Columbus, Ohio, April 30-May 3, 1987. The three churches had "closing conventions" the day before, taking care of constitutional matters and saying good-bye. In the four days of the first convention of the new church voting members finalized legal details and elected the ELCA's first bishop, Herbert Chilstrom, other officers, and 228 other people to various boards, councils and committees.

On January 1, 1988, three American synods, the American Lutheran Church, the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches and the Lutheran Church in America, merged to become the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In August 1997, the ELCA declared full communion with the United Church of Christ, the Reformed Church of America, and the Presbyterian Church-USA. The ELCA also decided that the differences between it and the Roman Catholic Church in matters of salvation had essentially been resolved.

Lutheran Beliefs

Lutheran beliefs are expressed in numerous historical Lutheran confessions, most of which were penned by Luther himself or early Lutheran leaders. These confessions have been collected into the Book of Concord, which is regarded as an authority for doctrine and practice by all Lutherans.

ELCA Lutherans view the Book of Concord as an important expression of the Lutheran faith, but not necessarily binding in its entirety for all modern Lutherans. LCMS Lutherans, on the other hand, "regard their doctrinal content as a true and binding exposition of Holy Scripture and as authoritative for all pastors, congregations and other rostered church workers."

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LCMS) is more conservative than the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The ELCA allows for the possibility of errors and cultural limitations in the Bible and interprets it using the methods of historical criticism. The ELCA ordains women and it tends to be open to the acceptance of homosexuality and abortion among its members.

- The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- This church accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this church.
- This church accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it, in faith and doctrine, all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- This church accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- This church confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Similarly, although all Lutherans are guided by the 16th-century Lutheran confessions set out in the Book of Concord, the ELCA does not require its members to accept them in their entirety as normative standards for modern life. LCMS members, on the other hand, "accept without reservation all the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, normative also for the church today."

- The Book of Concord contains the following Lutheran texts:
- The Three Ecumenical Creeds
 - The Augsburg Confession
 - The Defense of the Augsburg Confession
 - The Large Catechism
 - The Small Catechism
 - The Smalcald Articles
 - Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope
 - The Epitome of the Formula of Concord
 - The Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord

The official statement of faith of the ELCA is as follows:
This church confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This church confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe;

- Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
- The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

PRAYERS AND SEASONAL INFORMATION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

From Exodus 20:1-17

1. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have any other Gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother,
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

("The Apostles' Creed is so called because it is rightly considered to be a faithful summary of the apostles' faith. It is the ancient baptismal symbol of the Church of Rome. Its great authority arises from this fact: it is 'the Creed of the Roman Church, the See of Peter, the first of the apostles, to which he brought the common faith.'")

THE BEATITUDES

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Nicene's Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

("The Nicene Creed was first adopted by church leaders in 325 at the First Council of Nicaea. Later that century, at the Council of Constantinople (381) some minor changes were made and it was again reaffirmed at the Council of Chalcedon (451). This ecumenical creed is the most widely accepted creed in the Christian faith and it is an essential part of the doctrine and liturgy of Lutheran churches. Historically it has been used at Holy Communion on Sundays and major feasts.")

A MATTER OF SEASONS

How dull life would be if the seasons never changed! If some feel the church service is too dull, perhaps it is because they think of only one "climate", with little variety and change.

But there are seasons within worship too; Each with a different message, each with a different mood. Knowing these seasons and their meaning can keep any worship season from seeming stale and monotonous.

The Bible has a central theme: God is active in history with a revealing and redemptive purpose. To assist the worshiper in understanding this theme, the year is divided into seasons, each emphasizing a part of the theme. Taken together, as one leads into, or flows out from another, the seasons re-create the Central Theme in the space of one year.

The Church Year begins with **ADVENT**, the four weeks before Christmas. This is the season when we look forward to our Lord's coming. The diminishing candles, one for each week in Advent, tell us of the Light that God sent into the darkness of sin. Violet, the color of Advent, calls for the spirit of repentance as all men await the coming of the King of Kings.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son." This is the gift of Christmas. The manger tells of the fulfillment of the Advent expectation. The letters XP are the first two letters in the Greek word for "Christ". White is the color for Christmas, reminding us of the purity of Jesus, the *"Light of the World"*.

EPIPHANY season begins twelve days after Christmas, and it means *"the revealing of God."* It celebrates the man Jesus being recognized as God in the flesh. The star symbol comes to us from the story of the Wise Men who came to see the baby.

Other Bible verses read during this season tell us of miracles, he performed which show that He was truly God. White is the color of Epiphany because it sheds light on the person of Jesus.”

LENT includes the six weeks before Easter, and reminds us of the time in Jesus’ life when He took on Himself the sin of His people. The cup recalls His prayer in Gethsemane: *“remove this cup from me..”* The blood flowing from the cup over the world reminds us again that *“God so loved the world that He gave..”* Violet is a traditional color for penitence.

EASTER is the answer of God to the sins of His people. Because God raised His Son from the dead, sinless and eternal, so shall those who believe in Him be sinless and eternal. In God’s sight our sin is dead in the grave and we have life eternal. It is a grand celebration of the victory of Christ who won over sin and death.

PENTECOST is celebrated as the birthday of the Church. Because we are Christ’s, we have much to do. God sends His Spirit to empower His people for their twofold task of worship and witness. (The story of the first Pentecost is told in the second chapter of the book of Acts.) The seven flames of the symbol represent the seven gifts the Spirit gives to His people: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord.

TRINITY immediately follows Pentecost, and we now celebrate the oneness of the three Persons. From this day in May or June until Advent begins in late November, the Church looks at the growth of its people. During this season, the Bible readings are about the growth of the Kingdom of God, and our maturity as Christians. The triangle in the symbol stands for the Trinity, and the plant-form indicates growth. Green, always associated with growing things, is the color of Trinity.

Sacraments

What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is the physical sign of an unseen promise. Sacraments are rites of the church that convey God’s forgiveness, life and salvation through words and physical means. Lutherans celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.

Baptism— One of two sacraments for Lutherans, the other being Holy Communion. Baptism is the entry rite into Christian faith. It is an act instituted by God, performed using water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, whereby the baptized is united with Christ.

Holy Communion— One of two sacraments for Lutherans, the other being Baptism. In Holy Communion, also called the Eucharist, Lutherans recall the saving acts of God through Word, bread and wine, and are connected with Christ and with Christians of all times and places. In this sacrament we are fed with the Body and Blood of Christ.

Other Related Topics and Words

Confession of Faith

A confession of faith is a brief statement of a group’s beliefs. The ELCA Confession of Faith confesses the Triune God, Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God, accepts the Apostles’, Nicene and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this church and accepts the Augsburg Confession and the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord as valid interpretations of the faith of this church. (View the ELCA Confession of Faith in its entirety.) *The Confession of Faith* is also a normal component of Lutheran worship. The assembly affirms its own faith and their connection to the church catholic by saying the words of one of the ecumenical creeds.

Eucharist

From the Greek word for “thanksgiving,” Eucharist, also known as Holy Communion or the Lord’s Supper, is one of two sacraments for Lutherans, the other being Baptism. “The Eucharist” is also used as the name for the liturgical celebration of this sacrament.

Evangelical

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands "evangelical" as emphasizing the gospel or good news of salvation received apart from human works and, based on this, the ELCA values worship forms and confessions of faith of the historic Christian tradition. In the United States, the term "evangelical" is often associated with a religious and cultural movement known as "evangelicalism" that came to prominence in the 19th century and stresses individual conversion, the authority of the Bible, and moral and social reform.

Evangelizing

The act of spreading the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ by word and deed. Used specifically for the activity of inviting people to learn about Jesus Christ. Learn more about evangelizing activity in the ELCA.

Gospel

Gospel, which is a translation of the Greek word for "good news," tells us of God who created and sustains everything; of Jesus Christ who lived, died and was raised from death to give us life and salvation; and of the Holy Spirit who gives us faith and makes us holy. The four gospels are books in the New Testament that document the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. You can learn more about the gospel by visiting the Bible.

Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of the Trinity, in addition to God the Father and God the Son, Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies us in the faith.

Word of God

The Word of God -- read, preached and sung by the assembly in worship, is essential to the orders of service in the Lutheran tradition. Lutherans understand the Word of God as:

- 1) God's incarnate Word made flesh in Jesus, living among us;
- 2) The word of God proclaimed and heard as law (that which convicts) and gospel (that which frees); and
- 3) The recorded Word of God in the canonical scripture.

15 REASONS FOR GOING TO CHURCH

- 1. The best people go there.
- 2. The best Book on earth is read there.
- 3. The best part of our nature is fed there.
- 4. The worst part of our nature is cleansed there.
- 5. Our sorrows are explained there.
- 6. Our hopes are brightened there.
- 7. Our faith is strengthened there.
- 8. Our vision is lengthened there.
- 9. The Church stands for everything good.
- 10. The Church is God's right hand; I ought to take it.
- 11. The Church is God's voice; I ought to hear it.
- 12. The Church is God's table; I ought to eat there regularly.
- 13. The Church is God's school room; I ought to learn there.
- 14. The Church is God's hospital; my soul needs healing.
- 15. The Church is God's traffic signal; my dangers are many and I need the warnings.

On Sunday, March 17, 2013, in a special service and ceremony, a time capsule was placed in the cornerstone and dedicated by Rev. James Hammond. Our special thanks to members Otto Gruber, who provided key information for the location of the cornerstone; Doug Gaumer who made and donated the stainless steel time capsule box; and to Andrew Frederick, stone mason, for his talents and willingness to take on our challenge.

Reference Bibliography

Information in this booklet was compiled and written by April Osterstock, Chairwoman of the 250th Anniversary Committee in collaboration with Sharon Billger, Wayne & Jean Dietrich, Naomi Ring, Eloise Tucker, and Jacob Wessner. Without the support of this committee, this booklet would not have been possible.

Lutherans in Berks County, Two Centuries of Continuous Organized Church Life, 1723 – 1923, published by the Reading Conference of The Evangelical Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, copyright, 1923.

215 Anniversary Booklet for Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Krumsville, PA. 1761 – 1976 prepared by Jeffrey's of Delaware Valley, Division of Winthrop Scott Co. Inc. Reading, PA., copyright 1976.

"The Difference Between the ELCA and the LCMS," Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod Official Site. www.missourisynod.org
Martin Luther information: <http://www.biography.com/people/martin-luther-9389283>

Portrait of Martin Luther from the ELCA archives

Beliefs: "Lutheran Confessions," Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod Official Site. <http://www.religionfacts.com/christianity/denominations/lutheranism.htm> <http://www.elca.org/>

Mt. Zion Lutheran Church Mission Statement

The Mission of Mt. Zion is focused on supporting people in their faith journey with Christ at the center. This is accomplished by preaching God's crucifixion, teaching the Gospel and helping all members to witness God's grace in their daily lives. Mt. Zion is a cornerstone of faith and a spiritual home for all who embrace God.

The future of Mt. Zion is our youth. The members of Mt. Zion commit to invest in our youth by providing an education in Christ's love, supporting their endeavors and mentoring them to live as Christ has taught us.

The members of Mt. Zion embrace the community in which we exist. The doors of our church are open to all who wish to enter. Within our walls, we will use the many talents God has blessed us with; the leadership skills of our members, the musical ability and the natural willingness to serve each other and Christ.

While achieving our goals, Christ will always remain at our center and we will continually work toward being ONE in our feelings and mission at Mt. Zion

Mt. Zion Youth Group Mission Statement

The Mt. Zion Youth Group is a community of caring, supportive, encouraging, understanding, enthusiastic, fun-loving, and creative young people who want to work together to help people in need and our church. As we personally grow in our faith and in our understanding of God's relevance in our lives, our goal is to follow God's word and grow spiritually as we become the church leaders of tomorrow!"