

Real Estate Acquisitions & Church Incorporations

Original name of the fledgling Mission Church

Deutsch Evangelical Lutherische St. Johannis-Gemeinde zu
Williamstown, NJ.

Subsequent name changes

St. Johannes Germeinde of Williamstown

Incorporated October 31, 1987

First met in Grove School House

St. Johns German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Williamstown

Incorporated May 3, 1989

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Williamstown

Name change by resolution, May 21, 1930, Gloucester County
Books.

October 1897-October 1898

Property at Black Horse Pike and Corkery Lane purchased and church was built. Logs from trees on the congregations' properties were made into lumber at a local sawmill. Furnishings were donated from a Camden congregation while ladies of the church solicited department stores for additional needs.

1910-1911

Purchase of two lots on South Main Street, Williamstown, one mile west from Church Site. Purchased by the Maennerchor Society (men's chorus), a corporation of men from the congregation who purchased property and had specific by-laws and a constitution.

1920-1924

A wagon shed was built for the comfort of the parishioners' horses
(Book)

1928

Purchase of Kaester property with house and two lots on South Main Street for \$5,000 . Pastor Drew raised \$3,000 and the State Highway Commission paid \$4,000 for the property taken at Corkery and Black Horse Pike needed for the highway. Old church was torn down. Part of the materials were used to build the new church and the rest was sold. House used as parsonage until 2000 when it was demolished.

August 1929—construction of the new church begun on the two lots purchased by the Maennerchor Society, which were adjacent to the Kaester property.

September 1, 1929—cornerstone laid

\$1,000 donation from Louis Egerter

1929-30—Original church demolished by State Highway Commission to enlarge the Black Horse Pike. Only the front of the property was taken by the state, the cemetery and other land remains the property of St. John's Lutheran Church

1954—Dobbins property purchased (adjacent to church property, north side.)

1955— June 12, 1955, ground breaking of Education Building. November 24, 1955 cornerstone was laid. November 3, 1957, Education Building dedicated.

1970-1972—Construction of the 40 ft, \$40,000 addition to the front of the church. September 18, 1970 last service before construction. Christmas Eve 1971 first service after completion of construction. May 2, 1972, new addition was dedicated.

1993—Channel Property purchased. Buildings on site were demolished.

1998 —The Gommel Garden was designed and installed in memory of Marie and Helen Gommel. The garden is located on the Channel Property.

1999—Property at 1002 South Main Street was purchased from MHSR Associates. Main floor used for church office, conference room space and Sunday School classrooms. Upper floor used for Sunday School classrooms. In 2005 the upper floor was used for Interfaith Hospitality Network/Family Promise as their Day Center. Interfaith Hospitality Network Day Center moved to Glassboro in 2011. In 2012 the upper floor was completely rehabilitated. Member in residence who is responsible for overseeing and cleaning the properties.

St. John's Property Improvements and Repairs

1919—Church received a fresh coat of paint

1947—Church was painted

1950—Congregation voted to repair and remodel all church property. Main church auditorium, Social Hall, exterior of church, exterior of parsonage, balcony nursery wired for sound and enclosed with acoustic tile and safety glass. A new kitchen was installed in the parsonage. It is thought that the dropped ceiling in the sanctuary was installed at this time. Cost \$5,000

1951—new heating system was installed in the church; cleaned the parsonage; redecorated the parsonage; remodeled the kitchen of the Church

1952—New brick and flagstone steps were added to the church \$750 from an anonymous person; church floor was refurbished; minor renovations to the Chancel; new red carpet; new red covers on our pew cushions and new kneeling cushions in front of the Altar Rail; new light fixtures in the Social Room; Wooden steps of Parsonage were replaced with concrete. The parsonage had a new furnace installed; installation of a new electric range and hot water heater; venetian blinds throughout the parsonage compliments of the Women of the Church.

1953—Bathrooms in church and parsonage renovated, \$500; Nursery Dept moved to the newly renovated 1st floor of parsonage back room; this area is also used by our Senior Department; new bulletin sign on Main Street in front of the Church give by the Luther League; flood lights were installed so the front of the church could be lighted at night; received wrought iron candelabras; remodeled parsonage bathroom, purchased a modern vacuum cleaner for the church and venetian blinds for the Sunday School Dept in Parsonage.

1954—painting and papering hallways, living room, dining room of Parsonage; purchased an institutional stove for new parish house kitchen (Education Building).

1955—Ground Breaking Service held on June 12th for Parish House/ Education Building; held own Thanksgiving Day and Cornerstone Laying Service for the Parish House/Education Building.

1956—Exterior wood trim and shingles on the Church were painted; Pastor's study was moved to the room formerly used as the Nursery Department; Dobbins house was razed in December

1957—The garage on the Dobbins property was sold and moved; the parsonage porch was replaced with a cement porch; the driveway between parsonage and church was repaired with several loads of gravel; concrete apron was added to prevent drive from washing out; additional work on the Education Building: completion of ceilings; auditorium floor; entranceway hall floor; installation of Formica in new kitchen; gave church thorough cleaning

1958—Sidewalks were installed around the Education Building; parsonage received new kitchen cabinets; new plywood floor and covering in the kitchen and new plumbing.

1959—Education Building: new lights installed; new drapes made for windows; tile was laid on the floor of the lower level; Narthex of church was renovated, painted and tile laid on the floor; sanctuary was painted. Parsonage: considerable amount was done.

1960—New Insurance plan was purchased which gives us more adequate coverage; new storm windows were installed in the parsonage; bathrooms in the Parish Hall/Education Building were tiled and painted; new mowers for church grounds and cemetery were purchased; Parish Hall was landscaped; three rooms downstairs were painted; new lighting fixtures were installed.

1961—repair of the Good Shepherd window was completed; the Sunday School paid for the cost of cleaning and waxing the tile floors in the Education Building.

1962—Closet installed in the bedroom, Parsonage; hard wood flooring laid, sanded and finished in the same room; painting of the exterior of the Church was started, but will need to be finished in the spring; major project was the installation of the sewers in the Church and Educational Building.

1963—New roof on garage; repairs to bell tower; painting of Church exterior; painting of parsonage exterior; painting of Education Building exterior; blacktop on driveway; new sidewalk from parsonage to church; new gutters Education Building; new altar railing; wood paneling in the chancel; church basement was painted.

1964—new roof on Church and Parsonage; refinished pulpit; tiled bathroom in parsonage (tub area only).

1965—remodeling of Pastor’s study; paving of driveway around parsonage; enclosure of entrance to Sunday School Nursery room; new door on the rear entrance to the Church.

1966—major improvement was the installation of new pews and sanding the floors of the church; the church was painted.

1967—major improvement was completion of pews with kneelers; a new railing was installed at the choir section; new steps were created at the office in parsonage; new ventilation hood was installed in kitchen of parsonage; completion of black-topping driveway on the north side of the church and Education Building.

1968—new doors erected in entrance of the church on Main Street; installed new signs on Main Street and Black Horse Pike; new electrical service installed in parsonage.

1969—The women made drapes for Ed Building; new door installed on side of church; first floor of Ed Building painted; rain gutters installed on Ed Building; retention wall built in front of parsonage at sidewalk.

1974—completed church basement renovation (meeting room, choir room, kitchen, study); stained glass windows were re-leaded.; lower level and church were completely air conditioned; parsonage had decorative iron railings added.

1975—church basement completely furnished; room divider separating the lounge from the conference room was installed as well as a blackboard; pastor’s office now has two stuffed chairs and a new desk chair; larger stainless steel sink was put in kitchen; privacy dividers were installed in bathrooms and mirrors hung on doors; towel dispensers were installed in bathrooms; two electric hand dryers installed in the Ed Building bathrooms; sign was placed along the Black Horse Pike with “Last Lutheran Church...”; the big project was Parsonage renovation: all new windows installed; old molding removed; walls in living room, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms paneled; bathrooms paneled, tiled, fixtures replaced and new vanity sinks installed; additional cabinets installed in kitchen; foyer papered and painted; electricity updated with additional outlets bedroom lights.

1976—Church; lightning rod system installed; church was struck by

lightening causing damage to the sound system and organ; new vacuum cleaner purchased as well as a self contained public address system; the roof at back of church was repaired and frames of Church windows repainted.

Education Building: half of roof was re-shingled; inside repainted and woodwork refinished; outside and inside lights installed in garage at parsonage; LCW made drapes for big windows of foyer of Ed Building.

1977—Parsonage: new hot water heater installed as well as an air conditioner; lights installed in the garage; buildings repaired and painted.

Church: sign facing Main Street was painted; carpeting in upstairs of church was steam cleaned

Education Building: Floor of stage refinished; tile floors in lower level stripped, cleaned and re-waxed; nursery classroom was painted and decorated.

Grounds: parking lot was blacktopped in front of building.

1978—new back door was installed in parsonage.

Education Building: storm door was installed on nursery entrance; one dozen small folding chairs purchased for Sunday School; two dozen small wooden chairs repaired; exterior trim over main entrance repainted.

Church: front doors of Church repainted; air conditioning compressor replaced.

Grounds: parking slots striped in Education Parking Lot; as deterrent against thru-way traffic, new posts and chain were installed across the driveway between the church and parsonage.

1981—new dropped ceiling in upstairs area of the Ed Building installed; new wiring and lights were installed; ceiling plastered and painted in entrance area.

1982—New drapes and stage curtain were installed in Ed Building; only minor repairs were done.

1983—new roof installed on Education Building; exterior woodwork covered with aluminum; carpet installed in nursery' outside windows of the Ed Building painted and broken glass replaced. Heating system in church was repaired.

1984—cemetery sign repainted, “coming events” sign installed facing Black Horse Pike, “Last Lutheran Church” sign repainted; concrete walk poured along the side of the church; storm windows and new rear entry door installed in nursery room in Ed Building; Good Shepherd window lighted; speaker system and clock installed in nursery; “greeters” became a familiar sight in narthex of church; began two church services every Sunday in October.

1985—interior of the church repainted, carpeting installed in the lower level of Ed Building in center room and hall; former parsonage designated as the Education Building annex and used by the Youth Group and Sunday School to provide much needed space; new roof installed on church; parking lot re-striped; 48 new child size chairs purchased for Sunday School; office set up for Sunday School Superintendent on side of stage; mail slot installed in front door of church; cemetery sign re-erected after being blown down; new roof installed on church; additional rain gutter was installed on Ed Building; a light over the pulpit was installed on a separate circuit.

1986—new heating system installed in church; new hymnal racks installed to accommodate Bibles and hymnals; church steeple was repainted; installation of phone in lower level of church; installation of door between kitchen and dining room area in annex for Sunday School room.

1987—chair lift installed.

1988—parking lot lights installed; kitchen in Education Building renovated including: new floor, ceiling, sinks and refrigerator; bathrooms painted; closed circuit TV installed in nursery; water cooler installed in the lower level of church; chair and table carts purchased; crash bars and emergency exit lighting installed in Education Building; second story rooms in annex (former parsonage) were prepared for Sunday School classroom use.

1989—refinished floor in Education Building (upstairs); fixed downspouts and drains around Ed Building; three large trees removed; two new front doors and “crash bars” installed in Education Building and also rear door of church.

1990—cathedral ceiling closed off since 1950 to conserve heat reopened; insulation and wainscoting repaired and replaced where needed; interior of church repainted; door and window trim was wood

grained (by hand) by Artist, Peter the Painter; new carpeting and emergency lighting was installed; new cross by Peter the Painter was installed over alter and dedicated in memory of Linda Phillips; red dossal (curtain) removed to give full view of “Good Shepherd” window.

1992—repairs needed due to a break-in at the church (TV, VCR plus some cash) stolen; leaks in Parsonage porch repaired; grass and grounds maintained by Youth Group; new customs lighting installed in sanctuary; new gas heaters and air conditioners installed; new water line installed in the church and annex. A chain link fence installed at St. John’s cemetery; new organ purchased through generous donations in memory of Linda Phillips (installation was quite involved); some old and dying trees were removed.

1993—Channell property was purchased.

Property: south side of Narthex roof and roof over the “Good Shepherd” window were re-shingled.

1994—Youth Group mowed lawns, raked leaves and did general cleanup; bathrooms in the Ed Building and church were painted; painted rear stairway into church; exterior doors to church painted; ceiling in choir replaced.

1995—The Education Building was cleaned and painted; brightly colored classroom furniture and cabinets created a cheerful learning atmosphere; some repair work was also completed in the Annex; additional land area was cleared at the cemetery which allowed the creation of 100 new grave sites; new water service to Ed Building; clearing of trees and brush from new property.

1996—fall and spring cleanups supported by volunteers.

1997—carpeting was installed in the robing room, choir room, Pastor’s office (lower level of church); nursery room in Ed Building; new stage curtain in Education Building.

1998— built a park on old Channel property in memory of Marie and Helen Gommel; exterior of Ed Building finished to match exterior of church; sign near the Black Horse Pike replaced.

1999—roof of the Ed Building was replaced.

2000—parsonage was demolished to make room for more parking;

driveway skirt that went to the “Dobbins House” was removed; Parish House painted and new carpeting laid in the first floor.

2001—area where parsonage stood was paved; carpet in sanctuary replaced; rail around choir loft removed to accommodate a growing choir as well as the pews in that area; first pew on either side of the aisle was removed and pews were re-spaced for more leg room; chancel area was enlarged and electrical outlets rewired; all work was done by congregation members with the exception of the carpeting; organ which was in the corner of the right hand side of the church was moved out closer to the congregation allowing more space around the altar area for communion; lighting was installed on the church steeple.

2002—grass cutting serviced hired; some small repairs made, but most repairs were deferred to the future due to budget constraints; cracks over doors were repaired; bathroom fixtures in the Parish House fixed.

2003—three furnaces in the church brought up to code; exhaust pipes rerouted to chimney rather than going out the side wall; smoke piping for the Parish House also brought up to code; heating units cleaned and serviced; two oil burners in Ed Building repaired and connected to the chimney; water heater in the Education Building replaced.

Painting: Outside of the church, the windows, the side door frame primed and painted; lower level windows, front wood trim around picture window and double doors were painted; doors also refurbished; partitions in the bathrooms of the Education Building were stripped and painted; lines in parking lot were restriped.

The lawn is being mowed by a professional service.

2004—building maintenance and repairs were as follows: choir entrance door in the church was replaced; window in church office replaced; Education Building: window air conditioners installed in ; Children’s Garden created outside; Sunday School rooms revamped; high efficiency gas heater replaced the oil heaters.

2005—new upstairs heaters were installed in the church January 2005; new downstairs heaters were installed December 2005; lower level check valve failed, new one installed; ceramic tile was installed in the basement of church; heater ducts in the sanctuary were enclosed in wood; exterior painting continued; second floor of the Parish House was completely renovated; Interfaith now occupying second floor;

Education Building downstairs painting completed; all electrical circuits upgraded.

2007—electrical problem with chair lift was repaired; caulking was done in the church basement after major flooding; new roof was installed on Parish House in March, \$5,000; July a window air conditioner was purchased and installed on the second floor of Parish House until heaters and air conditioner could be replaced; gas lines were run to Parish House and air conditioners and heaters were up and running by August, \$15,324; cabinets and countertops were installed in the Parish House in preparation for the Tea Room; in September oil tanks were removed from the Parish House and Educational Building; attic stairs in upstairs apartment were repaired; Education Building received hard wired smoke alarms; minor repairs in the lower level back entrance to redirect rain water; kitchen was completely gutted; rewired and redone; new floor, new countertops, cabinets, sinks faucets, two new industrial stoves, two microwaves and a new freezer also installed in kitchen \$8,000.

2008 -The Gommel Garden was weeded, mulched and sprayed. Church: outside lights repaired and replaced; a new chairlift was installed in July; large crack by the cross in the nave of the church repaired; one speaker of sound system was turned to face the congregation; honey bees have taken residence in a church wall; back stairwell continues to flood. Education Building: Levilor blinds were installed throughout the building, purchased by WELCA; small air condition was installed in the Story Room during VBS; new lighting outside was installed. Parish House: Tea Room completed; new garbage disposal installed in the upstairs apartment; toilet in back bathroom of apartment was repaired.

2009—Education Building: the men’s bathroom was remodeled; six round tables were purchased and paid for by WELCA; wall between the movie room and classroom was taken down to make a larger classroom for Sunday School; damaged Parish House sign was repaired; repairs made to the upstairs bathroom.

2010—Church: an upgrade was done to the light switch panel; Gommel Garden was given a good cleaning out; old chimney was knocked down and debris removed; work begun to downstairs to build a robe closet downstairs and partition off a work area for the Director of Music/Organist; sidewalks and concrete installed in front of the

Organist exit; sidewalks and concrete in front of the church was replaced \$3,000; church roof was replaced \$14,000.

2011—Church: repairs made to the men’s urinal: work finished on the new music room; robes moved to their new closet; file cabinets and two movable 3/4 walls were purchased for the music room; lock boxes were installed outside each building containing keys for Fire Department use in case of an emergency \$469; restoration of the stained glass windows completed. All windows are now covered with a protective covering \$22,200; Good Shepherd window had a crack in the center so a small section was taken out and repaired \$4,700; inside of all stained glass windows cleaned.

Education Building—Upstairs wood floor was professionally cleaned and waxed \$300. Windows in youth room, large classroom and heater room were broken by vandals and several items were missing. All windows were replaced.

Parish House—Repairs made to toilet in apartment; vandals broke windows and doors both floors; only thing missing was a TV/VCR; repair cost of broken glass \$500; IHN moved out in September and left the apartment a mess. There is a lot of work before the apartment can be occupied again.

2012—Education Building: new gas meter and regulator was installed by the gas company due to a gas leak; new timer was installed for outside lights; problem with front doors breaking again. Hurricane Sandy blew the front doors off resolving the problem; new doors installed \$1,880.

Parish House—The upstairs apartment was rehabilitated; carpets were torn up, new floors put in, kitchen updated, bathrooms repaired, all the walls repainted, inside steps refurbished, \$9,779. A member of the congregation moved into the apartment and will be responsible for overseeing and cleaning the properties.

Parish House; Tea room was redone; galley kitchen had new cabinets installed, old refrigerator was painted, walls were painted and floors redone. Donations from Tea Room paid for the makeover; downstairs men’s and ladies’ room remodeled. A swale was dug in back of Parish House in hopes of alleviating the water problem in the basement.

2013—Our buildings and grounds are being taken care of by some very

vigilant stewards. Outdoor cleanups are held twice a year with volunteers tending the gardens regularly.

Church: overhead tract lighting was installed over the alter; new faucets were installed in the bathrooms; four pews received new padding and upholstery, \$1,276. Rear air conditioner was rebuilt and refrigerant line was flushed out and replaced with new Freon \$3,885; carpet, paneling and drywall were removed from one room in the basement due to a continual leak.

Education Building: the right wing of the stage was cleaned out for storage for the Hospitality Luncheons; new window air conditioner installed in kitchen window.

Parish House: a kitchen window was replaced \$500 and both heaters were repaired \$195.

2014—Church: doors in all 3 buildings have been rekeyed requiring only one key for all doors \$390; front door was scrapped and painted; four more pews were re-padded and covered and 24 kneelers were reupholstered for \$2,356 (memorial funds); held our first polish and shine in years. Every inch of the church was cleaned.

Education Building: extra handrails installed on main staircase; outside windows scrapped and painted; sprinkler system's main pipe broke and was replaced.

Parish House: 1st floor had some renovations: Closet door's fixed; carpet removed and replaced with new carpet in conference room and two offices; conference room and two offices painted including woodwork; new blinds were installed \$4,253; deck outside upstairs apartment replaced \$882; new faucets installed in bathrooms; new window in Pastor's office installed \$845.

Bibliography

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church Parish Record Book

Annual Reports—1958—2014

Booklets from the following Anniversary Celebrations

75th Anniversary Book

80th Anniversary Book

95th Anniversary Book

100th Anniversary Book

Documents in the church files

Informational Booklet—1955

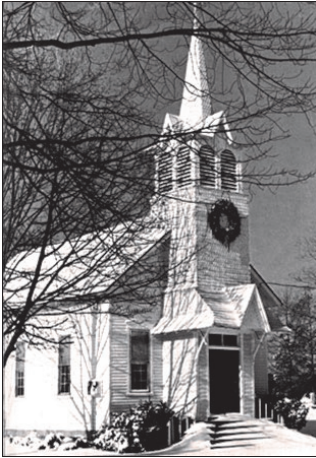
Newspaper articles various years throughout the history of the church

Pictures from various years given to the church

Comments from congregation members

St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church 160 Anniversary Website

Brief History—St. James Lutheran Church of Folsom our Sister



1848—Jacobus Evangelical Lutheran Church of New Germany (Folsom)

Met in members homes

1853—became Deutsche Reformed Zion Kirche, Folsom NJ

2008—Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church members joined St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Most of these settlers were devout Lutherans who wanted a church where they could worship in their native tongue like their forefather's. In 1848, they began holding services in their homes with the aid of itinerant clergy. In 1853 they received a land grant. About the same time there arose a division among the members of the Jacobus Evangelical Lutheran Church. One reason for the discord was the way in which the Lord's Prayer referred to the deity. Some said it should be "Unser Vater", which in English is "Our Father", and other's wanted "Vater Unser", which means "Father of Our's". Another reason for discord was the fact that some members thought that the service should be in English and others felt it should stay in German. In 1853, the conservative Lutheran worshipers and the more progressive Lutherans divided the six acres of church property equally. The ground that became St. James' included the land where a one-room school was built. The other three acres became Deutsche Reformed Zion Kirche . <http://www.stjamesfolsom.org/about-us>

1853— St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church of Folsom

