

Historical Sketch



The grounds which now constitute the real estate belonging to these churches were conveyed to the trustees in four separate deeds in 1817, 1822, 1838 and 1859 respectively.

The first deed of Feb. 19, 1817, was made by Daniel and Polly Wehr to Lawrence Baughman and Jacob Miller, trustees, for the consideration of \$4, containing 80 square rods more or less in the southeastern corner of Medina county and containing the spring.

The second deed, dated Sept. 14, 1822, was made by Peter and Emily Waltz for the same consideration, \$4, and to the same trustees. This lot is situated in Chippewa township, Wayne county, across the highway from the above parcel of land.

The third parcel, in the southwestern corner of Summit county, was obtained on Nov. 15, 1838, from Mr. and Mrs. William Brouse for \$5, and was deeded to Peter Colbetzer and John Hall, trustees of the German Reformed Lutheran Emanuel church.

The fourth and last lot was purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Whitman on June 3, 1859, for the sum of \$70. This constitutes that addition to the old cemetery and church grounds. The deed was made to N. Seiberling and Levi Hunsicker, trustees. The present boundaries in all constitutes a little more than two acres.

The first church building used by the congregation was a log structure erected on the site of the present cemetery. A division in the membership caused the building on the old Simons farm to be erected and a cemetery started. The very best of logs went into this building. The walls were chinked and plastered inside and out making the room a very warm one. In it was an old pulpit to which steps led up on either side. The benches were logs hewn smooth and blocked up, some high and others lower to accommodate all ages. It was the only church far and wide and people came from Bates' Corners, Wadsworth and for miles from the east and south. Walking or horseback were the ways the most of the people traveled, and they followed a trail through the woods. This church was thus in use in 1828 and how much earlier is not known.

A new era dawned in 1838, and a new house of worship was erected, possibly during the following year. This was in the southwestern corner of Summit county. Peter Burget, whose body lies in this cemetery, was chief carpenter. The building was much larger and higher than the old log structure, hence the name "High" church,

occupying almost the whole of the Brouse purchase. There were three doors on the east, south and west sides respectively, with a gallery around three sides and seats on an inclined floor. The pulpit stood on the north side.

In this church Sunday school was first organized in 1840. David Waltz was its first superintendent and held the office for 25 or 30 years. Other following superintendents were Eli Holbein, Samuel Burger, William Stouffer, Daniel Wohl, Christopher Long and Martin L. Miller. The great day was the Sunday school picnic. Flags and banners were carried and 100 or more girls, all dressed alike, rendered beautiful music. Through 34 years in wet and dry, winter and summer, this High church was the center of attraction every Sunday, one time the Lutheran pastor presiding followed the next Sunday by the Reformed pastor and so on.

As the years rolled by and changes were constantly taking place it was evident that a new house of worship was needed to better take care of the growing congregation. This change brings history down to the present beautiful frame building erected in 1873. The present cornerstone was laid with proper services, Revs. Leiter and Gilbreath officiating. On dedication day the congregations met in the old High church, and after a prayer and other short services the ministers led the assembly out of the old building into the new. The house was crowded and the day was fittingly celebrated. For many years High church was the only place of worship in this part of Ohio. It is claimed that from this start in 1817 has grown today the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Wadsworth, Barberton, Manchester, Western Star, Loyal Oak, Doylestown, Akron and other surrounding communities.

The affairs of the cemetery, one of the most beautiful and nicely kept in this vicinity, are conducted by two trustees, one elected by each of the congregations annually. They in turn appoint a third member forming an organization by which funds are received and administered for the benefit of the church and cemetery. Amandus Hunsicker is the present caretaker which position he has filled for many years. In the cemetery are buried 520 persons since the establishment of the burial ground, as follows: men 135, women 195, boys under 16 years of age 87, girls under 16 years 92, without inscriptions 9, German inscription 2. One of the above persons, Mrs. Elizabeth Everhard, wife of John J. Everhard, has been buried over 100 years, the date of interment being August 4, 1817. Not one of the former pastors who have passed to the other shore are interred there, Mrs. Schruue being the only pastor's wife buried there. The following soldiers lay buried in this cemetery: Revolution of 1776,

Peter Waltz, died in 1832, aged 83 years; also a Mr. Lautzenhiser; Mexican war, Peter Burget, died in 1885, aged 71; Civil war: William Benner, died in 1862, aged 29; Eli Blocker, died in 1863, aged 23; Carlon Ware, died in 1863, aged 27; Daniel Waltz, died in 1865, aged 37; David Baughman, died in 1875, aged 39; John Edwards, died in 1876, aged 54.

An effort has been made in connection with this history of the church to obtain an accurate list as is possible of the pastors and their years of service but owing to no records available of the exact time which the earlier pastors served the following table is the best that could be obtained. The names and years of later ministers have been secured from older members of the congregations up until later years which records are found in the church books. The following record is from 1817 to 1917:

Reformed	Lutheran
Benjamin Foust 1817-1821	George Weygandt . . 1817-1822
Henry Sonnendecker . 1821-1825	— Schrue 1822-1831
Charles Swisler 1825-1830	— Baughkey 1831-1840
John W. Hamm 1830-1870	Samuel Klein 1840-1853
E. D. Miller 1870-1871	John Hamilton 1853-1865
*Samuel Leiter, D. D., 1871-1883	Reuben Smith 1865-1868
Edwin Otting 1883-1887	Samuel Seachrist . . 1868-1869
J. P. Stahl 1887-1893	— Gilbreath 1869-1870
Philip Steinhage 1893-1897	W. W. Lang 1870-1872
I. N. Burger 1897-1905	P. P. Lane 1872-1874
J. N. Houser 1905-1909	Nathan Paltygroff . . 1874-1876
C. F. Brouse 1909-1914	Josephus Sponseller, 1876-1884
J. J. Wagoner 1914-1916	John Kauffman 1884-1892
Jacob Ihle 1916-1917	Charles Etter 1892-1896
David Sellers 1917	William Leisher 1896-1901
	— Kale 1901-1905
	— Lerch 1905-1907
	— Oney 1907-1909
	* — Day 1909-1910

*Died during pastorate.

Peter Waltz was the first Reformed elder commencing his services on Aug. 20, 1817.

*Rev. Day resigned in 1910 since which time no Lutheran services have been held because of the disbanding of the congregation.



1817



1917

Centennial Celebration

High Church

Emanuel Reformed and Lutheran

Near Doylestown, Ohio



September fifteenth and sixteenth
nineteen hundred seventeen