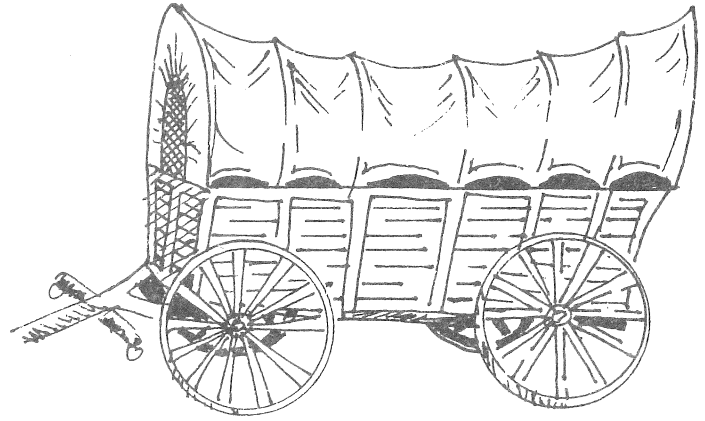


# Emanuel United Church of Christ (High Church)



Founded 1817

Doylestown, Ohio



# Our History

## 1817-1978

The little log church in the wildwood, not in the dell, but upon the hill; that was our beginning. We may best vision this from the following address, given in full by Edward Brown in his Wadsworth Memorial, published 1875, on page 60.

### A SKETCH OF THE EARLY SETTLERS OF WADSWORTH AND CHIPPEWA

by Peter Waltz

*"In August, 1814 a company of thirteen of us started from Ellsworth (now Mahoning County, Ohio) to come West. Names as follows: my father, brother John, Catharine and myself; Christopher Rasor, William Rasor, Christian Rasor, and George Rasor; old Father Everhard, Christian Everhard, Jacob Everhard, and Jacob Smith.*

*We started on Monday morning, about the middle of August, with two wagons loaded with provisions. The first day, we came about six miles, to Turkey Creek, where we broke an axle on one of our wagons. Here we encamped over night, and repaired the wagon. The next day, we came to this side of Deerfield, and encamped on what was called Yellow Creek. The third day, we got along finely till almost night, when we again had bad luck. The other wagon was broken in the same way as the first. This day, we arrived at Suffield.*

*In the morning we started, and came as far as to where old Mr. Cahow lived, near Wolf Creek; from there we crossed Wolf Creek and came on the old Harrisville trail, across the Broad Bottoms Run; then came west to near where Jacob Miller's house now stands. From hence, cut the road southward, to where John Everhard lived (on Johnson Road between Summit-Medina county line and route #548). We arrived there little before night set in. They had erected a shanty here, in the Spring, in which we all found lodging until Monday. We cut a road to where Jacob Everhard (1967 Files farm just west of High Church), and from this place, we cut our way through to our new home, known at present as the site of the Old Waltz Church (High Church). We had to seek shelter in our wagons for two nights. The third night, we had quite a house to live in. Then, you may believe, we felt at home.*

*When our company came to Middlebury (East Akron), Judge Norton and William Hart's father lived there, and had erected a small gristmill. They wanted to know whether we belonged to an army, as we were well armed. I think our company had with them nine guns.*

*We worked hard all summer, in order to clear enough land to sow some wheat in the fall. The next Spring, in April 1815, we moved our families. You may imagine what a time we had in getting here.*

*We brought a lot of hogs along, and as the bears were then quite numerous and annoying, we were obliged to keep them penned up all summer, so as to shield them from the depredations of Bruin. The bears killed two of our hogs. We discovered two of the savage beasts while in the act of devouring them, and as we had two first rate dogs to assist us the bears had no chance of escape.*

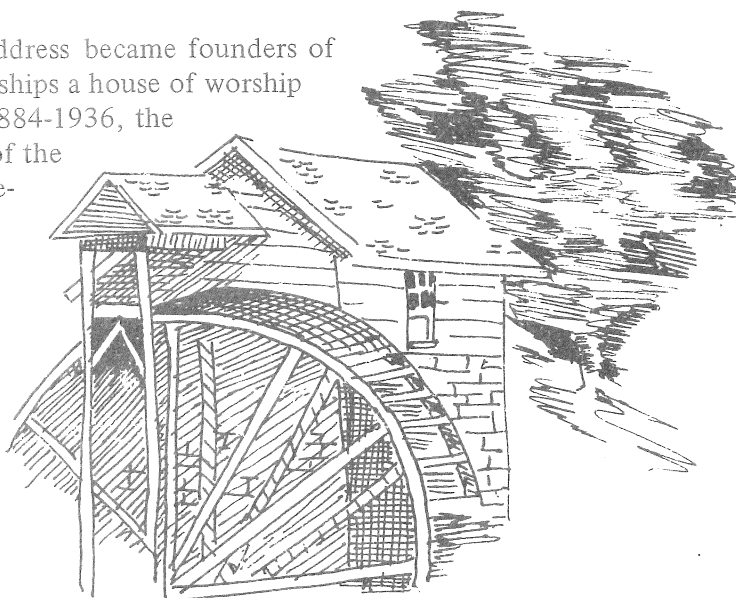
*Now I will give you an account of how we obtained our salt in those days. In the fall of 1815, myself and father went to Cleveland for some. We had a span of horses, and a yoke of cattle, hitched to the same wagon, which was loaded with pork and wild honey. The first day, we got to where Mr. King kept tavern. From here we started, and got on the wrong road, and struck the river, below Old Portage. We kept on the west side of the river, till we got down to where James Brown lived, where we broke one of our wagon chains, in consequence of which, we were delayed one day. My father sent me to Hudson, a distance of seven miles, to get the chain mended. The charges for the same were twelve and a half cents. It took eight days to go to Cleveland and return.*

*Middlebury was the place we got our grinding done. It always took two days to go to mill, and return. Where Upper Akron is now situated, was then a large alder swamp, through which we could not drive, but were obliged to drive around it."*

NOTE: Peter Waltz, the narrator, died 28 May 1876, aged 76 years, 7 months and lies buried in our cemetery.

All of the persons mentioned in this address became founders of High Church, and in spite of the many hardships a house of worship was not delayed. In the Church Register, 1884-1936, the Rev. E. H. Otting, entered a German copy of the original of an agreement of Lutheran and Reformed church members of Chippewa Township, Wayne County, and Wadsworth Township, Medina County Ohio, for a Union Congregation, and also the Constitution adopted at the same time, 1 January 1817. The following translation was made 21 September 1942 by Rev. J. H. Poetter.

"1 January 1817, church members of Chippewa Township, Wayne County, in the



State of Ohio, united for the purpose to build a Reformed and Lutheran Christian Church, and how it shall be built in an orderly manner.

1. A regular Consistory shall be elected, namely, Two church elders, one Reformed and one Lutheran, and Four deacons, two Reformed and two Lutheran, and these eight men shall be the Church Consistory (Council).

2. The Consistory shall exercise care to maintain Christian teachers who guard the doctrine of Christ which we confess.

3. The Reformed shall have the right to vote for a Lutheran minister, and the Lutherans likewise shall have the right to vote for a Reformed minister, and in the same manner the elders, deacons and trustees shall be elected, also teachers and other officers. Moreover, all motions and resolutions shall be adopted by majority vote. The Reformed, however, shall not reject the Lutheran minister if the Lutherans are satisfied with their minister, and the Lutherans shall not reject the Reformed minister to dismiss him if the Reformed are satisfied with their minister.

4. In case of a funeral of one or more persons, members of this congregation shall have the right to choose a man for an exhortation should no pastor be available. Should it happen that a church service has been announced for the same day and time, the funeral shall be postponed till after the service.

5. The Consistory shall exercise care that no person or persons shall be admitted to Holy Baptism or the Lord's Supper who live in vice.

6. All unruly and obstinate persons who do not contribute to the building and maintenance of this church shall be deprived of all rights of this Church. Persons of the Christian religion shall be permitted to be buried in this cemetery, except those who commit suicide.

7. Elders, trustees and deacons shall be elected every four years, namely, one elder and one trustee and two deacons every two years; the rest remaining in office for the remaining two years; then an election shall be held to vote again.

8. The deacons shall be in charge of the church utensils (Baptism and Lord's Supper), keys, as well as alms (benevolent offerings), of which they shall give an annual report.

9. The trustees shall be responsible for the money received for the church building and present a report annually.

10. The Reformed shall have the same right to use the Baptismal and Communion utensils as the Lutherans, and the Lutherans as the Reformed.

11. In case two persons of this congregation should die, a man and a woman, and the funeral service is arranged at the same time, the funeral for the man may be held first in case the same minister is not to officiate for both.

12. A Christian minister shall have the right to exhort (preach) in this church if the majority of the Consistory grants permission.

13. Should two or more persons be engaged in a church quarrel it shall not be permitted that they take their grievance to court or to law, but it should be settled by the Consistory.

14. The name given to this church is Emanuel Church.

15. The majority elected Peter Waltz and Jacob Everhard as builders."

Elders – Peter Waltz and Christian Everhard

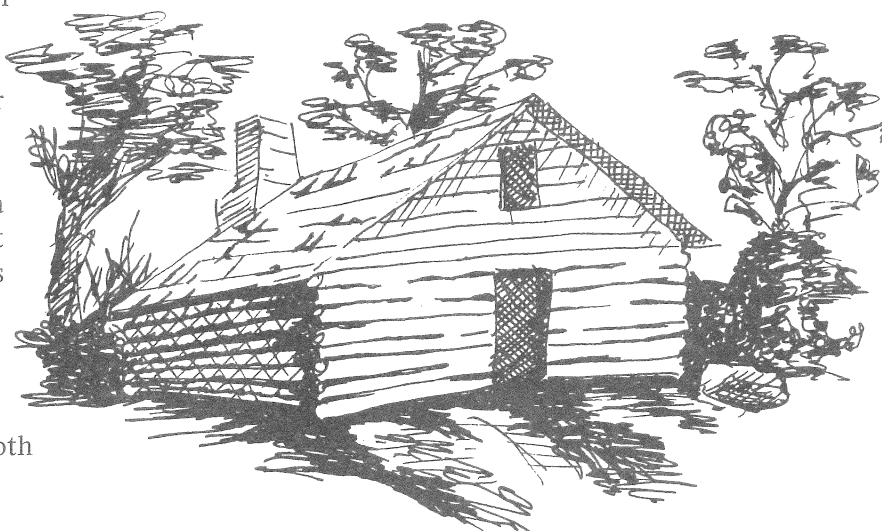
Deacons – Lorentz Bachmann, Daniel Wehr, Adam Schmitt and John Everhard

Trustees – Jacob Everhard and Adam Bachmann

23 March 1819 the majority elected Thomas Frederick for deacon (to replace the late Daniel Wehr).

The church building was to be constructed on Waltz property in Chippewa Township, Wayne County. In February 1816 Daniel Wehr (Ware) had purchased 120 acres, the southeast corner of Wadsworth Township, Medina County. On 19 February 1817 he realized that his time had come and that there was no church burial ground, so for a consideration of \$4.00 he conveyed to "Lawrence Baughman and Jacob Miller and the rest of the inhabitants", eighty square rods of ground, the SE corner of his property for the "sole exclusive purpose of burying ground, for that and no other purpose forever". We may be sure that he was buried there as the Medina County records show that in 1818 Christian Ritter was appointed guardian for the minor children of Daniel Wehr: Isreal age 10, Samuel age 7, and Susanna age 5 years. This 80 square rods of ground included the spring, very necessary when people and horses travelled many miles to attend church. While no minutes of the meetings in 1817 remain, no doubt there was much discussion regarding burials so close to the spring. Construction had started on the log church across the road in Chippewa Township, Wayne County on the 4 August 1817. Mrs. Elizabeth (Smith) Everhard, wife of Jacob Everhard was buried in the present cemetery.

Construction of the log church and burials continued in Chippewa Township and on 14 September 1822, Peter Waltz (the Revolutionary Soldier), and his wife Eve, conveyed by deed to "Lawrence Baughman and Jacob Miller and the rest of the inhabitants" one acre of land in Chippewa Township for a consideration of \$4.00, for "sole exclusive purpose of burying ground or place of interring the dead for that and no other purpose forever". Thus we see that the first two deeds make no mention of a church, however, we know the first church was constructed on this Waltz property in Wayne County. This was a log structure, the wall plastered inside and outside. Steps on either side led up to the pulpit. The benches were smooth



hewn logs blocked up at various heights to accommodate all ages. This was the only church for these denominations in a radius of many miles and people came walking, or on horseback thru trails in the woods, carrying their dinner with them.

By November 1838, the living and the dead were crowding the Wayne County acre, so William and Rebecca Brouse for a consideration of \$5.00 conveyed the southwest corner of Norton Township (now Summit County), 5-1/2 rods by 6-1/2 rods, to Peter Colbetzer and John Hall, trustees of the "German Reformed Lutheran Emanuel Church". This is the first deed to mention the church and on this property the next building was started that same year. Peter Burget was the chief carpenter for this new structure, which occupied almost the whole of the Brouse purchase. This building was much larger than the old log building, hence the name "High" Church. The pulpit was on the north side, with a gallery around the other three sides and three doors. The seats were arranged on an inclined floor, and with the gallery, would accommodate 600 persons. There was no organ or choir in those days, not even hymnals; the minister would read the lines and the congregation then sing them, all in German.

This building was heated by two stoves, the pipes running into a drum hanging over the center, from which one pipe led to the chimney. The pulpit was an ornamental box about three feet high, above a high platform with steps on either side. Seats in the south half of this church ran east and west, with an aisle to the pulpit, in the north half seats ran north and south on each side of the aisle. From the east door a stairway went to the gallery.

In this building the first Sunday School was organized in 1840 and David Waltz, the first superintendent, served for over twenty-five years. On 14 February 1845 Peter Baughman and David Waltz, trustees of the building of Emanuel Church, and John Hall and William Bliler, trustees for the congregation came to a settlement of the accounts and there remained \$3.62 in the hands of William Bliler. Further accountings continued yearly for several years by the separate trustees. By 1859 more room was needed, and on 3 June of that year one acre and 25 rods of land in Chippewa Township, Wayne County was purchased for \$76.00 from Andrew Whitman, said land conveyed to Nathan Seiberling and Levi Hunsicker, Trustees of Emanuel Church and "said land to be occupied as a graveyard and church property".

In 1873 the present church building was erected at a cost of \$3,200.00. John C. Baughman was the chief carpenter and Jacob Miller did the stone work. The cornerstone was laid 6 July 1873 by Revs.: S. B. Leiter, E. D. Miller, W. M. Gilbreath and S. C. Goss, and Dedication Service was held Sunday, 9 November 1873, with Revs.: E. D. Miller, S. B. Leiter, S. C. Goss, H. L. Wills, and J. W. Swick. The interior arrangement has been changed a few times and in 1888 the hardwood ceiling was installed, in 1890 the seating and doors changed. In 1886 a furnace was installed, most of the work donated by members, with a cash outlay of about \$160.00. In 1896 the Ladies Aid Society had the church repainted, inside and outside and put in a cistern at a cost of over \$100.00. Electric lights were first used at a Christmas service 23 December 1938.

As was the custom of the time, this church served both Lutheran and Reformed denominations until 1912 when the Lutherans withdrew. In the 95 years of Union Church, Emanuel was the "mother" for all the churches of these denominations in a radius of over five miles. We usually say that Reformed services were held one Sunday and Lutheran the next; this is not entirely

true. Prior to 1827 services were conducted by missionary ministers from Stark County, and included Rev. Anthony Weyer, Lutheran; and Benjamin Foust, Reformed, the latter held the first communion of record on 24 May 1819. The first baptism recorded in the church book was, Paul, son of Christian and Magdalena Everhard, born 13 May 1826 and baptized 2 July 1826, and appears to be in the hand of Rev. John Jacob Fast, Lutheran of Stark County. In the following twenty-five years over 400 baptisms are recorded, both Lutheran and Reformed in the same book. Unfortunately the early ministers did not sign their record, so we are not able to state how many were Reformed.

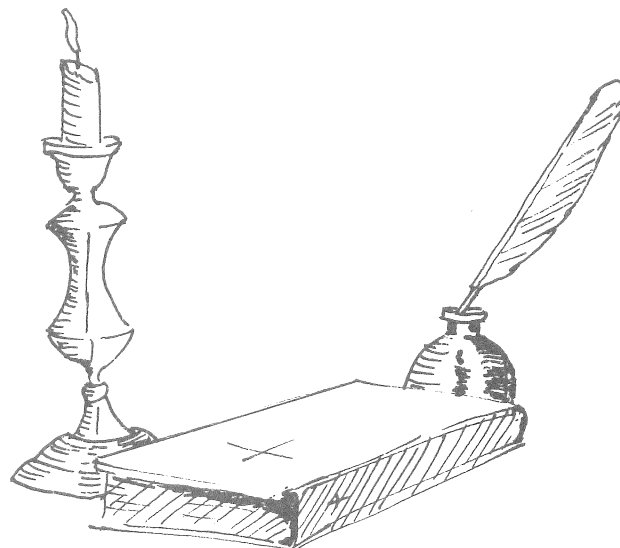
In 1827 the Rev. J. Henry Weygandt, Lutheran, came here and served nine area Lutheran congregations until his death in 1847. In 1837 the Rev. John W. Hamm, Reformed, started his forty year service, the longest continuous record of any pastor for this church. He, also, served about nine congregations. After the merger of the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States on 26 June 1934, the official name became Emanuel Evangelical and Reformed Church, however it was still called "High Church". In 1957 it became the United Church of Christ by the union of the Evangelical and Reformed Church with the Congregational Christian Church.

In January 1941 the congregation voted to discontinue its part in the Marshallville Charge and Rev. J. H. Poetter, who had served these congregations since 1926, became the full time pastor. At the suggestion of the Synodical Council, the congregation voted on 24 April 1952 to join with the Mt. Zwingli Congregation.

In 1956 land was purchased from Mrs. Mary Deibel joining the church property on the south and west, two acres at a price of \$2500.00. In 1957 the church was raised and a basement addition constructed. This same year negotiations were completed with Ohio Edison for a right-of-way easement over 4/10 of an acre in the SW corner (part of the 1956 purchase), for which the church received \$5,000.00.

In 1960, the congregation built a parsonage adjacent to the church at a cost of approximately \$25,000 with the major labor done by the men of the congregation. The house was built with a study overlooking the valley allowing the pastor a view of the church and area.

In 1967 the interior of the church was remodeled reversing the entrance and moving the altar to the old entrance of the church and adding a Narthex and "upper room". This refurbishing of the church was done in the puritan manner with walnut pews trimmed in white and white walls. The pride of the congregation was the Celtic Cross imported from Scotland. Hand tooled in bronze in the reformed tradition, the cross is rich in symbolism. As in the past remodeling much of the labor of the refurbishing was donated by the congregation. This is typical of the country church where everyone puts his shoulder



to the wheel to help. Uniquely during the entire remodeling period, the church was used for worship every Sunday.

In 1971, the congregation remodeled the garage of the parsonage into a Pastor's study with a separate door for more privacy and added a two car garage to the house. As in the past, the men of the church contributed much of the required labor.

In 1972, the windows of the church were replaced. These were made especially for the church and contained slats that regulated light into the church.

The congregation continued to increase in membership and finally in 1977, decided to embark on a building program that would increase the sanctuary seating and enable Sunday School classes to have their own rooms instead of sharing the fellowship hall. The plan allowed for the building of six classrooms, a library and church office and provided for the possible expansion, in the future, of a fellowship hall. This also freed the sanctuary from any class and eliminated the congestion in the Narthex.

The cemetery has always been an integral part of this church, and maintained by the church until 23 October 1902, when "Emanuel Church Cemetery Association" was incorporated to better serve the interests of all concerned by: Jeremiah Harter, Amandus Hunsicker, Charles M. Baughman, John M. Swain, Forest Swain, Orvis Waltz, and Martin L. Miller. The cemetery is managed by a board of trustees, all of whom are members of the church. An endowment fund was raised by subscription and has been added to by gifts and inheritances. All members of the Church have the privilege of grave space without cost, and it is one of the best cared for cemeteries in this area. In 1936 thirty feet of land on the east side of the cemetery was donated by Bert Harter so that a driveway could be built, this deed was not made until 1966.