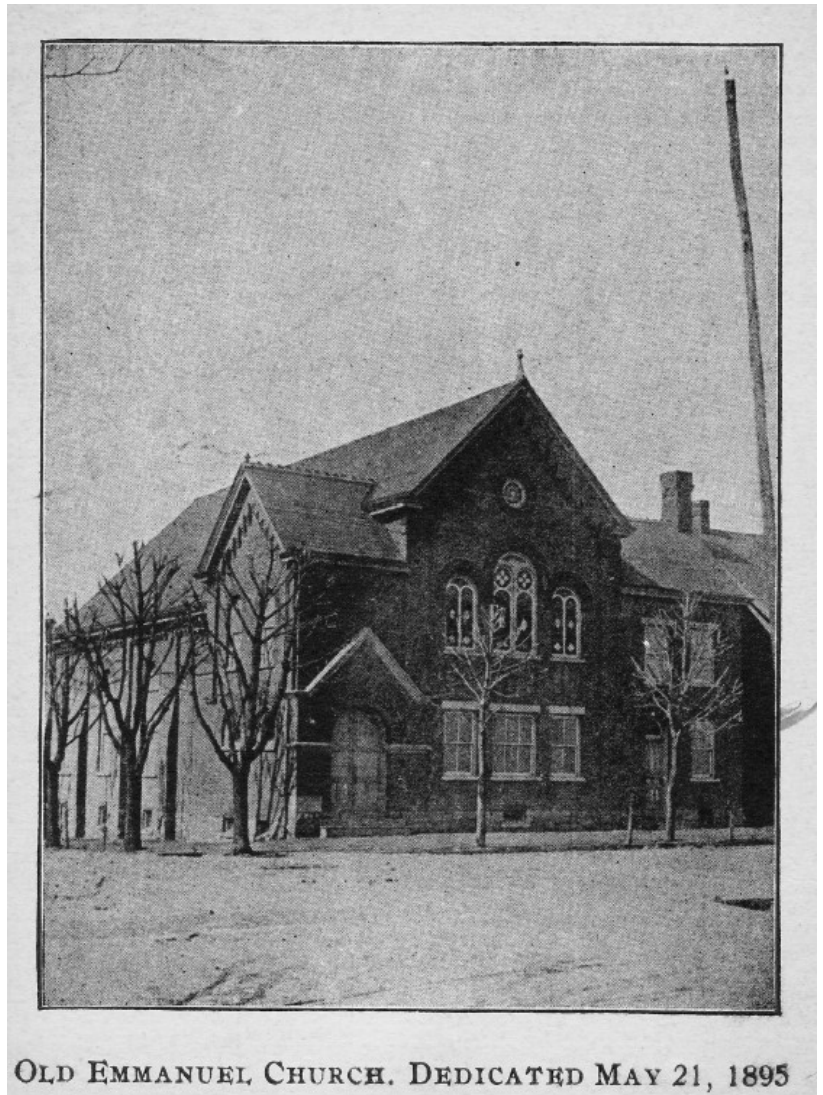




120th Anniversary 1895-2015

*A Brief History of the
Lord's Work at Emmanuel*



Key Dates in Emmanuel's History



1790ca Pennsylvania German farmer and Revolutionary War veteran Jacob Albright (1759 – 1808) is converted to faith in Christ after experiencing the deaths of several of his children. He begins a ministry as an itinerant preacher to German speaking people in Lancaster County. “To the German first, but also to the English”.

1816 Albright's converts form the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* (Evangelical Association), numbering about 300 members.



1840's Evangelical Association preachers, also known as circuit riders, begin to make occasional visits to Bethlehem. (Illustration at left titled “Going to Conference”.)

1853 A revival meeting is held in the Odd Fellows Hall on New Street and 33 people are converted. The first “class” is formed out of this group, trustees are elected, and the decision is made to proceed with a building program.

1854 The Bethlehem congregation builds a 40'x50' brick church building on the corner of North and New Streets and takes the name St. John Evangelical Church. The building is dedicated on Christmas Day by the Rev. E. Bast.

1875 Though English appears to be the language of the future, the Evangelical Association's German language newsletter still out subscribes its English counterpart by a 2:1 ratio.

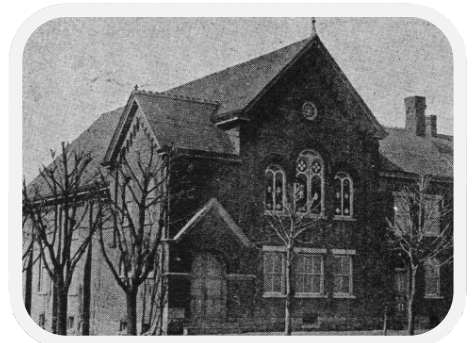
1880 The 1854 church is replaced with a new brick structure a short distance east on North Street. Today this building (date stone at right) serves as a Korean Methodist church.



1890 Eight decades after Jacob Albright's death, his band of followers have grown "from 300 German-speaking inhabitants of Eastern PA, to a host of 150,000 worshipping on three continents in 2,000 churches and under the guidance of 1,250 ministers" (Gilmore, 1960).

1880's – Early 1890's A bitter split develops in the Evangelical Association over the doctrine of “entire sanctification”, German vs. English, and central vs. local church governance (but according to one commentator was really 99% over personalities). By 1891 the two factions, known as the “Majority” and “Minority”, begin to hold competing annual conferences. A flurry of litigation ensued, eventually reaching the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

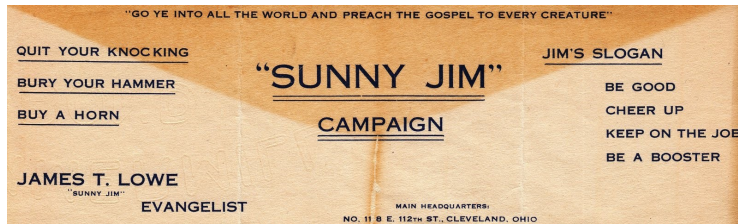
October 1, 1894 The PA Supreme Court rules that the “Majority” is the true Evangelical Association and has rightful control of church properties. Having taken the side of the “Minority” the St. John's congregation is forced to vacate the North Street church. They decide to erect a new building at the corner of Center and Union Streets (shown at right).



Key Dates in Emmanuel's History

1900 A special congregational meeting is held at which the church is renamed "Emmanuel United Evangelical Church". At that same meeting, the congregation approves a plan to construct a parsonage next to the church, today known as 807 Center Street.

1912 Having outgrown its original structure, the congregation promptly tears it down and constructs the church building we worship in today for a total cost, including furnishings, of \$40,500 (roughly equivalent to \$1 million in 2015). Men and boys of the church assist with early construction, cleaning the original bricks for reuse in the new structure.



1914 Revival services held under evangelist James "Sunny Jim" Lowe result in a reported 240 conversions, with over 100 people added to the Church.

1917-1918 Over two dozen young men from Emmanuel answer the call to serve in World War I.

1920 Debt on church building is retired.

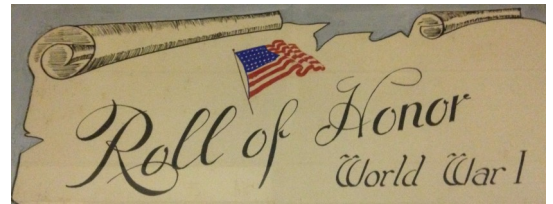
1924 A second great revival is experienced under the Stevens and Clark Campaign, resulting in the conversion of 220 souls, of whom more than 50 were added to the Church.

1925 The church building is completely renovated at a cost of \$10,000.

1928 The church is renamed "Emmanuel Evangelical Congregational", and has a membership of 500.

1930 Property consisting of two residential lots adjacent to west side of church purchased for \$14,000.

1945 World War II ends, with over 100 young men and women of Emmanuel having served. Membership reaches 775 as Emmanuel celebrates her 50th anniversary.



1969 The 75th Anniversary brochure notes the beginning of a new ministry to international students.

1973 A new addition is constructed on the west side of the church, including a chapel.

1980ca Emmanuel loans its chapel to Grace Deliverance Baptist church, a then beginning African American congregation now celebrating their 35th Anniversary. A series of young churches would share our facilities on up to the present.

1994 Emmanuel celebrates 100 years of worship at the corner of Union and Center.

THE LAST TWENTY YEARS (1995-2014)

Over the last twenty years, Emmanuel has continued to undergo changes that have been a mixture of joy and sorrow.

Less than a year after celebrating the 100th anniversary, Emmanuel suffered the sudden loss of Pastor Harvey Copperwheat. Pastor Copperwheat was a dynamic preacher with a heart for revival and was active in corporate prayer with other local pastors seeking spiritual renewal for the Lehigh Valley.



We were then blessed with the ministry of Pastor Bob Bast (pictured at left) and his wife Cathy who served for the next nineteen years. Pastor Bob was a faithful gospel minister known for his warmth, humility, and servant attitude. During his ministry, the church expanded its use of contemporary music (in which he frequently participated), and saw the addition of former members of Olivet and Easton E.C. churches. Ministry to international students continued with Emmanuel hosting the annual Christmas program that exposes students with little knowledge of the gospel to Bethlehem's Christian heritage via the Moravian Putz displays, a fellowship dinner and singing carols. Many special relationships have resulted.

During this period, the church considered alternatives to its future, in light of smaller attendance and a large, aging facility. The church was convinced that God wanted us to stay at the corner of Union and Center to minister to the neighborhood. Towards that goal, youth ministry was reenergized by a focus on local unchurched students, whose ethnicity was a radical departure from Emmanuel's German roots. A key component was the development of a basketball league.



The Lord's leading toward an outward focus resulted in the start of several other ministries, among which are the Mustard Seed clothing ministry, Comfy Quilters, Back to School Night, and Safe Halloween.

In the spring of 2010 members of the Ministry Council joined others at a seminar on uncovering God's Pillar of Fire vision for each church. Convinced that God had a vision for Emmanuel Church and we should uncover it, we held a series of small group meetings that many took part in during the summer. Participants expressed what they thought were the gifts, opportunities and challenges that God has given our church and what their dreams were for her future. With this in hand, Pastor Bast went on a personal retreat to meditate on scripture and seek God's vision for our church.

God was faithful by giving him the challenging vision of Jesus calling us to "let down the nets on the other side of the boat." We have accepted this challenge and are stepping out in faith to reach out in new ways to those living around us that we have not reached before, to be "fishers of men and women" in our time.





In 2014, God sent us Pastor Rick Sergi and his wife Joan, along with a wonderful group of people from his pastorate at the Sunrise church plant. Pastor Rick has received additional insight on the meaning of the vision given to us in 2010. The “nets” are representative of the network of relationships we are building with other ministries, our neighbors, and local government officials. Casting the nets on the other side of the boat speaks to the idea that we need not row across to the other side of the lake: we just have to continue to adjust our fishing technique where our boat already is. Pastor Rick has brought with him energy, creativity, and a contagious love for Jesus, and we look forward to how God will use us together in future ministry.



The following pages are a selective look back on our history, hence the inclusion of the word “brief” in the title. Attempting to contain 120 years of activity within a small booklet inevitably results in the omission of many items of significance. Perhaps this is the same feeling John the gospel writer had when he wrote “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.”

Thus it is seen that without a written history the Association would finally become uncertain concerning herself, and it would soon become impossible to comply with the biblical exhortation : “ Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn and the pit whence ye are digged.” (Isaiah 51, 1.) The recollections of “ the wonderful works of God ” which He has wrought for this Church and the inspiration produced by them, as well as the adoration due unto Him who is the author of all good, would cease, which would be an incalculable and irretrievable loss.

Excerpt from “History of the Evangelical Association” by R. Yeakel, 1894.

Houses of Worship



<== **1880 church building** located on North Street a short distance east of New Street, which today is Korean Methodist. Due to a denominational dispute, St. John was forced to vacate this building in 1894. In less than a year, the congregation built a new church on the corner of Center and Union.

1895 church building ==>

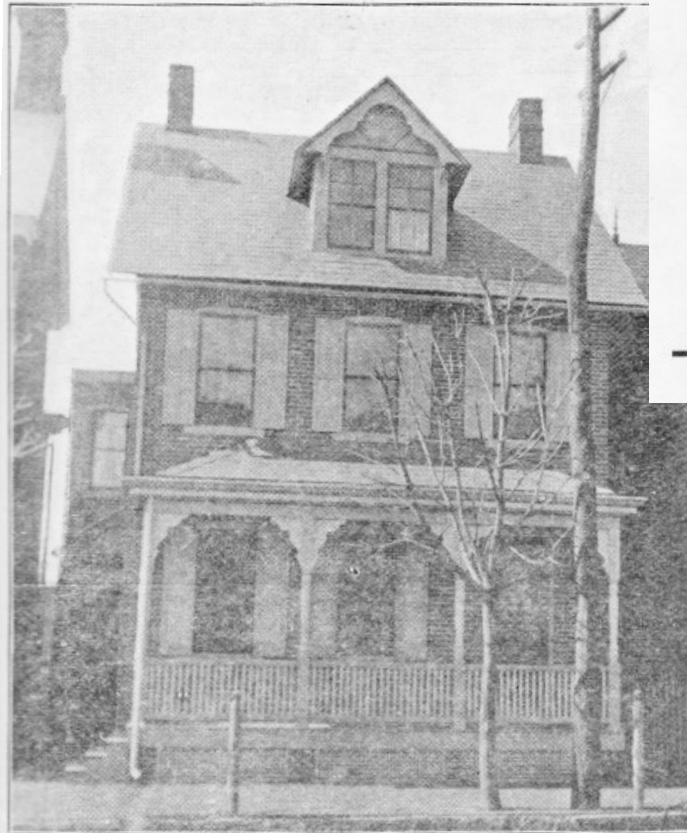
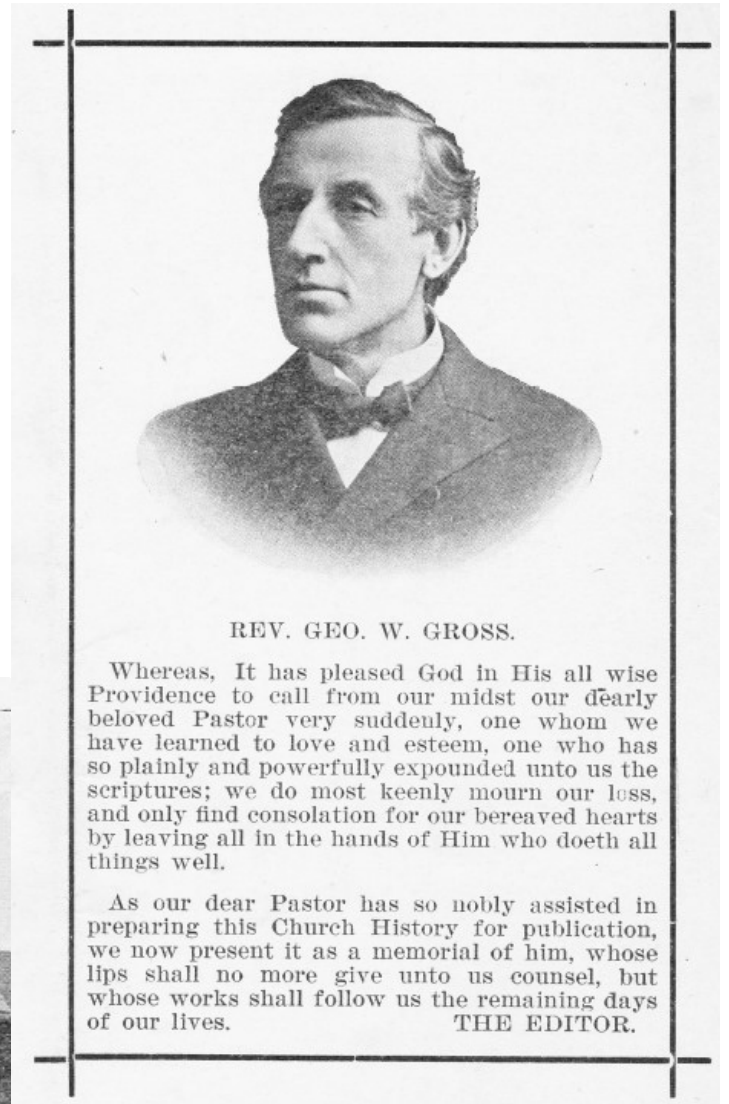
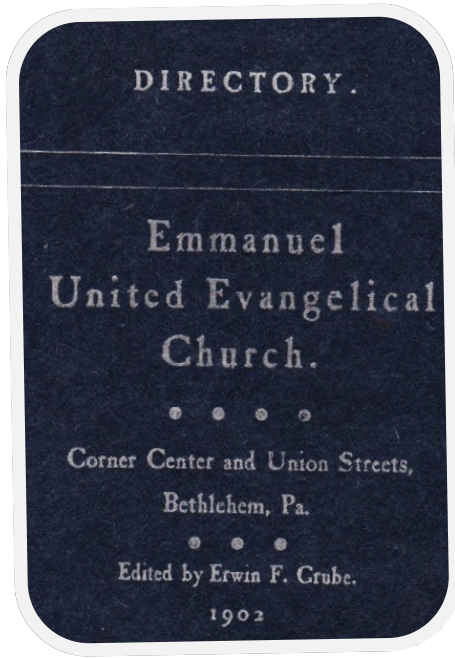
In 1900, the congregation would change its name from St. John to Emmanuel.

This building would be demolished after only 17 years of use to make way for our present building. (Note the carbon arc street lamp).



<== **1912 church building** in which we worship today, built for a total cost of \$40,500. This view dates from the 1940s. The cross on top of the bell tower was a familiar landmark. The detail below was taken in 2003; due to maintenance concerns, the bell tower and the cross were soon after removed.

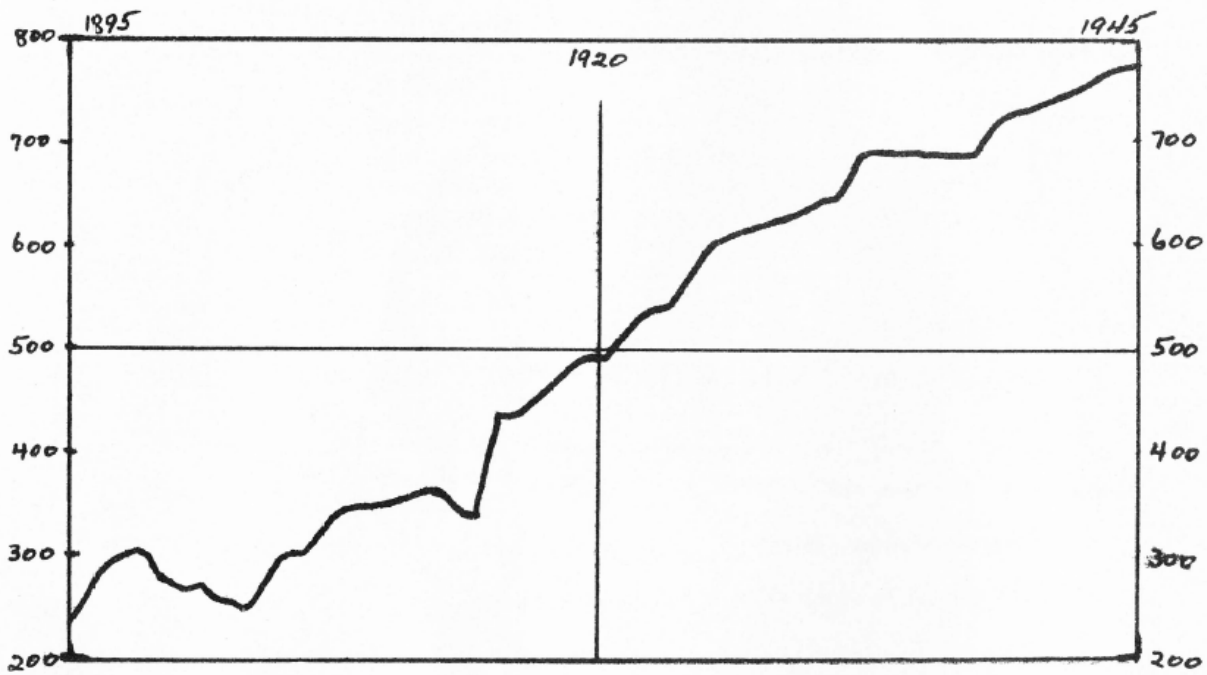




At the time of publication of the 1902 directory, the parsonage at 807 Center Street was brand new. Shortly before the directory was printed, the congregation suffered the sudden loss of its pastor.

At a special congregational meeting held in the church Feb. 5, 1900, the matter of erecting a parsonage was presented. It was maintained and clearly comprehended that if a certain amount of money be raised on the property, the balance would, within a certain number of years be liquidated by the amount of money annually paid out for rent. Also bearing in mind that a site sufficient to erect such a building was owned by the congregation and located next to the church, a Building Committee was appointed consisting of Rev. G. W. Gross, F. J. Mitman, O. P. Heller, L. Moyer and H. Yeakel. A brick building was erected, as above. Contract awarded to Speck Bros.

HOW EMMANUEL GREW



The growth of Emmanuel Church has been steady . . .

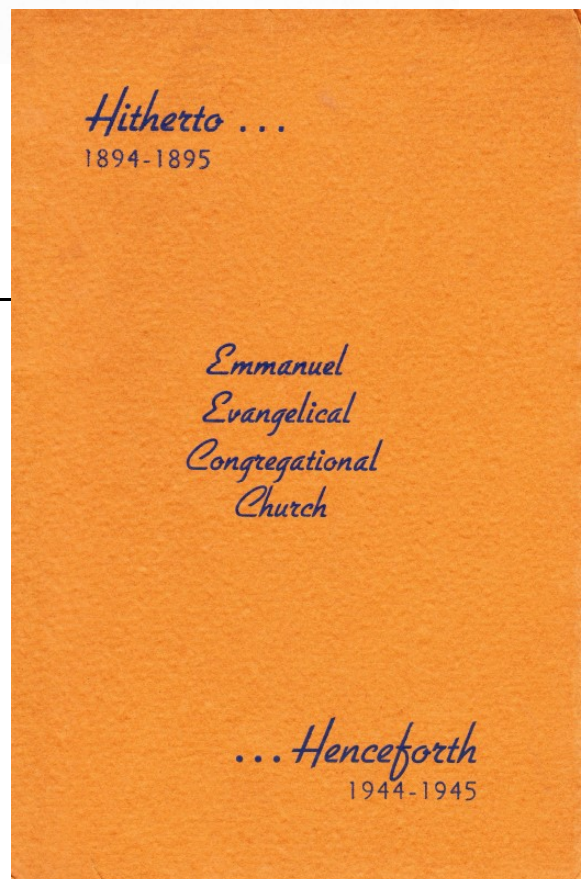
At the beginning there were 235 members
 After 25 years there were 490 members
 At the present time, there are 775 members

This hand drawn graph of Emmanuel's growth was featured in the 50th anniversary booklet.

John E. Waser was the pastor.



REV. JOHN R. WASER, Pastor



1894 - 1969
**75th (DIAMOND JUBILEE)
 ANNIVERSARY**

Emmanuel
Evangelical Congregational Church
Bethlehem, Pa.
December 7, 1969



REV. JOHN S. HEIM, PASTOR
REV. RICHARD R. GERBER, ASST. PASTOR
MISS. GRACE MEALEY, MINISTER OF MUSIC

The 1969
 Anniversary
 brochure mentions
 several "new"
 approaches, including
 a ministry to
 international
 students.

DIRECTORY - 1969

Rev. John S. Heim, Pastor
 Rev. Richard R. Gerber, Asst. Pastor
 Miss Grace Mealey, Minister of Music
 Mrs. Chester Mosebach, Church Secretary

OFFICIAL BOARD

Dr. W. O. Sloyer, President
 Frank Thomas, Vice President
 Ronald W. Frantz, Secretary
 Edward Turley, Treasurer

TRUSTEE BOARD

Frank Thomas, Pres.
 Chester Mosebach, Vice Pres.
 Richard Confer, Secy.
 Dr. William Sloyer
 Gerald Werst
 Kenneth Wesner
 William Mease

STEWARD BOARD

Donald Silfee, Pres.
 Clyde F. Mumma, Vice Pres.
 Ralph Fenicle, Secy
 Kenneth Parsons
 Furn Fuhrman
 Ronald W. Frantz
 Richard Standlick

CLASS LEADERS

Carson Kuhns, President
 Dr. Alan Pense
 George Trein
 Rev. H. E. Samuels
 Rev. John S. Heim, Pastor

Mrs. Merritt Michael, W. M. S. President
 Clyde P. Mumma, Sunday School Supt.
 William Lynn, Lay Delegate
 Mrs. Charles Simpson, C. E. President
 Mrs. Earle Groth, Financial Secretary
 Rev. Richard R. Gerber, Asst. Pastor

The Missionary Societies have reached new highs in interest and in activity. Our Sunday School retains its overall excellence. Special mention must be made of the high school - college age classes whose teachers have implemented new literature and new approaches to youth's problems.

The growing Week-day Church School represents a challenge and a tremendous opportunity for christian service. The young people of the church have undertaken entertainment of International Students in a new phase of christian witness.

Changes in the order of service have made our worship more meaningful and the high quality of Emmanuel's music reflects the professional musicianship of our Minister of Music, Miss Grace Mealey.



Architect's rendering of the 1973 west side addition.

A place to start for young churches



Our lovely chapel with its own organ is as appropriate for weddings as it is for prayer meeting.

The chapel, as it was seen soon after it was constructed as part of the 1973 addition. Several years after, Emmanuel invited a recently formed church, Grace Deliverance Baptist, to use our chapel for worship until they could obtain their own building. This tradition of offering a place for young congregations has continued up to the present, with Casa de Restauracion currently worshipping here. We thank the Lord for them, as they have been a tremendous asset to Emmanuel.



Some familiar faces from the 1973 program for dedication of the new addition.

The Rev. David C. Greulich talks with members in his new study.



Our newly renovated Beginner's Department gives our children a cheerful atmosphere.

Dear Christian Friends,

We welcome you to the dedication of the newly renovated and expanded facilities of Emmanuel Evangelical Congregational Church. Rejoice with us as we praise The God of our Fathers who has guided us throughout these past months of construction, and who continues to provide the needed resources to complete the work undertaken.

In a day when Christian training is overlooked in the schools, and woefully neglected in the home, Emmanuel has shown its continuing belief in the value and necessity of quality Christian Education in pleasant contemporary surroundings by providing these renovated facilities. We ask all of you to pray and work with us to the end that men and women, boys and girls might come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and grow in Christian faith and love.

I want to express my personal thanks to the many committee members who have given so freely of their time and energies during these past four years: the Planning Committee, Building Committee, Faith Covenant Committees on Prayer, Stewardship, Publicity and Fellowship, and the committees actively at work during this Dedication month. In addition, we greatly appreciate the guidance given us by Church Growth Services, and the fine working relationship with the Contractor, Chiles and Sillivan.

I believe this series of week-end special programs in September, 1973, will prove to be one of the most productive programs in the history of Emmanuel Church. We urge you to be present and share in each weekend.

Yours in Christ's service,

David C. Greulich
David C. Greulich, Pastor

1894 - 1994

100th (Centennial)

ANNIVERSARY

*Emmanuel Evangelical
Congregational Church*

Bethlehem, Pa.



Harvey Copperwheat, Pastor
David Erikson, Youth Pastor
Grace Mealey, Minister of Music



The 100th Anniversary brochure included this message from Pastor Harvey Copperwheat (pictured below) who would be suddenly taken from us less than a year later.

Pastor's Message

It has been my privilege to pastor at Emmanuel Church during the last six years, and I am thrilled that the centenary of the congregation took place whilst we were with you.

Emmanuel Church has had an illustrious past, for which we can praise the Lord. Many have found Jesus Christ as Savior here, many have gone into the Community to make an impact for Christ, some have been called to serve as pastors, missionaries, even bishops!

But we do not rest on our laurels.

Times have changed. The neighborhood has changed. The congregation has changed. The thinking and life-style of the people around us have changed.

God has not changed. The Gospel has not changed. The power of the Holy Spirit to transform lives has not changed.

We may tend to think that the "glory days" are behind us, but we still have much to do, "there is still much land to be possessed."

The challenge before us is to adapt the way we do things without changing the content or the power of what we say. The Apostle Paul wrote "I have become all things to all men that I might win some." May that be our philosophy as we make ourselves available to God for His Glory.

Let us look upon these past 100 years, not as cement to get hardened into, but as a foundation to continue building upon.

And may this word of the Lord be true for us: "The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house"! (Haggai 2:9).

Thank you for all you have meant to us.
God bless you.

Ministers Who Have Faithfully Served Emmanuel Church

1891 - H.D. Schultz	1925 - G.H.R. Dellecker
1894 - B.D. Albright	1928 - J.A. Smith
1897 - G.B. Sweigert	1933 - G.A. Maurey
1899 - G.W. Gross	1937 - F.G. Yost
1902 - S.E. Butz	1942 - J.A. Smith
1903 - J.S. Heisler	1943 - J.R. Waser
1907 - H.H. Smith	1950 - A.Z. Bodey
1910 - W.J. Edelman	1966 - J.S. Heim
1913 - S.L. Wiest	1970 - D.C. Greulich
1915 - J.S. Heisler	1978 - R.T. Haupt
1920 - C.D. Huber	1988 - H.C. Copperwheat

1995 - Robert Bast

2014 - Rick Sergi



Gospel Messengers From Emmanuel Church

Rev. Herbert A. Dech	Rev. Ralph Bealer
Rev. Walter J. Dech	Rev. Earl Remaley
Rev. H.J. Kline	Rev. Joseph Tice
Rev. J.E. Illick	Rev. Dean Felker
Rev. F.G. Danzer	Rev. Nevin Beehler
Rev. A. Trauger	Rev. James Ritter
Rev. Charles R. Lichty	Lorraine Kuhns
Rev. Raymond Kilpatrick	Rev. Richard Bodey
Rev. James Beltz	Rev. Donald Hammond
Rev. Herbert H. Dech	Rev. Robert Stahl
Rev. Earl Dimmick	Rev. Daniel Pense
Rev. Albert L. Barnhart	Gary Hammond
Rev. Raymond Steinhart	Rev. Steven Pense
Rev. Albert Freeman	

US Flag had 44 stars in 1895



In 1895



The membership was 235. The Sunday School had an enrollment of 221 with an average attendance of 157. The Women's Missionary Society had 26 members and raised \$20.00 for Missions. The Pastor's salary was \$600.00.

Main Street looked like this:



A Brief History of the Lord's Work at Emmanuel

Compiled 2015 by Matthew Spengler

