

**Baltimore City  
Commission for Historical and  
Architectural Preservation**

**Landmark Designation Report  
April 11, 2017**



**Our Saviour Lutheran Church**

3301 The Alameda  
Baltimore, Maryland



COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

ERIC HOLCOMB, *Executive Director*

Charles L. Benton, Jr. Building 417 East Fayette Street Eighth Floor Baltimore, MD 21202-3416  
410-396-4866



CATHERINE E. PUGH  
*Mayor*



THOMAS J. STOSUR  
*Director*

## **Significance Summary**

The church is significant for its architecture and for its role in Baltimore City history. This church building was constructed in 1930 for the congregation of Our Saviour Lutheran Church. This church was one of the earliest English-speaking Lutheran congregations established in the city in 1892. Originally located in East Baltimore, the congregation moved to this site in 1920. This structure was designed by the firm of Frohmann, Robb, and Little, who designed many ecclesiastical structures, including the Washington National Cathedral and Baltimore's Cathedral of the Incarnation. The church is an excellent example of the Gothic Revival architectural style.

This congregation served the needs of their congregants, but also the needs of their community. This church opened a non-denominational Sunday School for children and young adults with intellectual disabilities in 1951, and was one of the eight churches of Homestead-Coldstream Churches Inc., which investigated and fought block-busting and racially-discriminatory real estate practices in their community in the 1960s and 1970s, resulting in investigation of these practices.

In 1973, this congregation merged with another historic Lutheran congregation, that of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, located at 1901 Druid Hill Ave. This congregation was founded in Baltimore in 1929 by a group of African-American Lutherans who moved from rural Meherrin, Virginia to Baltimore in the first wave of the Great Migration. The core of this church was comprised of members from the African-American St. Matthews Lutheran Church in Meherrin, founded in 1883. In 1971, Baltimore's St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, facing an impending loss of their church building due to urban renewal plans, decided that they wanted to merge with another congregation, particularly a white Lutheran congregation that wanted an integrated congregation. Mergers between predominantly white and a predominantly African-American congregations are highly uncommon, and this merger set a precedent in Baltimore and in the Lutheran Church's Missouri Synod. Today, the congregation is still thriving and serving its congregation and community at large.

## **History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Saviour (1892-1973)**

Our Saviour Lutheran Church was originally founded as Jackson Square Evangelical Lutheran Church in March 1892. It was founded by 12 charter members who wanted to create an English-speaking Lutheran church, born out of German-speaking Immanuel Lutheran Church. The congregation first held its services at Immanuel Lutheran Church, until it purchased and renovated the former Jackson Square Centenary Methodist Congregation church and parsonage later that year. This church is located at 1721 E. Fairmont Ave., the southeast corner of the intersection of Fairmount Avenue and Irvin Place in the Washington Hill neighborhood in East Baltimore. The church once faced Jackson Square (alternatively referred to as Jackson Place), which is now gone. After making improvements to the building, the church was dedicated as the

Jackson Square Evangelical Lutheran Church on August 7, 1892.<sup>1</sup> A Sunday School was founded in the autumn of the same year.

In July 1902, the rear of the church was destroyed by a severe windstorm.<sup>2</sup> The congregation raised funds for repairs, and the church was rededicated in March 1903. Architect Joseph Evans Sperry designed the reconstructed rear of the church.<sup>3</sup> By 1911, the congregation had grown to 345 members.<sup>4</sup> In 1912, the church hosted the “First Convention of the English District”, a national meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Church’s Missouri-Ohio Synod. This was a great honor, and the church was renovated and refurnished prior to this event.<sup>5</sup> By the 1910s, many members of the congregation were moving out of the neighborhood, and so the congregation as a whole decided to move to another part of the city. Because their church name was tied to Jackson Square, they chose to rename the congregation “The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Saviour”. The church held a farewell service on June 8, 1919, but continued to hold services in the Sunday School rooms until December 1919, and then held services at Immanuel Church until mid-May 1920. The congregation sold their church in Jackson Square to the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church, which has occupied the building ever since.<sup>6</sup>

The congregation of Our Saviour Church purchased its present site at 33rd Street and The Alameda from the Frank Novak Realty Company in 1919, and constructed a frame chapel that seated 200.<sup>7</sup> At that time, the area was largely undeveloped, and the congregation considered their new site a “wilderness.” In the congregation’s *50th Anniversary History*, it states that “prevailing conditions had dictated the choice of building materials”, which likely referred to the limitations of building materials during and immediately following World War I. This chapel was dedicated on May 16, 1920.<sup>8</sup> A fire on August 8, 1921 burned the rear half of the chapel, destroying the Sunday School and the pipe organ that the congregation had brought with them from their first church.<sup>9</sup> The congregation worshipped in a neighborhood church until the chapel repairs were completed in October 1923.<sup>10</sup>

The congregation determined that they needed a more durable edifice. In December 1922, the congregation announced that they were seeking bids from contractors for construction of a stone church designed by architect J. A. Dempwolf, of York, PA.<sup>11</sup>

It seems that Rev. Stiemke’s arrival as pastor in 1924 was the impetus for a change in direction for the church construction, because the plans for new church changed drastically in just a few short years.<sup>12</sup> In June 1927, initial sketches and preliminary drawings were accepted from the architecture firm of Frohman, Robb, and Little, which had offices in Washington, D.C. and Boston. Edward A. Wehr of Pittsburgh was chosen as the general contractor.<sup>13</sup> Both the architect Donald Robb and contractor Edward Wehr were natives of Baltimore. The Church building committee stated that because both Robb and Wehr were from Baltimore, they “took a special interest in seeing that The Church of Our Saviour should include personal touches of refinement

and care in execution.”<sup>14</sup> The building committee chose the architecture firm based on their excellent body of work, including the Washington Cathedral. In 1965, the program for the building’s 35th anniversary stated that “Our church’s design has received many laudatory comments that have reached across the seas. The Church of Our Saviour is still known as one of the finest small churches in America.”<sup>15</sup> The contractor, Edward A. Wehr, was a Baltimore native who established himself in Pittsburgh, but had contracts across the country, including in New York City and Cleveland. He specialized in ecclesiastical construction. Wehr was well-regarded in the construction field, serving as President of the Master Builders’ Association, and as a member of the Pittsburgh Builders’ Exchange.<sup>16</sup>

Ground broke on November 25, 1928, and the cornerstone for the present building at Thirty-third Street and The Alameda was laid in a ceremony on August 4, 1929.<sup>17</sup> It was dedicated on September 7, 1930.<sup>18</sup> The eighteen carillon bells were donated by John and Alma Wever in 1934.<sup>19</sup> An annual tradition began just a year later when the Naval Academy had a game at Memorial Stadium, further west on 33rd St. Apparently several young men from the neighborhood had entered the Naval Academy, and their parents asked Rev. Stiemke to play the bells as the midshipmen marched down 33rd St. to the stadium before the game. As the Sun article states, “Not a man to do a thing by halves, the Rev. A. J. Stiemke, pastor of Our Saviour, decided that the parents had an excellent idea there--and decided as well that ‘Anchors Aweigh’ [the fight song for the Naval Academy] would do justice to the occasion.”<sup>20</sup>

In 1942, the congregation celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, at which the first four pastors of the church participated: Rev. William Dallmann, pastor at the time of the church founding in 1892, Rev. Dr. Henry Bernard Hemmeter, pastor from 1892-1895, Rev. Oscar Martin Kaiser, pastor from 1895-1910, and Rev. Theodore Christian Sorge, pastor from 1910-1924.<sup>21</sup>

The pastor at the time of 50th Anniversary was Rev. Adolph John Stiemke, who became pastor in 1924.<sup>22</sup> Rev. Stiemke served as pastor from 1924-1961, and then as pastor emeritus until his death in 1967. Rev. Stiemke was “instrumental in the planning and building of the present Our Saviour Lutheran church structure”, was also responsible for planning the sequence of the stained glass windows installed after World War II, and establishing a scholarship fund for students interested in joining the ministry.<sup>23</sup>

Two decades after opening its new church, the congregation had grown in numbers and expanded its activities. It had a robust Sunday School, and in 1951, the church opened the first Sunday School class for children and young adults with intellectual disabilities. Organized by a congregant who had a child with intellectual disabilities, the Sunday School was run through the Lutheran Mission Society, and was open to anyone with intellectual disabilities, regardless of faith. It was the first Sunday School for people with intellectual disabilities in Baltimore.<sup>24</sup> Former Church Council President and current Church Council Board member Judy Volkman

was involved with the Sunday School in the 1960s because her son had a disability.<sup>25</sup> Other church groups included the Junior Walther League and Senior Walther League, the Women's Guild, and the Choir and Junior Choir.<sup>26</sup>

The ground breaking for the Parish Activities Building was in October 1957, and the building was dedicated in June 1958.<sup>27</sup> This addition to the church was designed by architect Howard G. Hall of Baltimore, the contractor was J.H. Williams, and the building cost \$178,360.<sup>28</sup>

Working with other neighborhood churches and organizations, Our Saviour helped develop a community health facility, child care center, and an investigation in the buying and selling of housing in the neighborhood.<sup>29</sup> Our Saviour was one of eight churches in Ednor Gardens-Lakeside and the adjoining neighborhood of Coldstream Homestead Montebello that banded together to fight block-busting in their communities in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>30</sup> The group, Homestead-Montebello Churches, Inc., working with community partners, were "resolute in their determination to expose instances of unlawful real property schemes, and to assist those residents so victimized by seeking redress of their losses to the fullest extent of all available remedies at law."<sup>31</sup> This group of churches pooled their money together and hired Vincent Quayle, then a Jesuit seminarian, to investigate the predatory real estate practices in the area.<sup>32</sup> Quayle later went on to found and be the long-running Executive Director of St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center.

The churches were so mobilized because their neighborhoods were changing very quickly at the hands of realtors that were block-busting, that is, buying properties from white people for cheap due to fears of an influx of African-Americans, and then selling to African-Americans for significantly higher prices and often with financially-predatory lending terms. The opening lines of a 1969 *Sun* article about block-busting in Baltimore stated "Between April, 1965, and July, 1966, a well-known Baltimore real estate speculator bought 25 row houses from white people along two blocks of the Alameda south of 33d street and sold or rented them to Negroes. Typical among the houses was one that was bought for \$6,500 and sold two months later for \$11,950."<sup>33</sup> Between 1964 and 1970, this neighborhood rapidly shifted from a white community to majority African-American community, and churches in the community closed or were on shaky financial ground as their congregants moved away.<sup>34</sup> Rev. Quayle and a fellow Jesuit, Rev. John Martin, conducted a study of the house sales in the neighborhood, finding that at least a third of the houses in the neighborhood were "bought cheaply from panicky whites and sold dearly to Negroes by speculators, who often arranged terms at exorbitant rates for persons unable to call on banks."<sup>35</sup> In a 1969 *Sun* article, Rev. Quayle blamed two realtors who "single-handedly changed the neighborhood" of Coldstream Homestead Montebello between E. 33rd St. to the north, E. 28th St. to the south, the Alameda to the west, and Hillen Road to the east.<sup>36</sup> According to Mike Dausch, former Church Council President for Our Saviour Lutheran Church, it was realtor Morris Goldseker that was block-busting in Coldstream Homestead Montebello.<sup>37</sup>

In February 1969, thanks to the efforts of fair-housing advocates, Homestead-Montebello Churches Inc., and others, the U.S. Justice Department initiated an investigation into block-busting practices in Baltimore, which were made illegal under the 1968 Civil Rights Act. The Act took effect January 1, 1969, meaning that the Justice Department began its investigation into block-busting in Baltimore merely a month after it had the authority to do so.<sup>38</sup> Our Saviour stayed involved in these efforts and in October 1972, it hosted a meeting for City housing officials, including Housing Commissioner Robert Embry, Jr. and neighborhood groups on the topic of racial “steering” practices.<sup>39</sup> Our Saviour Lutheran Church’s activism regarding block-busting and racially-discriminatory housing practices in the 1960s and early 1970s really set the groundwork for their decision to merge with an African-American Lutheran congregation.

### **History of Saint Matthew Lutheran Church (1929-1973)**

Saint Matthew Lutheran Church was founded in Baltimore in April 1929 by a group of African-American Lutherans. It was founded by George Rufus Evans and several others who moved to Baltimore from Meherrin, a very small community in rural central Virginia, as part of the first wave of what would later be recognized as the Great Migration. Mike Dausch, Church Council President of Our Saviour at the time of the merger, stated that people moved up to Baltimore from Meherrin to work in the steel industry starting after WWI and into WWII.<sup>40</sup> George Rufus Evans moved to Baltimore first in 1920, and he originally worshipped at Immanuel Lutheran Church.<sup>41</sup> Once others from his community moved to Baltimore, the small group of families worshipped in their homes, particularly at the home of Ms. Marie Dowdy, before petitioning for a Lutheran Mission.<sup>42</sup>

On February 1, 1930, an article in the *Baltimore Afro-American* announced that Rev. Martin H. Dorpat, pastor of the Lutheran Mission, 1535 N. Patterson Park Avenue, would begin a series of services at the Druid Hill Y.W.C.A. Sunday morning. The Lutheran Mission has recently been established in Baltimore for African-Americans. The article went on to state that “There are at present seventeen members, who were formerly a part of a Meherrin, Virginia congregation, which the Rev. L. G. Dorpat, father of the Baltimore pastor, has charge of. When these members moved to this city and there was no church of the denomination at which they could worship, the elder Dorpat arranged the mission here and placed his son in charge. These two ministers, father and son, are the only white Lutheran pastors who devote their entire time to race missions.”<sup>43</sup> This congregation in Meherrin, named Saint Matthews Lutheran Church, had been established in 1883 by a white Lutheran Missionary, and it was home to a church and school for African-Americans.<sup>44</sup> This church still stands today. Perhaps not surprisingly, this small group of African-American Lutherans named their church in Baltimore after their home church in Meherrin, where they retained close ties, with the congregation of St. Matthew traveling down to Meherrin annually.<sup>45</sup>

Reverend Martin Dorpat helped the congregation in Baltimore secure an assembly room in the second floor of the Druid Hill YMCA to worship. The church grew slowly in the first few years. The main members in 1930 were Moses Doswell, George Rufus Evans, Henry Dowdy, Carrington March, Marie Dowdy, Georgia March, Rachel Dowdy, and nine children.<sup>46</sup> Interestingly, Carrington March was not from Meherrin, and was a Reverend in the Lutheran Church. In the 1920s, he served as the pastor for St. Philip's Evangelical Lutheran Church in East Baltimore, which was the first African-American Lutheran Church in Baltimore, founded in the 1890s.<sup>47</sup> However, March was one of the founding members of Saint Matthew Lutheran Church, and obviously retained close ties to St. Matthews, as this is where his funeral was held in 1964.<sup>48</sup> Carrington's son, William C. March, was also a founding member of the congregation; he later grew up to establish his eponymously-named funeral home, which was the largest African-American-owned funeral home in the country, was a founder of Harbor Bank, and a noted philanthropist.

Saint Matthew grew slowly but gained a larger following in the 1930s, hosting its first baptisms in 1931, the first confirmations in 1932, and forming a choir in 1935 under the leadership of Mrs. Julia Becker, a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church. In 1936, the Church was officially organized. The congregation formed a Ladies Aid Society, a Young People's Society, and a Junior Young People's Society soon after.<sup>49</sup> Due to the growth of the congregation, they needed larger facilities. The Baltimore City Mission Board of the Lutheran Church purchased a building at the corner of Druid Hill Ave. and Robert St. for \$25,000 in 1938.<sup>50</sup> This had previously been the home of a Seventh Day Adventist Church, and was originally constructed as a telephone exchange building for the Maryland Telephone Company.<sup>51</sup> The Women's Auxiliary bought the ground on which the building sat so that they did not have to pay ground rent. The new church was dedicated on July 24, 1938.<sup>52</sup> This building still stands today.

In 1944, the church welcomed an African-American pastor, Rev. Osborn T. Smallwood, of Washington, D.C.<sup>53</sup> On July 25, 1954, the church celebrated its 25th Anniversary, and burned their mortgage, which they had paid off. In April 1966, property was purchased at Eutaw and Whitelock Streets in Reservoir Hill with the intention that a new church would be built there. A service of Praise and Consecration was held on May 15, 1966. But in July 1972, the church returned the property to the Southeastern District of the Lutheran Church.<sup>54</sup> It is not clear why the church did not pursue construction of a new church at that site, but instead, this "small but most loyal" congregation merged with Our Saviour Lutheran Church, and moved to the church at Thirty-Third Street and The Alameda on April 1, 1973.<sup>55</sup>

## **The Merger and Creation of Our Savior Lutheran Church (1973-present)**



On April 1, 1973, the congregations of Our Saviour Lutheran Church and Saint Matthew Lutheran Church merged together. While church mergers are not terribly uncommon, this merger was unique in that it was a merger between a predominantly white and predominantly African-American congregation. This was the first merger of black and white churches in Baltimore City.<sup>56</sup> Press about the merger was quick to point out that the merger was the decision of the congregations, not the pastors or the District officials.<sup>57</sup> Mayor William Donald Schaefer designated April 1, 1973 as “Our Saviour and St. Matthew Lutheran Church Day”, noting that this merger “is an outstanding achievement in a troubled times” and “is a hallmark in human relationships and a true sign of Christian Brotherhood in action.”<sup>58</sup>

For the congregation of St. Matthew, the impetus for a merger stemmed their church being slated for eventual demolition as part of urban renewal plans.<sup>59</sup> Their options were to purchase another building, construct a new building, or merge with another Lutheran congregation in a “changing neighborhood” -that is, a neighborhood that was transitioning from majority white to majority African-American- that would be interested in “instant integration and a joint ministry with a biracial approach.”<sup>60</sup> The President of Our Saviour’s Church Council, Mike Dausch, had read about the decision facing the congregation of St. Matthew in the Lutheran Mission Society newsletter, and shared the possibility of a merger with the members of the Church Council and the Pastor. After much discussion and a very tight vote in favor, the congregation of Our Saviour decided to pursue the merger.<sup>61</sup> In an article about the merger, it was described in this way: “Barriers can be found in most anything. Racial. Tradition. Culture. There are probably barriers involved in the Our Saviour-St. Matthew merger. The headers are so resolved that any and all barriers can be overcome by the love of Christ. This has happened during the five-month talks. It will continue to be the case. It is so determined.”<sup>62</sup>

On the day of the merger, Sunday, April 1, 1973, the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church held their last service in their church at 1901 Druid Hill Ave. The one hundred members then participated in a motorcade that travelled to the Martin Luther statue by Lake Montebello, where they laid flowers in memory of deceased members, and then proceeded to Our Saviour Lutheran Church, where the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church and Our Saviour Lutheran Church worshipped together for the first time.<sup>63</sup> The *Baltimore Afro-American* newspaper article, Judy Volkman and Mike Dausch all relayed the astonishing weather event that occurred during the service. As Mike Dausch recalled in a phone interview, “The church was packed. During that service, it got as black as night, the wind blew like mad, there was rain, hail, on the roof you could hear the hail, and I was wondering if the roof was going to collapse, and then by the end of the service, the sun was shining and there was a rainbow. All in that one hour period.”<sup>64</sup>

Mike Dausch stated that beyond faith and hard work, there were some other reasons why this merger succeeded where others failed. This merger was successful because both congregations were financially sound, both were in the Missouri Synod, and the church was in good shape. Karl

Lutze, a minister at Valparaiso University and president of the Lutheran Human Relations, who advised Dausch on the merger, had warned him other cases of church mergers where the church with a white congregation was not in good financial shape and the building was in poor shape because they had deferred maintenance because they weren't sure if they were going to stay in a neighborhood that experiencing racial change. The result was that when the churches decided to merge and stay in a building, the costs of deferred maintenance were exorbitant. This outcome was not the case for Our Saviour's merged congregation.<sup>65</sup>

When the two congregations merged, both of the pastors from original congregations - Rev. Erwin Prange from St. Matthew and Rev. Robert Metzger from Our Saviour - served the newly merged congregation as co-pastors for a year.<sup>66</sup> The two Church Councils also merged together for one year so that everyone could get to know one another and each other's traditions, after which elections were held for a single, integrated Church Council.<sup>67</sup> The new congregation, named Our Saviour Lutheran Church, had over 400 members, since at the time of the merge, St. Matthew's had 110 members, and Our Saviour had 325.<sup>68</sup>

However, as both Mike Dausch and Judy Volkman confided, the congregation did lose members as a result of the merger.<sup>69</sup> Volkman, a former Church Council President (and first woman President in the Baltimore area for the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod), even remembers people saying at the time of the merger that the church wouldn't survive it, that the site of the church would become a gas station after the merger failed.<sup>70</sup> Dausch recalls people who stayed after the merger, and who decided to join. Dausch recalled an usher from Our Saviour that tendered his resignation immediately following the merger service, but Dausch asked him to stay for a month to teach the usher from St. Matthew about his efficient ushering system. The usher agreed, and stayed for a month, and ended up not leaving the congregation, dying a member years later. He also recalled that African-American civic and civil rights leader Raymond Haysbert, who was then the CEO of Parks Sausage, sent his children to Sunday School at Our Saviour before the merger, but that he and his wife didn't attend themselves. But they joined the congregation after the merger, saying "I know you said that all people were welcome, but until the merger, I didn't believe it."<sup>71</sup>

Since the merger in 1973, the church of Our Saviour Lutheran has continued to serve its congregation and the surrounding community. Judy Volkman recalls the ecumenical "Friday School" that the church ran in the 1970s and 1980s. The church was open to children in the surrounding community, and the kids would participate in activities, be tutored in reading, and have a meal. Some of these students did join the church, and Volkman will occasionally see these children – now adults – in the neighborhood today.<sup>72</sup>

Today, the congregation is largely comprised of older adults, most of whom commute to the church, but they are active ministering to their neighborhood and to their members. Judy

Volkman ascribes the long-term success of Our Saviour Lutheran Church to the fact that there is a core group of people who believe that it is important that they are at the corner of the Alameda and 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, ministering to the surrounding community.<sup>73</sup>

## **Architecture**

The Gothic Revival stone church was designed by Frohmann, Robb, and Little. This firm also designed the National Cathedral and in Baltimore, the Episcopal Cathedral of the Incarnation on University Parkway.<sup>74</sup> When it was constructed, the church had a seating capacity for 400 people.<sup>75</sup> “The structure, which has already received many favorable comments because of its splendid lines and pleasing effect, is one of the first in America to combine the architecture of the Early English and the Norman periods. It has been built with the thought of permanency and the incorporation in it of a true devotional atmosphere.” An article in Baltimore *Shopper’s Guide* noted “Of special interest, because of its excellent conformity with the architectural motif, is the wrought iron hardware of the church. This was made by Samuel Yellin, a Philadelphia craftsman.”<sup>76</sup>

The 18 bells in the bell tower were a gift by two members of the congregation, John and Alma Wever.<sup>77</sup> The bells were the largest set of carillon bells in Maryland and the largest set cast in an American foundry.<sup>78</sup> The bells were cast by the McShane Bell Foundry in Baltimore.<sup>79</sup> The bells have the same range as a human voice and are fully chromatic.<sup>80</sup> The bells weigh between 500 and 3,000 pounds, and each have lengthy inscriptions on them with both Bible verses and dedications.<sup>81</sup>

The stained glass windows were made by the Willett Stained Glass Company in Philadelphia.<sup>82</sup> On October 28, 1941, the chancel windows were dedicated in a service. On December 4, 1949, the chancel windows were dedicated in a ceremony. On June 10, 1962, there was a dedication service for the tower windows.

## **Application of Landmark Designation Criteria**

The property meets CHAP Landmark Designation Standards:

B. A Baltimore City Landmark may be a site, structure, landscape, building (or portion thereof), place, work of art, or other object which:

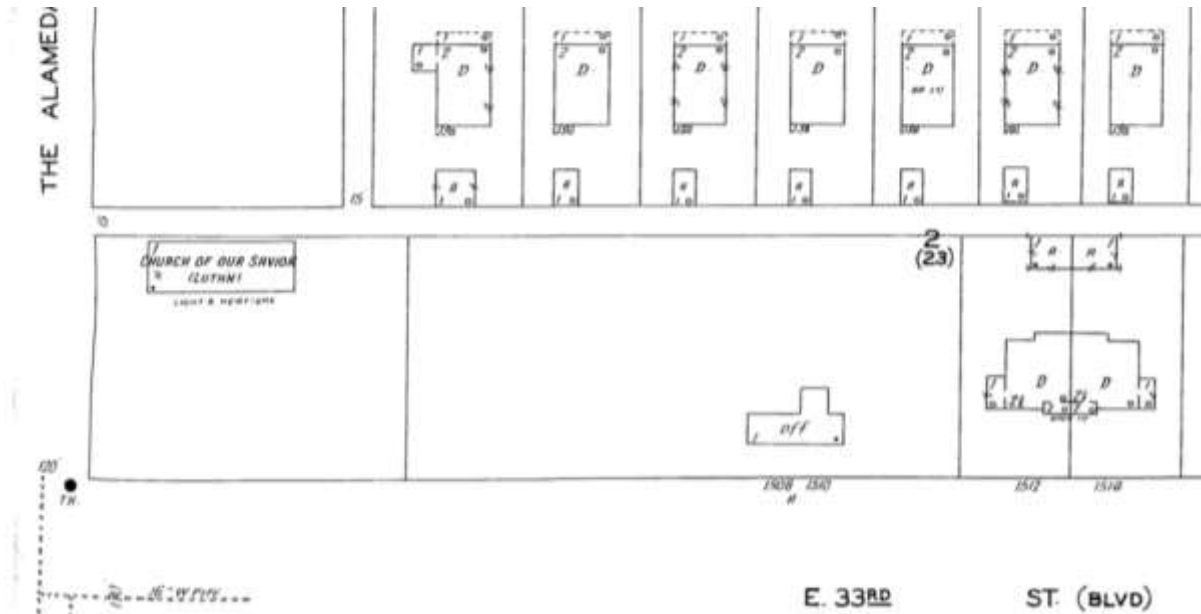
1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history;
3. That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The church is significant for its architecture and for its role in Baltimore City history. This church building was constructed in 1930 for the congregation of Our Saviour Lutheran Church. This church was one of the earliest English-speaking Lutheran congregations established in the city in 1892. Originally located in East Baltimore, the congregation moved to this site in 1920. This structure was designed by the firm of Frohmann, Robb, and Little, who designed many ecclesiastical structures, including the Washington National Cathedral and Baltimore's Cathedral of the Incarnation. The church is an excellent example of the Gothic Revival architectural style.

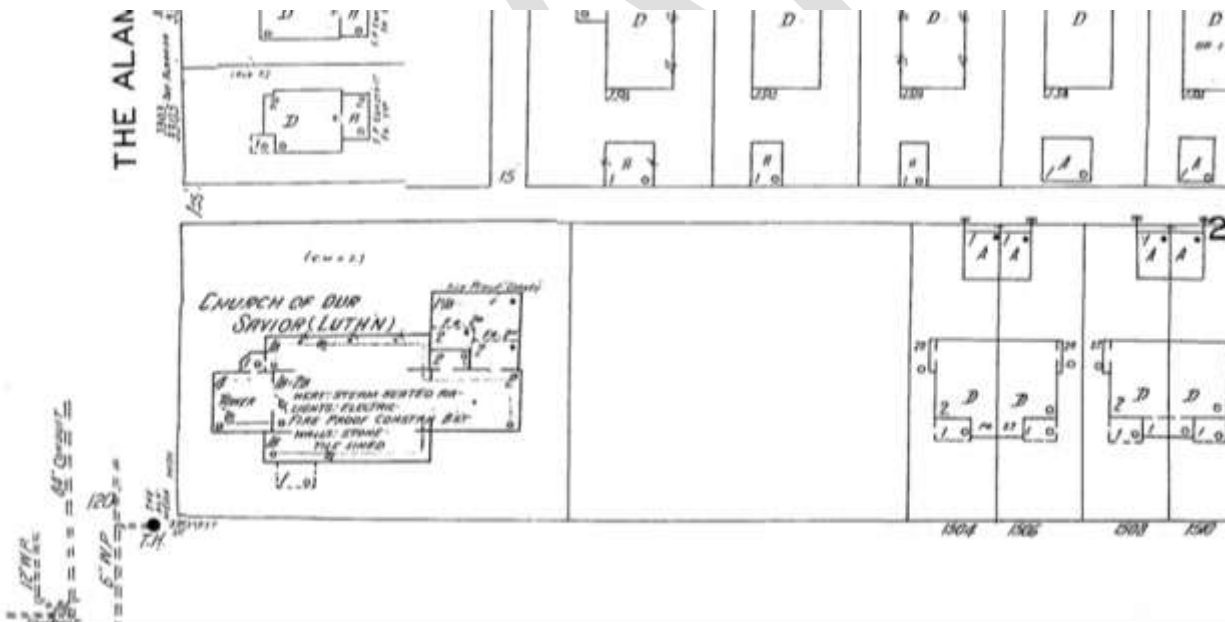
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In 1973, this congregation merged with another historic Lutheran congregation, that of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, located at 1901 Druid Hill Ave. This congregation was founded in Baltimore in 1929 by a group of African-American Lutherans who moved from rural Meherrin, Virginia to Baltimore in the first wave of the Great Migration. The core of this church was comprised of members from the African-American St. Matthews Lutheran Church in Meherrin, founded in 1883. In 1971, Baltimore's St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, facing an impending loss of their church building due to urban renewal plans, decided that they wanted to merge with another congregation, particularly a white Lutheran congregation that wanted an integrated congregation. Mergers between predominantly white and a predominantly African-American congregations are highly uncommon, and this merger set a precedent in Baltimore and in the Lutheran Church's Missouri Synod. Today, the congregation is still thriving and serving its congregation and community at large.

# Maps



This 1928 map shows the one-story frame chapel. (Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1928-1936, Volume 7, 1928, Sheet 753).



This 1951 map illustrates the church prior to its 1957 addition. (Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1914-1951, Volume 7, March 1951, Sheet 753)

## Historic Images



Photograph of Our Saviour's wooden chapel at The Alameda and 33<sup>rd</sup> St., constructed in 1920.



CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR - BALTIMORE - MARYLAND  
FRANCIS ROBB & LITTLE ARCHITECTS - BOSTON & WASHINGTON - JUNE 11 1897

Illustration of the church interior.

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- <sup>1</sup> “Historical Sketch of the Church” in Twenty-fifth Anniversary, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*; “CHURCHES ARE HIT: Steeple Of St. Mary’s Star Of The Sea Must Come ...” *The Sun* (1837-1991); Jul 21, 1902; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun pg. 2)
- <sup>3</sup> “CHURCH TO BE REDEDICATED: Jackson Square English Lutheran Is Also Ten Years Old” *The Sun* (1837-1991); Mar 14, 1903; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun pg. 6
- <sup>4</sup> “CHURCH MARKS ANNIVERSARY” *The Sun* (1837-1991); Mar 13, 1911; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun pg. 7)
- <sup>5</sup> A Half Century for Christ - 1892-1942, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church; “LUTHERANS IN SESSION: Missouri-Ohio Synod Meets At Jackson Square ...” *The Sun* (1837-1991); Jun 27, 1912; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun pg. 9; “LUTHERAN SYNOD CLOSES: Sessions At Jackson Square Church Have Been Important” *The Sun* (1837-1991); Jul 3, 1912; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun pg. 8.
- <sup>6</sup> *History* in “75 Years of Our Savior”, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church
- <sup>7</sup> 85th Anniversary of Our Saviour Lutheran Church; A Half Century for Christ - 1892-1942; on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church
- <sup>8</sup> A Half Century for Christ - 1892-1942; on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church
- <sup>9</sup> 85th Anniversary of Our Saviour Lutheran Church; A Half Century for Christ - 1892-1942; on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church; “2 SPECTACULAR FIRES IN CHURCH AND STABLE: Rear Of Lutheran Structure ...” *The Sun* (1837-1991); Aug 9, 1921; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun pg. 18
- <sup>10</sup> A Half Century for Christ - 1892-1942, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church
- <sup>11</sup> “REAL STATE DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS: Evangelical Lutheran Church Of ...” *The Sun* (1837-1991); Dec 16, 1922; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun pg. 14; *The American Contractor, Vol. 43, No. 32*, August 22, 1922, pg. 43. Accessible as a Google E-book: <https://books.google.com/books?id=KPxYAAAAAYAAJ>
- <sup>12</sup> “LUTHERAN CLERIC DIES AT HIS HOME: Mr. Stiemke Was Retired From Church In 1961” *The Sun* (1837-1991); Jun 17, 1967; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun pg. A12
- <sup>13</sup> A Half Century for Christ - 1892-1942, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church
- <sup>14</sup> The Thirty-fifth Anniversary of the Dedication of the Present Church, September 19, 1965, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church; “CORNERSTONE RITE SET FOR TOMORROW: Rev. A. J. Stiemke To Officiate At ...” *The Sun* (1837-1991); Aug 3, 1929; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun pg. 5; )
- <sup>15</sup> The Thirty-fifth Anniversary of the Dedication of the Present Church, September 19, 1965, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church
- <sup>16</sup> George Thornton Fleming, *History of Pittsburgh and Environs: From Prehistoric Days to the Beginning of the American Revolution, Volume 5*, (New York and Chicago: The American Historical Society), 1922, pg 309. Accessible as a Google E-book.
- <sup>17</sup> A Half Century for Christ - 1892-1942, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church; Program from Corner stone laying ceremony of The Church of Our Saviour Lutheran on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church; “CORNERSTONE RITE SET FOR TOMORROW: Rev. A. J. Stiemke To Officiate At ...”
- <sup>18</sup> 85th Anniversary of Our Saviour Lutheran Church, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church
- <sup>19</sup> Program for the “Dedication Service and Memorial Chime Concerts, May 20-27, 1934”, on file with Our Saviour Lutheran Church
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