



*ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH*

1900 ST. PAUL STREET

CHAP LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

2007

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church is located at 1900 Saint Paul Street within the Old Goucher College National Historic District.

The Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) has the responsibility of recommending to the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore the adoption of ordinances designating districts and landmarks within the limits of the City of Baltimore, having special historical, architectural, educational, cultural, social or community significance, interest, or value as Baltimore City Historic Districts or Landmarks, thereby necessitating their preservation and protection. In making its recommendation, the Commission shall give appropriate consideration to the following standards. In reaching its decision, the Commission shall clearly state which standards have been applied.

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

1. *dates from a particular period having a significant character, interest, or value, as part of the development, heritage, or culture of the City of Baltimore; or*
2. is associated with the life of an outstanding historical person or persons: or
3. is the site of an historic event with a significant effect upon the cultural, political, economic, social, or historic heritage of the City of Baltimore; or
4. *is significant of the architectural period in which it was built and has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, method of construction, or engineering, or is the notable work of a master builder, designer, engineer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or*
5. contributes information of historical, cultural, or social importance relating to the heritage of the community; or
6. has yielded, or may be likely to yield, archeological information important in history or prehistory.

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church meets the following criteria:

1) The congregation of the church dates to 1860 when the original members broke apart from the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church. The current location of the congregation of the church dates to 1898 and remains an important place of worship for many Baltimore residents. St. Mark's is an excellent example of a religious congregation that has contributed to the development, heritage, and culture of Baltimore City.

4) The exterior of St. Mark's is a terrific example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style that was most popular in the late 19th century during its revival period and can be seen in a majority of the blocks surrounding the church. The chief architect of the church was Joseph Evans Sperry, one of the most prominent architects in Baltimore at the time, and the interior of the church was designed by the Tiffany Studios, most renowned for their work in stained glass windows.

ARCHITECTURE

The present St. Mark's Lutheran Church was designed in the style of early Christian architecture known as Romanesque. This was the prevalent type of architecture in Europe following the fall of the Roman Empire (476 AD) to the beginning of the Gothic period (late 12th century). The architect, Joseph Evans Sperry, drew inspiration for the church by visiting Europe and touring many of its finest churches, most notably the St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, Italy.

Joseph Evans Sperry's most notable projects prior to St. Mark's included the construction of the Church of St. Michael & All Angels (across from St. Mark's, the Mercantile Safe Deposit and Trust Company, the Oheb Shalom Synagogue, and the Brewer's Exchange. He also renovated the Masonic Temple and the First Unitarian Church. Sperry had already established himself as one of the most prominent architects in Baltimore at the time. After the construction of St. Mark's, Sperry added to his resume by building the Provident Savings Bank and, perhaps the most recognizable landmark in Baltimore, the Bromo-Seltzer Tower.



(St. Mark's in 1899, NE corner view)

In St. Mark's, Sperry included numerous distinguishable characteristics of the Romanesque style commonly referred to as Richardsonian Romanesque:

- Massive stone walls (throughout)
- Dramatic semicircular arches (seen on the north side over the stained glass windows, and the east side over the two massive oak doors that lead into the church, over the columns of the arcade that lead into the Sunday School building, and over the first-floor windows and door of the parsonage, and on all four sides of the top of the tower)
- Sculptured shapes in stone that give individuality to the building (three circular designs sculptured into the north side, two circular designs sculptured into the east side on the face of the Sunday School building)

- Heaviness was the ever-present characteristic of the style, emphasized by:
 - Stone construction (throughout)
 - Deep windows (throughout)
 - Cavernous recessed door openings (throughout)
 - Bands of windows (on the first-floor of the east side of the church face)
- Contrasting color or texture of stone (throughout)
- Short, robust columns (seen on the north side in the stained glass windows, the east side in the first-floor windows of the church, the entrance to the arcade in the Sunday School building, and on all four sides of the top of the tower)
- Single tower (towers occur in about 75 percent of Richardson's buildings)



(St. Mark's in 2007, NE corner view)



*(Parsonage and Sunday School with Tower and Church in background, SE side view)
(Façade of Church Building with Rose windows above, NE side view)*

HISTORY

Prior to 1860

Lutheranism as a movement is relatively young compared to other Christian congregations. The work of Martin Luther, a German priest who sought to reform the practices of the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century, was the initial beginning and namesake of Lutheranism. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted an open invitation to debate his 95 theses concerning the idea that time in purgatory could be reduced by making donations to the church. Over the next few years, Luther sparked a religious war throughout Europe as he and his followers began a large exodus from the Roman Catholic Church. Today, more than eighty million people call themselves Lutheran (about four percent of all Christians).

The first congregation of the Lutheran Church in Baltimore was organized about 1750. In its early years the congregation shared a church with the German Reformed congregation and in 1762 built its first church. In 1808, a block south of the original church, a new church was built and the new Zion Church had been consecrated. Until 1823, Zion Church was the only Lutheran Church in Baltimore. In that year, the First English Lutheran Church held its first meeting. The church began with only twenty-eight members however by the 1840's it had grown large enough to endure the separation of three organizations from the mother church. The Second and Third English Evangelical Lutheran Churches held their first meetings in 1842, and St. Mark's was organized in 1860.

1860-1898

In June 1860 Rev. John G. Morris retired after 33 years of service to the First English Lutheran Church. Two men were the principal candidates to succeed Rev. Morris. Dr. John McCron of Baltimore and Dr. Theophilus Stork of Philadelphia competed, and though Dr. McCron had won the majority of the votes he was unable to attain the two-thirds vote required by the Church Constitution. After a prolonged struggle, Dr. McCron was named the successor to Rev. Morris. On October 23, 1860, more than 100 members of the First English Lutheran Church organized a new church, St. Mark's Evangelical English Lutheran Church, and Dr. Stork was invited to become Pastor of the new congregation. A Provisional Church Council was appointed and they immediately rented the Third Presbyterian building on Eutaw Street, between Saratoga and Mulberry Streets, for \$30 per month. The only stipulation was that these two congregations would share the building. St. Mark's held its first service on November 4, 1860.

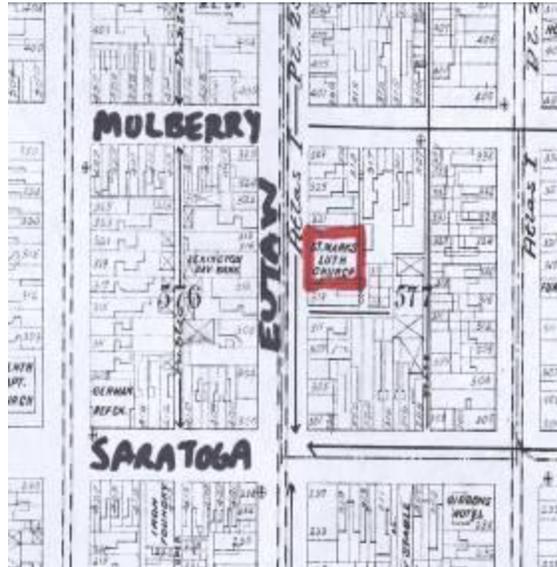
St. Mark's purchased their rented space outright in February 1861 for \$10,500. Repairs were immediately made and paid in full by St. Mark's and the church was reopened one month later. Due to his failing health, Dr. Stork resigned on May 25, 1865 and his son was elected pastor after having served as his father's assistant for three years. Rev. Charles A. Stork began his service on July 1, 1865.

Under Rev. Charles A. Stork the church continued to grow and donated money to numerous causes, including the provision of money for the construction of a new St. Mark's Church in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1873 the church was completely remodeled at a cost of \$21,000 and the church assembled at the Masonic Temple until the remodeling was completed. Two service groups were organized under Rev. Stork, the Young People's Society and the Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society which

provided assistance to the youth and female populations of Baltimore. Rev. Stork resigned in September 1881 and Dr. Charles S. Albert performed his first service on November 5, 1881.



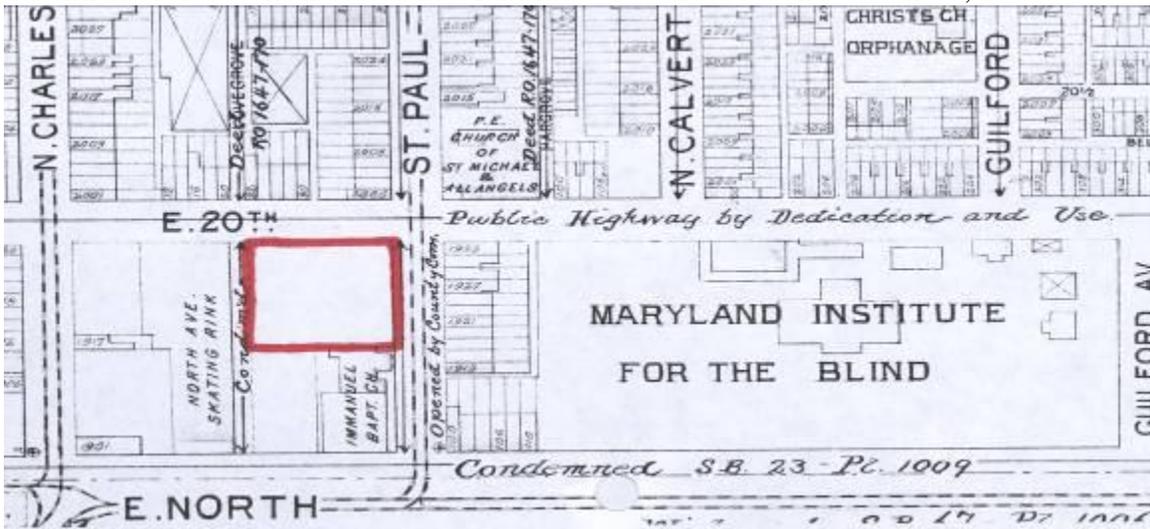
(Old Eutaw Street Church, 1873)



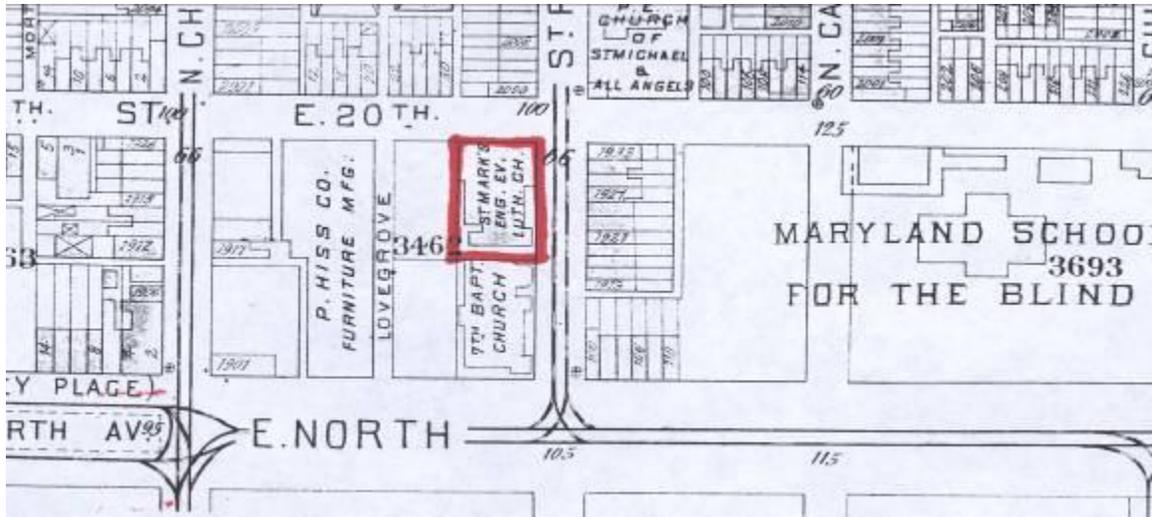
(Location on Eutaw Street, 1896)

The first issue of St. Mark's Quarterly was printed in September 1887 making it the only church paper circulating in Baltimore. This publication was continued until 1934. Dr. Albert was the first to mention a change of location for St. Mark's, noting the growing number of parishioners and the shift of Baltimore's residents further north in the city. The St. John's Circle, King's Daughters, and the Whatsoever Mission Band were organized under Rev. Albert. He resigned on November 26, 1893.

Rev. William H. Dunbar was chosen the new pastor on February 28, 1894. Rev. Dunbar oversaw the congregational meeting on November 20, 1895 where a vote was made to move the church to a new location. Due to the rapid growth of the congregation, a more modern and spacious building was needed. The present site of St. Mark's was purchased on October 16, 1896 for \$18,000 and the cornerstone was laid in the next year. The final service at the Eutaw Street location was conducted on October 30, 1898.



(Location on St. Paul Street, 1896)

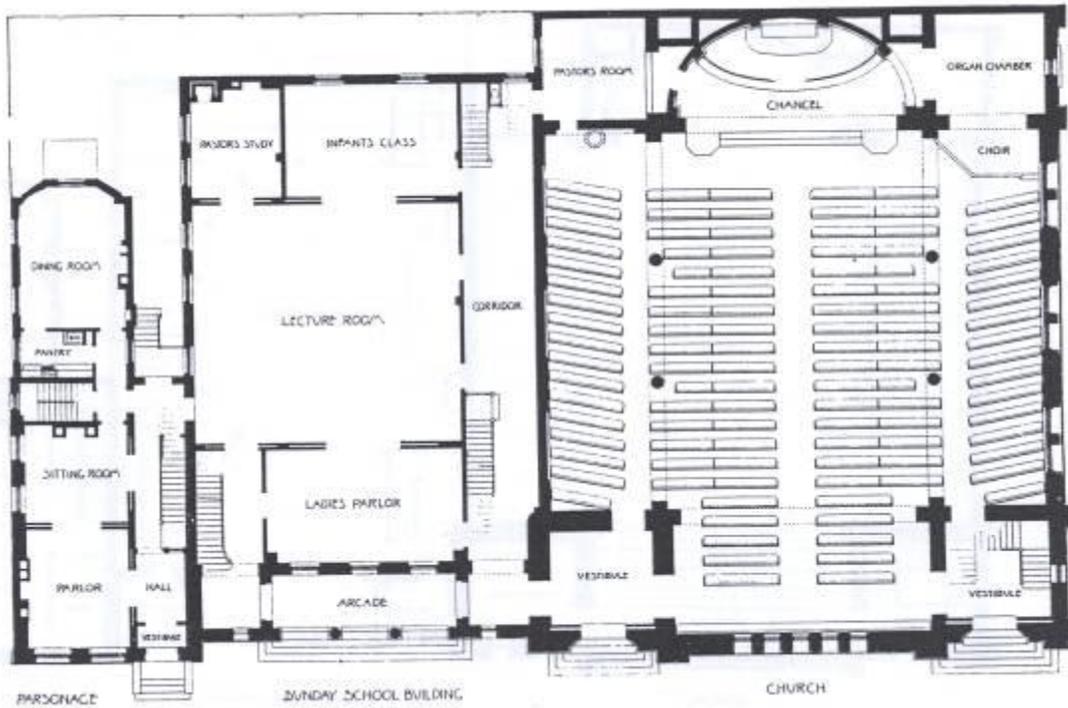


(Location on St. Paul Street, 1906)

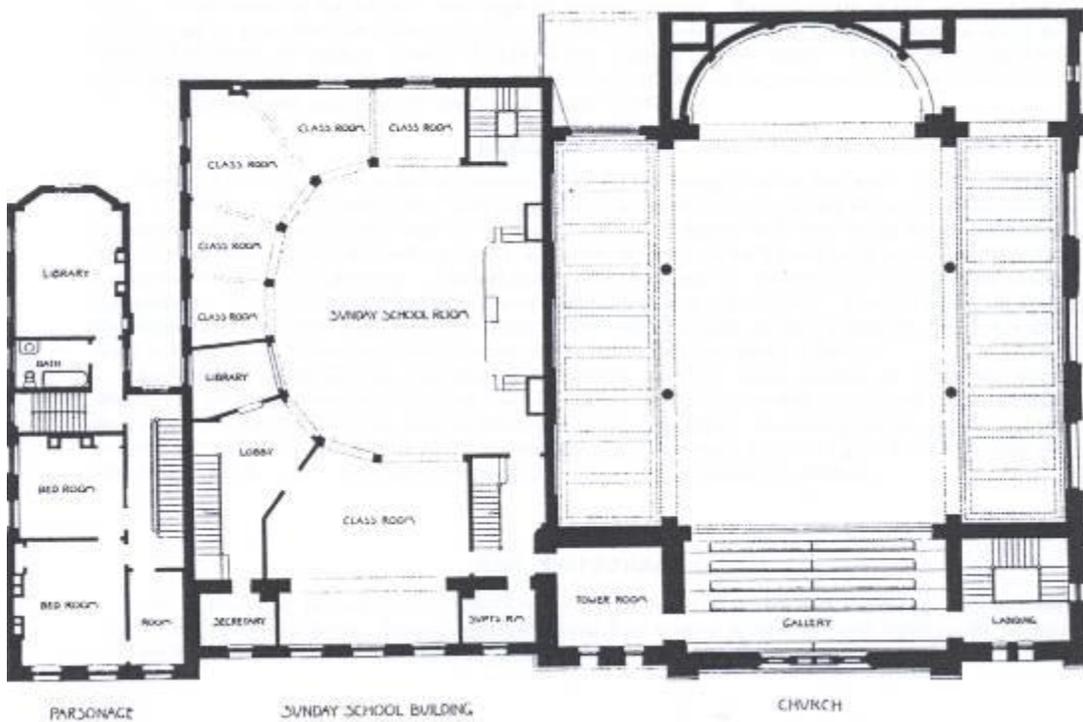
The new St. Mark's church was dedicated on November 6, 1898 and it included a spacious church, Sunday school rooms, and parsonage quarters at a cost of about \$110,000.

INTERIOR FLOORPLANS

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The interior design of St. Mark's is patterned after the very earliest of Christian architecture, which drew its inspiration from the Roman basilica or court house. The simplicity of the basilica plan: the round apse, the rectangular hall with beam and narthex, the flat ceiling, is in marked contrast to the complex forms of medieval churches. This emphasis on classical horizontality, plus the square bell tower and the portico of the adjoining Sunday School Building are reminiscent of the early Romanesque churches of northern Italy.

Church

To create the spectacular interior of the church, the building committee of St. Mark's hired Louis Tiffany and his Tiffany Studios to decorate the interior of the church. Tiffany was the son of Charles Tiffany, the founder of Tiffany and Company. Louis Tiffany, with the help of his father's money and connections, led his initial glassmaking business to thrive. His first business was broken up in 1885 when Tiffany wished to concentrate on art in glass. He eventually was able to offer more than 5,000 colors and varieties of glass. Other innovations included layering to add depth, using glass wrapped in copper foil to detail lines in flowers and foliage, and using lead to emphasize architectural lines. The Tiffany Glass Company mainly made stained glass windows and "Tiffany" lamps, but the company also designed a complete range of interior decorations. At its peak, his factory employed more than 300 artisans. The company flourished throughout the early part of the 20th century, however the Tiffany Studios closed in 1932 shortly after the great crash of the stock market.

Louis Tiffany assigned one of his chief artists, Rene T. de Quelin, to head the St. Mark's project. The style de Quelin followed for the interior was clearly Byzantine, a type of art developed in eastern Europe in the early years of the Christian era. Byzantine art made wide use of deep, rich colors, achieving much of the effect with glass mosaics and jewels. Green, blue, red, gold, and white were prominent colors in the 4th, 5th, and 6th centuries and are heavily used throughout St. Mark's interior. These colors represent:

Green- the color of nature in her most beautiful season, symbolic of the Christian life

Blue- the color of the sky, symbolic of infinity

Red- the color of blood and fire, symbolic of the redeeming sacrifice of Christ and of the perpetuating fire of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church

Gold- the color of crowns, symbolic of the Kingdom and of the Church Triumphant

White- the color of purity, symbolic of the pure life of Christ and his Gospel

The predominant emblem of decoration is the Cross, signifying the supreme sacrifice of Christ for mankind. With 40 Latin or Roman crosses and more than 2,500 Greek crosses, it is quite difficult to notice this powerful symbol.

The apse is round-arched with a semi-dome ceiling. Pilasters supporting arches above encompass the apse, which is 28 feet wide and 35 feet high. The altar is made of Rubio marble and inlaid with gold and mother of pearl, as are the pulpit, the lectern, and the baptismal font. These were all made by J. and R. Lamb of New York City (frequent collaborators of Tiffany's).



(Apse of St. Mark's, w/ the altar directly in the center)

In the mosaic panel above the altar is a Latin cross, studded with large uncut opals from the arms of which are suspended the Greek letters Alpha and Omega. This form of the cross was used by the early Christians as the secret sign of their faith.

In the center of the chancel frieze above the cross is a symbol in relief of the Holy Trinity that when translated means Father, Son, Spirit, God. In the lunettes to the left are an anchor (symbol of hope) and a lamb bearing a banner (symbol of Christ victorious over death and the devil). In the lunette to the right are the heart and cross (symbol of charity and the cross of Martin Luther).

In the spandrels to the left are the peacock (symbol of immortality), the crossed Greek letters X and P (the monogram of our Lord), and a triangle within a circle (symbolizing the Holy Trinity and Eternity). In the spandrels to the right are the monogram I.H.S. (translated from Latin means Jesus Savior of Men), the Dove (symbol of the Holy Spirit), and the candle (symbol of the light of the world). In the center of each spandrel is the double-edged sword (symbol of the Holy Scripture).

The four pilasters with their richly ornamented Byzantine capitals are symbolic of the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, while the arches they support symbolize aspiration and hope.

The church's stained glass windows are the masterpieces of the entire decoration. The Good Shepherd windows, the Resurrection of Our Lord windows, the rose window above the balcony, and the lunette window above the sacristy door were all designed by the Tiffany Company. The rose window above the balcony is the most interesting because of its symbolism, a large circular window divided by a Greek cross and surrounded by 12 smaller windows, meant to represent Christ surrounded by his disciples. For some unknown reason, the Medallion window near the organ was not made by Tiffany, but by Joseph Lauber of Baltimore.



(The Resurrection of Our Lord windows)

(The Good Shepherd windows)



(The Rose windows above the balcony)

The clerestory above the columns on both the left and right sides of the church are richly colored and decorated with a large gold cross in the center of each spandrel. Gas lines used to rise to the clerestory level where they would feed long lines of gas lights primarily used during the early 20th century.



(The clerestory with Medallion windows and Good Shepard windows in background)

The organ is visible in the background of the above picture of the clerestory. When St. Mark's was built in 1898, they did not purchase a new organ. Instead they transferred the organ from their Eutaw Street location and installed that in the new church. This organ lasted until 1922 when a new organ was installed. This instrument was a product of M.P. Moller from Hagerstown, Maryland. The organ was rebuilt on numerous occasions with a modern mechanism installed in 1948. The Trumpet-en-Chamade (additional pipes) were built in 1960 and installed under the Rose windows in the balcony. The organ was just recently replaced a few years ago, however many of the old pipes dating to the original Moller organ are still used.



(Portion of the organ's pipes)

LIST OF PASTORS

1. Rev. Theophilus Stork	1860-1865
2. Rev. Charles A. Stork	1865-1881
3. Rev. Charles S. Albert	1881-1893
4. Rev. W. H. Dunbar	1894-1917
5. Rev. Robert D. Clare	1918-1948
6. Rev. Paul H. Smith	1948-1958
7. Rev. John Yost Jr.	1959-1971
8. Rev. Peter Nodyne	1971-1979
9. Rev. Bryce Shoemaker	1981-1987
10. Rev. Dale Dusman	1985-Present



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)