

*“Had you stood on the public square in the year 1802, you would have been on the summit of a pleasant hill sloping gently in all directions; also, you would have been standing in a virgin forest of stately oaks. In that year some settlers looking for new frontiers settled on this spot and thus began our village of Columbiana.”*

(Taken from the dedication booklet compiled in 1952.)

### **In the Beginning**

The founding of Columbiana was in 1805 by Joshua Dixon, when he first laid out the village. That same year, the ministerial organization of Pennsylvania sent a missionary, John Stough, to the Ohio country, where he settled in Columbiana County. Around 1806 Reverend John Stough became the first clergyman licensed to perform weddings in Columbiana County. In 1812, all territory west of the mountains was designated the Western Conference of the Lutheran Church. The first convention was held in Washington County, PA, with missionary John Stough as the leader. In 1818, the Ohio Synod was organized at Somerset, OH, again with Stough as the leader.

In 1813 a Reformed Missionary, Reverend John Peter Mahnenschmidt came to Columbiana from the East and preached in a small log cabin on the West side of the Public Square – the site of the old Park Hotel. In 1814, the School and Meeting House Society of Columbiana was formed. The only conditions of fellowship [by the various religious groups using the cabin] were “a practical conformity to the principles of impartial equity, and that every member shall be considered as possessing in himself an original and inalienable right to believe and worship God as his own conscience may dictate without being called into question by any other member”. After [what was termed] a forceful sermon by Reverend Mahnenschmidt, the Reformed and Lutheran members decided to build a church of their own. Thus, a church house hewed of logs was constructed on the site of the present-day Grace church. The two groups were separately organized and had their own pastor, elders, and deacons; however, they shared a secretary, treasurer, and a set of trustees. This church was called the “*Jerusalem Church*”.

This house of worship served the two groups until 1866 when the Reformed Church bought the Lutherans’ interest in the building for “\$1,000, if you can raise it”, payable in two installments, while the Lutherans took the name “Jerusalem”. The Jerusalem Lutherans then worshipped in the town hall for six months and thereafter in the old Methodist Church. In 1867, the Lutheran congregation decided to build a church of their own. They erected a brick structure in what was known as the John & Frederick Stivers addition – located at the southern end of the village on South Main Street, on the edge of the wilderness. The first service held in the new church building was in 1868. The church was constructed by Hiram Bell for the price of \$3,100. Many members also worked to help in the construction process. The final payment for the construction was made in 1871. The balance in the church treasury at that time was \$8.93. The church also purchased a bell weighing 800 pounds at a cost of \$360 and an organ for \$350.



In and about 1900, a commodious parsonage was built on the lot immediately south of the church facing South Main Street. By that time, streets had been paved and the surroundings beautified.

### **Threats of Violence**

Two services were held at Jerusalem with one spoken in German and the other in English. During the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, threats were received against the church because of the German Services. The men of the congregation armed themselves and took turns staying in the church at night, patrolling to protect the building. In 1913, it was agreed that the German service would be held in the parsonage on the first

Sunday of each month during the Sunday school hour. German was eventually phased out completely in 1923 with all the services thereafter being held in English.

### **Church Renovation & Addition**

The next 45 years passed swiftly under the leadership of many faithful pastors. In 1913, the members of the congregation, which had slowly and steadily increased in size, decided in a special meeting that their church was too small to accommodate all its members. A building committee was elected to find the ways and means either to enlarge the church or to build a new one. The congregation had 223 communicants and 75 members who were entitled to vote. The Sunday school had a membership of 175.

A north wing was added that doubled the seating capacity while the basement was finished for social and Sunday school purposes. The steeple was removed and a belfry tower built instead. The outside walls were veneered in brick so within and without there was the appearance of a new church.



The bell in the tower was rung by a rope for services. The church was heated by two large coal furnaces. The janitor would get the fires going on Saturday night, bank the coals, and arrive at the church early Sunday morning in order to have the church warm for services. The bell tower, however, was heated with a gas stove where the choir lined up on the steps for the entrance procession. Catechism classes were also held in the bell tower. The cost of improvements was in the vicinity of \$8,000 to \$9,000.

The dedication ceremony was held during a blizzard on March 1, 1914, but was filled to capacity by the many visitors who came from Youngstown, Salem, and surrounding towns. By 1932 more of the basement was excavated. When finished, it provided additional Sunday school rooms and a larger kitchen.

### **The Altar**

The altar was purchased in 1943 and was installed in the front taking the place of the organ pipes. The beautiful hand-carved altar graces the sanctuary and was obtained with funds raised by a very active Luther League. They very conscientiously held fundraisers to earn the money needed to purchase the altar. The costs incurred were: 1) Altar, Last Supper Frieze, and the Statue of Christ, \$504.23; 2) three sets of paraments, \$218.88; and 3) repair of the wall behind the altar, \$9.50. The brass cross was purchased in 1956 at a cost of \$68.59. After these purchases, the altar balance was \$14.52.



The 8' x 3- $\frac{1}{4}$ ' altar consists of five carved spires on each side of a central spire that is topped by a brass star. The spires themselves are highlighted with gold leaf. The central lighted niche, where the statue of Christ stands, is surrounded by four scallops on each side. The lighted Frieze of the Last Supper at the base has two columns on each side.

### **Our Growing Church**

In 1951, the congregation had once again outgrown the building. A new church was built with the groundbreaking held on June 17, 1951. During construction, services were held at the Columbiana High School. On May 16, 1952, the cornerstone laying ceremony was held with Dr. L. Schliesser of Youngstown as the guest speaker. The dedication ceremony was held on November 2, 1952, where Reverend H. C. Osterman, DD, president of the Eastern District of the American Lutheran Church, gave the sermon.

The new stained glass windows added to the church during this renovation included the New Jerusalem Window in the front of the building. The stained glass windows from the old church were placed in what was then the church parlor (today the offices and library/choir room).



In 1967 an addition was made to the building. New classrooms were added for the nursery and kindergarten age children, a new kitchen, and restrooms. A covered entranceway leading from Luther Hall to Hyland Court was added. The parlor was moved to the basement level off of Luther Hall, and the old parlor area was converted to pastor and secretarial offices.

During the time when Reverend Robert Simen was at Jerusalem, the idea of providing in-car speakers for use in an automobile was introduced and approved. The idea came from a member who returned from a vacation in the West and told of the wide use of in-car speakers at numerous churches out there. After an extensive technical study, the Social Concerns committee was able to install a box at the rear of the building. Six speakers were made available to be attached to cars by means of large connecting cables. The system was installed to accommodate those who were physically challenged [temporarily or permanently], for anyone in the community for whatever reason, or for someone who needed to leave before the church service was over.

Some additional improvements made to the church since 1967 include: utilizing the old bell into the sign at the front of the building, adding a carillon that chimes & plays hymns at noon each day, installing a handicap-accessible ramp on the south side of the building [built in memory of Bruce Yarian using funds donated by Harry & Viola Eberhardt and the congregation], and installing a new sound system [in memory of Sarah & Kenneth Tyson by daughter, Shirley].

### **The New Jerusalem Window**

The large front stained glass window facing Main street symbolizes the disciple St. John's vision of a New Jerusalem from Revelation 21, Versus 1 & 2: *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away....I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband."*

The central figure in the window is Christ as the King. He is the dominate figure in the top center lancet and is seated on the throne. The Seven Rivers of Life flow from the feet of Christ. On his head is a crown with seven spires representing the seven churches, and above his head is the Dove of the Holy Spirit. The three golden rays emanating from it symbolize the Triune God. Christ is holding an open book - the "Word of God" - while his right hand is raised in a blessing to all. Beneath his feet in the center is the symbol of Christ, the Lamb, holding a lancet.



St. John is depicted in the bottom portion of the center lancet. He is seated and holding a pen and tablet to write down the Revelation that he received on the Isle of Patmos of the New Jerusalem. The four evangelists - St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John - are written in banners across the four beasts in the top and bottom side lancets.

In the center of the left lancet is an Angel holding a great key and a huge chain with which to bind the dragon lying behind the angel. In the center of the right lancet is the Angel with a golden reed to measure the Holy City. At the feet of the Angel are flames, a symbol of the Pentecost.

The Alpha and Omega symbols are on the two side lancets in the peak with the Tree of Life below them. Across the top of the three lancets are the words *"Glory, Honor, Power"*, which are given to the One who is worthy, the Lamb. At the peak of the window in the tracery lights appear the walls and towers of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, with the word *"Alleluja"* in the streamers that are flowing across the towers. Each tower is topped with the Cross of Christ and around the towers are five-pointed stars, the symbols of Divine Worship. At the bottom of the window is the quotation from Revelation 21:2: *"And I, John, saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, come down from God out of Heaven"*.

The color scheme used in the window is symbolic: red is for Divine Love & Courage; blue is for Truth; gold is for the Goodness of God; green is for new Life & Resurrection; purple is for the Royalty of Christ; and white is for Divine Wisdom.

The New Jerusalem stained glass window was made by the Pittsburgh Art Glass Company. It was given to Jerusalem Lutheran Church by Cora B. Staley in memory of Henry Staley, who served as treasurer for close to 40 years.

### **The Jerusalem Rose Window & Sanctuary (Nave) Windows**

The Rose Window over the altar symbolizes Communion and the forgiveness of sins. The grape vine that twines around the entire window signifies the wine, which is Christ's blood, shed for all. The sheaf of wheat is for the bread, which is Christ's body. The cup at the center is the new covenant (Luke 22:17-20).

The sanctuary windows are different scenes from the life of Christ. The first window on the right when entering the sanctuary (north) is the Bethlehem window, depicting the birth of Christ. It features the scroll, which represents his childhood and his education. The second window depicts the Baptism of Christ. Here we see the descending dove and the three rays of light; these symbols representing the baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Next is the beginning of Christ's ministry symbolized by the water jars, which represent the first miracle at the marriage feast in Cana. The story continues to the third window on the left side of the sanctuary (south). This window depicts Jesus and the Passion during Holy Week. It is symbolized by the pitcher and basin representing the washing of the feet on Holy Thursday. The fourth window shows the cross and crown of thorns symbolizing Calvary. Last of all, is the sun rising over the field representing the Resurrection.

### **Narthex Windows**

The three windows in the narthex symbolize Faith, Hope, and Love (1 Corinthians 13:13). The first window – Faith – is the cross and crown of resurrection, symbolizing that by Faith in the cross of Christ we receive the Crown of everlasting life. The second window – Hope – is the anchor, the symbol of Hope. And the third window – Love – is the open bible, which is the symbol of Love.

### **The Lutheran Emblem and the Latin Cross**

The window in the hall [beside the mailboxes] leading to the pastor and secretarial offices is the Lutheran Emblem. The colors of our Lutheran Ensign are black, red, white, blue, and gold. It is best described as:

We proudly bear as banner a cross within the heart,  
To show that we have chosen Christ the better part.  
Then joy and peace and comfort shall blossom like a rose,  
Until our earthly blessings with worth of heaven disclose.

The window found in the north stairwell depicts the Latin Cross. The window found in the south stairwell (narthex extension) is a symbol of the Church. Here, the church is symbolized by a ship. The church is pictured as a ship that carries Christians over the stormy, troublesome sea of life to the safe haven of eternity.

### **[Former] Library/Choir Room Windows**

The room originally known as the church parlor [but more recently known as the library or choir room] has some very interesting windows. These windows were kept from the original building and installed here after construction of the new church. Looking to the East we see the Lily and Rose of Sharon. These flowers are both symbols of Christ. Then looking to the South are the windows from the old church. One is of the Good Shepherd and the other is of Christ praying in the Garden of Gethsemane.

### **The Baptismal Font, Pulpit & Lectern**

In the minutes from the Mary and Martha class for October 23, 1925, it is noted, "a motion passed that we assume half the cost of a Baptismal Font". On November 27, 1925, it reads, "funds for the font to be raised by holding 'Silver Teas' and raising money by the 'Dollar Day' method. A marble font was suggested, but Reverend Krumm thought one of wood would be better, not because it was cheaper but it would harmonize with the church furniture." Again on February 11, 1926, in the minutes we find, "Baptismal Font put in the church". Reverend Krumm received \$66 from the class for half the cost; the total cost was \$132.

The pulpit has two symbols, the sword and the bible. These are both time-honored symbols of the word of God. The lectern bears the symbol of the flaming torch, which is symbolic of the light received through the reading of God's word.

### **The Pastors of Jerusalem Lutheran Church**

The pastors that have served Jerusalem over the years have tended the flock well and have brought the word of God to the members. Our dedicated Pastors are:

#### *Pastors who served during the sharing of the church building:*

1824	Reverend Hewitt
1838	Reverend Hoelsche
1842	Reverend Siegele
1845	Reverend Mueller
1857	Reverend Schladermund
1861	Reverend Nauffer
1864	Reverend Strachlein

#### *Pastors who served after we built our own building:*

1869	Reverend S. Baechler
1874	Reverend M. F. Lauffer
1877	Reverend Schillinger (who married a daughter of the congregation)
1882	Reverend S. Baechler (rather unordinary to serve two pastorates)
1885	Reverend A. Birch
1895	Reverend J. H. W. Hoerr
1899	Reverend W. H. Lehman
1901	Reverend C. D. Uber
1909	Reverend C. D. Fischer

1921	Reverend C. E. Krumm
1935	Reverend C. J. Sutorius
1945	Reverend R. C. Finkenbine
1946	Reverend P. T. Rueckwald
1948	Reverend A. A. Anderson
1963	Reverend Thomas E. Rehl
1968	Reverend Robert B. Simen
1976	Reverend F. Eugene Grimm
1984	Reverend W. David H. Conrad
2012	Reverend Sean Myers

There have been two Visitation Pastors who served Jerusalem Lutheran Church. They were Reverend Carl Sitler from 1967 – 1968 and Reverend Orville E. Lueck from 1978 – 1988.

All of these pastors, through their consecrated teaching of God’s word as taught by the Lutheran Church, have had a part in the shaping of our beautiful house of worship. These men have given to us much of their zeal, their unquenchable spirit, and their farsighted vision.

### **Family Names**

While covering the 1914 dedication, *The Youngstown Vindicator* reported that it was difficult to obtain a complete history because regular records were not kept. The news writer, Mr. Fred Oertly, was able to find several names from christening records, election results, bills, etc. Some of those names are:

Altdoerder, Basler, Baun, Bayer, Beilharz, Boehringer, Bortzen, Boyden, Burg, Bush, Bushong, Candell, Crumrine, DeHoff, Eberle, Esterly, Faringer, Fessler, Feuerstein (Firestone), Flatting, Flickinger, Fuchs, Geiger, Gleckler, Glosser, Goell, Greenamy, Grimm, Haible (Hively), Harold, Heiser, Heisey, Helfert, Helford, Herman, Hetrich, Hisey, Hofus, Holderied, Keister, Keller, Kiser, Kleckner, Knechle, Koch, Kridler, Kuegle, Kyser, Law, Lechner, Lounner, Lower, Matzenbach, Metz, Meyer, Mitchell, Neidig, Nolle, Quass, Queiss, Rapp, Rauch, Roth, Rothfuss, Ruckenbrod, Schauwecker, Schuh, Schmidt, Schontz, Seachrist, Smith, Sponseller, Stauffer, Straab, Werner, Winch, Windel, Wonsettler (Sitler), Xander, and Young.

### **Music at Jerusalem**

Music has always been an important part of the liturgy at Jerusalem. The Hope Choir was organized by the young people on September 9, 1896. They adopted their constitution and by-laws on September 30, 1896. The object of the choir “shall be to enhance the beauty and solemnity of divine services by the rendition of appropriate anthems, choruses, solos, etc.; also to make the members become better acquainted with sacred music”. They held their meetings in the homes of the members and elected new officers every six months. A roll call and collection was taken at each business meeting. The collection ranged from 10¢ to 51¢.

In November of 1896, the music committee of the Hope Choir decided that a quartette should sing a few of the new anthems as a means to help decide whether to purchase the new anthem books that were under consideration. The committee advised the choir “not to act too hastily in their selection since Christmas was approaching”. With the treasury somewhat limited, they should do nothing to plunge themselves into debt. In January of 1897, a bill totaling \$1.10 was paid covering the cost of these anthem books. Each member was taxed 8¢ to cover this cost.

The minute book reports that on August 10, 1898, it was voted that any member coming five or more minutes late shall be fined 1¢. A motion was also made to subscribe to the *Echo*, a monthly music

magazine, for a cost of \$1.00 per year. New anthem books were eventually purchased in 1899, costing \$4.60 [including express charges], and the members were taxed 10¢ each to defray the cost.

Attendance and collection continued to be taken through April of 1901. The secretary was asked to visit choir members who had been absent for a period of time to learn if it was their intention to remain in the choir. The choir was eventually disbanded leaving a balance of \$1.91 in the treasury. It was then donated to the Luther League. It is reported that at one time there was an orchestra and junior orchestra that played for Sunday school openings as well as other events in the church.

The church has had other choirs throughout the years as well. Over the last forty years, an organ has been used during worship services. The current organ in the church was purchased in 1968 for a total cost of \$30,863. It is an Allen Digital Computer organ with 69 [out of 117 available] voice cards. These cards range from true diapasons to novelties such as bagpipes. The special speakers and voicing mean that the sound is consistent in every part of the sanctuary and balcony.

In October of 2005, the church was faced with not having an organist for the first time in 55 years. While we went through a period without music during worship services, the advancement of technology provided us with a viable solution. Through the help of the Memorial Fund, a MIDI [Musical Instrument Digital Interface] sequencer was purchased. The MIDI Assistant is designed to allow musical data files to be shared through the organ providing music that sounds like it is actually being played by the organist. Visitors coming to Jerusalem for the first time cannot distinguish the difference between using the MIDI sequencer versus a skilled organist. Several members from the congregation have volunteered to serve as organ technicians. They have learned how to use the pre-recorded disks thereby supplying high quality organ music during Sunday worship. Currently, we have approximately 500 pre-recorded hymns in various categories that can be used in conjunction with our current hymnals.

### **Groups and Organizations**

Groups and organizations have also played an important role at Jerusalem through the years. In the early days, there was the Tri-City Luther League, which met on Sunday evenings. They would take turns going to various member churches for their meetings. Grace Church in East Palestine, Zion in New Waterford, and Jerusalem in Columbiana were the member churches. Later years refer to the youth simply as the Luther League. More than likely there has been a variation of names for the Luther League over the years. For example, in the early 1970's, the youth used the name JOY – Jerusalem Organization of Youth.

The Women's Missionary Society and the Daughters of the King were organizations for the JLC women. They were the forerunner of today's women's groups. The men's group was the Good Cheer Club.

For the past several decades, the women of the congregation were divided into three circle groups – Faith, Hope, and Charity. Their meetings were held once a month with a coordinating council overseeing the three groups. Today, the three women's groups are organized into two groups yet remain very active and dedicated. They are involved in several mission activities including: quilting for Lutheran World Relief (making around 100 quilts each year); sewing kits and health kits for Lutheran World Relief; collecting cancelled postage stamps for Stamps for a Living (a stamp reprocessing business helping patients with an opportunity to earn a small salary), Campbell soup labels, and used eye glasses; sponsoring a mitten tree each Fall for mittens, scarves, and hats for needy children in the area; and collecting food and baby items on a requested basis for local organizations.

More recently, the women our have been using their talents by starting a prayer shawl ministry.

The shawls are knitted or crocheted in a pattern of three, symbolizing the Holy Trinity. Crocheted shawls are usually done in a pattern of one row of single crochet followed by three rows of double crochet. Knitted shawls are worked in a pattern of Knit 3, Purl 3. A prayer is said as the shawl is begun and then many prayers are said as new stitches are added. Once the shawls are completed, they are blessed during worship service before they are given out. The shawls are provided to those of all ages who may be sick or terminally ill.

Our church women provide a token of Christmas Cheer every year for the shut-in members of our congregation. Additionally, they have an active prayer chain ministry for any person who is need of a prayer and for whatever reason. Over the years, there has always been a funeral committee who is in charge of the funeral dinners held at the church for family and friends of the departed. Our church women diligently tend to the altar care regularly.

### **Chrismon Trees**

In the Spring of 1967, Mrs. Lois Rehl (wife of Pastor Thomas Rehl) came up with the idea of making Chrismons for the Christmas trees at Jerusalem. The ladies began making the ornaments, but sadly Mrs. Rehl was killed in an automobile accident before the project could be finished. Thus, the ladies of Jerusalem finished them in memory of Lois Rehl. The Chrismons have been displayed each year on the trees ever since. They have stood as a symbol of the love that Jesus brought to each of us and that you are filled with the Holy Spirit during the holiday season.



The Jerusalem Chrismons are Christian symbols. The Chrismon is a combination of the words Christ and Monogram. There are a total of 12 different symbols on the trees: the Chi Rho, Sun of Righteousness, Cornerstone, Cross & Orb, Circle with monograms of Christ, Greek Cross, Cross & Chi, Iota Eta Sigma, Iota & Chi, Fish & Bread, Cross in Eternity, the Crown, Iota Chi, Shepherd Crook, Triquetra & Circle, Eight-pointed Star, and the Star of Bethlehem.

### **Perpetual Candles**

There are three perpetual candles located in the sanctuary. All three candles were purchased and are kept lit by the families who donated the candle. The candle serves as a remembrance of their loved one's life and contribution at Jerusalem. The first perpetual candle, placed on the altar, is in memory of Kyle Oberholtzer. The second perpetual candle, placed beside the lectern, is in memory of Janet Hammer. The third perpetual candle, placed where the baptismal font was originally located, is in memory of Bruce Yarian. Currently, the prayer candle dais is located directly below this third perpetual candle.

### **Lion of Judah Pictures**

The six pictures displayed in the sanctuary are the work of William Hallmark. The various pictures represent: the Lion of Judah, For He is our Peace, Keys to Death & Hell, the Promise of Peace, the Scepter, and Keys to the Kingdom. Each picture was purchased by an individual of the congregation for use in the sanctuary.

### **Deaf Ministry**

What began as a means to assist her parents with enjoying Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday services developed into a weekly interpretation of Sunday services in 1989 to a group of hearing-challenged individuals. Pixie (Prisilla) Monske and her sister, Dina, grew up with both parents being deaf and used American Sign Language in their communication with them. Pixie became a "Professional Proficient American Sign Language Interpreter". It was their parents that encouraged other deaf friends to join our worship services to learn more about the Good News at Jerusalem. As news spread, the group grew from a

few to approximately 40-45 people. They came from Columbiana as well as many surrounding communities.

Pastor Conrad became deeply interested in wanting to be able to communicate with this dedicated group and expressed his interest in learning to sign. Pixie began teaching Pastor Dave simple signs and techniques for introductions and finger spelling. The Deaf Community was inspired to see that Pastor Dave was able to sign to them. Still, an interpreter was needed to facilitate communication between the hearing members and the Deaf friends.

The weekly interpretation of sermons quickly developed into monthly bible studies. Soon thereafter deaf bibles were purchased from the donations received from many organizations from within the church. Now the deaf group could further their desire to learn about Jesus through the classes taught by Pastor Dave and interpreted by Pixie. Their excitement further progressed into wanting more fun, fellowship, and having foodstuff during the bible study. Summer picnics held at Firestone Park complete with bible study and games became an annual event.

Beginning signing classes were taught by Pixie to other members of the church wishing to have the ability to communicate with this faithful group of friends. The children and youth of Jerusalem also learned to incorporate signing into their singing. The signing of church songs even progressed into teaching it during Vacation Bible School held yearly with St. Jude Catholic Church. Interpreting did not stop there. Pixie work side-by-side with Pastor Dave to interpret a few deaf weddings, baby baptisms, and funerals.

This distinctive outreach program was enjoyed by the members of Jerusalem as well as the deaf community. In 2000, a big change took place when attendance began its decline. The deaf community members were aging and experiencing health issues, transportation was an issue, some became shut-in or went to nursing homes, and unfortunately many passed away. After eleven successful years, the ministry came to a close. Yet the presence of this deaf community has provided many memories for so many of us. One cannot deny the joy, happiness, honor, and love felt during these eleven years. Perhaps Jerusalem may again one day have the opportunity to minister to another wonderful group of deaf people.

### **Peace Garden**

Many gardeners will tell you there's something about tilling the soil, planting flowers, and watching the bounty blossom that has more to do with feeling close to God than feeling lucky about having a green thumb.

While reminiscing about her mother, Marie Householder, and her love of flowers, Esther Tucker first started thinking about the possibility of creating a beautiful and peaceful garden in the area south of the church where the parsonage once sat some 40 years ago. She envisioned the garden to be visually beautiful as well as providing a natural and serene setting for personal quiet prayer, meditation, conversation, small meetings [such as Sunday school, Bible study, or Circle meetings] as well as a perfect background for pictures or perhaps a small wedding.

In May of 2003, Esther approached the church trustees with the idea of creating a garden on the grassy area beside the church. Trustees gave their consent and it was approved in June by Council, provided the planting and maintenance of the garden would not fall under the responsibility of the Trustees but would be under the care of volunteers. A "Peace Garden" committee was formed, zoning was investigated, a design was created, and estimates were obtained. The final design met approval of the Trustees in May of 2004. The entire cost of the Peace Garden has been through funds raised or money

donated in memory of loved ones.

The meditation portion of the garden located in the center is in the shape of a cross. The cross is filled with pavers, some of which have been given in special memory or in honor of family members. A special paver has been donated in honor of all members of the armed forces, who over the years, have given the ultimate sacrifice – *Honor To All, Past and Present*. An arbor that faces to the West welcomes visitors to the garden. Tucked on one side is a statue of an angel where it is protected and shaded by hostas. Statues of a lion and a lamb make their home beside each other in reference to Isaiah 11:6: *“The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid...”*.

A bulb garden highlights one area where tulips bloom in the Spring and an array of lilies bloom during the Summer. Daisies, marigolds, lavender, stokasia, and sedum are among other plants that add color and interest. In the Fall, chrysanthemums are in full bloom. It is the goal to have color year round. The area under the large oak tree is referred to the shade garden where hostas and lily of the valley thrive. A statue of a young girl prays next to a stone plaque with the bible verse from Matthew 24:35: *“Everything else will pass away by my words will last forever”*. Also located in the shade garden is a bench and bird bath where some of God’s winged creatures visit.

### **Military Mission**

We are a unique church in that we choose to honor our military. With the onset of the War in Iraq and subsequently in Afghanistan and having members of our own families serving in the military, a special altar was built to display the pictures of our loved ones who are currently serving in the armed forces. As a church family, we continue to support and pray for them. As the number of casualties increase, as a church family we pray for all families who are suffering from the loss of a loved one. We believe in the power of prayer and use the military altar as a means to never forget.

Our “Wall of Stars” is representative of the number of lives lost during these wars – one star, one life. It is a visual reminder of the ultimate sacrifice that these men and women have made. A new ministry that has developed out of the casualties of these wars is to personally write to the surviving families of each enlisted soldier who has given the ultimate sacrifice. This ministry evolved out of the belief of one parishioner from Jerusalem who felt called by God. This calling was to inform the surviving families that while we may not know them personally, as Christians, we are praying for them and that they are not forgotten.

One of our church members has anonymously written this poem:

#### ***The Stars on Our Walls***

*In this place of worship we pray and question why.  
Our young brothers and sisters must go to war and die.*

*Some questions have no answers, we really do not know why.  
But in our hearts we remember them, and this is what we show.*

*With all the stars that grace our walls in this place we pray,  
We will always be indebted to those who died along the way.*

*They left behind their families, an unfamiliar place they had to live.  
God bless them all for they have given the best that they had to give.  
For freedom’s sake they sacrificed their bodies and their lives,*

*To free a people from themselves and the evil they despise.*

*Should it be not far away that day when they come home.*

*Please dear God, remember them when they approach your throne.*

*Remember all their courage and why this had to be.*

*For I don't know the reason, it's a mystery to me.*

*For those who died along the way and those who had to fall,*

*We remember every one of you with a star upon our wall.*

### **JLC Preschool**

In 1980, the Property Committee was looking for ways to bring the public into the church by use of the church facilities. The results of the committee's efforts were use of the barn for Boy Scouts, use of Luther Hall by Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), and the formation of the South Side Preschool. While it was formed as an outreach of the church, it was designed to be a self-sustaining one. The tuition fees charged per student defray the cost of running the preschool. It conducts its own fundraisers each year to raise funds for scholarships that help those who are in need of financial assistance. Over the years, they have been involved in recycling aluminum cans, which teaches the children about the environment as well as providing a small means of revenue.

The Preschool has its own Board of Directors that oversees the operations of the preschool. It is comprised of three members of the congregation and two nonmembers. Of the three congregational members required, one shall be the pastor of the church. The preschool is run by one administrator/teacher and one teacher assistant. Classes are held for three-year olds or young four-year olds on Tuesdays and Thursdays while the pre-kindergarten students attend on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. One does not have to be a member of the church to attend our preschool.

They created a RSVP program – Retired Senior Volunteer Program – where each day volunteers assist the students with learning their numbers and letters or with writing. They have a well-rounded curriculum that prepares the children for kindergarten, which includes science activities, fine motor activities, and a daily art project. They also focus on social skills by teaching them to share, to respect elders, and being kind to others.

In 2007, the name of the preschool was changed from South Side Preschool to JLC Preschool. At that time, the preschool became more of an outreach mission under the direction of the church council. They wanted to be able to say a prayer during snack time, read nondenominational short stories about Jesus, and sing religious songs during the Christmas programs and during class time. They still maintain their own Board of Directors, but report to Executive Council like the other committees and boards from within the church.

*“Down through the years (1814 - 1928) there have always been those who kept alive loyalty to Jerusalem Church; those whose deep and sincere desire it has been to have made sacrifices to satisfy this desire. We, who carry on today, can take new courage and renew our fealty to those principles which to us have become such a glorious heritage.”*

(Mrs. Ed Bierman, 1935)



*Yesterday is history.  
Tomorrow is a mystery.  
And today? Today is a gift.  
That is why we call it the present.*

*---- Babatunde Olantunji*

The information contained herein has been obtained from many sources found in the church office. Over the years, booklets have been compiled for various reasons and each was a source in providing insight to our history. Other sources were articles, newspaper stories, and permanent records of the church. This commentary has been compiled by the Call Committee of 2010-2011 as a means of providing background information to the pastoral candidates.