

## ✚ HOLY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE HILL OVERLOOKING ROBESONIA ✚

### MAJOR RENOVATIONS TO THE SECOND CHURCH BUILDING

St. Daniel's church building (the second church building in its history) underwent a major renovation in 1911 during the pastorate of Rev. Oscar Pflueger.

At the congregational meeting in December 1909, it was decided to hold a separate congregational meeting for the purpose of voting regarding building a new church building on the site of the current building. A subsequent vote in January 1910 was not unanimous, with 39 votes in favor and 11 against. On January 11, 1911, with 28 members in attendance, the St. Daniel's congregation did in fact resolve to renovate the church.

A Cornerstone Relaying ceremony was held on April 30, 1911. The morning service (or "Morgen Gottesdienst") was held in German and the afternoon service was held in English. The receipts of the day were \$89.83 in plate offerings, \$73.67 placed in the stone, and \$20.92 from the sale of paper weights [see photo!], for a total of \$184.42. The 1911 Parish Record stated that, "The contents of the [original] corner stone, which was laid May 1, 1814, and which appears to have been the one used already in the first church, were all crumbled and unfit for insertion in the stone at this time."

The following proclamation, properly signed, was placed in the stone:

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY GHOST. AMEN.

Proclamation.

At the relaying of the cornerstone of St. Daniel's Evangelical Lutheran Church, in Heidelberg Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania, on the thirtieth day of April, A.D. 1911, in the administration of John K. Tener, governor of Pennsylvania, and of William Howard Taft, President of the United States of America.

With a joyful retrospect of 160 years, during which time the Word of God has been faithfully preached and the Holy Sacraments administered according to the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as held by THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN MINISTERIUM OF PENNSYLVANIA AND ADJACENT STATES of the GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA, and a hopeful prospect of continued blessings of Almighty God upon ourselves and our children, we pledge ourselves anew to devout continuance in the teachings of the Apostles and Prophets, and faithful service in the Church of God upon earth, and for posterity record the following for enclosure in the cornerstone of this St. Daniel's Church:

1. In the 160 years of history, this congregation has had two church edifices, the cornerstone of the first church having been laid about May, A.D. 1751, and that of the second on May 1, A.D. 1814. After 36 years of service the church was renovated, during the pastorate of the Reverend Daniel Ulrich, and on January 15, A.D. 1850, reconsecrated with the holding of special services, on which occasion the Reverend Lewis G. Eggers preached the sermon.

2. After the lapse of 60 additional years, January 21, A.D. 1911, at a congregational meeting, it was resolved extensively again to renovate the church, retaining however, the well preserved walls to the east, to the north and to the west. Among others these alterations are proposed: An addition of 14 feet is to be built toward the east of the church, to be surmounted by a tower and a bell; an 8 foot pulpit recess is to be extended toward the west; the floor is to be raised and inclined; the ceiling is to be replaced and lowered; the inside is to be studded, lathed and plastered; the outside is to be cemented; stained glass windows are to be placed; the whole is to be refurnished and modern heat is to be installed. The supervision of this renovation has been trusted to Jonathan E. Stump as Building Committee and the builder is John H. Hollenbach.

3. On the removal of the old cornerstone it was learned with regret that all the contents had wasted. Signs of repair on the leaden casket which had held the contents of the same, lead us to believe that this was already the casket of the first cornerstone, and perhaps the stone itself that of the first church. At this relaying of the stone the contents are placed in a new sealed casket of copper, and the whole inserted in the original leaden casket.

4. The articles placed in the cornerstone this day are the following:

The Holy Bible.

Luther's Small Catechism – General Council Edition.

Sacramental Bread and Wine.

THE LUTHERAN – Issue of April 27, 1911.

THE READING EAGLE – Issue of April 29, 1911.

This Proclamation.

Current coins

A copy of the printed Service used.

5. Grateful recognition is hereby made to Almighty God for His manifold blessings upon the congregation. With the development of the resources of this beautiful valley has also come material prosperity to its citizens and to the members of this congregation. At the recent communion the Sacrament was administered to 455 guests.

6. The Reverend Oscar Erwin Pflueger has been pastor of this congregation since November 1, A.D. 1902, and at the services of this day is assisted by the Reverend Jacob W. Lazarus.

The elders are George D. Stump, Albert T. Keppley, John A. Katzaman, and Pierce E. Gruber.

The deacons are Daniel J. Spatz, Charles B. Sweigert, Oscar R. Kiebach, and Walter A. Stump.

The trustees are Edmund N. Matthew, Harry W. Sheeler, and Adam D. Stump.

Hereunto do we reverently affix our names, this thirtieth day of April, A.D. 1911.

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#### CHURCH BELL

The contract for the church bell was awarded to Menelly and Company, Watervliet, NY. The weight of the bell was specified at 1800 pounds; the price to be thirty-one cents per pound. The total price was \$574.20. The price included \$80.00 for mounting -- a 10% discount -- and the freight charges were paid by the company.

#### STAINED GLASS

The altar wall contained a beautiful circular stained glass window above the altar depicting Jesus Christ praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. Other elongated stained glass windows were placed in the north and south walls. Two double-door main entrances were placed in the new east addition with a large stained glass window between them showing Jesus Christ as a shepherd carrying a lamb.

The outside walls were covered with stucco and colonial fixtures were replaced by more modern decorations.

The 1911 Parish Record stated that the church had been completely rebuilt and was first reoccupied on Christmas Eve 1911, when it was filled with a large and appreciative congregation of worshipers. The 1912 Parish Record stated that Consecration took place on "Whitsunday" (Pentecost), May 26, 1912. A morning service was preached in English on

Psalms 96:6. An afternoon service was preached in German on Micah 4:1-2. "Many more people were present than could enter the building." It must have been very exciting, indeed!

In 1922, electric lights were installed in the building. Two years after that, a new organ was purchased from M.P. Moeller Co.

What an amazing and enduring history we share!

Follow this space throughout the year for snippets of St. Daniel's history from 1751 to 2026.

Historical details taken from the 'Saint Daniel's Evangelical Lutheran Church "Eck Kirche" 1751-2001' church history book written by the St. Daniel's History Committee in celebration of the 250th anniversary. More detail regarding this topic is found in Chapter 2 – The Church Grows. Additional details from Parish Records. Photos of St. Daniel's archives.

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St. Daniel's Lutheran Church, post-1911 renovations.



ST. DANIEL'S (CORNER) CHURCH ON A SUNDAY MORNING, OR "SONNDAG MERGERTS AN DER ECK KERCH."

A busy Sunday morning!



The altar decorated for Harvest Home (date unknown). Notice the beautiful round stained glass window depicting Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.



Undated photo from a distance.





Interesting note: the Parish Record mentions selling of paperweights to help fund the renovations. Just recently, prior to reading that info, I happened to find and purchase this paperweight on eBay. Could it be one of those sold?!



I've been unable to determine the date for this photo and if it was pre-renovation. It is also a Harvest Home celebration, but it's unclear if it is the altar in the sanctuary prior to the 1911 renovations. If anyone knows, please let me know.