

CARR - 735

ST. JOHN'S (LEISTER'S) LUTHERAN CHURCH

1898

Leisters Church Road  
Westminster vicinity

public

St. John's (Leister's) Lutheran Church was organized in 1844 and the first church was a log structure erected in 1845. The original church is described as being "a plain log structure, 35 x 40 ft. in dimensions, one story, 'not painted, not plastered nor ceiled.'" In 1864, this structure was weatherboarded, plastered, reroofed and painted. The current church was constructed in 1898 and the Democratic Advocate of November 1898 provides the following description of the church:

"This new edifice is built of Penna. red brick and its dimensions are 35 x 57 ft., with a bell tower 10 x 10 ft., and 60 ft. high in which is swung a sweet sounding bell of 800 lb. weight. There is also a pulpit recess 5 x 14 ft. The style of architecture is semi-gothic, and the trimmings are of brown stone. The interior is handsomely furnished and presents a very pleasing and attractive appearance. The walls and ceiling are beautifully frescoed in mellow tints. The wood-work is of yellow pine and ash, finished in the natural colors. The pews are of quartered oak, as is also the pulpit and chancel furniture. The windows are of white enameled glass. The floor is carpeted. The new structure stands some distance west of the old church, and is surrounded by a fine grove of forest trees."

The Sunday school building at the rear of the church was built in 1950 and was designed by Alfred Hamme of York, Pennsylvania.

The St. John's congregation is a latecomer to Lutheranism in the County, dating to the 1840's. The present rectangular brick Garden Wall bond structure has highly pitched Tudor arch windows and openings. It sits in a fairly rural area north/east of Westminster off the road to Manchester.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MAGI # 070210 4608

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC St. John's (Leister's) Lutheran Church

AND/OR COMMON same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Leisters Church Rd. 6

CITY, TOWN Manchester CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Maryland VICINITY OF Westminster COUNTY Carroll

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY  | OWNERSHIP                                 | STATUS  | PRESENT USE  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT               | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED        | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE          | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED                 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH  | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS           | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE                   | <b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>                 | <b>ACCESSIBLE</b>                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT                 | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC              |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION          |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> NO                         | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:                    |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME St. John's Lutheran Church Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER Leisters Church Rd. Md. 21157

CITY, TOWN Manchester VICINITY OF Westminster STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Carroll County Office Building

Liber #: 177 Folio #: 135

STREET & NUMBER 225 North Center Street

CITY, TOWN Westminster STATE Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

| CONDITION                                |                                       | CHECK ONE                                   | CHECK ONE   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT       | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE <u>1898</u>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR            | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |   |   |

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

from St. John's (Leisters) Lutheran Church 100th Anniversary 1844-1944  
--service booklet.

"This new edifice is built of Pennsylvania red brick and its dimensions are 37 x 57 feet with a bell tower 10 x 10 feet, and 60 feet high in which swung a sweet sounding bell of 800 pounds weight. There is also a pulpit recess 5 x 14 feet. The style of architecture is semi-gothic and the trimmings are of brown stone. The interior is handsomely furnished and presents a very pleasing and attractive appearance. The walls and ceiling are beautifully frescoed in mellow tints. The wood work is of yellow pine and ash, finished in the natural colors. The pews are of quartered oak, as is also the pulpit and chancel furniture. The windows are of white enameled glass. The floor is carpeted. The new structure stands some distance west of the old church, and is surrounded by a fine grove of forest trees."

St. John's sits on a soft incline about 12-15 yards off the east side of Leisters Church Road which is right of Md. 482 to Hampstead. The location is about three miles north/east of Westminster. Beyond the back of the building (25 yards east) is its own cemetery. The building faces west.

A high coursed stone foundation supports a 3 x 4 bay English Garden Wall bond (one row headers, seven stretchers...) structure with a gable roof and front entrance tower. The roof is topped with asphalt shingle.

The north and south side walls are four bays of windows each. The pointed Tudor arch stained glass windows with plain wood trim, have stone bases, and a double row of brick voussoir trim at the pointed arch. The windows are recessed about three inches each which makes a sill of the same dimension. The south side wall accomodates a gable-roofed, asphalt shingle topped shed with novelty siding.

The eastern back wall is three-quarters unexposed due to the 1950 addition. The last one-quarter, which constitutes the upper wall has two exterior single brick chimneys, on either side gable. The chimneys extend beyond the brick wall, but are enclosed in the cornice.

The three-bay western front has a single pointed Tudor arch and window, same design as side windows, on either side of the central tower. The tower extends from the wall six to seven feet, is square, and has on either front side a buttress which is an extension of that wall. The entrance, from cement steps are double wood doors with iron strap hinges and plain trim. Above the door is a plain frieze and beyond that a row of mini-dentals. A pointed Tudor arch, stained glass transom with a double row of brick voussoir trim tops it off. A wooden gable porch cover with decorative support brackets protect the entrance from the elements. The square tower has a pointed arch, small stained glass window with a double row of voussoir trim above the front entrance, and in the center of the square tower. Above that is a stone which reads "St. John's Lutheran Church, 1898". The open wooden belfry has a pair of pointed arch opening, with railings on every side and brackets on either side of each facade which supports the gable dormers, roof on each side. The spire has asphalt shingle and supports a contemporary Latin cross. There is a pointed Tudor arch window on the south side wall of the tower.

(continued)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

| PERIOD  | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC          | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC     | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS              | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE            | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION              | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING            | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES 1898 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. John's is actually a latecomer in the Lutheran realm in the county. With its emergence in the mid-1840's, and organization in February of 1844, St. John's became yet another Lutheran church in the Westminster area.

During the revival period of 1843 and 1844, services were conducted by Rev. J. Philip Willard in Abbotts schoolhouse, a short distance from the present Church on the Westminster-Hampstead Road. Rev. Willard was the current minister of the Westminster Charge, serving from 1842-1845. In 1844 the church was organized under him, with 52 charter members.

The first St. John's Evangelical Lutheran church erected was a plain log structure, 35 x 40 feet, one story, unpainted and unplastered, It stood on a two acre plot of land, one each given by Daniel Leister and John Reese and standing near the then current cemetery. It was dedicated in the autumn of 1845. Shortly before this a constitution was drawn up by Rev. Willard, where the place, duty, and responsibilities of clergy, officers and members was established.

In 1864, improvements to the log structure were made, including weatherboarding, plastering, painting and re-roofing.

Leister's was part of the Westminster Charge until 1886, the number of parishes served in this charge gradually decreasing over the years from perhaps as many as thirteen in the 1840's to three in 1869, (including Grace, Kriders and Leisters). In 1886, Grace was to be known as the Westminster Charge and Benjamins (Kriders) and Leisters as the Salem Charge. It has remained so for over ninety years.

As is traditional, growth produced a need for a larger sanctuary, thus under the pastorate of a Rev. Diehl, the thought of a new church developed. The present edifice was dedicated in 1898, free of debt. It cost \$3800 to build. It stands west of the old church site.

In 1887, a lot was purchased for \$400 for a parsonage on Westminster and became known as 162 Pennsylvania Avenue.

In the 1920's and early 30's, the church was renovated and redeccorated. New glass windows were installed, chancel alterations were made, including a new altar.

In 1950, ground-breaking services were held for a new Sunday School building of 54 feet x 33 feet. Minor alterations in the sanctuary were found necessary for the project. The choir window was removed and placed in the vestibule.

In 1970, a further addition of running bond was added to the 1950 addition.

(continued)

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Service of dedication, March 4, 1951 --service booklet  
 100th Anniversary, 1844-1944 --service booklet  
 "The Times" Sept. 29, 1944 St. John's Lutheran Church to Observe 100th Anniversary.  
 "Jubilee of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation" 1894 newspaper article-unknown source

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

|       |          |        |         |
|-------|----------|--------|---------|
| STATE | Maryland | COUNTY | Carroll |
| STATE |          | COUNTY |         |

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

|                 |  |           |             |
|-----------------|--|-----------|-------------|
| NAME / TITLE    | Fred Eckhardt historic site surveyor                 |           |             |
| ORGANIZATION    | Carroll County Committee of the Md. Historical Trust | DATE      | spring 1979 |
| STREET & NUMBER | 210 East Main Street                                 | TELEPHONE | 848-6494    |
| CITY OR TOWN    | Westminster  | STATE     | Maryland    |

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
 The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 267-1438

## 7 DESCRIPTION

The 1950 flat-roofed addition of English Garden wall bond is attached to the east end of the church. To this was added in 1970, another flat-roofed addition of running bond.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

trivia - The first pastors, up to the very late 1870's held services in both English and German, the latter less frequently. In fact, during the 70's German was preached only once every five or six weeks. In 1880, some of the German families became dissatisfied with the service, thus withdrew and built for themselves a church one mile south of St. John's. Nevertheless, many German families stayed and their descendants form a part of the present membership.



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

225. N. Center Street
Westminster, Maryland 21157

WESTMINSTER PLANNING DISTRICT

FIELD SHEET--HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY

1/56

SURVEY NUMBER: CARR-735

NEGATIVE FILE NUMBER:

UTM REFERENCES:
Zone/Easting/Northing

U.S.G.S. QUAD. MAP: WESTMINSTER

PRESENT FORMAL NAME:
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

ORIGINAL FORMAL NAME:
LEISTER'S CHURCH

PRESENT USE: church

ORIGINAL USE: church

ARCHITECT/ENGINEER:

BUILDER/CONTRACTOR:

PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE:

Excellent ( ) Good ( )

Fair ( ) Poor ( )

THEME:

STYLE:

DATE BUILT: 1898

COUNTY: CARROLL

TOWN: WESTMINSTER VIC

LOCATION: LEISTER'S CHURCH ROAD AT MD 482

TAX MAP 40 Block 7 P122

COMMON NAME: St. John's (Leister's) Lutheran Church

FUNCTIONAL TYPE:

OWNER:
ADDRESS:

ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC:
Yes ( ) No ( ) Restricted ( )

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:
Local ( ) State ( ) National ( )

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Structural System

- 1. Foundation: Stone (x) Brick ( ) Concrete ( ) Concrete Block ( )
2. Wall Structure
A. Wood: Log ( ) Post and Beam ( ) Balloon ( )
B. Wood Bearing Masonry: Brick (x) Stone ( ) Concrete ( ) Concrete Block ( )
C. Iron ( ) D. Steel ( ) E. Other
3. Wall Covering: Weatherboard ( ) German Siding ( ) Board and Batten ( )
Wood Shingle ( ) Shiplap ( ) Novelty ( ) Stucco ( ) Sheet Metal ( )
Aluminum ( ) Asphalt Shingle ( ) Brick Veneer ( ) Stone Veneer ( )
Bonding Pattern: Other:
4. Roof Structure
A. Truss: Wood (x) Iron ( ) Steel ( ) Concrete ( )
B. Other:
5. Roof Covering: Slate ( ) Wood Shingle ( ) Asphalt Shingle (x) Sheet Metal ( )
Built Up ( ) Rolled ( ) Tile ( ) Other:
6. Engineering Structure:
7. Other:

Appendages: Porches ( ) Towers (x) Cupolas ( ) Dormers ( ) Chimneys ( ) Sheds ( )
Ells ( ) Wings ( ) Other:

Roof Style: Gable (x) Hip ( ) Shed ( ) Flat ( ) Mansard ( ) Gambrel ( ) Jerkinhead ( )
Saw Tooth ( ) With Monitor ( ) With Bellcast ( ) With Parapet ( )
With False Front ( ) Other:

Number of Stories: 1

Number of Bays: 3 x 4

Entrance Location: center

Approximate Dimensions:

THREAT TO STRUCTURE:

No Threat (x) Zoning ( ) Roads ( )
Development ( ) Deterioration ( )
Alteration ( ) Other:

LOCAL ATTITUDES:

Positive (x) Negative ( )
Mixed ( ) Other:

CARR-735

ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL OR STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION:

RELATED STRUCTURES: (Describe)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

REFERENCES:

1862 Martenet's Map:  
1877 LG & S Atlas:

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

Open Lane ( ) Woodland ( ) Scattered Buildings ( )  
Moderately Built Up ( ) Densely-Built Up ( )  
Residential ( ) Commercial ( )  
Agricultural ( ) Industrial ( )  
Roadside Strip Development ( )  
Other:

RECORDED BY:

ORGANIZATION:

DATE RECORDED:

U.S.G.S. MAP  
WESTMINSTER, MD.  
1:24000 SCALE





CARR-735

ST. JOHN'S (LEISTER'S) LUTHERAN CHURCH

Leister's Church Rd  
Westminster vicinity

8/83

south elevation

Photo By Joe Getty



St. John's (Chester) Lutheran

March - 79

Can. - ~~210~~ 735

western tower & elevator, on south side

Fred E.



THE METHODIST CHURCH  
100 E. 10th St. S.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
Phone 525-1111  
Fax 525-1112

St. John's (hesters) Lutheran

March - 79

Cam. - ~~210~~ 735

Western tower elevation

Fred E.