ST. DAVID'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
235TH ANNIVERSARY
ADDRESS BY DR. CHARLES GLATFELTER
MAY 15, 1988 - 3:00 P.M.

Introduction by John M. Fuss, Jr.
Good afternoon everyone. Welcome to this program which is a part of our 235th Anniversary celebration. Whenever you are celebrating an anniversary of some kind, it is always wise to find out what you are celebrating and give consideration to what took place or what was taking place at that particular time. When you are celebrating a 235th Anniversary, you don't have anyone around who remembered it or even people who might have known people who remember it. In such cases, you have to go to authorities or experts on the subject.

Certainly the preeminent historian in the field of churches, certainly Lutheran and Reformed Churches in this area, is Dr. Charles Glatfelter who we have with us this afternoon. Dr. Glatfelter was born in Glen Rock. He was educated at Gettysburg College and received his Doctorate from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. He has been a Professor at Gettysburg College since 1949. He has also been Director of the Adams County Historical Society since 1959. He has written several books of history or historical information on the college and other churches. But he also has published two volumes in 1979 and 1981 on the early Lutheran and Reformed Churches principally in Pennsylvania, but also in other areas. I do have copies of those if any of you would like to look at them afterwards.

Dr. Glatfelter is presently a Lutheran, but he does have strong Reformed roots. Dr. Glatfelter, we certainly are pleased to have you here this afternoon.
Remarks by Dr. Glatfelter

Growing up in Glen Rock within about a block of the Lutheran Church, I used to walk by the Church several times a week and look at the text for the sermon the next Sunday. I never particularly liked to go to Church, but I didn't have any alternative. I had to go. So I at least professed to have an interest. And when I got inside, the old minister would always announce at the beginning a text for his sermon. In a way ministers I think generally don't today. But I can't imagine a sermon years ago without a text.

Now we ought to have a text to begin today, even though what I am doing is not preaching a sermon. And there is an excellent text from a report that the Reverend John George Altsence sent to Europe in 1761. He was reporting to the Church in Holland which was helping the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania with pastors and donations and he prepared a report which he headed "Faithful Presentation of Some Circumstances of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania" and here is the text. It doesn't have a chapter, it doesn't have a verse, but it is still a text. "It is almost impossible to convey any idea with how much difficulty all these congregations are maintained. Everything so to speak has been started anew and without hard labor, not one congregation can be built up. With faith, hope, love, zeal, patience and readiness to serve in preaching, catechising and family visitation, by constant riding about because the people are so scattered, we must carry on the work."

To the best of our knowledge, John George Altsence never got west of the Susquehanna River. As far away from his parish in Germantown as he got was Lancaster where the Reformed Coetus, the predecessor of your Conference, met on several occasions. But even though he never got here, he certainly was describing conditions that existed in this area two and a half centuries ago. One of the unfortunate things is, as John Fuss told you, that there is nobody here who can tell us about the beginnings or there is nobody who can tell us about what somebody told us about the beginnings and the history of this old Church has been more poorly taken care of than the history of many other churches in this area. It is unfortunate, but it is true.

I went to the Historical Society in York to which I have been going for forty some years looking for information and there simply isn't much there. I went to the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society in Lancaster which is one of my favorite places for getting information and there simply is not much there. And then I went to what is left of the Lutheran Historical Society in Gettysburg and there simply is very, very little there. One of the things that perplexed me when I started to investigate in preparation for coming here was the date when the third Church was built. One place I read it was 1867. One place I read it was 1869. If I would have looked back there, I would have seen that it was 1867, but it wasn't 1867 at all. The corner stone of the third Church that is pictured back there was laid on June 13, 1869 which is not 1867 by any stretch.
of the imagination. And according to a Hanover newspaper that somebody should have consulted, but apparently I was the first one to decide to do that, there were so many people here on that day that someone thought there had never been that many people in this vacinity at any time in the past.

And that third Church was dedicated on May 22, 1870. There were eight ministers present. It took eight ministers to dedicate it and the Church cost the unGodly sum of $10,000. Now do you realize that your pastor could, if he wished, next Sunday preach a sermon on the occasion of the 118th anniversary of that third Church because next Sunday will be the anniversary of its dedication.

About eight years ago, I read in the Lutheran about the triumphant march of the Lutherans out of this Church to their new Church on the hill and the Lutheran said this about it. "The official organizational records of St. David date from 1750 when it was established as a Union Congregation with a Presbyterian Parish. However, baptismal records date from 1721, so it is an old, old congregation. In 1753 after the Presbyterians died out or were absorbed into the other denomination, a Union was established with the German Reformed Congregation, now the United Church of Christ. There has been a history of controversy and friction between the two congregations almost from the beginning", Rev. Roy Stuart said. "Practically every other word in what I just read is a lie. I got a severe case of indigestion reading this nonsense and I was reminded more than anything else of what Abraham Lincoln is supposed to have said "It is better to be thought a fool and be silent, then to speak up and remove all doubt."

Well, now that I got that out of my system, I feel a little better. You have already been told that I am a Lutheran. Nevertheless, I said that and I guess it is my Reformed blood that hasn't all been drained out of me that led me to that rather strong statement. You can't have a church, can you, without people? And when you start to study the history of a church, you ought to start with people. Now Rev. Neil Hively, a friend of mine, who is the pastor of the Lutheran and Reformed Cooperative Parish at Steltz has become interested in the history of Steltz Church and at my suggestion started to draw a map of the region around Steltz to find out when people came there. And when you start doing something like this, it kind of gets in your blood and he kept extending the area that he was probing and when he heard that I was coming here, he extended it all the way to this place and so you'll have an opportunity later to look at his map which would be part of the Sherman's Union Church region and you can find out just exactly when some of the people who came here made their first claim from the Penns for land. The first step was to get a warrant.

Daniel Zacharias whose place was northwest, am I pointing northwest roughly?, northwest of the Church. Daniel Zacharias in 1744, Daniel Bowser to the northeast in 1746, Philip Heidleman, very, very close to where we are now in 1748, Steven Mathias to the north in 1749, John Huntzinger again, very, very close to the Church in 1750. There were people who were laying first claims to land right around here in the period from 1744 to 1750.
Now there was an old register of baptisms in this congregation that apparently disappeared a long, long time ago. And somebody made a copy of it while it was still in existence as best he could and was able to make enough of the entries so that we can testify to its general accuracy. Some of these names you have probably never heard about, because some of the old timers are gone, gone, gone. But in a few other cases, you might recognize some of the name. Nicholas Wolfgang, a baptism 1752, Frederick Berlin, 1752, Melkor Keener. Who ever heard of Melkor Keener. Well he went to Baltimore and became a business man.

This road that goes from Hanover south into Maryland was like a magnet attracting people towards Baltimore. There were more business opportunities there. Bernard Houck 1753, Valentine Wentz 1753. His tombstone is still out here and the stone that his family erected to Valentine and his wife and I suppose some of his children is very evident. Valentine Wentz was the progenator of Abel R. Wentz who was for many years President of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, a Church historian who in his later days was very much interested in the Wentz family. Jacob Degrosh. Who in the world here today has ever heard of Jacob Degrosh except me? His name is on that map and you might remember him because I am sure he was the first person to leave some money to this Church in his will. He made his will about 1755 and he left five pounds to the Church by Milkur Keeners. That's what he called this Church. Now remember Milkur Keeners because I'm going to say something about him a little later.

To the curf beim Milkur Keeners. His will was written in German and I think the man who wrote it was the first Reformed pastor of this Church.

Well let's go on. A couple more names, Jacob Raunkel, George Motter, George Peter Baum, Karl Baublitz, John Peter Stephen, Coward Crow. Maybe most of those names don't mean anything to you. But the blood of a couple of those people flows in the veins of my children and they didn't get it through me. They got it through their mother.

Now I want to remind you of something that I am sure all of you know. That there was a disputed boundary between Maryland and Pennsylvania in those early days. But what very few people know is that as early as 1739 at the strong urging of the Royal Government in Britian, a temporary line was drawn and most of the fighting and most of the doubting stopped at that time in 1739. Now that was a quarter century before Mason and Dixon went through here. Mason and Dixon kept a careful journal and I can tell you that on the 31st of July, 1765, Mason and Dixon crossed the McAlisterstown Baltimore Road surveying west. So we know that those two surveyors were down here just a short distance on July 31st, 1765 according to their journal. Now members of this Church, as you would expect, lived on both sides of the line. The Pennsylvania side and the Maryland side and I regret that I have not had the time to study the people who lived on the Maryland side. It is much, much easier for me to get to
the Pennsylvania records than it is to get to the Maryland records.

But it is possible that close to one half of the people affiliated with this Church belonged on the other side of the line. It is quite possible. I should also call to your attention that when that temporary line was drawn, it was agreed that any persons who had received grants from Maryland need not worry that those grants would be respected and there was a man named John Digges who had received five, or six, or seven thousand acres from Maryland authority and called his tract Digges Choice. And we are not very far from Digges Choice. When Richard McAlister wanted to lay out his town, which he chose to call Hanover but which people called McAlistertown for a long time, he got his grant from Digges Choice. So we are that close to Digges Choice.

I talked about these people. Almost all of them were farmers. They took up large tracts in contrast to what they had experienced in Europe. And I have often wished that if I could go back to the 18th Century for just a little while, one of the questions I would like to ask is how does it feel to own two or three hundred acres of land when you know very well that if you had been back home the most you could have owned was five, or ten, or fifteen or twenty?

Pastor Hively didn't put quite as much information on that map as he might have, but when you look at it, you're going to find a good many tracts that are two hundred acres or three hundred acres in extent. Nobody could hope to farm that much land in a lifetime in the 18th Century and that wasn't important. The important thing was it was mine. I think that if we could go back and hang around these people long enough, we would find that they love the land in a way the Scotch Irish didn't. And let's not criticize the Scotch Irish. They had other more important things. But I think the Germans loved the land and the land responded to them.

Two hundred years ago this year in 1789, Benjamin Rush who was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a Philadelphia physician, the Founder of Dickinson College, the man who provoked the Germans to found Franklin College in Lancaster, wrote about the Germans and this is what he said. A German farm may be distinguished from the farms of the other citizens of the state by the superior size of their barns, the plain but compact form of their houses, the height of their enclosures. They believed in having fences and taking better care of their stock. The extent of their orchards, the fertility of their fields, the luxuriance of their meadows and the general appearance of plenty and neatness in everything that belongs to them. And then he talks about the contrast between what these people brought with them to America and what they had in 1789 and he said that this contrast if you look at it carefully would form such a monument of human industry and economy as has seldom been contemplated in any age or country. Now he laid it on and he laid it on pretty thick. But even if we remove a couple layers from Benjamin Rush, it is still a high tribute to the German farmers.

I'm convinced of something else and that is if we could go back
long enough to become familiar with them, we would find that these people were pious in their way. Notice I said in their way. I think they were earthy. If you are pretty sanctimonious, their earthiness I think might make you feel uncomfortable if you were around them for a while. I think they were close to being superstitious. Do not the older ones of you here today and don't nod, I don't want to know. But don't the older ones of you here today remember parents and grandparents who were really and truly superstitious and it was an earthiness that I think goes back generation after generation after generation. Christianity was laid over a superstition that those people had long before they were in one way, shape or form converted.

I also think many of them had a fear of God, a fear. Maybe a healthy fear, but a fear. A kind of fear that I think very few of us today know very much about. There was a lot that they couldn't understand and to a good many people today if we can't understand something, we just brush it aside. But I think these people thought that somehow in his mystery, God was trying to tell them something and they had better respond by fearing God.

Also, I think we don't have to go back to know that these people had to be hearty. They had to be practical. They were wrestling with the new land and they couldn't spend morning, noon and night on their knees praying. There was an awful lot of work to be done and along with this fear, with this superstition, I think there was a certain hard headed practicalness that enabled them to get through.

There is a lot that I hear people talking about that I really regard as nonsense. And one of the things that I regard as nonsense is the picturing of our forebears as pushovers for some religious authority or for some political authority. There is plenty of evidence remaining to show that these people were not prepared to accept any kind of ministry in Pennsylvania. They remember overbearing princes and overbearing pastors in Europe and they were determined that they were not going to have the same in Pennsylvania.

How do we know that? There are plenty of ministers who have left records telling us precisely that and I think we can believe them on that point.

Now, they were here in Pennsylvania where there was something unusual in the world in the 18th Century. The church and state were in fact separate. They were in fact separate. And if they were going to have a ministry, it was not going to be handed to them by the state and when a minister went to the Pennsylvania political authorities and said you ought to do this, you ought to do that because the church isn't getting along in Pennsylvania, the authorities would say we have no authority to interfere in a matter like that. You have to take care of it yourself.

Laymen therefore, laymen had to take a much more active role in establishing religious institutions in Pennsylvania than they had
in Europe. In fact, the people here were presented with a situation for which they were not prepared. Just remember in Germany or in Switzerland, the church had been there, as far as they knew, since Adam and Eve. It had been there, the buildings, the pastors. You didn't have to start over again. And that was not true here. You did have to start over again. You remember that text from John George Altsense "Everything so to speak has been started anew".

Now, what kind of pastors would come to Pennsylvania. Some very good ones, but some who were obviously misfits in Europe and decided that it would be possibly to their advantage to get out and go somewhere else. The story that dominates my history of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches and what I have called the Pennsylvania field is the story of the scarcity of properly trained and regularly ordained pastors.

The situation was complicated a bit by the mixture of Lutherans and Reformed. A number of ministers who worked in Pennsylvania explained it to the people back in Europe. In many of my families, the father is Lutheran. The mother is Reformed. Or the father is Reformed and the mother is Lutheran. And I am sure that a good many of you remember a situation like that in your own families in the twentieth century. And more often than not, if a Lutheran father married a Reformed mother, he stayed Lutheran, she stayed Reformed and they made some kind of agreement about the children. My wife's grandmother complained to the Lutheran minister for not visiting her. She was Reformed to her dying day at the age of 96 and she said "Look, I gave you all my children" because in that family, all of them became Lutheran.

Now these people can tell us out of their ignorance that there was a Presbyterian congregation here. Really, before they open their mouth, they should either learn what the truth was or should ask someone what the truth was.

In the eighteenth century when Englishmen tried to figure out who these Germans were, they knew the Lutheran. But they came from some kind of strange and different Church to the colony. But they sensed that the Reformed had some kind of affiliation with the Puritan or the congregational family in England and so they sometimes called the Reformed Presbyterians because the Presbyterians belonged to that Reformed Family. And a little bit later, I am going to refer to a document in which they are referred to as Calvánists and most Reforms were Calvánists. When you see the Reformed referred to as Presbyterians, read Reformed. And when you see the Reformed referred to as Calvánists, read Reformed because that's precisely what it means. There never was a Presbyterian Congregation here and I suspect there never will be.
Now, let's go back and get a running start. We've got to start somewhere. There were three very early settlements of Lutheran and Reformed worship west of the Susquehanna River. The first one was called Codorus, the second one was called Conewago, the third was called Monocasy. All of them were named after creeks. None of them necessarily had to be on a creek, just near a creek.

Codorus is now represented by Christ Lutheran Church in York and by the First Reformed Church. I have called it Reformed, you know what I mean in York. Monocasy is represented by the Lutheran Church and the Reformed Church in Frederick. The Conewago Reformed are represented now by Christ Reformed Church just east of Littlestown and the Lutheran by St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Hanover, the first site of which was on Third Street in McSherrystown if you know where the Myers Memorial sign is. That's where the first Lutheran Church in the Conewago settlement was located.

The earliest resident Lutheran minister for those three congregations, the earliest resident Lutheran minister, died about a year after he was settled. Pathetic. And it took almost ten years before another Lutheran minister came to live west of the river. The first Reformed minister came in 1745 and by the grace of God and the skill of his teeth he lasted for about twenty-five years and I'm not going to mention his name until later. You'll hear a lot about him.

With a good many people coming into the area, obviously sooner or later, there are going to be more than three centers of worship. It's a fascinating subject is to try to figure the earliest members of worship and then find out whether the second generation appears and then if the third generation appears and then watch how they go about worship, but after a while you would like to have a church near your home and after a while, you would like to have a church Lutheran and Reformed. There aren't many Lutheran and Reformed congregations in York and Adams County that don't have parents and grandparents. Christ Lutheran Church in York did, St. Matthew's Lutheran does but most of them didn't. If you ever heard of Pipe Creek down near Taneytown, that was one of the next generation. They keep congregations that are more for beauty. Way out there in the middle of no where in the north eastern part of Adams County, I don't see how these people ever found Bermudian. It's hard for me to find whenever I try to find it.

And then we come to David Church. We come here. It had been in existence as early as I can tell, but the records do refer to the Union Church Agreement of June 16, 1753. Two hundred and thirty-five years ago next month. It was Saturday. I expected to find this was a Sunday but I had to refer to my Ready reference calendar. I found it was a Saturday. Now what does that Union Church Agreement mean? It means in all probability, in all probability that they now had their first church building. And this agreement was to provide for its amicable use. The agreement was probably brief. It probably said that the expenses of the Church were to be borne by both sides. When you remember this is a Union Church, did you
talk about the Lutheran side and the Reformed side. If you didn't, you should have. And the agreement probably said one Sunday was Lutheran and one Sunday was Reformed.

The Lutheran Pastor who signed that agreement was John Phillip Strider who was never ordained, who was a schoolmaster who took to being a pastor and got away with it. He first shows up outside Philadelphia and he keeps working his way west until he shows up very momentarily here and then dies in Frederick, never staying anywhere very long. I think he was here today and gone tomorrow as far as David's Church is concerned.

For the Reformed side, the signature was Rev. Jacob Leschev and he is the man I identified a while ago as having been associated with this area for a quarter century. Some people call him Leschey and if you refer to the Church that is named after him, maybe you call him Leschey. I think in the eighteenth century his name might have been pronounced Leschev. But Lischy sounds to me as though we ought to call it Lischy.

Now who long before 1753 was there any kind of an organization here? And I think if you are honest, I think you would have to say you really don't know. And it helps if you have something rather definite. That Union Church agreement June 16, 1753 is something very, very definite and if the Lord regards truth, this is truth as far as I am concerned.

Now, when this Church was born, it obviously served a large territory and could not expect to hold all of the people who at one time or another considered this their home. Jacob's Church, not St. Jacobs, Jacob's Church which we know as the Stone Church dates from about 1756. Zion in Manchester from about 1760. Benjamin's, not St. Benjamin's, Benjamin's or Pipe Creek outside of Westminster from the early 1760's. Taneytown from about 1764. And after Richard McAlister founded a town that we know as Hanover, the Reformed people who lived there who didn't want to go toward Littlestown to Christ Reformed Church organized Emanuel in Hanover.

And either, in all or almost all of those cases, members were drawn away from David. One of the founders of Pipe Creek was one of the original members here. One of the founders in Manchester was. Some of the people who appear very early in the Stone Church records also appear first of all here. So there is the flitting that takes place within a few years after this church was formed and it is something that you would expect. It is a normal development.

Now let's look at the pastors on the Reformed side and let's start with Jacob Leschev who has always intrigued me because he was the first pastor of the Glatfelter family in America. He first lived in York and then shortly after he established residence in York, he started buying land. He liked land as much as any land hungry layman, just south of Spring Grove between Spring Grove and Jefferson. And this man who was Mr. Reformed pastor west of the Susquehanna
River in Pennsylvania for so long, had no formal theological training. He came to this country as a very strong man with the Moravians. The Moravians ordained him. He soon fought with them and decided that he was really Reformed, not Moravian and he joined the Reformed Church and the Reformed Coetus, that body that was the predecessor of your higher Church judiciary.

And after a while they threw him out for a number of reasons, including what they considered to be a moral lapse. He got married to his second wife and she became pregnant too soon after his first wife died. But in those days, well Jimmy Swaggert has left the Assembly of God Church and is on his own. Jacob Lishey left the Reformed Church when they kicked him out and continued as a Reformed minister.

Try to move with me now. Try to remember your geography from public school. You know where Baltimore is? Jacob Lishey is living just south of Spring Grove, remember. He was the first reformed pastor in Baltimore. He was the first Reformed pastor at Pipe Creek. He was the first Reformed pastor at Taneytown. He was the first Reformed pastor at Silver Run. He was the first Reformed pastor at Lower Bermudian. He was the first Reformed pastor at Dover. He was the first Reformed pastor at Kreitz Creek. He was the first Reformed pastor at Canadokly. Are you still with me? When you get to Kreitz Creek and Canadokly, you're over there east of York. When we were still in Dover, we were north of York. We started to the south and we are going west and we are completing a large circle. And last of all, he was the first Reformed pastor at the Stone Church.

He kept a register of the baptisms that he performed from about 1745 to about 1768 or 9. One thousand, seven hundred baptisms he entered in his register. No wonder he retired in 1769 or 1770 when he was only fifty years old. Something must have come over the man. Ministers didn't usually retire. They kept preaching until they died. He dropped out about 1769 or 70. He lived for ten more years and he was buried in a little grave yard south of Spring Grove. The grave yard is still there. In the 1920's they took his stone and a couple's spades full of earth and took them over and deposited them in Lishey's grave yard. But my great-great-great, great great grandfather and mother are still buried in the little graveyard. Nobody took their bones over to Lishey's Church.

Now, when Lishey felt whatever it was that was coming on, he tried to get someone to take his place and he got a man by the name of John Christopher Faber who had come across the water as a relatively young man. He wanted to get the approval of the Dutch Authorities and ordination, but when he was waiting for that, an unfavorable letter of recommendation came saying that he was unsuitable.

David's Church and the Stone Church and by now there was a Fissel's Church. Can you understand what John George Alsence meant when he talked about constantly riding around. Suppose you lived in
Taneytown in the eighteenth century and you were expected to serve this church, the Stone Church and Fissel's Church and two or three or four others that I can't remember right now. You wonder whether they were ever home.

I'm going to skip over a minute and say a little bit about John Christopher Gobrecht who came to Hanover in 1780. He started out as a weaver and a farmer and he felt that he was converted and he persuaded--he had, after he had studied some theology, he persuaded the Reformed leaders to examine him and ordain him. So when he came to Hanover he came as a trained, not regularly trained, but a trained man and an ordained man. And I think John Christopher Gobrecht was a very devout man and comes here at a time when there are new congregations and a shortage of ministers and although he lives to be eighty and dies in 1815, for the last fifteen year or more of his life, he is obviously not in good health.

I said I was going to talk today about the first half century of the life of David's Church and that will take us up to about eighteen hundred. By which time John Christopher Gobrecht I think is not serving this congregation any more, the Reformed side here and I frankly don't know who is. I have some ideas, but those ideas are about a couple of men who simply called themselves preachers and got away with it.

And I'm not saying that they were evil. It was simply that they were men who operated outside the regular channels of the Reformed Church and the Lutherans had these people too.

Now I do want to say something about what was going on in the community here during this first half century. I have about four or five things that I want to comment on and the first one of them is what was often called the Patapsco Road. The old name for Baltimore was Patapsco. And it was only about the time that this church was established that Baltimore came to be anything. Baltimore was very inconspicuous until a good many people got across the Susquehanna in York and Adams Counties and Cumberland County and needed a market for their goods. These pioneer farmers were good farmers, but they didn't want to be just subsistence farmers. The only way they could get a few more things to live with would be by selling something and they couldn't sell something to each other. They had to find a market.

The most obvious market was Philadelphia and Philadelphia was very far away. But a much more convenient market was Baltimore and the town of Baltimore grew not so much on Maryland as it grew on this part of Pennsylvania which you and I know so much about.

In 1766, the residents of Manheim Township and Heidelberg Township petitioned the York County Court and they said that a long time ago when the boundary had not been settled at all, the Baltimore County Court had laid out a road from the Conewago settlement. I told you where Conewago was, the area around Littlestown east towards Hanover. The Baltimore County Court had laid out a road from the Conewago settlement down to Patapsco. And then the line was drawn.
When the line was drawn, Baltimore County said well don't expect us to keep up that road north of the line. It isn't our responsibility. It was nobody's responsibility. And so these farmers, including I suppose some of them who were members of this Church petitioned the York County Court saying that this road was and here I quote "as useful a road as perhaps any in the province. Won't you please ordain it and establish it as a road so that we can maintain it legally". And that's what the Court did in 1767.

And when the Court established a road, the clerk would write in the minutes all the courses and distances that road follows. South so many degrees west, so many perches to so and so's place, south so many degrees, east so many perches to another place and I've followed that road. It starts at the Adams County line north of Hanover and it goes to the Maryland line. It is amazing how closely it follows Route 94, present day Route 94. It is amazing how few changes have been made in 220 years in the courses and distances of that road.

One of the places where it changes course is at Jacob Sherman's house. And now you've heard me mention a name deliberately for the first time. Milkur Keaner, remember him? He had a tavern along this road. You had to have a tavern about every five or ten miles. Don't think of it as a place you go to get drunk. It was a very important establishment in the East. Milkur Keaner had a tavern from almost the time that York County was formed, 1751 to 1760. And then somebody had it whose name needs not concern us and then in 1763 Jacob Sherman got a license to keep a tavern. Jacob Sherman had just come into this area from Berks County. He didn't come directly from the other side. He came from the county. He stayed in Berks County for a while and then he decided to come here and he had the tavern for about ten years and then shortly thereafter, his son, Conrad Sherman, had the tavern and that tavern was somewhere according to the Orphan Court, I mean the court sessions docket, somewhere south of Pleasant Hill. I don't know precisely where but that's close to the Church.

This is one of the important things that happened. The people who settled here and founded this Church had an important road that made it possible for them to take their things to market in Baltimore. Milkur Keaner the tavern keeper as I told you went to Baltimore and became a businessman.

Now another important thing that happened in this vicinity was the establishment in the early 1760's of Mary Ann Furnace. There were not very many places near or west of the Susquehanna River which had an iron furnace nearby. George Ross who became a signer of the Declaration of Independence, George Stevenson who was a big wheel in York for a good many years and a man by the name of Thompson who was one of the first supporters of the American Revolution. Those three persons organized George Ross and Company and set up Mary Ann Furnace. They bought hundreds upon hundreds upon hundreds of acres of land, because what you needed in the eighteenth century
was an unbelievable access to wood that could be burned to make charcoal. It could be used to make heat. It could be used to turn iron ore into iron and then into useful products.

And there is I think only one tract on the Hively map that is clearly George Ross and Company but there were till it's all said and done more than a dozen of them, some of them 300, other ones 400 acres. And during the American Revolution, Mary Ann Furnace was making ammunition for the Continental Army.

Now a third thing that happened here that I want to say something about is the efforts by these people to obtain a clear title to the Church land. When you study the history of this Church, you've read that the land on which this Church was built was donated by two men and their names are not always rendered the same. But the fact is that when these people look into it, there was nobody who claimed this land, nobody. And when they wanted to clear title, they had to start at the beginning. And the beginning was obtaining a warrant from the Proprietors of Pennsylvania and here is a copy of the warrant.

I'll read some of it. Whereas Helfer Kramer, Jacob Hawck and Leonard Sabel Trustees for the Lutherans and Jacob Raunkel, Henry Martin and Henry Filger Trustees for the Calvansists of Manheim Township in the County of York had requested that we would allow them to take up eight acres of land in said township and county adjoining the lands of Jacob Sherman in trust for the use of a church for place of worship and burying ground as well for the German Lutherans and Calvansists of those parts for which they agreed to pay the yearly quit rent of one shilling sterling. These Presents here are to authorize and require you to survey or cause to be surveyed according to the methods of townships the said quantity of eight acres of land and this was signed by John Penn and this is the John Penn who was the grandson of William Penn and the date on this is the 6th of April 1775. He signed it only twelve days before the battles of Lexington and Concord which started the American Revolution.

Now usually it took quite a while for the surveyor to get around and survey this land. Not in this case. Here is the copy of the original survey which showed the eight acres which showed a stream passing through here and which locates the church, which locates the church. A draft of a lot of eight acres and allowance of six acres situated in Manheim Township, York County serving under Helfer Kramer, Jacob Hawck and Leonard Sabel for the Luther Congregation, Jacob Raunkel, Henry Martin and Henry Filger, Trustees for the Presbyterian Congregation. Remember I told you whenever you see that you are supposed to read Reformed.

Upon the 15th day of April, 1775 the Lutheran and Reformed bearing dates of 16th of April instant. This was done by Archibald McClain, Deputy Surveyor. Archibald McClain belonged to a very influential family just west of Gettysburg. He had been appointed a deputy surveyor and this is not one of the first surveys he made, but one of the early surveys he made.
Now, if you had a warrant and you had a survey, you still did not have a clear title. To get a clear title, you needed to squeeze out of those proprietors a patent deed. That word patent shouldn't scare you. It simply means a deed of public authority. Remember when the King gave Pennsylvania to Penn, he gave him not only the right to govern the place, but he gave him title to something like thirty million acres of land. So if you wanted a title, you needed to get a patent deed.

It just so happens that I learned when I got here today, that Mrs. Fuss not long ago found your patent deed. Here it is. You go to Harrisburg and you can get a copy of this deed as it is entered into a Patent book in Harrisburg. You can get it for 30¢. This is the genuine article. I hope that somebody here will make a motion to take this deed to have it restored and cleaned up. These things should be protected and then sealed to save them and it also testifies that you have clear title.

Do you know when the lawyers drew up the deed by which you purchased the church in 1977, they didn't know anything like this existed and they didn't take the time to go to Harrisburg to see if anyone had a clear title.

But I'm telling you the truth. I was flabbergasted when I read that deed while I was working on one of my books, because I knew there was a patent deed, but the lawyers didn't take time to look for it.

Well, then the American Revolution which came along. Within a decade after the Revolution was over, we had a new Constitution and a new Government. We are celebrating the bi-centennial, you know, of the American Constitution right now and I discovered recently that there were people in this area in Manheim Township who were so opposed to a new Constitution that they rioted and they were arrested and they were tried before the Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and the Chief Justice gave them a stern lecture and then said sentence will be postponed for a year and left them dangling for a year.

At the end of that time we had a Constitution. The Supreme Court Justice came back to York and a lot of the tensesness was gone and they were fined just a couple pennies and a new Government got started.

And I suppose if we investigated, we would discover that those people became faithful Pennsylvanians and Americans when it was all over.

Now at last we come to the year 1800. We must still call it David's Church, not St. David's. People didn't start calling it St. David's for a long time. People didn't start calling Benjamin Saint Benjamin for a long time. They didn't start calling Jacob's Saint Jacob's for a long time. It was David's Church and Jacob's Church. I haven't found the word Sherman's used until the 1840's and 1850's. Who in the world was David? Who in the world was Jacob? Who in the world was Benjamin? I have never found out how those names were chosen. All I know is they weren't Saints.
It was a Union Church in 1800, a Union Church. There was a parochial school here. There were no public schools in Pennsylvania. Virtually every one of the two or three hundred Lutheran and Reformed congregations in Pennsylvania at this time had a parochial school. I don't know where it was, but one of the Church documents from 1783 refer to the schular, to the schoolmaster. To think the church assumed the burden of educating the young.

There was no Sunday School. The Sunday School came later and if the people, the good people here at David's were as eager to have Sunday School as the good people of the Stone Church were, they kept the Sunday Schools out as long as they could. It was something new and strange and different. It took a long time to get used to them. I have discovered in studying the history of many of these congregations that the documents will say, "We want a piece of land". That document doesn't. We want a piece of land for a church and school and graveyard. We need a church. We need a school. We need a graveyard.

I told John Fuss before we came in here and while we were walking through that graveyard how pitiful few tombstones there are out there for the first fifty years of this church. And that's true. I have walked through dozens of these old graveyards. And in a good many cases, I think the people never had gravestones. And in a good many cases, they disappeared a long time ago. And you have to look elsewhere if you want vital information about a good many of these people.

Although the Lutherans had a liturgy, the Reformed didn't. I don't think most Lutheran ministers in the 1780's used the liturgy. I think the services were quite simple. I think virtually every word spoken in these churches was German. Probably in the winter there weren't services every Sunday.

The schoolmaster in a good many of these congregations led the singing. If there was no minister around, frequently the schoolmaster would conduct funerals too, but one of his tasks was to lead the singing.

There are enough song books and hymnals here to go around I'm sure for everybody who is here this afternoon, but in 1800's there were only a handful of hymnals I'm convinced people had. The hymns that were sung were either familiar to most people or many people didn't bother singing. A minister like Henry Melchior Mulhernberg thought that singing was very important and I suppose most ministers did and they encouraged people to sing. But some of them probably didn't.

Communion. I think that with a little encouragement Lutheran pastors now would start having Communion three times a day and that's a little too frequently for me. Especially when I realize that my forefathers and yours got along with Communion twice a year, in Spring and in Fall. And somehow I think they survived. And somehow I think the rate of entrance into Heaven was probably as high then as it is now. Spring and Fall, Spring and Fall.
I've told you that I think that old document is very precious. Another very precious document is a parish register which lists baptisms. And when a church does not have an old parish register, it almost doesn't have a history. If you know where Holzschwam is, Holzschwam goes back to the 1760's and there isn't anything until the 1830's. And I have a feeling when I study Holzschwam that there is a great curtain between me and them.

St. John's Lutheran in Abbottstown, how I wish that that old register that goes back to the late 1760's would still exist. Apparently it was burned in a fire as early as 1829 when some prank set fire to St. John's Lutheran Church in Abbottstown.

Well, the original parish register of David's doesn't exist, but we do know from an effort by Dr. Zacharias we do know about the entries. Then there was a register that was started in 1763 and another one started in 1783. I thought what I would do is add up the number of baptisms on the Lutheran side and the Reformed side for the decade before 1803 when we say David's was fifty years old. And I came to 122 Reformed baptisms between 1794 and 1803 and 161 Lutheran, 283 baptisms in ten years in this Church. That's a lot isn't it, compared with probably the number that the two congregations have today. 283, that's 28 a year. That would be about a baptism about every other week.

It's certainly an indication that in spite of the terrific shortage of pastors, something was going on here. Somehow there was preaching. Somehow there was Communion. There were baptisms.

There is a question in the eighth chapter of Romans which has intrigued me for a long time. After St. Paul has discussed some very difficult things about life and living, he says what then shall we say to these things? Now my purpose in presenting to you this afternoon what the believable evidence tells me about the early history of David's Church in its larger setting has not been to encourage you to dwell in the past, something which we cannot do in any event.

There are some things we should say about David's Church. More than two and a third centuries ago, many German and Swiss farm people had the courage to pull up their European roots, knowing they were never going to go home again. They had the courage to undertake a long and perilous sea voyage, knowing that almost surely some of them were going to die. And they had the courage to try to find a new home in an uncertain new world. They came, they came. But for many it must have been a wrenching experience and they must have wondered more than once whether God was with them.

Now these people who came here, whether they came to Codorus, or to Manheim or to Heidelberg or wherever, found the burdens of Pennsylvania Government easy and light compared to what they had known at home. They were not the ones to stir up rebellion against lawful authority. But once that rebellion came, the Revolutionary Government began making heavy demands on them and most of us don't realize
how heavy those demands were. Paying high taxes, higher than the British ever invoked, renounced the solemn oath that they had taken before God to be good and faithful subjects of George III and then to take up arms against him.

They obeyed and I've come to the conclusion that probably the reason the obeyed was because when they searched their hearts, they came to the conclusion well at last this is our home. This is our home. But it must have been a wrenching experience. And they must have wondered more than once whether God was with them. Now in 1803 when we leave them, they've contemplated the continuing even worsening shortage of good pastors after so many years and they could not see how that shortage was going to be met. And they must have wondered whether God was still with them or whether he was punishing them for something they had done.

Now you and I know today, without my giving you any details at all, how in our own midst and throughout the world the Christian faith is being cast aside and Christian principles of good conduct are brazenly rejected. You and I know without going into any detail there are serious problems in our society everywhere we turn. And we should wonder, whether we do or not, whether God is with us.

Now we should also remember that these members of David's Church and these people of every age had their own special trials and tribulations and I've tried to list a few. We were not the first and we won't be the last. These people I've been talking about, for the most part persevered, they persevered. I wonder whether some Sunday morning a long time ago, Jacob Lischey mounted the pulpit in the old Church on a Reformed Sunday or Karl Frederick Wildbahn mounted the pulpit on a Lutheran Sunday and picked as his text "What shall we say to these things".

Paul gave an answer to the Romans which is at the end of the chapter. It was valid for the Romans. If Jacob Lischey read to the end of the chapter or if Karl Frederick Wildbahn read to the end of the chapter, it was valid for Helfer Kramer and Jacob Raunkel, for Jacob Hawk and Henry Martin, for Leonard Sabel and Henry Filger and it is valid for us.

I listened to a Baccalaureate sermon this morning. I played hookey from Commencement this morning. I should really have been at Commencement, but I decided I would rather be here. But I did go to Baccalaureate this morning. Now I heard the preacher say in effect, don't just sit there, do something. And this advice should lead us not to just sit here, but to do something.

This is what St. Paul said to the Romans, "For I am sure that neither life nor death nor angels nor principalities of things present or things to come or powers nor height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Amen." This is what we should say to these things.

Thank you for listening.