

Churches in the Shenandoah Valley

St Martin Lutheran Church
2235 River Rd
New Market, VA 22844



A brief History

The history of St. Martin's goes back to the coming of the five sons of Ludwig Zirkle and other German Lutherans to the Shenandoah Valley in the 1760's, and in particular to the coming of Paul Henkel to New Market in 1790. Henkel wrote in his notes that he and Ludwig Zirkle went about looking for Lutheran people and found that there were none right in the settlement itself but found Lutherans toward the north and the west where the Zirkle's themselves had settled. They concluded it would be wise to locate a church for these people and selected a site called Davidsburg where Mr Zirkle had donated a half acre lot. The construction of Davidsburg Church began at the north end of New Market.

The increasing number of people west of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River had problems getting to the church when the river could not be crossed, and because of the distance some of them had to travel, so it became feasible to establish new congregations to the west of the river. In 1853, Rev Socrates

Church website:

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Henkel began to preach in Kipps schoolhouse and the Mt Zion congregation was organized on February 12, 1854.

Near Manor's Mill, on the west bank of the river, a log schoolhouse was built, called Old Oak Shade School. In the summer of 1885, Rev J.A. Snyder, pastor at St Matthew's Church, began holding monthly worship services in the school. Worship services and the Sunday School continued in the school house for several years until the fall of 1889, when a committee consisting of Noah Zirkle, Perry C. Olinger and William Clem was appointed to secure funds and building materials for the construction of a house of worship. Abraham Zirkle donated land for the church just west of the school and over railroad line, and James W. Dove, Moses Kipps, Miss Nancy Quick, Reuben Golladay and others donated trees for lumber and many contributed labor. The church was built in the spring and summer of 1890. It was a small frame structure, 40 by 30 feet, with two doors in front and a pulpit platform at the back.

The congregation was organized September 13, 1890 and 39 members of St Matthew's Church withdrew their membership to become charter members of the new congregation. The name given to the new congregation was St. James. The church building was dedicated on July 13, 1891. At that dedication, the congregation, acting upon a petition of Moses Kipps, determined to rename the church St. Martin. The pews were made from lumber prepared at Hess' Mill on the river and Mr William H.Ollinger contributed \$130 so that the new church could start without debt.

Upon organization St Martin was accepted into the New Market Parish alongside St. Matthew's and St Mark's Forestville. The first joint council was held November 1, 1890.

A new parish, consisting of St. Martin's, St. Mark's and Mt Zion was formed in 1933. and at the first joint meeting held in Forestville December 28, 1934, the name of Quicksburg Lutheran Parish was chosen.

A lot in Quicksburg was donated by Mr and Mrs Philip Olinger and the new parish built a parsonage on this lot, completed without debt on the fall of 1935. By that time the congregation had grown to 243 members

It was this building which was destroyed by fire early on the morning of January 13, 1935, on the same day which it was to be rededicated. Under the able leadership of the Pastor, the Rev. Edward T. Bollinger, plans for the construction of a new church were launched, which were vigorously completed by the building committee. Ground was first broken on May 24, 1935. Construction of church actually began on August 12, 1935. The Corner Stone was laid Sunday afternoon, September 8, 1935. The congregation, in the meantime, continued to worship in the Oak Shade schoolhouse nearby. The first service was held in the newly built church on March 22, 1936 and the dedication service held on April 26, 1936.

Church website:

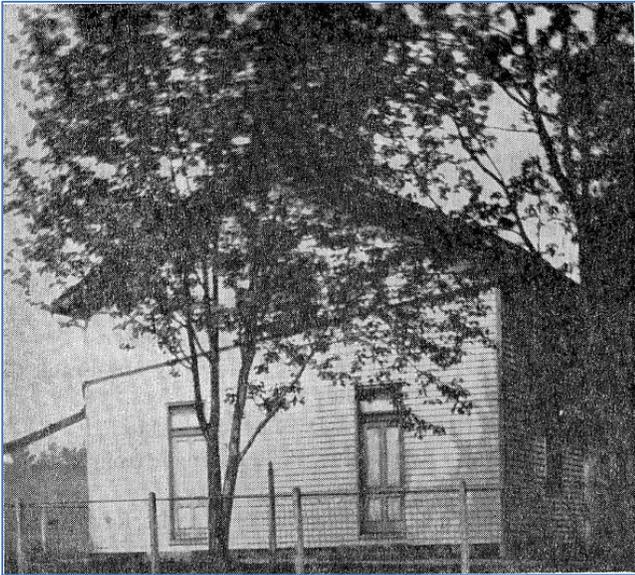
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A bell was secured and installed in November 5, 1938 in the brick bell tower, but in 1944, due to complaint from a member that he could not hear it where he lived, the congregation agreed that it should be moved to a new bell tower erected on the roof of the church.

The basement had been finished, shrubbery and trees planted, the lot fenced and additional land was purchased for parking. In 1975 bathrooms, a nursery and a ramp for wheelchairs were added.

On January 1, 1989, after 18 months of discussions regarding the realignment from the Synod and Central Valley Conference, St. Martin's and St Mark's formed a two church parish.

Compiled from documents loaned by Fred Neese, Sept 2011



Sunday School

First Church

1955



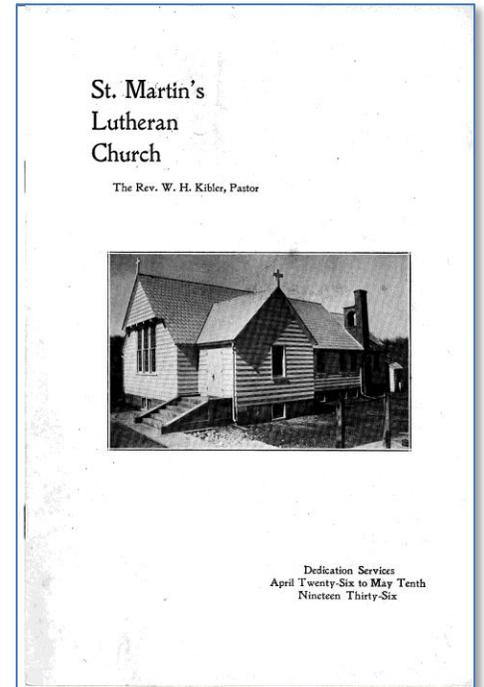
Rebuilding after fire

Church website:

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Rebuilt Church 1936



Inside the rebuilt church



1935 Parsonage



1944 Church with new bell tower

Church website: