

# The Second Church 1798 - 1824

In 1798 the first church structure, which had faithfully served Ebenezer for thirty-seven years, was heavily damaged by a violent storm. Since it was no longer functional, the Consistories decided to erect a new two-story log building with galleries and "other conveniences of the time" on the site of the old church. A church record, dated November 22, 1798, states the following:

"Inasmuch as we find that our supply of money, which you have from the beginning gathered in great readiness, is insufficient to complete the work (relating to the church building), we ask you for further contributions and we believe no member of true Christian feeling will say no. A record of this contribution shall be inserted in the church book."

Following this notation, there appears a list of fifty-three people whose contributions are listed in schillings and pence.

One year prior to the election of Thomas Jefferson as the third president of the United States, Jacob Oswald of Ebenezer Church, John Smith of Jacob's Church, and Ferdinand Ritter of Bethel Church, entered into an agreement with John Penn of Bucks County to purchase a twelve-and-one-half-acre piece of land. According to a deed filed in Berks County on October 17, 1799, the property was located approximately one-fourth of a mile east of the village of Lynnport and south of the original Thomas Everett property formerly occupied by the late Stewart Hamm, a member of Ebenezer Church.<sup>4</sup> It is believed that the three churches had planned to build a common Reformed parsonage on the site. However, there is no evidence that the plan, believed to have originated in 1790, was carried out; nor do we know how the land, which became known as "Pfarrers Land" (Pastor's Land), was disposed of.

As the Ebenezer Lutheran and Reformed congregations entered into the nineteenth century, for some unknown reason they had not yet been granted an official title to the church property purchased in 1760. In fact, it was to be fifty-one years later, 4 January 1811, that a deed, giving title to the forty-three-acre property, was officially recorded in the Northampton County Courthouse. Exactly fourteen months later, 6 March 1812, the property became a part of the newly formed County of Lehigh.

Fourteen months prior to the official recording of the deed for the church property, the Ebenezer Church Joint Consistories commissioned Stephen Balliet, Jr., a surveyor, to conduct a survey of the property. A reproduction of the surveyor's sketch and comments, dated 6 November 1809, appear here with a more recent surveyor's sketch.

In the year 1816, as James Monroe was campaigning for president, the United States of America was being rapidly expanded westward by settlers with ax and gun. At the very same time, newly formed Lehigh County and, specifically, Lynn Township were also experiencing rapid changes and expansion. A new community was being laid out on land adjacent to the eastern perimeter of the Ebenezer Church property. The owner, Samuel Ely, subdivided the land into numerous lots which he then offered for sale. The developed tract became the village of New Tripoli, which was to provide Ebenezer Church with many new parishioners in the ensuing years.

It is believed that eight gentlemen served as pastors to both congregations of Ebenezer Church during the time of the second building. They are listed according to dates considered to be fairly accurate regarding length of service:

**Lutheran**

Daniel Lehman	1798 - 1806
Friedrich Gaisenheimer	1806 - 1808
Johannes Knoske	1811 - 1823
C. F. J. Saeger	May have been a Supply pastor

**Reformed**

Friedrich William Van der Sloot	1798 – 1803
Johann Heinrich Helffrich	1804 – 1810
Heinrich Diefenbach	1810 – 1816
Johannes Helffrich	1816 – 1824

**Figure #1 Surveyor's Sketch of Church Property (1809) and Commentary.**  
**From *church archives*.**

**Figure #2 Surveyor's Sketch of Church Property (1975). Note location of the present church building and the Reading Railroad right-of-way which bisected the church property until the early 1960's. From *church archives*.**