

A Brief History of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and the Caretaker's House

St. Paul's Evangelical (Zion's) Lutheran Church was founded in 1715 as a German Reformed Church. Five and one half acres of land were purchased in 1734 in the village of Red Hook to establish a church and build a parsonage and church and start a cemetery. Over the years, the congregation purchased more land and added it to the existing site.

The caretaker's house was built circa 1800 as a farmhouse. The enclosed map shows some street possibilities in 1796. A proposed road could have run through the site, but instead Fisk Street was created. Probably the farm extended to the corner of South Broadway and Firehouse Lane.

The saltbox house was known as the Moul House for many years. Then the Dodd family bought it and lived there until 1939 when St. Paul's purchased the house and the lot next to it. It was used as a caretaker's house for the church sexton and cemetery manager. Different families had this job for the next fifty plus years.

Only about a third of the house is original. Rooms were added on and the outside was renovated in the 1970's. At this point, not much is salvageable, nor is much original. All of the windows have been replaced at one time or another.

The house has fallen into disrepair with sills rotting away and the roof caving in. The wooden floors are buckling. The staircase is cracked and there are holes in the floor upstairs. The steps to the cellar are broken and unsafe. There is very little insulation in the walls.

Unfortunately, if there were any records, they were destroyed by the minister, Rev. Kenneth Jetto when he removed all church papers as he was leaving St. Paul's.

Submitted by Lorraine Humphrey
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