

St. John's Church History The History of St. John's UCC

St. John's Church traces its origin to February 17, 1850, when a group of immigrants came to Runck's old schoolhouse on Rapid Run Rd. in Cincinnati, Ohio to organize a church. Motivated by a desire to worship God in their own language, they organized the Evangelical Protestant Church of Delhi and Green Township.

The German immigrants chose as their patron saint the beloved disciple of Christ, St. John. Most of the members had been affiliated in their homeland with the Lutheran, Reformed, and Evangelical Churches. For this reason, they were anxious to remain free from all denominational entanglements, believing that different religious opinions need not lead to discord as long as the spirit of true freedom and the love of neighbors prevail.

One of the most vital questions concerning the welfare of the congregations of our forefathers was the German language. After much discussion, it was decided to introduce a bi-lingual service on Sunday mornings. German and English sermons were presented to a segregated congregation (men on one side, women on the other).

The first constitution of St. John's stated: "We are united to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and in accordance with the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther and other German Reformers, allowing freedom of conscience and freedom of interpretation in points of doctrinal difference.

We are united for the purpose of serving God and our fellow men. With bleeding hearts we were forced to leave our Fatherland and break away from our parents, brothers and sisters. We now desire to unite ourselves as a Christian Congregation in order to live together in love and peace under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit until called by our Savior to our heavenly home. Hatred and strife shall not be tolerated in our midst, for we are all children of the one and same Heavenly Father."

In 1863, land was purchased at the present location on Neeb Road, between Cleves Warsaw and Rapid Run Road in Cincinnati, Ohio. After using a frame building for several decades, the congregation built a more appropriate brick structure in 1899. This building is still in use today as the Day Care Center.

In 1957, the congregation united with the Ohio Conference of Congregational Churches, and in 1958, it became St. John's Congregational Christian Church. In 1959, the Congregational Christian Church and the Evangelical and Reformed Church merged to become the United Church of Christ.