



## The History of Church of the Holy Eucharist

Little did John Brainard, a young Christian missionary from Indian Mills, realize that the establishment of a one room church in 1778 would lead to the eventual name for a growing township. This small church built on the present site of the Tabernacle Cemetery at the corner of Chatsworth and Hampton Gate Road was organized for the northeastern section of what was then Shamong Township. The church became known as "Tabernacle in the Wilderness." Both Lenni Lenape and white settlers worshipped there.

As the population grew, a Catholic identity began to take shape even though numbers were few. In 1940 the faithful worshipped at Saint Ann's in the Pines, Browns Mills and Sacred Heart in Mt. Holly. In 1943 a missionary church began in Medford Lakes. It was known then as The Log Cabin Church. Fr. Paul Greco eventually became the first pastor.

Catholic school children first attended Sacred Heart Schin Mt. Holly. In 1943 a missionary church began in Medford Lakes. It was known then as The Log Cabin Church. Fr. Paul Greco eventually became the first pastor.

Catholic school children first attended Sacred Heart School in Mt. Holly and later Our Lady of Good Counsel in Moorestown. Anthony Russo shuttled the children to and from Moorestown on one school bus. CCD was taught in the Russo's home by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Newark from 1946 to 1955. The need for a Catholic school became apparent and St. Joseph's School, located on Rt. 70 in Medford, opened its doors in 1956.

The parish continued to grow and shortly after Fr. William Campbell's arrival in 1958, when plans were made for a new church. St. Mary of the Lakes was dedicated in 1966. By the summer of 1981, St. Mary of the Lakes had become the largest geographical parish in New Jersey

After the census of 1981, Fr. John Campoli of St. Mary of the Lakes realized a need for Mass to be held at an additional location. Tabernacle Middle School became the site for these services. The first Masses were held at 9:30 and 11:00 A.M. and began in the summer of 1982. The weekly attendance grew to 500.

It became apparent to Bishop Reiss that a church in Tabernacle would be both a spiritual and practical benefit to the people in their attendance at Mass and all other forms of worship. The announcement was received on September 17, 1982 that the new parish – The Church of the Holy Eucharist - would begin operation on October 1, 1982. The bounds of the parish include

these townships: Shamong, Southampton, Tabernacle, Chatsworth, Vincentown and Woodland Township.

Twelve and a half acres of farm land were purchased on November 18, 1983 from Anthony Russo. The property had been in the Russo family since 1970 when it was purchased from Mervin Fletcher. Originally this land was owned by Frank Earl Haines.

An architect, Henry Jung, A.I.A., was engaged in early August 1983. Among his many accomplishments were the Air Force Academy Chapel in Colorado, the United Nations Chapel in New York, and sixty other churches around the country.

Contracting bids thru our Building Committee for our new church were accepted in January 1985. E. Allen Reeves Inc., of Abington, PA, was awarded the general contract. After all necessary approvals were received; ground was broken on April 19, 1985. Actual construction began in June of 1985 and was completed in the summer of 1986. Dedication of the Church was on September 7, 1986.

In the front of the Nave is a crucifix carved out of wood The Corpus was added to the cross in 1989. It was created by Robert K. Carsten of Springfield, Vermont.

Donated by the Lee Family, Holy Eucharist's organ is a Rodger's Model 890 "pipe augmented organ" installed shortly before Christmas, 1989. There are 407 pipes and an electronic augmentation system for the lower notes. Its expanded American classic tonal design is highly compatible with Roman Catholic liturgy as well as being suitable for the performance of all styles of organ literature.

The stained glass windows in the Daily Chapel and the Atrium honor the seven sacraments and the four evangelists. High in the altar area are small windows with the symbols of the Sacraments. The stained glass was designed by Maureen McGuire of Phoenix, Arizona. They were added to church between 1989 and 2002.

On March 1, 1996, the Stations of the Cross were added; they were sculpted by Holy Eucharist parishioner Joseph Palecki. The designs of the stations were taken from the original drawings of Henry Jung, the architect who designed Holy Eucharist Church.

In 2005, for those who participated in our "Continuing the Journey" campaign, a wall was prepared in the gathering space for our Tree of Life Memorial. This memorial contains over 727 engraved leaves that commemorate each of the families/persons who gave so generously toward the building fund for the new construction.

The new construction included a Faith Formation Center, Hoffman Hall, and the connecting cloister. Hoffman Hall is a large room that can accommodate 298 people. It has an attached kitchen. This area is used for the showing of films, meetings and events. The room is named after Flora and George Hoffman who provided for a major part of the funding in their will.

On September 25th, 2007, the new 35-foot cross was raised in the circle in front of the church to commemorate our 25 years as a parish. Artist, Peter Vanni, designed the cross.