# Nomination of Historic Building, Structure, Site, or Object

## Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

**Philadelphia Historical Commission**

Submit all attached materials on paper and in electronic form on CD (MS Word format)

## 1. Address of Historic Resource

(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street address:</th>
<th>838½ N. 42nd Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postal code:</td>
<td>19104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Councilmanic District:</td>
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## 2. Name of Historic Resource

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Name:</th>
<th>St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Name:</td>
<td>Community of God Church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 3. Type of Historic Resource

- [x] Building
- [ ] Structure
- [ ] Site
- [ ] Object

## 4. Property Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition:</th>
<th>[ ] excellent</th>
<th>[x] good</th>
<th>[ ] fair</th>
<th>[ ] poor</th>
<th>[ ] ruins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupancy:</td>
<td>[x] occupied</td>
<td>[ ] vacant</td>
<td>[ ] under construction</td>
<td>[ ] unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current use:</td>
<td>church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## 5. Boundary Description

Please attach a plot plan and written description of the boundary.

## 6. Description

Please attach a description of the historic resource and supplement with current photographs.

## 7. Significance

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

### Period of Significance (from year to year):

from _1871_ to _1950_

### Date(s) of construction and/or alteration:

_1872, 1895, 1906_

### Architect, engineer, and/or designer:

_Emil H.C. Hartmann, Duhring, Okie & Ziegler_

### Builder, contractor, and/or artisan:

_Philip Haibach, Ambrose Beck_

### Original owner:

_St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church_

### Other significant persons:

_Pastor Christian F. Welden_
CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:
The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):
✓ (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
□ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
✓ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
✓ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
□ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
□ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
□ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
□ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
□ (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
✓ (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR
Name with Title__Jonathan E. Farnham, Executive Director Email__jon.farnham@phila.gov________
Organization__Philadelphia Historical Commission____ Date __26 April 2013________________________
Street Address__Room 576, City Hall____________ Telephone__215-686-7660________
City, State, and Postal Code__Philadelphia, PA 19107________________________________________
Nominator □ is  ❌ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY
Date of Receipt:______________________________________________________________
□ Correct-Complete  □ Incorrect-Incomplete  Date:________________________________________
Date of Notice Issuance:________________________________________________________
Property Owner at Time of Notice
Name:________________________________________________________________________
Address:_______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
City:___________________________ State:____ Postal Code:________
Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation:________________________
Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission:_________________________________
Date of Final Action:___________________________________________________________
□ Designated  □ Rejected  4/11/13
5. **BOUNDARY**

The former St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church is located at 838½ N. 42\textsuperscript{nd} Street, at the northwest corner of N. 42\textsuperscript{nd} and Parrish Streets, in the Belmont section of West Philadelphia.

Beginning at a point at the Northwest corner of N. 42\textsuperscript{nd} and Parrish (formerly Myrtle) Streets; thence extending Northward along the West side of the said N. 42\textsuperscript{nd} Street seventy-two (72) feet; thence extending Westward on a line parallel with the said Parrish Street one hundred ten (110) feet; thence Southward parallel with the said N. 42\textsuperscript{nd} Street seventy-two (72) feet to the North side of Parrish Street; and thence Eastward along the North side of the said Parrish Street one hundred ten (110) feet to the point of beginning. Being known as Parcel No. 57N03-0079, Office of Property Assessment Account No. 774371000.
6. Description

The former St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church complex consists of two buildings, which are connected, the original 1872 church building and a larger, later church building. The later building was constructed in two phases, in 1895 and 1906. The original St. Petri church building, which faces Parrish Street, is connected to the rear of the larger church building, which faces N. 42nd Street, and was converted to a parish hall when the new church was erected. Narrow pedestrian alleys separate the church from the rowhouses to the north along N. 42nd Street and to the west along Parrish Street. A low, black, metal picket fence runs along the sidewalk at both N. 42nd and Parrish Streets. Both the earlier and later church buildings are excellent examples of the Rundbogenstil or German Neo-Romanesque Style of architecture.

The 1872 church building is a diminutive structure with its gable end facing Parrish Street. Its street façade is two stories tall and clad in red-orange brick with a corbelled parapet and round-arched window and door openings. The west or side façade is one story tall, clad with the same brick, and fenestrated in the same manner.

The second St. Petri church building is cruciform in plan with the front façade facing N. 42nd Street. The church has a traditional plan with a narthex at N. 42nd Street, a nave running west from the narthex parallel to Parrish Street, a transept running north and south and crossing the nave, and an apse at the rear or west along Parrish Street. The larger church building has a rusticated Conshohoken limestone base and is clad in pink brick and ornamented with grey terra cotta elements, Indiana limestone pilasters, red porphyry columns, grey granite steps, stained glass windows, and black wrought-iron ornament.

The front façade of the later building is composed of three elements, a square-in-plan bell tower with steeple and pyramidal spire at the south, a central gable end with a grand portal and rose window, and a cylindrical tower with conical roof at the north.

The facades of the square-in-plan bell tower are divided into two stories below the steeple and spire. The lower two floors are framed with terra cotta quoins. The first-floor facades have arched, at-grade doorways framed in terra cotta under oculus windows within square terra cotta frames. A terra cotta cornice separates the first floor from the second. The second-floor facades are ornamented with oculus windows within circular terra cotta frames. A terra cotta cornice separates the second floor from the third floor or steeple. The steeple facades sport triple arched windows below a corbelled brick cornice. Above the cornice of the steeple, a pyramidal spire with copper-clad dormers rises from within terra cotta corner pinnacles.

The central gable end of the front façade is two stories in height with the stories divided by a terra cotta cornice. At the first floor, a grand limestone, porphyry, and terra cotta gabled portal stands at the top of a set of steps. The doorway is arched, with an arched stained-glass transom over the doors. An inscription on the portal reads “Ev. Lutherische St. Petri Kirche.” The portal is flanked by arched stained-glass windows with terra cotta surrounds above terra cotta plaques. At the second floor, a grand rose window set within a terra cotta frame with engaged columns ornaments the façade. Small arched windows with brick hoods flank the rose window. The gable end concludes with a corbelled brick cornice.

The facade of the cylindrical tower is divided into two stories below the conical roof. The first-floor facade is punctuated by an arched, at-grade doorway framed in terra cotta under an oculus window within a square terra cotta frame. A terra cotta cornice separates the first floor from the
second. The second-floor façade is ornamented with an oculus window within a circular terra cotta frame. A corbelled brick cornice separates the second floor from the conical roof.

Along Parrish Street, the later church building appears as four volumes, the bell tower to the east, the nave, the transept, and the apse at the rear.

The south façade of the bell tower with steeple and spire is identical to the east façade facing N. 42nd Street. The west façade of the bell tower is pierced by an arched doorway with metal lintel at the second floor.

The south façade of the nave is set back from the sidewalk and divided into lower and upper segments by a roof with terra cotta balustrade that spans from the bell tower to the south transept at the sidewalk line. Below the roof, at the ground floor, the façade is articulated with a central doorway flanked by segmentally-arched window openings. A wooden vestibule stands in front of the doorway. Above the roof, the façade of the nave is articulated with two double-height, stained-glass, round-arched windows under decorative corbelled window hoods. The façade is topped by a corbelled brick cornice. The north façade mirrors the south façade and includes a tall chimney at the apse.

At the ground floor, the transept section of the south façade runs along the sidewalk and is punctuated by three round-arched openings. The outer openings have windows. The central opening is covered by a wood shed addition that can be seen in photographs dating to 1895. Above the ground floor and a terra cotta cornice, the upper floor of the south transept is three sided with one stained-glass, round-arched window under a decorative corbelled window hood at each side. The southeast-facing side of the transept includes a door under its window. The façade is topped by the same corbelled brick cornice that runs along the nave.

An apse projects from the rear of the crossing. As at the nave, the façade of the apse is divided into lower and upper segments by a roof with terra cotta balustrade that spans from the south transept to the rear of the later church building at the sidewalk line. Below the roof, at the ground floor, the façade is articulated with a doorway and a segmentally-arched window opening. Above the roof, the façade of the three-sided apse is articulated with stained-glass, round-arched windows under decorative corbelled window hoods. At the second-floor of the chancel, a small volume projects out toward Parrish Street; it is fenestrated with small, paired, round-arched windows under corbelled brick hoods. The façade is topped by the same corbelled brick cornice that runs along the nave and transept.

The roofing is a grey slate.
Aerial View of St. Petri looking to the northeast.
Aerial View of St. Petri looking to the west.
St. Petri looking northwest from the corner of N. 42nd and Parrish Streets.
St. Petri looking southwest from N. 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.

St. Petri, main portal at east façade.
St. Petri looking northwest at south façade.

St. Petri looking northeast at 1872 chapel and apse of main church.
7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church, also known as St. Peter’s, is a significant historic site that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Located at 838½ N. 42nd Street in the Belmont section of West Philadelphia, St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church satisfies Criteria for Designation a, c, d, and j as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code. The former St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church:

(a) Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
(c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
(d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; and,
(j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.

PASTOR CHRISTIAN F. WELDEN AND THE EARLY YEARS OF ST. PETRI

In 1871, Pastor Christian F. Welden (1812-1898) organized the small congregation of St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church from unaffiliated German Lutherans in the growing German-American neighborhood in the Belmont area of West Philadelphia.1 Lutheranism is a branch of Western Christianity established in the early sixteenth century by Martin Luther, a German monk and former Catholic priest, whose efforts to reform the theology and practice of the Catholic Church led to the Protestant Reformation. In his Ninety-Five Theses, issued in 1517, Luther objected to the Catholic practice of selling indulgences and contended that salvation is not earned by good deeds such as the purchase of indulgences, but is received only as a free gift of God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Luther challenged the authority of the Pope and the Catholic Church, teaching that the Bible is the only source of divinely revealed knowledge. He translated the Bible to vernacular German, attacking sacerdotalism with the claim that all baptized Christians comprise a holy priesthood. German settlers brought Lutheranism to Pennsylvania in the late seventeenth century. In 1742, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, a missionary from Germany, established the first Lutheran church body in North America at Trappe, Pennsylvania. At a meeting in Philadelphia in 1748, Muhlenberg established the Pennsylvania Ministerium, the first Lutheran synod in America. St. Michael’s Lutheran Church at 5th and Cherry Streets, constructed between 1743 and 1748, was Philadelphia’s first Lutheran consecrated house of worship.

Welden, the founding pastor of St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church, was prominent in the American Lutheran Church and a central figure in its schism in the middle of the nineteenth century. Welden was ordained in New York in 1833 and dispatched to the northwestern part of the state, where he ministered in the small town of Rush and then organized the Zion German Lutheran Church in Rochester. In 1835, he resettled in Pennsylvania, where he led Lutheran services for the communities of New Holland, Muddy Creek, Allegheny, and Robeson on the borders of Lancaster and Berks Counties. Moving regularly in eastern Pennsylvania, he then served as pastor in Bucksville from 1839 to 1842, at Zion’s Church in Chester Country from 1842 to 1850, in Lykens Valley in 1850 and 1851, and in Bethlehem from 1852 to 1868. Welden quickly rose in the ranks of the Pennsylvania Ministerium, the umbrella group of the state’s Lutheran churches, serving as Secretary from
Welden was a leader of a conservative faction of American Lutheranism, which sought to restore the Confessions of Faith found in the Book of Concord to prominence in Lutheran church life. These documents, especially the Augsburg Confession, were identified as the cornerstones of a distinctively Lutheran theological identity, but had been interpreted loosely by Lutherans in the United States during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Progressive Lutherans, who were influenced by other Protestant denominations in the United States, minimized the importance of the Confessions. The progressives were affiliated with the Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and its leader Samuel Schmucker, who authored the *Definite Synodical Platform* in 1855, a text that minimized the importance of the Confessions. For years, conservative and progressive American Lutherans debated the significance of the Confessions. When the Evangelical Lutheran General Synod of the United States of North America admitted the progressive Frankean Synod into its fold at its annual meeting in 1864, the conservative Pennsylvania Ministerium walked out, breaking its ties with the progressive-leaning umbrella group. Led by Welden and others, the Pennsylvania Ministerium founded the conservative Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in 1864 to rival the progressive seminary in Gettysburg. Welden had advocated in 1860, during his presidency of the Pennsylvania Ministerium, for the establishment of such a seminary to counter Gettysburg’s influence and provide sufficient numbers of German-speaking ministers. In 1867, Welden and his colleagues likewise founded the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to rival the General Synod. The schism between the conservative and progressive branches of the Lutheran Church, the most significant event in the American Lutheran Church of the nineteenth century, lasted until 1918, the 400th anniversary of the Reformation, when the progressive and conservative branches of the church reunited as the United Lutheran Church in America. As a central figure in that schism, Pastor Christian F. Welden is a person significant in the past and is associated with the former St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church.
After the establishment of St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church in 1871, Pastor Welden and the congregants initially worshiped at St. Stephens English Lutheran Church on Powelton Avenue near N. 40th Street in West Philadelphia. On 15 May 1872, Welden himself, not the congregation, leased a 72-foot by 110-foot lot at the northeast corner on N. 42nd and Parrish Streets for the erection of a church. Welden agreed to pay William D. Kelley an annual ground rent of 6% of the property’s value of $3,600, or $216.5

Kelley (1814-1890), who leased the property to Welden, was a prominent and interesting character. An attorney and a judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia, he was catapulted to national fame after his 1854 anti-slavery speech, “Slavery in the Territories,” was widely published and read. That year, he quit the Democratic Party and helped found the Republican Party. A friend of Abraham Lincoln’s, Kelley travelled to Springfield, Illinois in 1860 to inform Lincoln that he had been nominated as the Republican Party’s presidential candidate. Kelley was elected to the U.S. Congress that same year, in 1860. A member of Congress for 30 years until his death in 1890, Kelley advocated for voting rights for African Americans, the creation of Yellowstone National Park, which he called Great Geyser Basin, and protective tariffs for iron and steel. Kelley was caught up in but survived the infamous Credit Mobilier scandal of 1872, in which the Union Pacific Railroad and Credit Mobilier of America defrauded the U.S. government of millions of dollars during the construction of the transcontinental rail line and bribed U.S. congressmen to hide their tracks.6

An event in 1877 evidences Kelley and Welden’s close affiliation. Kelley intervened for Welden after Welden’s son, William Henry Welden, shot and wounded Louisiana gubernatorial candidate Stephen B. Packard in an assassination attempt on 15 February 1877. At the time of the shooting, the Republican Packard and Democrat Francis T. Nicholls both claimed victory in one of the most hotly contested and violent political battles of the Reconstruction Era. Aiding Welden, Congressman Kelley “telegraphed from Washington [to New Orleans] that he knew Welden and his people well, and the young man, whatever else his motives might have been, was incapable of entering into a conspiracy to murder.” As the New York Times reported, Kelley’s telegram convinced Stephens, the wounded gubernatorial candidate, and the local government to attribute the shooting to intoxication, not political conspiracy, and to release the younger Welden to the custody of his father, Pastor Welden. William Henry Wendell returned with his father to Philadelphia and was never prosecuted for the shooting.7

Five years before retrieving his son from New Orleans, on 29 September 1872, Pastor Welden led a group of visiting church officials in the laying of a cornerstone for a 62-foot long, 26-foot wide brick church at the western edge of the lot at the northwest corner of 42nd and Parrish.8 In a cavity in the cornerstone, the clergy placed copies of the Lutheran catechism, the Augsberg Confession, copies of German religious and secular papers, and coins of the United States. The Inquirer, which reported on the ceremony, noted that “Though weak in numbers and in wealth the congregation expect[s] to have the church consecrated upon its completion, free of debt.”9 The chapel was constructed at a cost of $4,250. On 11 December 1872, Welden transferred the ground lease for the property, which he personally held, to the congregation.10 Four days later, on 15 December 1872, the church was consecrated.11 At the annual convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1873, Pastor Welden was commended for the erection of the “neat chapel.”12
St. Petri Chapel, Parrish Street west of N. 42nd Street, 1872.

On 3 January 1881, Kelley transferred his interest in the $216 annual ground rent for the property to the Fidelity Insurance Trust & Safe Deposit Company, the trustees of the Estate of Charles Macalester, for $3,600. Later in 1881, at the annual meeting of the German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, it was reported that the prospects of St. Petri were “encouraging although the growth is slow. The current expenses of the Church, about $600, including a ground rent of $216, are regularly met. The [Lutheran] Board [of Missions for Philadelphia] contributes $100 per quarter to the Pastor’s salary, as the congregation is unable to do much more than meet its current expenses.” The 1880 U.S. Census indicates that Welden was 67 years of age and lived about four blocks from the church at 913 N. Holly Street with his wife and two adult daughters; his teenage son was “away at school.” At the end of 1883, Welden retired after 51 years of service to the Lutheran Church.

**PASTOR EDWARD H. POHLE AND THE GROWTH OF ST. PETRI**

In February 1884, Pastor Eduard Herman Pohle (1845-1902) succeeded Pastor Christian F. Welden, becoming the second minister of St. Petri. Pohle was born in Lohmen, Saxony, Germany on 5 May 1845 and immigrated to the United States. He entered the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in 1875 and graduated on 19 June 1878. He was ordained that year and then served as pastor at Christ Church in Mahoney, Pennsylvania from 1878 to 1882 and St. Paul’s Church in Norristown, Pennsylvania from 1882 to 1884.

Despite concerns about slow growth and a lack of funds expressed a few years earlier, on 19 August 1884, the congregation purchased the property with the “church edifice” at 42nd and Parrish Streets from the Fidelity Insurance Trust & Safe Deposit Company for $3,600, ending the ground rent payments. The congregation grew as the neighborhood grew up around it in
the 1880s and by the early 1890s was outgrowing the small church built in 1872. In 1891, the congregation included about 90 families, a Sunday School with 175 students and 22 teachers, a library with 450 volumes, and several support organizations including a Women’s Union, a Women’s Mission Union, a Men’s Building Fund Union, and a Building Fund Union of the Sunday School.\textsuperscript{17}

**The New Church Building**

By 1887, the St. Petri congregation, which was outgrowing its small church facing Parrish Street, decided to erect a new, larger sanctuary on the open land to the east at the corner of N. 42\textsuperscript{nd} and Parrish Streets. That year, it established a Men’s Building Fund Union to create an endowment to finance the construction of a larger building. On 13 April 1893, the congregation voted to erect a new, larger church building and, to support this effort, established a Building Committee to plan for the new church. The Building Committee was headed by Adolph Kreutzer and including Pastor Pohle, T.J. Ellinger, Henry Kaestner, Gottlieb Schmid, Wilhelm Muench, Christian Heim, Philipp Storch, Carl A. Trik, A.H. Nolde, and Jacob Beiswanger. Pastor Pohle, who had studied sculpture and architecture at the Gewerbe und Bauschule in Dresden, prepared preliminary sketches of the new church in the Rundbogenstil or Romanesque Style. The Building Committee selected architect Emil H.C. Hartmann to design the new church from Pohle’s sketches. Hartmann, who had attended the Stuttgarter Bauakademie and was well known in Philadelphia’s German community, had designed a store and residence for the Building Committee’s president, butcher Adolph Kreutzer, at 4150 Lancaster Avenue in 1883.\textsuperscript{18}

On 14 June 1893, the *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide* reported that Hartmann had completed plans for the new church building at 42\textsuperscript{nd} and Parrish Street.\textsuperscript{19} The following summer, on 11 July 1894, the same periodical reported that Hartmann had completed the plans and was receiving bids.\textsuperscript{20} On 14 November 1894, the real estate periodical reported again on Hartmann’s plans, which called for a two-story church building, 69 feet wide by 83 feet deep, with a 120-foot-tall bell tower and an 85-foot-tall round tower.\textsuperscript{21} The plans stipulated Conshohoken limestone for the foundations, Indiana limestone for pilasters, red porphyry for columns, grey terra cotta for trim such as cornices, pink pressed brick for the walls, grey granite steps, grey slate for the roof, stained glass windows, and black wrought-iron ornament. The Conklin Armstrong Terra Cotta Company of Philadelphia provided the terra cotta trim, as it noted in an 1898 catalog of its products.\textsuperscript{22} Hartmann was paid $1429 for his design for the church.\textsuperscript{23}
Adolph Kreutzer, president of the Building Committee

Little is known about Emil H.C. Hartmann, the architect. He was born in Wurttemberg in south-central Germany about 1852 and attended the Stuttgarter Bauakademie. Immigration records indicate that the 27-year-old Hartmann arrived in the United States on 13 October 1879 aboard the ship *Switzerland*, which had sailed from Antwerp. Hartmann described himself to immigration officials as an “architect.” With him were four others with the surname Hartmann: Mina, age 21, Anton, age 30, and Anna and Emil, both age one. The 1880 U.S. Census indicates that 28-year-old Emil H.C. Hartmann worked as an architect and lived at 915 N. Bambrey Street in the Brewerytown section of Philadelphia with his wife Wilhelmina (presumably the Mina in the immigration records), their two-year-old son Emil, and two German-born borders. Neither Emil H.C. Hartmann, the designer of St. Petri, nor his wife were listed in the 1900 or later U.S. Censuses, indicating that they may have left the country, perhaps returning to Germany. Their son Emil G. Hartmann, who was one year old when the Hartmanns came to America in 1879, was listed in the 1900 and 1910 U.S. Censuses. In 1900, the 23-year-old Emil Hartmann worked as an “architect” and rented a home at 1214 Market Street with his wife Clara and their three young daughters. By the time the 1910 U.S. Census was taken, 32-year-old Emil G. Hartmann was working as an “architect” in the “brewery” industry and living at 117 N. 61st Street with his second wife, their young daughter, and his wife’s parents. William Schmeltzer, the father-in-law, worked as a brewer.

Emil H.C. Hartmann and his son Emil G. Hartmann, who were both architects, have been confused for one another. The father appears to have had a limited career as an architect in the United States, designing the church building for St. Petri, the Zion German Lutheran Church in Wilmington, Delaware, and perhaps a few stores and dwellings. He disappeared from surviving records before 1900. The son had a longer and more prolific career, designing numerous buildings for breweries in Pennsylvania and the Mid Atlantic.
Owing to limited funding, the congregation erected Hartmann’s grand church in two phases, a practice that was common in the nineteenth century. During the summer of 1895, the Philip Haibach Contracting Company erected the first floor of the church (das untere Stockwerk), which included the bases of the two towers as well as the grand portal. Temporary hipped roofs topped the one-story structure, allowing the congregation to hold services in the partially completed building. Haibach was paid $14,532 for completing the lower part of the structure. An undated engraving in the collection of the Lutheran Archives Center at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia depicts what must be Hartmann’s original design for the church. The engraving shows the first floor as constructed, but shows a slightly different design than later constructed for the upper section (das obere Stockwerk). For example, it depicts several differences including an arched instead of gabled front façade, a small spire at the crossing, clocks not dormers on the spire, oculus windows in the nave, and cresting along the ridge of the roof. The engraving also depicts an ornate two-story building in place of the original chapel along Parrish Street.

A group of dignitaries led by Pastor Pohle and Pastor Emeritus Welden laid the cornerstone for the new church on 5 May 1895. Ministers W.A. Schaeffer, F.W. Weiskotten, R. Bielinski, J. Niemann, J.K. Plitt, and Dr. A. Spaeth joined the local leaders as they lifted the cornerstone into position. The St. Petri’s Choir and West Philadelphia Maennerchoir performed and Ministers Schaeffer and Spaeth addressed the crowd. Construction of the first phase progressed quickly. The new church was consecrated on 29 September 1895, Pastor Emeritus Welden’s 83rd birthday. Along with Welden and Pastor Pohle, Ministers F. Wischan S.A. Ziegenfuss, J.E. Nidecker, A. Hellwege, Dr. A. Spaeth, F.W. Weiskotten, H. Weigand, C. Goedel, J. Niemann, A. Linsz, J.L. Sibole, H.W. Elson, F. Jelden, and W.R.M. Oeser officiated at the consecration ceremony. During the ceremony, the clergy, trustees, Sunday School members, and West Philadelphia Maennerchoir paraded to the front door, where they were met by architect “E.C.H. Hartman.” The architect handed the key to Pastor Pohle, who opened the doors for the congregation. The first phase of the new church building cost $21,901.47. In a typical year, St. Petri’s expenses totaled about $2,000, but they jumped to $22,349.53 for 1895, the year the lower section of the church building was erected.
Emil H.C. Hartmann's original design for St. Petri, c. 1894.

The first phase of St. Petri, 1895.
Sketch of the first phase of St. Petri, published in the *Inquirer*, 30 September 1895.


On 14 June 1902, the Reverend Eduard H. Pohle, the minister with architectural training who had prepared the first sketches of the new church, died suddenly while visiting Germany. The following week, on 22 June, the St. Petri congregation held a memorial service for the deceased spiritual leader. Pastor Philip J. Hoh replaced Pohle as the minister of the St. Petri congregation. Hoh had lead Zion Lutheran Church in Wheeling, West Virginia, St. Johannes in Reading, Pennsylvania, and Kripplein Christ Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. In 1904, the Lutheran Observer reported that Charles Mueller had left a bequest of $4,500 to St. Petri’s, allowing the congregation to pay down much of its debt for the first phase of the church. With the debt reduced, Pastor Hoh and the St. Petri congregation launched a campaign to raise the funds needed to complete the church building, which had stood in an incomplete state for a decade. To generate the funds, St. Petri’s issued $10,000 worth of bonds, which paid an annual interest of 4%. St. Petri also obtained a mortgage from the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society. In August 1905, the Lutheran League Review reported that Pastor Hoh and his congregation at St. Petri’s was “about to complete the main audience room of its church edifice. The estimated cost is $25,000.”

The congregation retained the architectural firm of Duhring, Okie & Ziegler, led by H. Louis Duhring, R. Brognard Okie, and Carl A. Ziegler, to update Hartmann’s design for the completion of the church building. Duhring, Okie & Ziegler designed many Presbyterian and Episcopal church buildings, but only one other for the Lutherans, Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Riverside, New Jersey in 1899. Designing a superstructure for a partially completed building, Duhring, Okie & Ziegler had few options for revisions, but did update Hartmann’s design, apparently to reflect contemporary taste and to reduce construction costs. The updated design, known from an engraving as well as the completed building itself, is somewhat simpler than the Hartmann design of 1894. Most notably, the second story of the front façade was redesigned with a simple gable in place of the arched parapet, better reflecting the pedimented main entry and simplifying the roof structure. The oculus windows in the nave walls were deleted and the
arched windows extended upward. At the roof, the spire at the crossing, cresting, and finials at the transept were deleted. At the main spire, the clocks were replaced with dormers. Finally, the design of the parish house, which would have replaced the 1872 chapel but was never built, was simplified. In general, Duhring, Okie & Ziegler’s building is simpler, more staid, and less Victorian than the church designed by Hartmann. The upper section of the church building was constructed by contractor Ambrose Beck and completed in 1906. The second phase of construction cost $35,299.13; the architectural firm of Duhring, Okie & Ziegler was paid $887.58; the contractor was paid $21,627.80. The completed church was opened with a grand ceremony in 1906.

Bond issued for fundraising for the completion of St. Petri’s church building, 1905.
The revised design for St. Petri by Duhring, Okie & Ziegler, with Rev. Hoh inset, c. 1905.

Duhring, Okie & Ziegler, Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Riverside, New Jersey, 1899.
Dedication of the completed St. Petri’s Church in 1906. Note the juxtaposition of the clean new and dirty old portions of the building.

**ST. PETRI AND THE RUNDBOGENSTIL**

With its red brick, deeply inset façade, corbelled parapet, and round-arched window and door openings, the diminutive original 1872 St. Petri church building is an excellent, albeit modest, example of the Rundbogenstil or Romanesque Revival Style of architecture. With its cylindrical tower with conical roof, round-arched window and door openings, corbelled brick cornice, and terra cotta ornament, the larger church building is also an excellent example of the style. Together, the two buildings, constructed during three building campaigns but joined as one, embody the evolution of the Rundbogenstil in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the United States. The Rundbogenstil was developed in central Europe, especially Germany, in the early nineteenth century as a reaction to the neo-Classicism that was predominant. The style spread to the United States in the 1840s. Promoted as a return to the Romanesque Style indigenous to central Europe, Rundbogenstil was used primarily for churches and synagogues, but was also employed for civic and institutional buildings. The 1872 St. Petri chapel is a translation in miniature of architect Heinrich Hübsch’s archetypal Rundbogenstil Church of St. Cyriakus (1828-1837) near Karlsruhe, Germany. Hübsch had first theorized the style in his provocative, influential essay *In welchem Style vollen wir bauen? (In Which Style Should We Build?)* of 1828. St. George’s Episcopal Church (1846-1848) in New York City, by architects Charles Blesch and Leopold Eidlitz, was the first church erected in the style in the United States. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Rundbogenstil was commonly employed for Protestant churches in the United States, especially by Lutherans and other sects that traced their roots to central Europe.
The St. Petri chapel and church embody the distinguishing characteristics of the Rundbogenstil and accurately reflect the cultural and religious identities of German-American immigrant community in Philadelphia in the second half of the nineteenth century. Pastor Pohle, who was trained as an architect in Dresden before entering the seminary, and architect Emil Hartmann, who was trained as an architect in Stuttgart, would certainly have known both the religious and cultural dimensions of the revival of the Romanesque style as Rundbogenstil in the nineteenth century and the landmark Romanesque churches of Germany and central Europe that fueled that revival. They would have been familiar with popular books like Morris Meurer's *Der Kirchenbau vom Stanpunkte und nach dem Brauche der lutherischen Kirche* of 1877 and Victor Schultze's *Das evangelische Kirchengebäude* of 1886, which provided information about historic Romanesque churches and advocated for the revival of the style for new churches. They would have known the landmark Romanesque churches of Germany, from which the Romanesque Revivalists derived their vocabulary. They would have known the gabled front façade of Limburg Cathedral; the spire with pinnacles at Aachen Cathedral; the round towers of St. Michael's in Hildesheim, Worms Cathedral, Laach Abbey, St. Cyriakus in Gernrode; and the Backsteinromanik or brick style of Romanesque architecture found at Jerichow Abbey and the Ratzeburg Cathedral. In the United States, they would have known of recent Romanesque-style Lutheran churches like the landmark St. Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Brooklyn, designed by architect J.C. Cady and completed in 1885, and the less well known but local Evangelical Lutheran Salem Church in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, completed about 1890, and Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, completed about 1891. They would have also known of the admonitions of American theorists of religious architecture like Paul E. Kretzmann, who later authored *A Short Introduction to Church Architecture and*
Ecclesiastical Art, especially from the Standpoint of the Lutheran Church, in 1912. Kretzmann and others like him advocated for simple, solid, harmonious churches in the Romanesque and Gothic styles with cruciform plans, main portals in line with naves, and paired towers flanking main portals. St. Petri’s reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Rundbogenstil and embodies distinguishing characteristics of that style.

J.C. Cady, St. Paul’s German Evangelical Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, 1884-1885.
In addition to its religious-cultural and architectural significance, St. Petri’s Church is important as a reminder of the prominent but now dispersed German-American community that once occupied the Belmont and Parkside neighborhoods of West Philadelphia. In general, Philadelphia developed from east to west, from its origins along the Delaware River in the late seventeenth century to its western boundary by about 1900. Ethnic communities followed this pattern, generally establishing themselves in the eastern section of the city and expanding westward, but not north or south, in a linear fashion. For example, as W.E.B. DuBois noted in *The Philadelphia Negro*, free African Americans first settled around in the area around 6th and Lombard Streets, where Mother Bethel Church is located, and then spread westward along the Lombard Street spine, creating a linear community corresponding with the Seventh Ward. German Americans likewise followed this development pattern, creating a linear community that spread westward roughly along Fairmount and Girard Avenues from its eighteenth-century origins around Franklin Square. There were, of course, other clusters of German Americans throughout the city in Germantown, South Philadelphia, Kensington, Frankford, and elsewhere, but the largest German-American community spread westward from the Delaware to central West Philadelphia along Fairmount and Girard Avenues. At 42nd and Parrish Streets, St. Petri roughly marks the endpoint of the German-American progression across the city before changes in transportation, build-out of available land, and other developments shattered this paradigm, dispersing people throughout the region.

Landmarks can be used to chart this progression. St. Michael’s German Lutheran Church (1743) on 5th Street above Mulberry (Arch) Street approximates the point of origin for Germans in Philadelphia. The nearby Zion German Lutheran Church (1766) at 4th and Cherry Streets and the First German Reformed Church (1772) at 4th and Race Streets indicate the growth of the community in the area. From there, German Americans spread north and then west. The German Reformed Church of Northern Liberties was founded in 1819. The *Philadelphia Demokrat*, the largest German-language newspaper in the United States, was founded on N. Front Street near Fairmount Avenue in 1838. St. Paul’s German Lutheran Church on Brown Street between 2nd and 3rd Streets dates to 1840. St. Peter’s German Catholic Church at N. 5th Street and Girard Avenue dates to 1841. St. Mark’s German Lutheran Church at N. 13th and Spring Garden Streets dates to 1851. Evidencing the westward migration, Zion German Lutheran Church moved from 4th and Cherry Streets to Franklin and Race Streets in 1869.

Other institutions indicate the presence of this linear German community including the German Chess Club at 4th and Cherry, a Scheutzen Halle at 306 New Street, St. James German Lutheran Church at 3rd and Columbia (now Cecil B. Moore); Carmel German Presbyterian Church at 4th and New Streets; Salem German Reformed Church at 4th and Fairmount Avenue; the German Eye and Ear Infirmary at 441 N. 5th Street (1876); the German Society on the 600 block of Spring Garden Street (1888); Zion German Reformed Church at 6th and Girard; St. Johannis German Lutheran Church at 15th and Ogden; the German Hospital at 20th and Norris Streets (1861); and Corinthian Avenue German Presbyterian Church on Corinthian near Poplar. Many organizations and institutions serving the German-American community were situated in the Brewertown section of the city, where numerous German immigrants including architect Emil H.C. Hartmann lived and worked, many at breweries. The organizations and institutions included St. Luke’s German Reformed Church at 26th and Girard; Zion German Presbyterian Church and German School at 28th and Thompson; and the Fairmount Liedertafel at 27th Street north of Girard Avenue.
In the later nineteenth century, the German-American community spread across the Schuylkill to the areas north and south of Girard Avenue, expanding the linear community. In addition to St. Petri’s, the Emanuel German Reformed Church was founded at 38th and Baring Streets in West Philadelphia.

A Scheutzen Halle was established on Viola Street near Belmont Avenue, in what would become Parkside, in the 1870s. At the end of the century, brewer and real estate developer Frederick Poth created an extravagant residential development in the German Baroque style for upper middle-class German Americans who worked in the industrial areas of Brewerytown, but did not want to live among the breweries and the industries that supported them. To the south of Parkside, a vibrant, working-class, German-American community grew up around St. Petri’s. Although Adolph Kreuter’s butcher shop on Lancaster Avenue and nearly all other marks of this community have been erased since the middle of the twentieth century, St. Petri’s, with its portal that still reads “Ev. Luthersche St. Petri Kirche,” stands as a reminder of this neighborhood’s past and of the greater German linear neighborhood that stretched from North Liberties to Belmont Avenue.44

Postcard announcing the Golden Jubilee of the German-American Gymnastic Union, held in Philadelphia in 1900. The postcard evidences the persistence of a German-speaking community in Philadelphia as late as 1900. The Philadelphia Turnergemeinde was located at 435 N. 6th Street until about 1910, when it moved to the northeast corner of N. Broad Street and Columbia Avenue.

**EPILOGUE**

By the 1940s, the clergy at St. Petri’s were conducting services in both English and German.45 By that time, most German immigrants and their offspring had become assimilated into
mainstream American culture. Moreover, World War II had prompted many German Americans to abandon outward expressions of their German cultural heritage. As the century progressed, residents of Philadelphia’s German-American linear community running along Girard Avenue pulled up stakes and moved to the suburbs. As urban churches of many denominations saw the numbers of their congregants dwindle, they too pulled up stakes and moved to growing communities beyond the urban core. In 1950, St. Petri’s merged with the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tacony to become St. Petri-Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church., which still meets at its church at 6816 Jackson Street in the Tacony section of Philadelphia. According to Jon Peterson, archivist at the Lutheran Archives Center at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, who interviewed an elderly St. Petri parishioner, the congregations merged at the urging of the wives of the pastors of the two churches, who were able to convince their husbands to forsake their pride and concede to the changing demographics. St. Petri sold its Rundbogenstil church building to the John Wesley Methodist Church on 16 June 1950 for $85,000 and moved to Tacony.46 The Methodists had been worshipping at a church at Holly and Aspen Streets, a few blocks south of St. Petri’s. On 31 May 1973, the Methodists sold the St. Petri’s complex to the Community Church of God and merged with the Wharton Street Methodist Church to become Wharton-Wesley Methodist Church, which still operates at 54th and Catharine Streets in West Philadelphia. The American Organist reported in 1992 that the “23-rank Hinners organ, built in 1906 for St. Petri’s Kirke in West Philadelphia, Pa., has been installed in Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Chicago.”47 Proud owners of the St. Petri’s structures, the Community Church of God has worshipped at 42nd and Parrish Streets for 40 years.

CONCLUSION

The former St. Petri Evangelical German Lutheran Church at 838½ N. 42nd Street is a significant historic building that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Located in the Belmont section of West Philadelphia, St. Petri’s satisfies Criteria for Designation a, c, d, and j as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code. The church:

- has significant character, interest, and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of the City of Philadelphia and its German-American community and exemplifies the cultural, social, and historical heritage of that community (Criteria a and j);
- is associated with the life of a person significant in the past, Christian F. Welden, a nationally significant figure in the Lutheran Church (Criterion a);
- reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Rundbogenstil or Romanesque Revival architectural style (Criterion c); and,
- embodies distinguishing characteristics of Romanesque Revival architectural style, especially as it evolved in the second half of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century (Criterion d).

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26 See the advertisement for “Emil Hartmann, Brewers’ Engineer and Brewers’ Architect,” in The Western Brewer and Journal of the Barley, Malt, and Hop Trades, v. 31, no. 12 (15 December 1906), 49.
27 Minutes of the 148th Annual Meeting of the German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, June 6 to 12, 1895 (Reading, Pa.: Germanyia Printing House, 1895), 14.
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32 St. Petri’s total expenses for 1893 were $1,996.60. They were $22,349.53 for 1895. See Minutes of the 147th Annual Meeting of the German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, May 17 to 23, 1894 (Reading, Pa.: Germanyia Printing House, 1894), 137-138; and Minutes of the 149th Annual Meeting of the German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, May 28 to June 3, 1896 (Reading, Pa.: Germanyia Printing House, 1896), 108-109.
33 Minutes of the 156th Annual Meeting of the German Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, June 4 to 10, 1903 (Pottsville, Pa.: Evening Chronicle, 1903), 16.


37 The *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide* reported that Duhring, Okie & Ziegler were preparing plans for Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Riverside, New Jersey in July 1899 [v. 14, no. 27 (5 July 1899), 417]; and had completed plans in September 1899 [v. 14, no. 38 (20 September 1899), 601].


43 George Thomas mentions this linear German-American neighborhood in his nomination of the Parkside Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places.

44 See, for example, the bilingual *St. Petri Parish Bulletin/St. Petri Gemeinde-Bote*, v. 25, no. 1-3 (February to April 1945).

45 Philadelphia Department of Records, Deed Series CJP, Book 2671, Page 213.