

FOR THE RECORDS

German Methodists in St. Louis

Elmbank Avenue and Memorial German Methodist Churches

Methodism began as a renewal movement within the Church of England led by John Wesley (1703 – 1791) and his brother Charles (1707 – 1788). The denomination resulting from their activity takes its name from the brothers’ “methodical” approach to Christian devotional practice. Beginning first as a movement within the Church of England, it developed into a separate denomination from the Church of England when John Wesley, a priest, defied church law by ordaining pastors to serve American congregations.

German Methodism dates from 1835, when German-born William Nast converted to Methodism in Cincinnati. After establishing the first German Methodist mission in 1837, Nast sent the Rev. Ludwig S. Jacoby to St. Louis as a missionary in 1841. Jacoby’s work resulted in the organization of First German Methodist Church, now Salem United Methodist Church in Ladue. Seven other German Methodist congregations were established in St. Louis, including Elmbank Avenue and Memorial congregations, described below.

A more thorough discussion of German Methodism appeared in the [October 2016 issue of PastPorts](https://bit.ly/3wZpSAT) <<https://bit.ly/3wZpSAT>>.

The following historical sketches were translated from *Jubiläumsbuch der St. Louis Deutschen Konferenz herausgegeben nach ihrer Anordnung zur Feier ihres fünfundzwanzigjährigen Bestands* [Anniversary Book of the St. Louis German Conference Published at Its Behest for the Celebration of Its 25 Years of Existence] by E.C. Magaret, Friedrich Mung, and Geo. B. Addicks (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, [1906], pp. 346–351, call no. R 287.6 J91).



Ebenezer German Methodist Church was founded at 2600 N. Taylor St. In 1885. The congregation built a new building at 4433 Elmbank Ave., pictured above, in 1903 and changed its name to Elmbank Avenue German Methodist Church. The congregation disbanded in 1937.

Elmbank Avenue Congregation

In late summer 1885, the quarterly conference of Salem Congregation at Taylor Avenue and Cottage Street resolved to build a mission church. Brother Phlipp Hehner was named preacher of the mission by the conference, meeting in September. The cornerstone was laid on Thanksgiving Day and the dedication took place in spring 1886.

Brother Hehner, forced to lay aside his work due to neuropathy, was followed by a three-year blessed tenure by Brother M. Röder. Then Brother W. Wilkening worked virtuously for five years. Then Brother C.A.C. Achard pastored the congre-

gation a year before he left the active service. Thereupon followed Brother J. B. Schwietert for two years and Brother H.C. Jacoby, who worked great blessing in the congregation for six years.

In July 1903, under the leadership of Dr. Geo. B. Addicks, the cornerstone of the current new and beautiful building was laid and the name changed from “Ebenezer” to “Elmbank Avenue.” The following September, the present preacher, W. Schutz, was installed in the congregation, and on Nov. 29 the church was dedicated to the worship of the Triune God under the direction of Bishop Fitz-Gerald. The furnished building along with the comfortable parsonage and lot cost \$11,400.

The congregation is composed of 95 members, has a promising Sunday school with 75 pupils, a lively youth group of 40 members, and two women’s societies. Officers of the board are Brothers Georg Reitz and G. Hurni, retired preachers, F. Blankenborn, F. Hugo, E. Hugo, F. Kercher, J. Blattner, J.H. Riske, H. Eikmann, A. Ziegeler and, J.C. Geitz.



Memorial German Methodist Church was founded as the South St. Louis Mission in 1843 and originally located on Columbus St. In the Soulard neighborhood. It relocated to 8th & Soulard Streets in 1858 and again to Jefferson & Accomac in 1892. The church was destroyed by a tornado in 1896 and the rebuilt structure, shown here, was completed later that year. The congregation disbanded about 1981.



Wm. Schutz was pastor of Elmbank Ave. German Methodist Church beginning 1903.

Wm. Schutz, the current preacher, was born in Wilnsdorf, Westphalia, Prussia in 1847 and came with his parents to the state of Illinois when he was 15. He was converted to God as a youth in Peru, Ill and served his adopted country as a soldier in the Civil War. Later he followed the call of God into the preaching office and then, after a year of traveling under the Supervising Elder, joined in the fall of 1871 what was then the Southwest German Conference. He served the

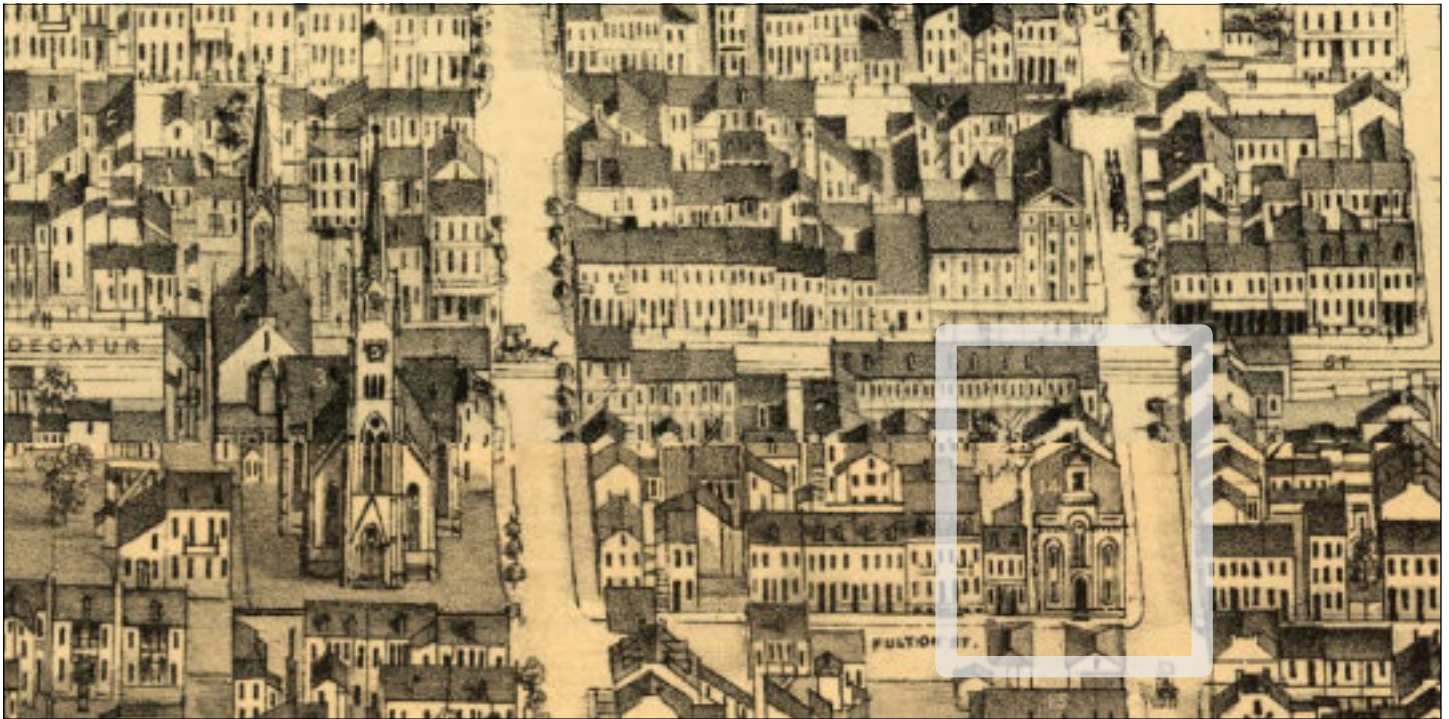
following congregations: Bunker Hill, Appleton, Red Bud, Decatur, Warrenton, Belleville, Warren-Circuit, and Warrenton (for a second time). After that, he made visitations in the Quincy District as the Supervising Elder before becoming the preacher of Memorial Congregation in St. Louis, Mo., which he left for his present position. In 1896, he was conference

representative to the meeting of the General Conference in Cleveland, O. He has proved himself to be a successful preacher, who has led many souls to heaven through his preaching and personal effort.

Memorial Congregation

Brother Philipp Barth, then a colporteur in a private home in south St. Louis, began preaching in 1841. His audience grew substantially and so he invited Dr. L. S. Jacoby to help. By September 1843, the ground was so widely sown, that the 80-member congregation could be organized as the “Mission in South St. Louis.”

In 1844, a suitable location was established on Columbus Street and was used by the congregation for worship until 1858. Then the congregation built an attractive house of worship on the corner of 8th and Soulard Streets, dedicated on March 13, 1860, but partially destroyed by fire in 1891. After



This composite of Plates 5 and 25 from Compton & Dry's 1875 map of St. Louis shows a portion of the Soulard neighborhood along 8th Street (Fulton) between Soulard St. And Lafayette Ave. Eighth Street German Methodist Church, established as the South St. Louis Mission, is highlighted. To the left, also facing 8th Street (Fulton St.) is Trinity Lutheran Church. Behind Trinity on 9th St. (Decatur St.) is St. Pauls German Evangelical Church. Source: [Camille N. Dry, Pictorial St. Louis, the Great Metropolis of the Mississippi Valley: A Topographical Survey Drawn in Perspective, A.D. 1875](https://bit.ly/3dmcuir) <<https://bit.ly/3dmcuir>>, Library of Congress.

the old property was sold in September 1892, construction of a new church at the corner of Jefferson Avenue and Accomac Street was begun and a modern house of worship costing \$23,000 was erected. In remembrance of the 50th year of existence of German Methodism, the congregation was later re-named “Memorial Congregation.”

As is well known, this church was totally destroyed on May 27, 1896 by a tornado during the administration of Brother J. L. J. Barth. The parsonage was severely damaged. The congregation was able to begin reconstruction with the general assistance of all of German Methodism, and the new house of worship was dedicated to the Lord in December of the same year. Both churches were constructed under the administration of Brother J.L. J. Bart.

The congregation currently consists of 230 members, 130 Sunday school pupils, 85 members of the Youth League, 50 members of the Women’s Society, and 40 in the Women’s and Young Women’s Mission Society.

Governance consists of the following brothers: Trustees: August Woitscheck, Fr. Schreck, Louis Busch, Emil Woitscheck, A. F. Pollmann, E. H. Kessler, W. Köpke, Phil. Klein and John Sehr. Wardens [*Verwalter*]: J.C. Brand, Theo. E. Jacoby, Phil. Klein, H. Mohr, Geo. Brand, H.F. Pollmann, John

Other German Methodist churches

Historical sketches of the following churches appeared in past Issues of *PastPorts*

Eden, St. Louis—[January 2013](https://bit.ly/3sslPbw)
<<https://bit.ly/3sslPbw>>

Salem, Ballwin—[August 2014](https://bit.ly/3x1NViB)
<<https://bit.ly/3x1NViB>>

Zions, Carondelet—[November 2012](https://bit.ly/3ttyeyk)
<<https://bit.ly/3ttyeyk>>



Charles Günther was pastor of Memorial German Methodist Church in 1903.

Sehrt, Fr. Schreck, John Twelker and Emil Woitscheck. Brother Edw. De Fries fills the office of exhorter, Geo. Brand is Sunday school superintendent and Brother F. H. Jänichen is president of the Youth League.

The congregation has been served by the following preachers: Dr. L. S. Jacoby, Kaspar Jost, Philipp Kuhl, Konrad Eisenmeyer, Sebastian Bart, Karl Köneke, Wm. Schreck, H. C.

Dreyer, John Keck, John Hausam, Rudolph Havighorst, Alois Löwenstein, John Hausam, Louis Kunz, Geo. Böshenz, H. Lahrmann, J. M. Winkler, R. Havighorst, Jakob Fifel, Hy. Pfaff, Dr. L. S. Jacoby, E. Heidel, Hy. Pfaff, John P. Miller, F. Stoffregen, Hy. Schutz, C. Holtkamp, C. Rodenberg, H. Naumann, J.L.J. Barth, Wm. Schutz and C. Günther.

Charles Günther, the present preacher of Memorial Congregation, was born on October 4, 1862 in the Department [*Amt*] of Esens, County [*Kreis*] of Aurich, Province of Hannover, Germany. As is the custom in that country, he enjoyed a good education, was confirmed in the state church at the age of 15 and received as a member.

In 1882 he entered this country, coming to San Jose, Ill. He was led to the Lord by God through the instrumentality of Dr.

Geo. B. Addicks, who came to San Jose, Ill. in March 1886 to preach about the situation of an unbeliever. After a long period of resistance, he decided to answer the call of God to the ministry and dedicated himself to some years of study at the German college in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, graduating in the spring of 1889. In the fall of that year he affiliated with the St. Louis German Conference as a probationer and has remained a loyal member. In the course of time he has worked in blessing in the following fields: Golden City, four years; Drake, Mo., three years; Ballwin, Mo.; five years; and since then he has been active at Memorial Congregation in St. Louis.

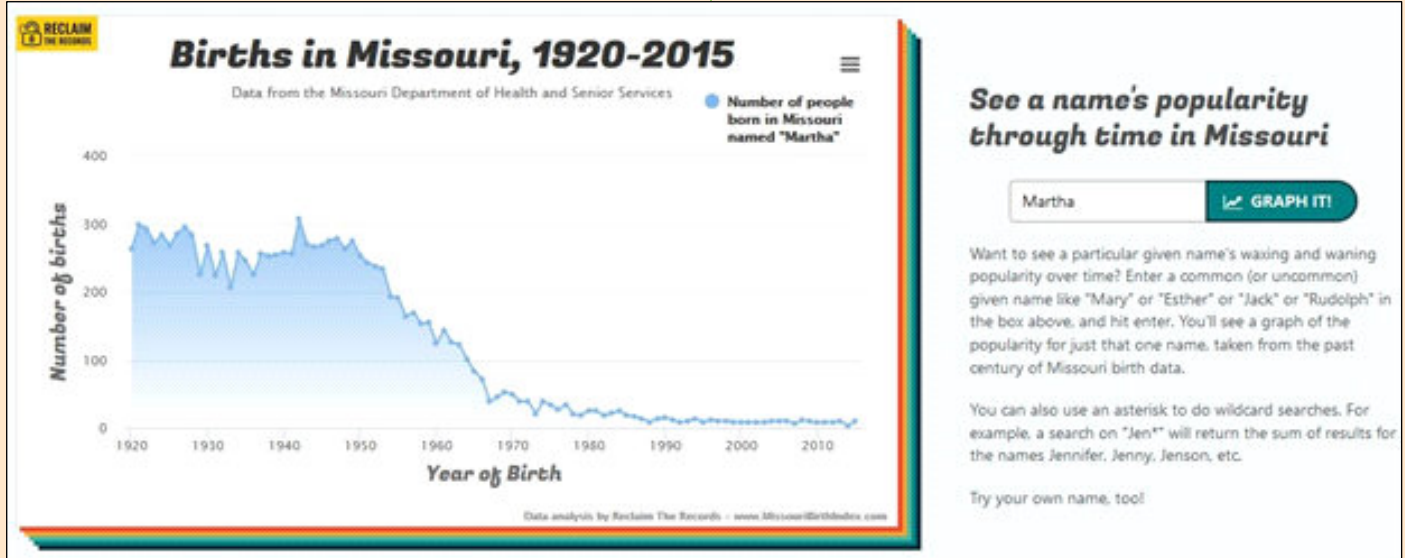
OF NOTE

History & Genealogy now open for research visits by appointment

The History & Genealogy Department is now open for research visits by appointment. Appointments last one hour and 45 minutes starting at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. The department can accommodate three appointments each period. Researchers can browse the stacks, and use print materials, computers, microfilm readers, and copying and scanning equipment. Table seating is available. Researchers may contact H&G in advance and request that specific materials be ready for them when they arrive for their appointments. Email requests to genealogy@slcl.org or call 314-994-3300 and select 5 on the main phone menu.

H&G's email lookup and Book-a-Librarian services are still available. See page 7 for more information about available services.

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Reclaim the Records gains access to restricted data

If you're interested in activist genealogy, then [Reclaim the Records](https://www.reclaimtherecords.org) <<https://www.reclaimtherecords.org>> is the site for you. The organization's board of directors pursues its mission of giving the public access to information of genealogical and historical importance through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and, when necessary, legal action. This has enabled them to win the release of millions of records, which are then uploaded online for free use.

New York and Missouri were the first states targeted by founder Brooke Schreier Ganz. In the case of New York, Ganz made an unsuccessful FOIA request for marriage indexes in New York City. The group subsequently filed a successful lawsuit and won. The results are available on the [Reclaim the Records website](https://bit.ly/3eorfAL) <<https://bit.ly/3eorfAL>>. The organization continues to pursue further suits in New York City to release records that the city has made increasingly more restrictive.

In Missouri, Reclaim the Records requested an index to death records kept by the state from 1968 forward

(prior years were already searchable on the Missouri Secretary of State's website). When the state failed to cooperate, they filed a suit based on Missouri's Sunshine Law against the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) in Cole County,



Missouri on November 23, 2016. Finally, on April 15, 2020, the organization declared "We won the records, we won attorneys' fees, and we even won fines against the

agency!" The [record set covers the years 1968–2015](https://bit.ly/3mTvKH6) <<https://bit.ly/3mTvKH6>>. In addition to the death index, the [Missouri birth index, 1920–2015](https://bit.ly/3e23gqw) <<https://bit.ly/3e23gqw>> is now available. At the bottom of the page, you can enter a given name and chart its popularity over the years, as shown, above.

Reclaim the Record's ongoing goals are to promote the use of Freedom of Information laws to improve access to genealogical records and to provide individual researchers access to records as an alternative to for-profit companies. Visitors may suggest record sets that they would like to see opened to the public and donate to support their efforts.

Live History & Genealogy classes via Zoom webinar

Classes are free and open to the public. Registration is required. [Register online](https://www.slcl.org/events) <https://www.slcl.org/events> or call 314-994-3300. Classes will be conducted over Zoom webinar. Times listed are Central Time.

Saturday, April 24, 2:00 p.m.

Who Were my Ancestors? Beginning Genealogical Research

If you have little or no research experience, this is the class for you. Learn about the genealogical research process and the many resources available in History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library. | [Register](#)

Monday, April 26, 6:30 p.m.

The Google Earth of the Last Century: Fire Insurance Maps

Curious about what your ancestor's living or work situation might have been like? Fire insurance maps offer a glimpse of the urban built environment in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Case studies will show how to use them to solve different research problems. | [Register](#)

Wednesday, May 5, 6:30 p.m.

Who Were my Ancestors? Beginning Genealogical Research

If you have little or no research experience, this is the class for you. Learn about the genealogical research process and the many resources available in History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library. | [Register](#)

Monday, May 10, 6:30 p.m.

PERSI: A Tool for Finding Articles about Your Ancestors

The Periodical Source Index or PERSI indexes over 11,000 Genealogical and Local History Periodicals published by local, state, national and international societies and organizations. Researchers will learn how to use this tool to access articles. | [Register](#)

**Check out the History & Genealogy
[Virtual Classroom](#)**

**View class recordings free
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Saturday, May 22, 2:00 p.m.

Finding Ancestors in U.S. Census Records

Census records are a basic and essential source for genealogical research in the U.S. Learn how to search census records effectively using Ancestry Library Edition and other electronic databases | [Register](#)

Tuesday, May 25, 6:30 p.m.

Of Non-Noble Lineage: Deutsches Geschlechterbuch as a German Genealogical Source

The 221 volumes of Deutsches Geschlechterbuch offer genealogical information for thousands of non-noble German families. Their standardized format makes using them possible for the non-German speaker. | [Register](#)

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JOURNAL HIGHLIGHTS

Selected articles from recent journals and quarterlies

The Alabama Review (Alabama Historical Association), 73:3 (July 2020): “Documenting Slavery at the Local Level: Montgomery, Alabama; A Case Study,” 223–245.

Internet Genealogy, 15:4 (Oct. / Nov. 2020): “City Directories: A Wealth of Information,” 23–26; “Extra Family Information: ‘Non-Population’ U.S. Census Schedules,” 35–40.

The Irish Genealogist (Irish Genealogical Research Society), 15:3 (2020): “Understanding Property Transactions in Ireland, I: Legislative and Historical Context,” 387–412; “A Study of Ure Families in Ireland Using Traditional genealogical Research and Genetic Genealogy,” 530–545.

Ohio Genealogy News (Ohio Genealogical Society), 51:2 (Summer 2020): “Finding a Book Online During COVID...or Anytime,” 22–25; “Making a Case for Homesteading Case Files,” 37–40.

The SAR Magazine (Sons of the American Revolution), 115:2 (Fall 2020): “The American Revolution and the Beginning of the End of Slavery in America,” 18–22.

Your Genealogy, 6:4 (Sept./Oct. 2020): “Emigration from the Upper Harz Valley [Germany],” 16; “Irish Genealogy Research: Pre-1864,” 21; “The Plight of the Pilgrims [400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower], 34.”

PastPorts is published by History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library, located on Tier 5 of Library Headquarters.

[Current and past issues can be downloaded from the web <http://www.slcl.org/pastports>.](http://www.slcl.org/pastports)



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The following H&G services are available during COVID-19 pandemic restrictions:

Photocopies

H&G can provide photocopies, prints, or digital scans of many library materials, including:

- Books and periodicals—up to 30 pages from one book or one article from a single journal issue. Staff can also photocopy or scan tables of contents and index pages.
- Microfilmed records—A list of microfilm available in the H&G collection can be [viewed online](https://bit.ly/3jrqw3j) <<https://bit.ly/3jrqw3j>>.
- Databases—H&G staff will print out database records if patrons cannot access the database at home.

Please use the [online lookup request form](https://bit.ly/2UQXJKE) <<https://bit.ly/2UQXJKE>> and be as specific as possible when submitting requests.

Print collection

One-third of the books in H&G’s collection—more than 27,000—can be checked out. The entire collection is included in the library’s [online catalog](http://webpac.slcl.org) <<http://webpac.slcl.org>>. Books with call numbers that **do not** begin with “R” are available to check out. Patrons can request books online or by calling 314-994-3300.

Research guidance

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Book-a-Genealogist

Researchers who would like in-depth assistance can schedule a phone consultation with an H&G staff member. Requests can be made using the online [Book-a-Genealogist form](https://bit.ly/3fQbB0r) <<https://bit.ly/3fQbB0r>>.

Database access

Many library databases can be used at home by St. Louis County Library card holders living in the metropolitan area. The Ancestry Library Edition database, normally restricted to in-library use, can be accessed remotely on a temporary basis. [View the list of genealogical databases on the library’s website](https://bit.ly/37GRBtF) <<https://bit.ly/37GRBtF>>.

For more information, please contact the History & Genealogy Department at 314-994-3300 or genealogy@slcl.org.