



Hungarian Ref. Church of Passaic, NJ

Reformed

220 Fourth St. Passaic, New Jersey 07055

www.passaichunref.org

973-778-1019

Pastor: Rt. Rev. József Vásárhelyi
Hungarian Church Services: Sun: 11:00 AM
Hungarian Congregation: xxxxx

Church History

In the early 1890s there were some 40-50 Hungarian Reformed and Evangelical families in the growing and prosperous industrial city of Passaic.

There is no record of the organizing meeting but during the summer of 1895 a committee is established to organize the Passaic and area Reformed Hungarians. Reverend Demeter conducted the first service at the North Reformed Church of Passaic on Jefferson Street on October 20, 1895. From this day on Rev. Demeter faithfully came from New York City on the third Sunday of every month to teach the word of God until May of 1898 when he returned to Hungary.

The small congregation in Passaic, with 90 members, became sizable enough by 1898 to keep records and hold regular meetings with an elected consistory. At April 24, 1903 the Congregational Meeting chose Rev. Elemér Kúthy, the interim pastor's brother, to serve like first full-time pastor. They bought two lots on the corner of Fourth Street and Morris Street (200 feet x 51 feet) for \$1,800. The foundation ceremony was held on January 15, 1905 but most incredibly, the ceremony for the dedication of the church and parsonage took place on May 7, 1905.

The Lórántffy Zsuzsanna Ladies Aid was formed on October 28, 1928 with 35-40 members; the President of the group was Rev. Tegze.

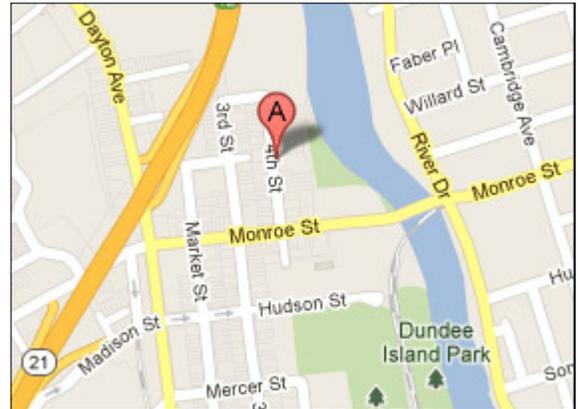
In the early 1940's, great material progress was made. The parsonage received another renovation. A substantial amount of money was paid back on the mortgage. Full time English services began in Jan. 1949, every Sunday at 11 a.m. with the assistance of three young theological students who grew up in the church and whose parents had served our church for a long time. Rev. Rácz opened a Vacation Bible School in June of 1952. The tuition was two dollars per person.

The church immediately organized to help the newly arriving refugees. They rented an entire apartment house on Gregory Ave. in Passaic to help provide a place for them to stay. By the end of December, 1956, more than \$4,000 was raised for their benefit. Rev. Bertalan and several members of the congregation were finding jobs and apartments for many of them. The church opened its heart to the Hungarian refugees and welcomed them among the congregation. With this unexpected influx of dozens of Hungarian families and youngsters and the already resolved commitment to build, the congregation formally accepted the responsibility to erect a substantial cultural center in the place of the recently purchased two family houses next to our church. On Jan. 16, 1957, the congregation built a two-story structure seating 500 with fifteen Sunday school rooms, two kitchens and large stage to perform our dances, plays and choral activities. The Congregation, on May 26, 1963, having 202 members present, voted with an overwhelming majority to call Rev. Dr. Aladár Komjáthy to the pulpit to be the sixth full-time minister. At this meeting, the minutes were also written in English for the first time. Rev. Dr. Aladár Komjáthy began his pastorate on July 1 and conducted his first service at our church on July 7, 1963.

The Family Circle was organized for the cultural and social growth of our church in 1963 and with the leadership of Mr. Árpád Bogdány. In September of 1967 a fencing club started its activities with the leadership of fencing Master Miklós Bartha.

On May 19, 1974, Cardinal József Mindszenty, the long suffering Roman Catholic Primate of Hungary, visited in the church while on tour in the U.S.

On May 7th they held a special service to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of building the sanctuary. Rev. S. Szabó was guest minister and Andrea and Erika Tóth read reflections of the consecration of the sanctuary. Just like in 1905 when two weddings were performed to consecrate our church, two weddings took place in the spring of 1995.



Map: <http://g.co/maps/fmkwn>