

PLACES OF WORSHIP IN HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP

By: Steven S. Goodman



INTRODUCTION

In March 1681, King Charles II of England granted William Penn the charter for a proprietary colony on the North American continent, which became Pennsylvania. Penn, a Quaker, had been persecuted in England for his religious beliefs. He viewed Pennsylvania as a “holy experiment” that would separate church and state, and his first legal code for the colony guaranteed religious freedom. Penn promoted Pennsylvania as a religious refuge for the persecuted, and he recruited settlers, largely Quakers but also Mennonites and members of other religious groups from across Britain and Europe, to his new colony.

Although southeast Pennsylvania had previously been part of New Sweden, and then New Netherlands, it was not until the land passed to English control that more extensive settlement began. Early in his proprietorship, Penn established Bucks, Philadelphia and Chester Counties and the first townships, including Haverford in what was then Chester County. He began selling sizable parcels of land throughout the region even before he arrived in the area in 1682.

As settlers arrived, the need quickly arose for places they could worship. Among the earliest settlers were Welsh Quakers who arranged to buy 40,000 contiguous acres, which came to be known as the “Welsh Tract,” encompassing all of what are now Haverford and Radnor, and most of Lower Merion, townships.¹ The first Welsh Quakers arrived in Haverford Township in 1682 and soon constructed a building in which to conduct their Meetings for prayer, reflection and meditation as well as administrative affairs.



The Welsh Tract and Haverford Township highlighted on “A Mapp of Ye Improved Part of Pennsylvania in America, Divided into Countyes, Townshipes and Lotts.” Surveyed by Thomas Holme, 1687.

Haverford Township continued to grow as people of other religious affiliations or backgrounds arrived, but 140 years would pass before another house of worship was built in the township. Even then, at the dawn of the 20th century, the township had only four places for formal religious gatherings. At that point, however, another population migration, this time from Philadelphia to suburban areas including Haverford Township, triggered the establishment of many of the houses of worship now spread across the township, creating a rich tapestry of religious life that continues today.

The houses of worship and religious institutions discussed below can be located on the interactive map accessible through the link below:

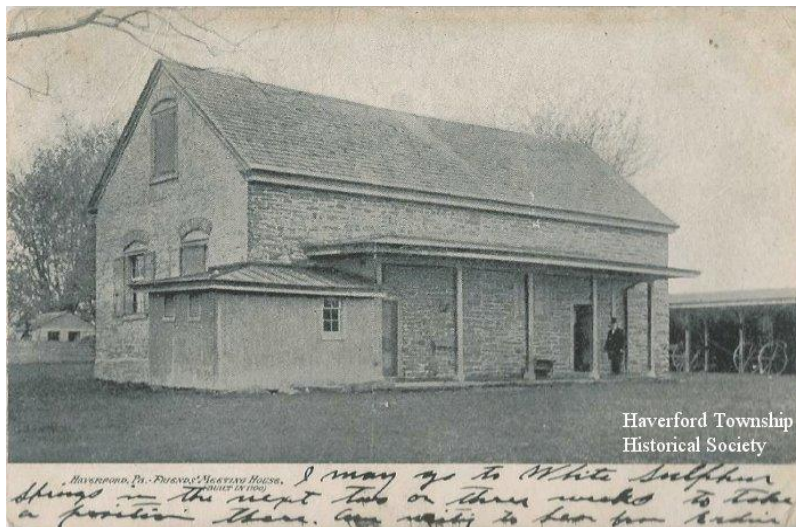
[Houses of Worship in Haverford Township](#)

THE EARLIEST HOUSES OF WORSHIP – 1684 THROUGH 1900

Old Haverford Friends Meeting/Haverford Friends Meeting

Old Haverford Friends Meeting, 235 East Eagle Road, Havertown

Old Haverford Friends Meeting is the oldest place of worship in Delaware County, founded in 1683 by the Welsh settlers who arrived in Haverford Township the year before. Meetings were held in members’ homes until the 1688 construction of a log building on present-day Eagle Road.² Almost as soon as the building was complete, fundraising began for erection of a stone structure on the same site. The initial stone section, believed to be the southern portion of the current Meeting House, was finished in 1700. The northern portion of the current structure, which replaced the original log building, was added in 1800.³ Further additions were made in 1930, 1949 and 1959.⁴



Early photograph of Old Haverford Friends Meeting, Haverford Township Historical Society



More recent photograph of Old Haverford Friends Meeting, Haverford Township Historical Society photo

William Penn is known to have visited and preached at Old Haverford Friends Meeting on several occasions. Because many of its Welsh members did not understand English, however, they may not have understood much of what he said.⁵

The Meeting's property originally extended to the west of the building, and a related Friends burial ground is located in that direction on Eagle Road. The burial ground was laid out in 1684, on land believed to have belonged to William Howell, an active member of Old Haverford Meeting who had received a grant of 5,000 acres from William Penn. The first interment in the cemetery occurred shortly after it was laid out.⁶

Old Haverford Friends Meeting remains in existence, holding worship and First Day School for children in the historic Eagle Road structure.

Haverford Friends Meeting – 855 Buck Lane, Haverford

From time to time, primarily in the 1800s, American Quakers have diverged over the authority of the Inward (later Inner) light, considered a direct, personal experience of the divine, as the primary basis for Quaker religious faith and practice. George Fox, the founder of the Religious Society of Friends, and other early Quakers believed in the centrality of the Inward Light in their religious practices. A schism occurred, however, in 1827 in Philadelphia and elsewhere along the East Coast between followers of Elias Hicks, a Quaker farmer and popular preacher from Long Island, New York, who became known as “Hicksites,” and those referred to as “Orthodox.” Each group claimed to represent authentic Quaker faith and practice.



George Fox, George Fox University Photo



Elias Hicks, Historical Society of Pennsylvania Photo

Hicks asserted the Inward Light in each individual as the primary focus of an individual's faith, over creed or doctrine. The Orthodox emphasized the authority of the Bible and the traditional evangelical understanding of Jesus Christ and atonement. Hicks' followers accused the Orthodox of abandoning traditional Quaker teachings, and the Orthodox claimed that the Hicksites overemphasized the Inward Light while underemphasizing the Bible. This conflict came to a head during the Friends' Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1827, resulting in a break between the two factions.

The Old Haverford Friends Meeting aligned itself with the Hicksites. In 1834, coinciding with the establishment of Haverford College, the Orthodox constructed a new meeting house on Buck Lane, now referred to as Haverford Friends Meeting. The founding members of Haverford Friends Meeting had been gathering in a tenant house on a nearby farm, but it proved to be too small for the growing population resulting from the schism and the opening of the College.

The meetinghouse has undergone several renovations, including an 1894 enlargement. The meeting also established Friends School Haverford in 1885, and a cemetery adjoins the meeting house. In the 1940s, the meeting house provided shelter and support for academic refugees fleeing the Nazi regime in Germany.



Haverford Friends Meeting House – Haverford Township Historical Society Photo

St. Denis Roman Catholic Church, 2401 Saint Denis Lane, Havertown

The second-oldest house of worship in Haverford Township, and oldest Catholic church in Delaware County, might not exist if not for a rude stagecoach passenger.

In 1806, Dennis Kelly, a 27-year old Catholic immigrant from Donegal, Ireland, arrived in Philadelphia with his wife and daughter. The family boarded a stagecoach, intending to head to the western reaches of the still-young United States, where Kelly believed he could make his fortune. The journey was unpleasant from the outset, however, as another passenger cursed loudly and continuously for several miles, until Mrs. Kelly could endure it no longer and ordered the stage to stop, at which point the family disembarked.⁷

Where they left the stage is unknown, but it was not nearly as far west as Kelly had intended to go, and the family lived for several years on farmland that is now encompassed by Villanova University. Kelly held various jobs until, in 1814, he borrowed money, purchased a mill seat and erected a small stone woolen factory on Cobb's Creek at Manoa Road. He subsequently purchased a grist mill from Joshua Humphreys, a shipbuilder known as the "father of the American Navy;" the old Haverford Mill, which had been in the Humphrey family since 1688; the Nitre Hall Powder Mill and several other mills along Cobb's Creek, all of which he converted to textile operations.⁸

Kelly's mills employed hundreds of workers, many of them Catholic immigrants like himself. At the time, four Catholic churches existed in Philadelphia, but they were quite distant from

Kelly's mill community. In 1822, Kelly donated land at what is now Eagle Road and St. Denis Lane in Havertown to Bishop Henry Conwell, second Bishop of Philadelphia. A small wooden church was built on the site in 1825 – the only Catholic church between Philadelphia and West Chester. The first Mass was offered in July 1825 by Fr. Michael J. Hurley, the pastor of Old St. Augustine's in Philadelphia.⁹

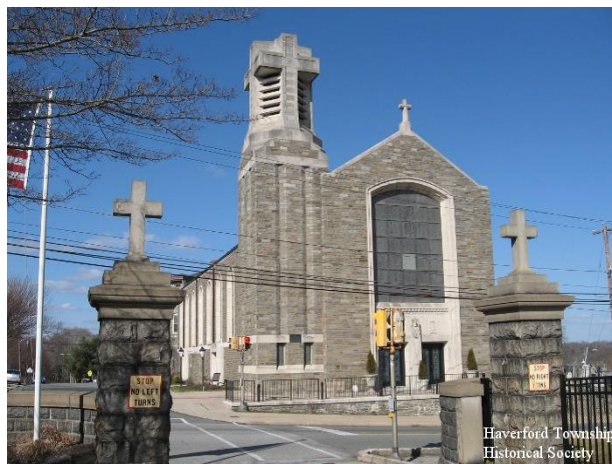


Portrait of Michael Hurley in 1813 by Thomas Sully

A new stone church replaced the original wooden structure in the 1860s and served the congregation for decades. With the eventual sale of several large tracts within the parish boundaries for housing development, however, and the resulting migration of people from Philadelphia to the area, the building ceased to be large enough for St. Denis' growing population. A larger, Romanesque-style church was built and dedicated in 1948.



St. Denis 1860s stone building



St. Denis 1948 Romanesque building

Haverford Township Historical Society photos

St. Denis has other notable attributes. In the 1850s Dennis Kelly had erected a one-room schoolhouse on Powder Mill lane near Haverford Road in the Beechwood area of what is now

Havertown, likely the first Catholic grade school in Delaware County. Approximately 50 students were enrolled in 1859, and the school operated until 1871.

In 1924, a new school was opened and a school building constructed, which lasted until the 1950s, when it was replaced by a larger building. By 1962, almost 1,400 students attended the school, and in 2012, the St. Denis and nearby Annunciation B.V.M. parish schools merged to form an institution now known as Cardinal John Foley School, serving students from pre-school through eighth grade.¹⁰

Kelly's 1822 grant of land to Bishop Conwell, upon which the original wooden church was built, also included space for a cemetery. Like all such facilities, the cemetery requires regular maintenance, and eventually a Villanova University student, Robert Prevost, spent a summer working as a groundskeeper there. In May 2025, Prevost became Pope Leo XIV, culminating a history of individuals associated with St. Denis moving into positions of authority in Catholic institutions.¹¹



Official Portrait of Pope Leo XIV, The Vatican

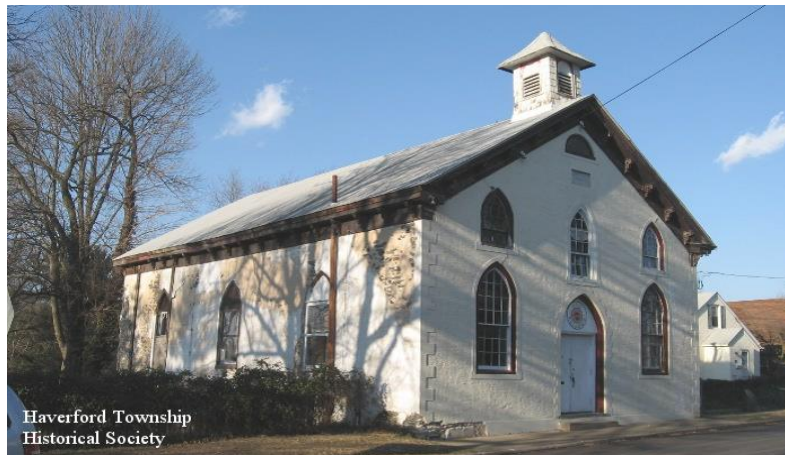
Bethesda Methodist, 404 S. Manoa Road, Havertown; Havertown United Methodist Church, 1108 Steel Road and 200 Brookline Boulevard, Havertown

Methodist Episcopal Bethesda Church was the third church organized and built in Haverford Township (and the last one to have a cemetery).

Methodism began in Philadelphia in 1767 with the arrival of Captain Thomas Webb, a British Army officer and missionary sent by John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. Webb organized a Methodist congregation that, in 1769, constructed St. George's United Methodist Church at the corner of 4th and New Streets, which remains the oldest Methodist church in continuous use in the United States.

Methodism reached Haverford Township in 1831 with the founding of Bethesda Methodist Episcopal Church in the Manoa area.¹² The new congregation constructed a church building in Gothic Revival style in 1832, on donated land on Manoa Road near Oak Way. The first

members contributed \$20 each toward construction costs, and with each subscription came two plots in the adjoining cemetery. The first Sunday School commenced approximately 10 years later, and the building was expanded in 1871 to meet the needs of the growing congregation.¹³



Bethesda Methodist, Haverford Township Historical Society photo

The fortunes of Bethesda Methodist waxed and waned, however, over the next several decades. Westward migration from Philadelphia played a key role, as it would with respect to many churches later established in Haverford Township. Construction of the West Chester trolley line and the Newtown Railroad led to residential development in the township and an influx of people from the city. One of the first new communities was Llanerch, whose Methodist residents desired their own church. St. Andrew's Church was established, causing a decline in membership at Bethesda to a scant four at the turn of the 20th century.¹⁴

Eventually the Bon Air community was built nearby, reviving interest in Bethesda. Its membership eventually climbed back up to 200, which positioned the congregation for the next chapter in its long history. That chapter would come to involve other Methodist churches with long histories in Philadelphia and newer churches in Haverford Township.

In 1790, members of St. George's living in south Philadelphia built a place of worship closer to their homes for use in inclement weather. In 1835 that building became a separate church called Ebenezer Methodist.¹⁵ In 1801, another group had left St. George's, becoming the United Society of People Called Methodist, which met in a building constructed in 1740 that, by 1802, was owned but no longer used by the University of Pennsylvania. The university sold it to a group that established the Methodist Episcopal Union Church, also known as Union Methodist.¹⁶

In 1916, Brookline Methodist Church was founded and began meeting in an abandoned one room schoolhouse, formerly known as the Cobb's Creek Schoolhouse or the "Old School," at 501 Strathmore Road. By 1922 Brookline Methodist had purchased property on Brookline Boulevard and constructed a new building.¹⁷

The next several decades witnessed a consolidation of these Methodist churches. By 1941, Bethesda had outgrown its building and was looking for land nearby for a new one. At the same time, Ebenezer decided to leave West Philadelphia and relocate to Haverford Township. Bethesda and Ebenezer merged, purchased land at 1108 Steel Road upon which a new church was constructed, and adopted the name Ebenezer Methodist.¹⁸

At approximately the same time, Union Methodist in Philadelphia was losing members as they moved to the suburbs. A prominent member who had moved to Brookline initiated discussions with the trustees of Brookline Methodist, and in 1948 those two churches merged under the name Union Methodist Church in Brookline.¹⁹ Not long after, in 1956, another Methodist church, named Trinity, was founded on Eagle Road at Maryland Avenue.

Over the next several decades, although each of these churches served the community well, congregants continued to move to more distant suburbs featuring newer communities with more modern houses and amenities. In 2004, Trinity Methodist sold its building to a Korean congregation and merged with Ebenezer to form Hope United Methodist Church. St. Andrew's decided to close rather than merge, and most of its remaining members moved to Union Methodist. Hope and Union, which had been sharing a minister and conducting joint services online during the COVID-19 pandemic, merged to form Havertown United Methodist Church in 2022, and their existing buildings became the Union and Hope campuses of the newly merged congregation.²⁰



HUMC – Union Church



HUMC – Hope Church

Bethany Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 5 Concord Avenue, Havertown

The last of the pre-1900 churches in Haverford Township, like the present-day Havertown United Methodist, also had its antecedents in Philadelphia. Unlike Haverford United

Methodist, however, Bethany Evangelical Presbyterian Church was founded by a captain of industry and eventual Postmaster General of the United States.

John Wanamaker, a devout Presbyterian and, at the time, Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association in Philadelphia, founded the Bethany Sunday School in 1858, three years before he established his eponymous department store. From humble beginnings in a tent along the Schuylkill River, it soon became one of the largest Sunday Schools in the country. In 1865, Wanamaker moved the Bethany Sunday School to a new building at 22nd and Bainbridge and expanded it into the Bethany Presbyterian Church (later Bethany Memorial, and eventually Bethany Collegiate).²¹



Photo of a young John Wanamaker, The Business Biography of John Wanamaker photo, and as Postmaster General, Pennsylvania Center for the Book photo

Almost from the outset, Bethany offered a variety of community services in addition to, or perhaps more accurately as part of, its religious functions. It provided fuel and food to local families so that their children could attend school. Outreach programs included personal and job counseling as well as health services. For non-members, the church operated a soup kitchen and provided clothes to those in need. Wanamaker also opened the Penny Savings Bank in a room in the church on November 1, 1889, specializing in small accounts held by church members and others.²²

Wanamaker remained very involved with Bethany until his death in 1922. He taught in and supervised the Sunday School, and served as its superintendent for three years. He led the Brotherhood, a group of 400 male church members who met for Bible study, and he lectured to the Bible Union.

During the ensuing two decades, as part of a general population migration westward from Philadelphia, many Bethany members moved to Delaware County, shrinking the congregation. In response, the church decided in 1947 to move to an undeveloped parcel of land on Township Line at Concord Avenue in Havertown, recommended by the Philadelphia

Presbytery. The building at 22nd and Bainbridge in Philadelphia was sold, providing funds for the new building. Groundbreaking at the site occurred in May 1948, and the new church building officially opened in September 1949.²³ It remains in use to this day.



Bethany Evangelical Presbyterian Church (BEPC website)

Post-1900 Houses of Worship

Haverford Township experienced significant growth after the turn of the 20th century, fueled largely by migration from the city of Philadelphia, particularly West Philadelphia, to which people had previously moved from districts closer to the Schuylkill River. This growth led to the establishment or relocation of a significant number of houses of worship of all denominations throughout the township. They are presented here in alphabetical order.

Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 401 Brookline Boulevard, Havertown

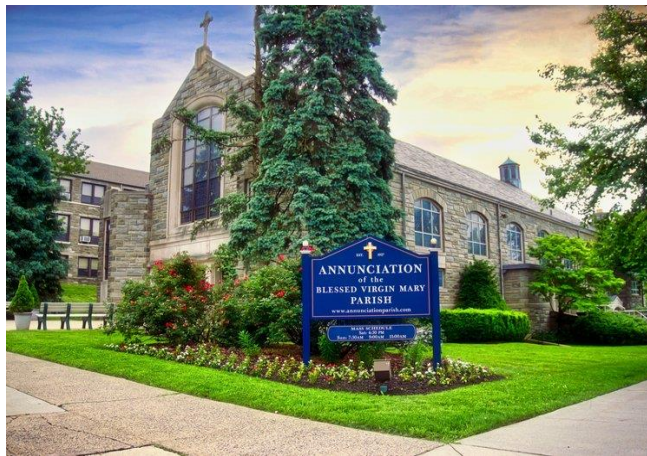
Annunciation BVM Parish was founded in 1927 in what was then the community of Brookline by Rev. John Patrick Cahir, who had been an assistant at St. James Church in Philadelphia. Although developing, the area was still considered rural at the time.

A parish is a territorial entity in many Christian denominations, including Catholicism, constituting a division within a diocese, but the concept also includes the people within the territorial community or congregation.²⁴ In the 1920s, Catholic residents of Haverford Township perceived a need for a parish between St. Denis in Oakmont and St. Laurence in Highland Park. Following several visits by the Chancellor of the Archdiocese, the residents received word in April 1927 that Cardinal Dennis Dougherty had created a new parish for them.²⁵

After meeting for a short time in rented property, parishioners purchased land along Wexford Road between Brookline Boulevard and Sagamore Road as the site of their new church and

school. Construction began in December 1927, with Cardinal Dougherty laying the cornerstone, and the new church opened on Memorial Day 1928.²⁶

Growth of the parish into the 1950s created the need for a larger church building. Parishioners constructed a new church at 401 Brookline Boulevard, and on April 3, 1955, Fr. Cahir celebrated the first Mass in the newly built church. Additional buildings were erected as the parish continued to grow.²⁷



Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Annunciation B.V.M. website photo

Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church (Armenian Evangelical), 100 N. Edmonds Ave., Havertown

Founded in 1907, Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church is one of the oldest surviving Armenian Evangelical Churches in the United States and the only such church in Pennsylvania. It is a member of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America.

The first Armenian Evangelical Church was established in Istanbul in 1846. Persistent political and social challenges led to significant Armenian emigration to the United States over the ensuing decades. In 1902 those who settled in Philadelphia, numbering approximately 120, formed the Armenian Evangelical Church and held services in Odd Fellows Hall on North Broad Street. This congregation grew and in 1907 invited the Rev. Haig Yardumian, educated in England but living in Bulgaria, to become its minister.²⁸

As Armenian immigrants continued to arrive in Philadelphia after World War I, a rift within the congregation led to formation of another church, the Armenian Congregational Church, in 1921. Within four years, however, the Evangelical Church and the Armenian Congregational Church merged and built a church on Ludlow Street.²⁹

In the late 1950s, following migration of many members to Upper Darby and Haverford Township, the congregation decided to relocate to Havertown. The church purchased a site

at Edmonds and Gladstone Avenues in Havertown in 1961 and, after overcoming opposition from nearby residents and ensuing litigation, the new building was completed in 1964.³⁰ Services are still conducted in part in Armenian.



Armenian Martyrs Congregational Church, AMCC website photo

Calvary Lutheran Church (closed)

Although not established until the early 1900s, Calvary Lutheran Church's roots date to 1848, when St. John's Lutheran Church was organized in Philadelphia. Members of St. John's eventually founded Martini Evangeli al Lutheran Church, which later became Calvary Lutheran.³¹

The first congregational meeting was held in 1908, and a pastor was hired in 1909. Following his arrival, the congregation purchased land at 57th Street and Haverford Avenue in West Philadelphia, upon which a new church building was constructed. Dedication occurred in April 1910.³²

As with so many other Philadelphia churches, Martini Evangeli members gradually migrated to the suburbs, and sentiment grew for a new building in a location more convenient to the membership. As early as 1928 the church appointed a committee to seek a new site, and subsequent iterations of the committee carried on the search. In December 1941 the congregation decided to move the church to Delaware County, but World War II intervened, causing a delay in acquiring an appropriate site.³³

Shortly after the war ended, the congregation changed its name from Martini to Calvary, and in 1946 it sold its property in West Philadelphia. The congregation held services and meetings in the Llanerch Fire Hall for two years while purchase and construction arrangements were made for a new church building. Eventually property facing Township

Line Road and bounded by Myrtle Avenue and Chatham Drive in Havertown was purchased and the new church building was dedicated on November 20, 1949.³⁴

In 1988, due to declining membership and resulting financial issues, Calvary Lutheran closed.

Delaware County Baptist Church, 1236 Ellston Road, Havertown

The Baptist church has a long history in the Philadelphia area. The First Baptist Church of Philadelphia was organized in 1698, just 6 years after William Penn established Philadelphia, making it one of the oldest churches in the United States. Brandywine Baptist Church, located at the edge of the Brandywine Battlefield, was formally organized in 1715, although its roots date back to 1692. Within Haverford Township, an 1890 building constructed by the William Penn Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows was once the meeting place of a Baptist congregation.³⁵

Delaware County Baptist Church carries on, within Haverford Township, this long Baptist tradition. It offers a variety of services and activities, including Sunday School and midweek Bible study.



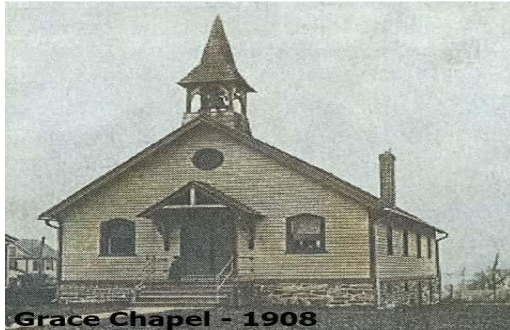
Delaware County Baptist Church, Google Maps photo

Grace Chapel, 1 W. Eagle Road, Havertown

Unlike many other houses of worship in Haverford Township, which originated in Philadelphia, Grace Chapel was founded in 1908 in Bryn Mawr. The new congregation moved into an existing wood frame building, already called Grace Chapel, but the following year the building was dismantled, transported to the corner of Eagle and Darby Roads in Oakmont, reconstructed and expanded.³⁶

Growth of the congregation necessitated a new building on the same site, which was finished in late 1914. The 1914 building is now the back portion of the present sanctuary. The main portion of the present auditorium was built in 1924, and other additions were made in 1934 and 1938.

Grace Chapel engages in significant global outreach, engaging in a variety of ministries in Europe, East and Southeast Asia, Africa and Mexico, including mobilization, technology, church planting, physical and art therapy, business and pastoring. At home, the church conducts a Spanish ministry, with individuals from Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala and Costa Rica attending services.



Grace Chapel 1908 and 2024 – Grace Chapel website photos

Havertown Seventh Day Adventist Church, 2 N. Edmonds Avenue, Havertown

Havertown Seventh-Day Adventist Church is a local religious community dedicated to providing spiritual guidance and support to its members. The church offers various programs, including Sabbath School and midweek prayer sessions, aimed at fostering fellowship and spiritual growth.



Havertown Seventh Day Adventist Church, Seventh Day Adventist Church Office of Archives, Statistics and Research photo

Horizon Community Church, 746 Panmure Road, Haverford

In 2015, Alex and Debbie Hanevich moved to Bryn Mawr with a vision of establishing a church somewhere in the Philadelphia suburbs. Alex Hanevich had completed his seminary degree in 2013 and previously served as an associate pastor of college students and young adults in Chattanooga, Tennessee before arriving in Philadelphia. The couple took time to learn from others who had started churches in the metropolitan area before launching their own.³⁷

Over the next few years the Haneviches began serving the community through local non-profit organizations and eventually started holding once a month church services at the Ardmore Music Hall, with Alex Hanevich as pastor. In April 2018 they launched Horizon Community Church and a weekly service at The Rock at 19 E. Eagle Road in Havertown, and in 2019 moved from meeting on Sunday evenings to Sunday mornings.³⁸

The COVID-19 pandemic forced services to move online for several months, but in-person services resumed with Covid restrictions in the autumn of 2020. In April 2021, the congregation began holding worship services at the Main Line Art Center in Haverford.³⁹



*Horizon Community Church in the Main Line Art Center
Horizon Community Church website photo*

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1501 Lawrence Avenue, Havertown

Jehovah's Witnesses are a global religious association with over 9 million members in approximately 118,000 congregations in 240 countries and territories. Their places of worship are known as "Kingdom Halls" rather than "churches," in part based on the belief that the term often translated "church" in the Bible refers to a congregation of people rather than a structure.⁴⁰ As in such congregations worldwide, Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in Havertown hosts meetings, open to the public, at which scriptures and their application to individuals' daily lives are discussed. Services often include audience participation, much like a classroom discussion. Meetings begin and end with song and prayer.



Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in Havertown, Google Maps photo

Lamb of God Church of Pennsylvania, 825 Beechwood Road, Havertown

The congregation now known as Lamb of God began in 1997 as a small home fellowship of five people. Two years later the church was founded by Pastor Robert Bolton as the God Love Chinese Assembly of God. The congregation initially held its services in rented space in Philadelphia.

By 2005, the congregation had raised sufficient funds to purchase its present building on Beechwood Road in Havertown. The arrival of a new pastor in 2007 also brought a change of name, to Lamb of God Chinese Church. In 2012, the church became independent and changed its name to its Lamb of God Church of Pennsylvania.



Lamb of God Church of Pennsylvania, Lamb of God Facebook page photo

Memorial Church of God in Christ, 747 Buck Lane, Haverford

Memorial Church of God in Christ was founded in 1933 by Rev. Edward Crudup. The congregation originally met in a former tombstone maker's shop on Glenbrook Avenue in Bryn Mawr. With an increase in membership, the congregation purchased land and an existing building on Buck Lane in Haverford in 1937, under the name "Memorial Church of God in Christ of Montgomery and Delaware County." The building, built in 1876, had previously been Haverford Public School No. 5 and then League Hall. Renovations and additions have been made to the building, but the original foundation of the school remains, as do two of the original brick walls.⁴¹

Rev. Crudup moved to California in 1946 and the congregation was served by a number of pastors over the ensuing decades. In December 1971, Nathaniel W. Porter, Sr. assumed the pulpit and served the congregation for 42 years. During this time the congregation grew and its building was significantly renovated and expanded.⁴²

In January 2014, Daren K. Miller, a 25-year veteran of the financial services industry, became pastor. Under his leadership, the church has established several community outreach programs, including a food pantry. The pantry began operation during the COVID-19 pandemic and has continued to grow, offering meals four days per week.⁴³



Memorial Church of God in Christ, Memorial Church website photo

Presbyterian Church of Llanerch, 211 Lansdowne Road, Havertown

The Presbyterian Church of Llanerch is another house of worship with roots in Philadelphia which followed the migration of its members to the suburbs. A number of Presbyterian families, primarily from the city, moved to the new suburban community of Llanerch in the early 1900s. A congregation unofficially organized in October 1908 and the church was officially constituted in May 1909.⁴⁴

In 1912, the church received a charter of incorporation from the Delaware Court of Common Pleas, and in October 1915 it was elevated from a mission church to self-supporting status (capable of funding its operations through donations from its congregation rather than reliance on an external denomination or larger church body). The congregation constructed a new church building in 1912 and enlarged it in 1925. Post-World War II suburban population growth led to the construction of an education building in 1953.

As of 2024 the church had approximately 100 active members. It operates a preschool and has engaged in outreach with a number of civic organizations.



Presbyterian Church of Llanerch, Presbyterian Church website photo

Sacred Heart Church, 105 Wilson Avenue, Havertown

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia founded Sacred Heart Church in 1927 to serve a growing Catholic population in Brookline, Oakmont and Manoa. Father John Hickey served as the first pastor and oversaw construction of the church at Wilson Avenue and Manoa Road, prior to which Mass was celebrated primarily in private homes. The parish campus also came to include the Sacred Heart Catholic School in 1928 and a convent in 1931, both later replaced with new structures, and a rectory. Growth of the parish to 1,400 families by the early 1950s necessitated construction of a new church building, completed in 1952. Father Hickey served Sacred Heart until his death in 1955 and he was interred on the church grounds.⁴⁵

Equally longstanding was the tenure of Father Thomas Falls who, after 20 years as a professor at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, succeeded Father Hickey and served Sacred Heart as pastor from 1955 to 1982. Father Falls was honored with the title Monsignor in 1965, during the Ecumenical Council Vatican II. He delivered the final remarks to the council's 2,200 bishops and cardinals, including an appeal for a council statement detailing the obligation of bishops to guarantee “a decent living wage” to priests.⁴⁶

Sacred Heart Catholic School continues to serve the educational needs of children from preschool through grade eight. It offers both a religious and academic educational program.



The Sheep's Gate Presbyterian Church, 1301 Maryland Avenue, Havertown

The Sheep's Gate Presbyterian Church is a Korean congregation founded in 1992. For a number of years the congregation shared the Trinity Methodist church building. In addition to its religious ministries, the church offers a bilingual day care program serving infants, toddlers and pre-kindergarten children, combining bible-based and play-based education.



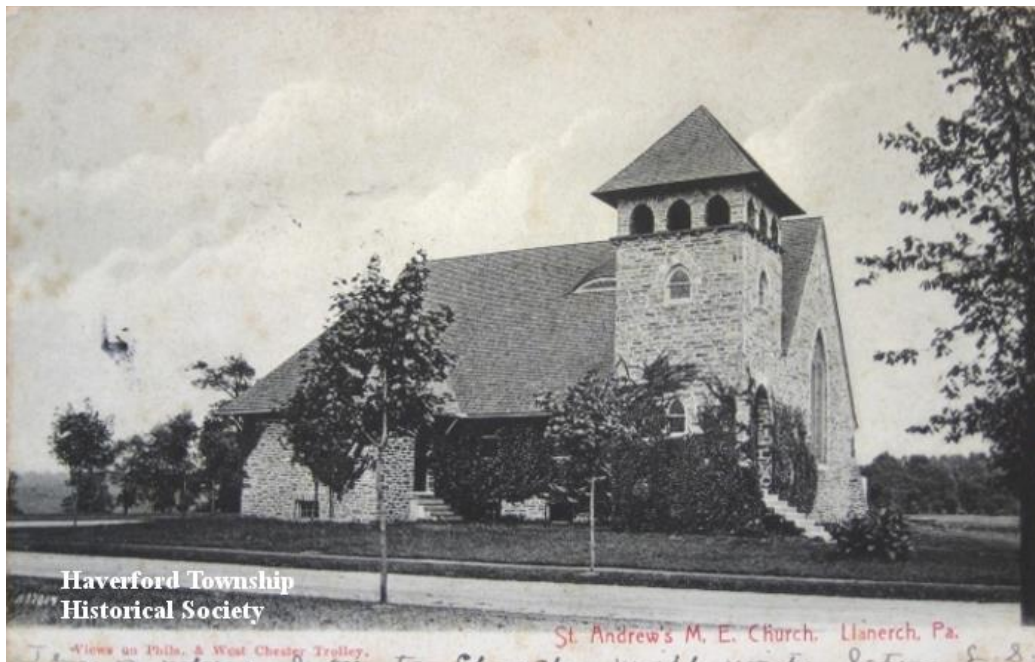
Sheep's Gate Presbyterian Church, Haverford Township Historical Society photo

St. Andrews Methodist Church (closed), 17 Llandillo Road, Havertown

The rapid growth of Llanerch that led to the establishment of the Presbyterian Church of Llanerch also provided the impetus for the founding of a new Methodist church in the community. In the late 1890s twenty area residents organized Llanerch Methodist Episcopal Church, the name of which was changed to St. Andrews in 1914.⁴⁷

Membership grew steadily, reaching approximately 500 in the late 1930s and 1940s. By the early 2000s, however, migration of members to more distant suburban locations, discussed elsewhere in this article with respect to other congregations, impacted St. Andrew's as well. Rather than join the 2004 merger of neighboring churches Trinity Methodist and Ebenezer Methodist, St. Andrew's eventually decided to close in 2011, and most of its remaining members moved to Union Methodist, which eventually merged with Hope United Methodist to form the current Havertown United Methodist Church.⁴⁸

An effort was made to preserve the St. Andrews church building, which was in a state of disrepair. A group called "Friends of St. Andrews" organized and held various arts-related events to raise funds for upkeep of the building. The group proposed in 2013 to convert the building into a community arts center or theater, but ultimately the costs associated with rehabilitation of the structure to bring it up to code and eliminate safety issues proved too much and in 2014 it was sold and eventually adapted into a single-family residence.⁴⁹



St. Andrew's Methodist Church, Haverford Township Historical Society photo

St. Faith Episcopal Church (closed), 1208 Allston Road, Havertown

Establishment of St. Faith, like so many other churches, resulted from migration to Philadelphia's western suburbs and the associated building boom in the early decades of the 20th century. St. Faith began as a mission in October 1932, worshipping in the cafeteria of the Brookline School. In November 1932, the congregation broke ground for a chapel on Allston Road at Brookline Boulevard, and the first service was held there in February 1933.⁵⁰

During World War II, attendance and finances declined. A fundraising drive and meetings with the Bishop of Philadelphia led to the appointment of a new vicar and revitalization of the congregation. The mission resumed its growth, became a parish and was granted a charter, as St. Faith Protestant Episcopal Church, by the Delaware County courts in 1947, one of only two churches in the world named for St. Faith.⁵¹

The congregation continued to grow and a new church building was built on the Allston Road site in 1958. The church also operated a weekday nursery school on site. Eventually, however, the church closed, and its building is now occupied by Wonderspring, a nonprofit provider of early childhood education and school-age care.



St. Faith Episcopal Church, Haverford Township Historical Society photo

Nevil Memorial Church of St. George/St. George's Episcopal, 1 W. Ardmore Avenue, Ardmore

George Washington Nevil emigrated with his parents, brother and sister from England to Philadelphia shortly after George's birth in 1847. His father operated a leather manufacturing business and left a substantial estate when he died in 1885, which was divided among the three children. The brothers continued to operate the business and it grew and further prospered. George's sister and brother passed away in 1911 and 1912, respectively, and George inherited the entire family fortune.⁵²

Nevil engaged in many charitable endeavors, including donations to over 20 hospitals, each as a memorial to his parents. He also envisioned a church as a similar memorial, and in 1929 he hand wrote a will that included a \$300,000 bequest to the Bishop of Pennsylvania to build a church in memory of his parents and a \$25,000 endowment, the income of which was to be used to keep the church building in good repair.⁵³

Nevil desired that the church be constructed at the intersection of Ardmore Avenue and Darby Road. Bishop Thomas J. Garland opposed this site because the area was sparsely populated, seemingly offering no prospect of a congregation large enough to support a church, and because of its proximity to an existing Episcopal church, St. Mary's. While the bishop was away on an extended trip out of the country, Nevil purchased the site and commenced construction, which was well underway when the bishop returned.⁵⁴

The saga of the church's location did not, however, end with this seeming *fait accompli*. In 1930, before construction was complete, Nevil passed away. He had not changed his will, which still left \$300,000 to the Bishop of Pennsylvania, notwithstanding that the church was nearly complete. The bishop preferred to accept the \$300,000 and let George's executor, The Girard Trust Company, take possession of the church, the location of which the bishop still opposed.⁵⁵

A settlement was ultimately reached, pursuant to which the executor would convey to the Bishop and the Church Foundation title to the land and buildings upon completion and \$250,000 in cash. The Delaware County courts approved the agreement in 1931. Construction was completed and, following litigation, ultimately dropped, by distant Nevil relatives challenging aspects of his will, the church was consecrated and held its first service in April 1932.⁵⁶

St. George's was relatively unique in that it was never a mission because it was self-sustaining from the outset – its status was that of "Bishop's church." In 1951, the church initiated the legal steps to incorporate the parish and in 1952 its corporate charter was granted by the Court of Common Pleas of Delaware County.⁵⁷

No records exist to explain why the church is named for St. George, who was not on the Episcopal Church's official list of saints. George is the patron saint of England, however, from which Nevil's parents, whom he desired to honor, had emigrated. It seems likely that Nevil selected the name to honor his English heritage.⁵⁸



The Nevil Memorial Church of St. George, Haverford Township Historical Society photo

St. James United Church of Christ, 135 Myrtle Avenue, Havertown

The present United Church of Christ, with which St. James in Havertown is affiliated, was formed on June 25, 1957 through the merger of the national Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches. These organizations were themselves the result of earlier consolidations and had their roots in Congregational, Lutheran, Evangelical, and Reformed denominations dating back hundreds of years. The UCC views itself as the “church of firsts,” including being the first historically white denomination to ordain an African-American (1785), the first to ordain a woman (1853), the first to ordain an openly gay man (1972), and the first Christian church to affirm the right of same-gender couples to marry (2005), among others.⁵⁹

St. James' origins lie in a meeting called by 21 charter members in April 1944 to establish a church under the sponsorship of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Although the founders had little experience in organizing a congregation, the Philadelphia Synod provided support, and the first service was held in July 1944.⁶⁰

The congregation grew steadily, resulting in the purchase of property formerly part of The Grange estate, including its dairy barn built in 1854. The parcel had been separated from The Grange in connection with the development of what became known as Chatham Village, and the barn had been used to store building materials during the Chatham Village construction. Through extensive renovation, the barn was converted into St. James' church building, and its datestone contains the initials "J.A" for John Ashurst, who owned The Grange in the 19th century and built the barn. The first service was held in the building in December 1948.⁶¹

St. James, which had been a mission of the Evangelical Reformed Church and partially supported by the parent church, became self-supporting in 1956, shortly before the merger that resulted in the United Church of Christ.⁶²



St. James United Church of Christ, Google Maps photo

St. John Neumann Parish, 380 Highland Lane, Bryn Mawr

St. John Neumann parish was founded as Blessed John Neumann by Archbishop John Krol in 1964 to serve Catholics in the Main Line area. It is named for the fourth Bishop of Philadelphia, John Nepomucene Neumann. During the previous year, Pope Paul VI had beatified Neumann and thus permitted public veneration of him.

The parish purchased ten acres of land in Bryn Mawr upon which it erected a church, and the first Mass in the new building was held in August 1967. In June 1977 Pope Paul canonized Bishop Neumann as the first American male saint, and the parish changed its name to St. John Neumann.

The parish operates a school, known as Ss. Colman-John Neumann, serving students from pre-kindergarten to grade 8. The school's roots date to 1915 when St. Colman School, staffed by the Sisters of St. Joseph, opened in Ardmore. Blessed John Neumann School opened in 1967, staffed by the Sisters of St. Francis and lay faculty. The two schools merged

in 1976, and for a short time the combined institution was known as St. Colman-Blessed John Neumann School. In June 1977, the school changed its name to Ss. Colman-John Neumann.⁶³



Church building, St. John Neumann Parish website photo



St. John Neumann, Britannica photo

St. Matthew's Reformed Episcopal Church, 200 Glen Gary Dr, Havertown

St. Matthew's was formed in 1934, and its present church building was built in 1940. It is a member parish of the Reformed Episcopal Church, which was established in 1873 and subsequently became one of the member churches that established the Anglican Church of North America in 2009 as part of a movement to unite traditional Anglicans in North America.⁶⁴

The congregation's original name was All Saints (Reformed Episcopal) Church, but it was changed to St. Matthew's in 1940. Shortly before, the congregation considered a merger with Berea Community church but it was not consummated.⁶⁵ In an expression of optimism and foresight, in September 1944 the church announced that it would be open to all on "V-Day," whenever that might occur.



St. Matthew's Reformed Episcopal Church, St. Matthew's website photo

St. Paul's Syrian Orthodox Church, 45 Glendale Rd, Havertown

St. Paul's Syrian Orthodox Church was established in 2000. The congregation, initially known as "St. Paul's Syriac Mission in Delaware County, PA," met in several temporary locations before acquiring property in the Overbrook section of Philadelphia. The church grew and, in 2010, it acquired its current building in Havertown, from which it serves Syrian Orthodox Christians throughout southeast Pennsylvania.

St. Paul's is affiliated with the Malankara Archdiocese of the Syrian Orthodox Church in North America, under the Holy See of Antioch and All the East. It offers not only regular Sunday services but also liturgical services on significant days in the Syriac Orthodox Church Calendar. English, Malayalam (the language of Kerala, the southernmost state in India, spoken by over 35 million people) and Syriac (a dialect of Aramaic and the liturgical and daily language used in portions of Syria, Turkey and Iraq) are all used at various times throughout the service schedule.⁶⁶



St. Paul's Syrian Orthodox Church, St. Paul's Facebook page photo

St. Raphaela Center, 616 Coopertown Road, Haverford

St. Raphaela Center is a spiritual center and retreat operated by the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a worldwide religious community founded by St. Raphaela Mary. The Sisters' original focus in the Philadelphia area was quite different. Coming from Rome at the invitation of Cardinal Dennis Dougherty in 1926, the Sisters opened a small chapel on 34th Street near the University of Pennsylvania and began teaching classes in business skills, languages and the arts to female students at the University and working women. The Sisters also organized classes and clubs for children.⁶⁷

In January 1957, two families sold their jointly owned thirty-room mansion in Haverford to the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This acquisition enabled the establishment of

the Blessed Raphaela Mary Retreat House. The Sisters adapted the structure to serve as a place of prayer that could house 50 overnight retreat participants.⁶⁸

St. Raphaela Center now offers a variety of programs, including prayer sessions, retreats and spiritual programs, with over 5,000 participants visiting the Center annually. In addition to its main function as a spiritual center, the Center serves as the headquarters of the United States Province of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as well as their Mission Center and formation house.



St. Raphaela Center, St. Raphaela Center website photo

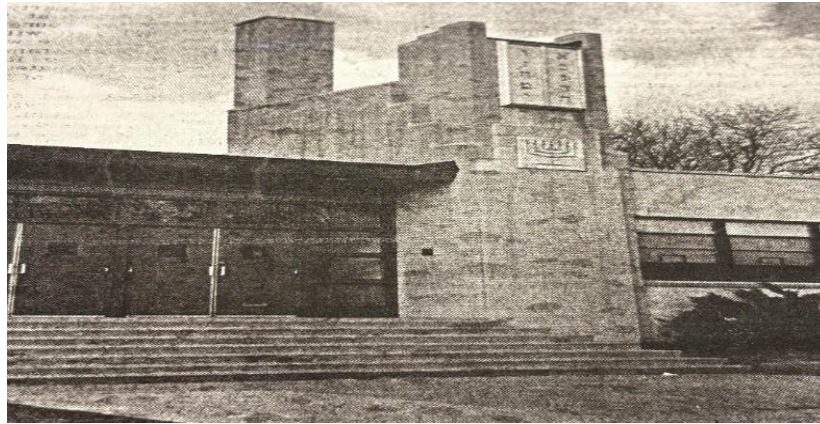
Suburban Jewish Community Center – B’nai Aaron (closed), formerly located at 560 Mill Road, Havertown

Haverford Township witnessed an influx of Jewish families after World War II, necessitating a place of worship. A new synagogue, Suburban Jewish Community Center – Tel Or, began meeting in the Llanerch Firehouse on Darby Road in 1952. In 1969, SJCC merged with Temple B’nai Aaron of Wynnefield, which originated in Philadelphia in 1926 and originally rented a garage at 54th and Columbia in West Philadelphia to hold its first High Holy Day services.⁶⁹

In the mid-1950s, SJCC – Tel Or acquired 5.6 acres of property on Mill Road in Havertown, upon which it constructed a synagogue. During construction, the congregation conducted services in the Oddfellows Hall on Manoa Road and in the former Brookline Theater.⁷⁰

SJCC - B’nai Aaron grew both organically and by absorbing Congregations Agudath Israel of Collingdale and Beth Tefillah of Yeadon in 1990, but membership eventually began declining as congregants moved to other suburban locations. In 2011, the synagogue closed its doors and merged with Congregation Adath Israel in Merion Station. Shortly after, the congregation

sold its Mill Road building and property to Trinity Christian Church of Greater Philadelphia (discussed below).⁷¹



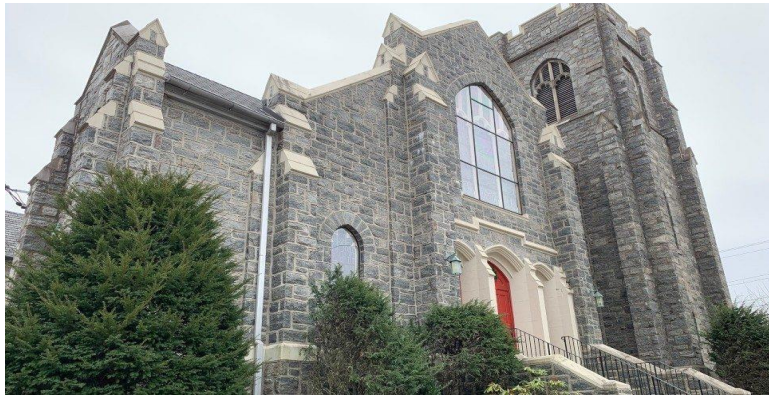
Suburban Jewish Community Center – B'nai Aaron, JewishGen.org photo

Temple Lutheran Church, 501 Brookline Blvd, Havertown

The Home Mission Board of the East Pennsylvania Synod of the Lutheran Church canvassed the Brookline, Penfield and Beechwood Park communities of what is now Havertown in 1916 and decided to establish a church in the area. Combining the Union Sunday School of Brookline, organized in 1914, and the Brookline Christian Endeavor, organized in 1915, Temple Lutheran was established in September 1916 by 30 charter members.⁷²

The congregation purchased four lots at the corner of Brookline Boulevard and Earlington Road for a Bible school building in 1919. The building was dedicated in September 1920 and was followed by purchase of two additional lots on Brookline Boulevard in 1922. A parsonage was constructed on one of the lots in 1924, and a church building was built on the other and dedicated in 1928. In the interim, Temple Lutheran became a self-supporting congregation in January 1925.⁷³

As with many institutions, Temple Lutheran was significantly impacted by the Great Depression. The congregation lost special building funds and had a sizable interest obligation on the indebtedness incurred in constructing the church building, but it met all of its financial obligations throughout the Depression era.



Temple Lutheran Church, Temple Lutheran Facebook page photo

Trinity Christian Church of Greater Philadelphia, 560 Mill Road, Havertown

Trinity Christian Church of Greater Philadelphia (TCCGP) resulted from the merger of three churches, Chinese Church of Philadelphia, Chinese Salvation Church and Main Line Chinese Christian Church, in March 2002. For almost ten years after the merger, Sunday services were held at the Delaware County Christian School in Newtown Square. The congregation purchased the former Suburban Jewish Community Center – B’nai Aaron building and property in Havertown in 2011 and moved to the new building in early 2012.⁷⁴

TCCGP has over 300 members and offers both Chinese and English worship services. Members are drawn from across the Greater Philadelphia area. Membership is predominantly Mandarin-speaking, with some speaking Cantonese, and consists primarily of Chinese professionals from mainland China, Taiwan and a smaller number from Hong Kong and other Asian countries, as well as members who grew up in the United States.⁷⁵



Trinity Chirstian Church of Greater Philadelphia, TCCGP photo

Trinity Lutheran Church, 1141 West Chester Pike, Havertown

Although established just after the turn of the 20th century, Trinity Lutheran Church has roots in the 19th century. South Philadelphia farmer Charles Gettz, who with other members of his family were members of Trinity Lutheran Church at 18th and Wolf Streets, moved to the Manoa section of what is now Havertown in the late 1800s. Charles Gettz approached the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and requested that a pastor visit periodically and start a Lutheran Sunday School, the latter of which occurred in 1891. Sunday school sessions were held in the nearby Odd Fellows Hall.⁷⁶

Growth of the community necessitated establishment of a church, and Trinity Lutheran was founded in 1902, primarily with the Gettz family as charter members. Charles Gettz donated a portion of the family farm as the site of the church, upon which its first building was constructed. The building was replaced by the present edifice in 1952 as part of a multi-year construction project also resulting in a parsonage, a chapel and increased parking. The church purchased and eventually demolished Odd Fellows Hall to make way for the new buildings.⁷⁷

Trinity Lutheran became one of the first Lutheran congregations to establish a “Unified Women’s Program,” and it also formed a men’s organization, The Men’s Brotherhood, of which Claude Haring, Philadelphia Phillies, Eagles and, previously, Athletics broadcaster, served as president. The church’s choir director and organist, D. DeWitt Wasson, became a well-known choirmaster and organist nationally, and members Robert Cole and Calvin Marsh served as flutist for the Philadelphia Orchestra and baritone soloist for the Metropolitan Opera Company, respectively.⁷⁸



Trinity Lutheran Church, Trinity website photo

True Jesus Church, 660 E. Township Line Road, Havertown

The True Jesus Church originated in China in 1917 when a rural northeastern Chinese man named Wei Enbo said he had a vision in which Jesus commanded him to “correct the Church.”⁷⁹ Banned in China in the late 1950s, the church gradually reconstituted itself, including in the 1980s in the United States, and it now has approximately 1.5 million members in more than 60 countries and regions across six continents, including Havertown, which serves the Philadelphia area. In addition to religious services, held on Friday evening and Saturday morning, which the church observes as the Sabbath, it also offers activities for the spiritual growth of its members, such as Bible studies, fellowship, a choir and classes for children and older youth.



True Jesus Church, Google Maps photo

Union Methodist/Brookline Methodist Church, 200 Brookline Boulevard, Havertown

Union Methodist’s recent history, featuring its merger with Hope United Methodist Church to form Havertown United Methodist Church in 2022, is discussed above. Its early history merits discussion as well.

The Methodist Episcopal Union Church was established in Philadelphia in 1801 following a split from St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church. By 1831 it occupied a building formerly owned by the University of Pennsylvania known as the “Whitefield Tabernacle” after George Whitefield, a renowned preacher who arrived in Philadelphia from England in 1739. Whitefield attracted so much attention for his open-air sermons that religious skeptic Benjamin Franklin donated funds to buy the land and build the tabernacle. The congregation grew significantly and eventually constructed a new church building at 20th and Diamond streets.⁸⁰

In the early 20th century, congregants gradually moved out of the area, leading to a decline in membership and an eventual merger with Brookline Methodist Episcopal Church, which as described above had been established in 1916. Its membership had grown and in 1921 it

had purchased a lot at the corner of Brookline Boulevard and Allston Road, upon which a church building was erected and dedicated in January 1923.⁸¹

In the 1940s, continued growth necessitated a new Brookline Methodist building. Funds were raised but World War II led to rising costs and a postponement of the project. During this period, the Methodist Episcopal Union Church decided to discontinue its activities and sell its property at 20th and Diamond. Methodist Episcopal merged with Brookline Methodist and the resulting congregation adopted the name “Union Methodist Church in Brookline.” The combined church received much of the proceeds from the sale of Methodist Episcopal’s Philadelphia building, which were used to build a new building in Brookline.⁸² That building is now the Union campus of Havertown United Methodist Church, pictured on page 9.

United Presbyterian Church of Manoa/Manoa Community Church, 153 Eagle Road, Havertown

In 1939, the Board of American Missions of the United Presbyterian Church purchased land in Manoa as the site of a new church, and shortly thereafter invited Reverend James L. Rohrbaugh, Pastor of the Calvary Orthodox Church of Wildwood, New Jersey, to help found the church. Rev. Rohrbaugh had been a missionary to Ethiopia but returned to the United States amidst the ongoing violence associated with the Italian occupation of Ethiopia.⁸³

The cornerstone of the new church building was laid in 1940 and the building was completed soon thereafter. Rapid growth followed, and by 1944 the congregation had tripled its membership and quadrupled its Sunday School attendance. By the mid-1950s, both membership and Sunday School attendance had doubled once again, with the Sunday School considered one of the fastest growing in the country. In 1971, the church added a nursery school which continues in operation.⁸⁴

In 2022, Manoa Community Church was awarded the Bart Hess Award for church vitality, given annually to an Evangelical Presbyterian Church that has demonstrated the most innovative approach to church revitalization. Additionally, the same year, Outreach Magazine highlighted Manoa in its fall issue, “100 Fastest-Growing Churches in America.”⁸⁵



Manoa Community Church, Haverford Township Historical Society photo

Conclusion

Haverford Township has a rich tapestry of houses of worship – over 30, serving a township population of approximately 50,000 – the result in part of a history of religious tolerance dating back to the founding of Pennsylvania. Members of the earliest congregations braved the challenges of emigration and the trials of a new land, and members of the later ones faced economic turmoil, significant population shifts and shifting fortunes that resulted in the mergers and, on occasion, closures of their houses of worship. That so many houses of worship, of various faiths and denominations remain is a testament to the achievements and sacrifices of many generations.

In many ways Haverford Township’s religious institutions share common purposes, and they often engage in interfaith cooperation to encourage their members to explore their commonalities and to support common causes. They also offer a wide range of spiritual activities and community service opportunities to their members. Together with schools, parks, cultural and social centers and a variety of other institutions, they stand as an integral part of life in Haverford Township.

¹ “Haverford Township: A Brief History,” www.havtwp.org/History_of_Haverford.html

² “History,” Old Haverford Friends Meeting, accessed May 7, 2025, [History | Old Haverford Friends Meeting](#).

³ “[History | Old Haverford Friends Meeting](#); Margaret E. Johnston, “Haverford Friends’ 300th Year – II,” Main Line Times, Nov. 3, 1983, p.17; [Haverford Her. Trail-Site 9](#), joint project of the Haverford Township Historical Society and the Friends of Haverford Trails, accessed May 7, 2025.

⁴ At the time of the 1949 addition, many of the members of Old Haverford Friends Meeting were descendants of the original members, including Barbara Aubrey Anderson Morris, the ninth generation in a direct line to Barbara Aubrey, wife of founding member and original trustee John Bevan. Barbara Barnes, “Willing Hands Enlarge a Meeting House,” The Evening Bulletin, July 6, 1949, p. B-14

⁵ [History | Old Haverford Friends Meeting](#).

⁶ [History | Old Haverford Friends Meeting](#); [Haverford Her. Trail-Site 9](#).

⁷ Joseph Barrett, “St. Denis Parish: Suburban Pioneer,” The Catholic Standard and Times, Feb. 6, 1975, p.12.

⁸ Barrett, “St. Denis Parish,” p.12; [Haverford Her. Trail-Site 10](#), accessed May 22, 2025; Richard Kerr, “Dennis Kelly (1779-1864) and Family,” Haverford Township Historical Society, Aug. 23, 2016, [KELLY-Dennis_1799-1864_and_Family.pdf](#); “Haverford Township: A Brief History,” accessed May 22, 2025, www.havtwp.org/History_of_Haverford.html.

⁹ Barrett, “St. Denis Parish,” p. 13; “Bicentennial Information,” St. Denis Roman Catholic Church, accessed May 22, 2025, [Bicentennial – Saint Denis Roman Catholic Church](#); Joan Toenniessen, “In our backyard,” News of Delaware County, Haverford Edition, Dec. 6, 1995, p. 6A; [Haverford Her. Trail-Site 10](#). The name of the church was originally St. Dennis, although there was no St. Dennis in the Catholic calendar of saints. This spelling was changed in 1865, one year after Dennis Kelly’s death, to St. Denis, after the first bishop of Paris. Barrett, “St. Denis Parish,” p.12.

¹⁰ Barrett, “St. Denis Parish,” p.15.

¹¹ Shawnette Wilson, “Pope Leo XIV previously worked as groundskeeper at cemetery in Havertown,” Fox29 Philadelphia, May 7, 2025; David Bjorkgren, “Pope Leo XIV remembered during his time in Delaware County,” Delco Today, May 12, 2025; Alicia Roberts, “Pope Leo XIV worked at this church near Philadelphia before becoming pontiff,” CBS News Philadelphia, May 8, 2025. Prior to appointment of its first resident pastor in 1873, clergy stationed in Philadelphia would travel to St. Denis to offer Mass, and eight eventually became bishops. One of them, Thomas Galberry, became President of Villanova University in 1872.

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- ¹² “A History of our Church”, Havertown United Methodist Church, accessed April 8, 2025, www.havertownumc.org/general-clean; Letter from Margaret Johnston, Haverford Township Historical Society, to Fran Macolley, July 9, 1996 (“Margaret Johnston Letter”).
- ¹³ Margaret Johnston Letter; [Haverford Her. Trail-Site 27](#).
- ¹⁴ Margaret Johnston Letter. As late as 1894, Bethesda Methodist had enough members to warrant publication of its own newspaper, the Bethesda Herald, a four-page publication issued monthly “in the interest of the Bethesda Methodist Episcopal Church, Manoa, Pa.” Richard D. Kerr, “Newspapers in Haverford Township,” Haverford Township Historical Society, May 16, 2019, p. 1, [Newspapers in Haverford Township](#).
- ¹⁵ Margaret Johnston Letter; “A History of our Church,” Havertown United Methodist Church; Tina Coleman, “In our back yard,” News of Delaware County, June 8, 1994, p. 6A.
- ¹⁶ “A History of our Church,” Havertown United Methodist Church.
- ¹⁷ “A History of our Church,” Havertown United Methodist Church.
- ¹⁸ “A History of our Church,” Havertown United Methodist Church; Coleman, “In our back yard;” Ebenezer H.M. Church History, 200th Anniversary, 1790-1990, p.7. The old Bethesda building then served as a “Fellowship Lodge” of the International Order of Odd Fellows until 1989, when the Lodge moved to Lansdowne. The building sat vacant until 2004, when it was purchased by an artist and photographer for use as his studio. “The Odd Fellows Lodge in Haverford Township,” Richard D. Kerr, Haverford Township Historical Society, Jan. 20, 2021, p. 5, [Odd Fellows Lodge in Haverford Township](#); Joe McAllister, “Church converts to studio,” News of Delaware County, Sept. 8, 2004, p.11.
- ¹⁹ “A History of our Church,” Havertown United Methodist Church.
- ²⁰ “A History of our Church,” Havertown United Methodist Church.
- ²¹ Halley C. Maxin, “John Wanamaker,” Philadelphia Center for the Book, Fall 2007; Materials in the Bethany Collegiate Presbyterian Church 50th anniversary collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
- ²² William R. Glass, “Liberal Means to Conservative Ends: Bethany Presbyterian Church, John Wanamaker and the Institutional Church Movement,” [American Presbyterians](#), Vol. 68, No. 3 (Fall 1990), p. 180; “A Short History of the Life of John Wanamaker,” Friends of the Wanamaker Organ, accessed November 19, 2025, [John Wanamaker – Friends of Wanamaker Organ](#).
- ²³ “Our History,” Bethany Evangelical Presbyterian Church, accessed July 29, 2025, [Bethany \(EPC\) celebrates 75 years of ministry in Havertown in 2024 - Bethany EPC Havertown 19083](#).
- ²⁴ Parish boundaries often do not align with township or other local municipal boundaries. Ecclesiastical parish boundaries are based on religious jurisdiction, whereas municipal boundaries are based on secular, governmental authority. There are four Catholic parishes whose churches are located in Haverford Township, but there are an additional six parishes whose geographic boundaries extend into the township: St. Bernadette, St. Dorothy, St. Laurence, Our Mother of Good Counsel, Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Pius. They are not further discussed in this article, however, because their churches are not located in the township.
- ²⁵ “Our Parish History,” Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, accessed March 25, 2025, [HISTORY — ANNUNCIATION BVM](#); Clara L. Donnelly, “History of the Parish,” p.1.
- ²⁶ “Our Parish History,” Annunciation B.V.M.; Donnelly, “History of the Parish,” p.4.
- ²⁷ “Our Parish History,” Annunciation B.V.M.
- ²⁸ Helena Nylund, “The Armenian Martyrs Congregational Church,” News of Delaware County, April 17, 1975, p.22; Peter B. Doghramji, “Centennial Reflections on the Origin and Destiny of our Church,” *Commemorative Booklet, 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Martyrs’ Congregational Church, 1907-2007*, pp. 13, 14.
- ²⁹ Nylund, “The Armenian Martyrs Congregational Church,” p.22; Doghramji, *Centennial Reflections*, pp.15, 18.
- ³⁰ Nylund, “The Armenian Martyrs Congregational Church,” p.22; Doghramji, *Centennial Reflections*, p.23.
- ³¹ “History of Calvary Lutheran Church, The Fiftieth Anniversary, 1908 – 1958,” p.7.
- ³² “History of Calvary Lutheran Church,” p.7.
- ³³ “History of Calvary Lutheran Church,” p.8.
- ³⁴ “History of Calvary Lutheran Church,” pp. 8-9.
- ³⁵ “About Us,” First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, accessed November 24, 2025, [History | FBC-Philadelphia](#); “Our History,” Brandywine Baptist Church, accessed November 24, 2025, [WELCOME | BBC](#); Richard D. Kerr, “The Odd Fellows Lodge in Haverford Township,” Haverford Township Historical Society, January 20, 2021, p. 4, [Odd Fellows Lodge in Haverford Township](#).

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- ³⁶ Kay Raftery, "Church has nearly a century behind it," Philadelphia Inquirer, Sept. 29, 1993, p. MD4; "Our History," Grace Chapel, accessed April 22, 2025, [Grace Chapel: Havertown, PA > Our History](#).
- ³⁷ "Our History," Horizon Community Church, accessed July 29, 2025, [Horizon Community Church | History](#).
- ³⁸ "Our History," Horizon Community Church.
- ³⁹ "Our History," Horizon Community Church.
- ⁴⁰ "About Us," Jehovah's Witnesses, accessed November 25, 2025, [Who Are Jehovah's Witnesses?](#)
- ⁴¹ "Our History," Memorial Church of God in Christ, accessed May 13, 2025, [Our History](#); Richard D. Kerr, "Schools in Haverford Township," Haverford Township Historical Society, April 24, 2023, [Schools in Haverford Township](#). The church's name was later shortened to Memorial Church of God in Christ.
- ⁴² "Our History," Memorial Church of God in Christ.
- ⁴³ Brad Nau, Tom Ignudo, "Pennsylvania man ditches finance industry to provide food for people in need: 'I'm in it for the outcome,'" CBS News Philadelphia, June 17, 2024.
- ⁴⁴ Lynn M. Case, "The Presbyterian Church of Llanerch," revised by The Reverend John Franklin McCleary in "Seventy Years of The Presbyterian Church of Llanerch," p. 1.
- ⁴⁵ "Sacred Heart Church, 75th Anniversary, 1927 – 2002," pp. 14-15.
- ⁴⁶ Special to the New York Times, "A Philadelphia Priest Closes Vatican Debate," New York Times, Oct. 28, 1965, p.20.
- ⁴⁷ Donald Zeiter, Pastor, "St. Andrew's United Methodist Church, 75th Anniversary, 1898-1973;" Marguerite Tennis, "A History of St. Andrew's Methodist Church, Llanerch, Havertown, Pennsylvania, February 28, 1897 – December 31, 1959."
- ⁴⁸ "A History of our Church," Havertown United Methodist Church.
- ⁴⁹ Lois Puglionesi, "St. Andrews' Future Debated," Daily Times, March 1, 2013.
- ⁵⁰ "Our Responsibility, St. Faith Episcopal Church, 1932 – 1955," p.3; Linda Reilly, "In our backyard," News of Delaware County, Nov. 30, 1994, p. 6A.
- ⁵¹ Reilly, "In our backyard," p. 6A.
- ⁵² Carlton Cressman, "The Substance of Things Hoped For: Being a History of The Nevil Memorial Church of St. George," 1978, p.5.
- ⁵³ Cressman, "Substance of Things Hoped For," p.7; "The History of St. George's," The Nevil Memorial Church of St. George, accessed June 3, 2025, [Our History - Welcome to St. George's](#); "The Nevil Memorial Church of St. George, Parish Profile," prepared by the Search Committee of St. George's Church in the Discernment Process of calling a new Rector, 1995-1996, p. 10.
- ⁵⁴ Cressman, "Substance of Things Hoped For," p.7.
- ⁵⁵ Cressman, "Substance of Things Hoped For," pp. 7-8.
- ⁵⁶ Cressman, "Substance of Things Hoped For," pp.8-9, 12.
- ⁵⁷ "The History of St. George's;" Cressman, "Substance of Things Hoped For," p. 12; "Parish Profile," p. 10.
- ⁵⁸ St. George's Episcopal Church, "The News of St. George," August 2000, p.1.
- ⁵⁹ "About," United Church of Christ, accessed June 3, 2025, [About - United Church of Christ](#).
- ⁶⁰ "St. James Church: The First Twenty Years, 1944-1964," pp. 3-4.
- ⁶¹ "St. James Church: The First Twenty Years, 1944-1964," pp. 5-6; Tina Coleman, "In our back yard," News of Delaware County, August 3, 1994, p. 6A; "Chatham Village Church Celebrates 20th Jubilee," The News of Delaware County, Nov. 5, 1964, p.1.
- ⁶² St. James United Church of Christ, "30th Anniversary Directory," 1944-1974, p. 1.
- ⁶³ "Mission," Ss. Colman-John Neumann School, accessed July 31, 2025, [Ss Colman-John Neumann School - Mission](#).
- ⁶⁴ John M. Campbell, "St. Mathews Reformed Episcopal Church, A Biography," unpublished, in the files of the Haverford Township Historical Society, p.5.
- ⁶⁵ "Havertown Church Marks 30th Year," The News of Delaware County, Nov. 30, 1964; "Our Jurisdiction," St. Matthew's Reformed Episcopal Church, accessed June 4, 2025, [Our Jurisdiction | St Matthews Church](#). The Reformed Episcopal Church is part of the larger ACNA denomination but retains its own identity and structure.
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- ⁶⁷ “*Our Story: Raphaela’s Life*,” Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, U.S. Province, accessed July 31, 2025, [Our Story Inspired by Raphaela - Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus](#).
- ⁶⁸ “*Our History*,” St. Raphaela Center, accessed July 31, 2025, [History - St. Raphaela Center](#).
- ⁶⁹ George S. Larmour, “*In Our Back Yard*,” News of Delaware County, Feb, 21, 2001, p. 7A; Eleanore Besser, “*History*,” in “*The Presidents’ Ball*,” Nov. 11, 1989, accessed July 31, 2025, [Suburban Jewish Community Center Bnai Aaron - Havertown, PA, USA](#).
- ⁷⁰ Larmour, “*In our Back Yard*,” p. 7A.
- ⁷¹ Lois Puglionesi, “*New Haverford Church opens at former synagogue*,” Daily Times, Feb. 7, 2012.
- ⁷² “*History of Temple Lutheran Church of Brookline*,” unpublished, in the files of the Haverford Township Historical Society; “*The Temple Lutheran Church of Brookline – Fifty Years of Mission and Ministry*,” unpublished, in the files of the Haverford Township Historical Society.
- ⁷³ “*History of Temple Lutheran Church of Brookline*,” “*The Temple Lutheran Church of Brookline – Fifty Years of Mission and Ministry*” (“The Temple Lutheran Church of Brookline, Delaware County, heretofore acting as a Mission, under the supervision and partial support of the Home Mission and Church Extension Board of the United Lutheran Church of America, is hereby declared a self-supporting Church, under the jurisdiction of the United Lutheran Church in America.”).
- ⁷⁴ “*About – History*,” Trinity Christian Church of Greater Philadelphia, accessed September 16, 2025, [About - Trinity Christian Church of Greater Philadelphia](#).
- ⁷⁵ “*About – History*,” Trinity Christian Church of Greater Philadelphia.
- ⁷⁶ Frederick L. Fritsch, “*One Hundred Years...By the Grace of God! The story of Trinity Lutheran Church through the eyes and memory of Pastor Frederick L. Fritsch*,” May 1995, p.1.
- ⁷⁷ “*One Hundred Years...By the Grace of God!*,” pp. 2, 9.
- ⁷⁸ “*One Hundred Years...By the Grace of God!*,” p.13.
- ⁷⁹ Melissa Wei-Tsing Inouye, “*Exclusivity and the True Jesus Church*,” By Common Consent, April 8, 2020.
- ⁸⁰ H.S.J. Sickel, “*A Brief History of Union Methodist Church in Brookline, Delaware County, Pa. and its Historic Cornerstones*,” 1956, p. 14.
- ⁸¹ Sickel, “*A Brief History of Union Methodist Church*,” pp. 2-5.
- ⁸² Sickel, “*A Brief History of Union Methodist Church*,” pp. 6-7.
- ⁸³ “*Fiftieth Anniversary, September 8, 1990, United Presbyterian Church of Manoa, Eagle Road – Havertown, Pennsylvania*,” p. 2; “*Our Story - History*,” Manoa Community Church, accessed July 25, 2025, [Our Story – Manoa Community Church](#).
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