

HISTORIC RED HOOK

St. Paul's (Zion's) Evangelical Lutheran Church, Village of Red Hook

The origin of this Romanesque Revival red brick church on South Broadway dates to 1715 when Palatine Lutheran and German Reformed congregations combined and built a church south of what is now Red Hook. The two congregations later split -- the Lutheran group built a new church, St. Peter's, or the "Old Stone Church" south of Red Hook, and the German group, having incorporated under the name German Reformed Zion's Church, purchased five acres in Red Hook from General John Armstrong in 1796. They built a frame church on the site, where services were delivered in German until 1823, and then in English and German on alternate Sundays until 1830. After the frame church was severely damaged in a windstorm, it was replaced by a stone church in 1834. In 1846, the members of the German Reformed Church were unable to sustain a Reformed pastor and joined the Lutherans.

By the 1880s, numerous repairs to the stone church became necessary, so the Church Council decided to erect a new structure at a cost of no more than \$11,000. Architect Lawrence B Valk & Son, who had designed many distinctive churches in New York City, was hired, and local builder Daniel Van De Bogart brought on to do the masonry. A major design feature included a massive rose window with quatrefoil tracery over the entry. Over 1,000 people attended the laying of the cornerstone of the current church in 1889 and it was completed in 1890 at a cost of \$19,207. A marble tablet salvaged from the stone church remains in the basement of the present church.

The parsonage was built in 1903 and over the next decades, the church increased its land to 14.9 acres. The church retains most of its original architectural features and with its large cemetery commands the largest green space in the village of Red Hook. It was entered on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998.