



1868

GERMAN TEMPLARS

Colonists from Maine arrived in Jaffa in 1866 and founded the American Colony. They constructed wooden houses from prefabricated materials they brought with them. Due to diseases, the climate and the treatment by the Ottomans, many of them died and many others returned to Maine. In 1868 newly arriving settlers, the German Templars, who viewed themselves as “the new people of Israel” migrated to the area. Rooted in the Pietist movement of the Lutheran Church, these revivalists desired to establish a utopian society in the Holy Land.



1898

WILHELM II ENCOURAGES

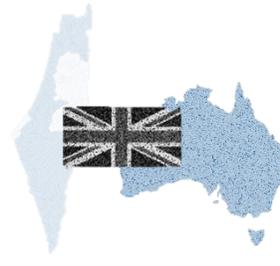
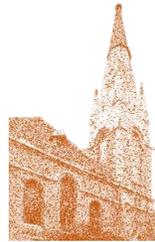
German Emperor Wilhelm II and his wife, Auguste Victoria, were on a tour of the Holy Land in 1898. During their visit in Jaffa, they met with the German Templars. At that point the Templars used the American wooden houses in which to meet and pray. However, Wilhelm encouraged them to build a church for themselves. Thus, planning began for a Neo-Gothic style church to be built.

building the church →

1904

CHURCH FINISHED

The building of the church took six years and it opened on 6 June 1904 in order to serve those in the German colony. The original opening date was planned for the 22nd of May. Unfortunately, Friedrich Braun, the main donor for the church, contracted dysentery after his arrival, and died. This delayed the opening of the church. There is a memorial for him inside the church. The church served the German Evangelical community until its dissolution at the onset of World War II.



1917-1948

BRITISH MANDATE

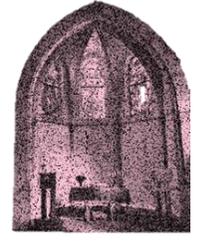
During the British mandate, the Germans couldn't stay in the area during the World War II. The British deported the Templars to Australia. Religious buildings at that time became public property. Thus, Immanuel Church wasn't used for worship during the war. Following WWII and the establishment of the state of Israel, the church was handed over to the Lutheran World Federation in 1951.



1955

NCMI TAKES OVER

In 1955 the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) transferred responsibility of the church property to the Norwegian Church Ministry to Israel (NCMI), that was serving Jewish believers in the land – mostly Romanian immigrants. agencies support the work. Over time, other local and international believers joined the congregation and the main language changed from Romanian and German to Hebrew and English.



1977

GENERAL RENOVATIONS

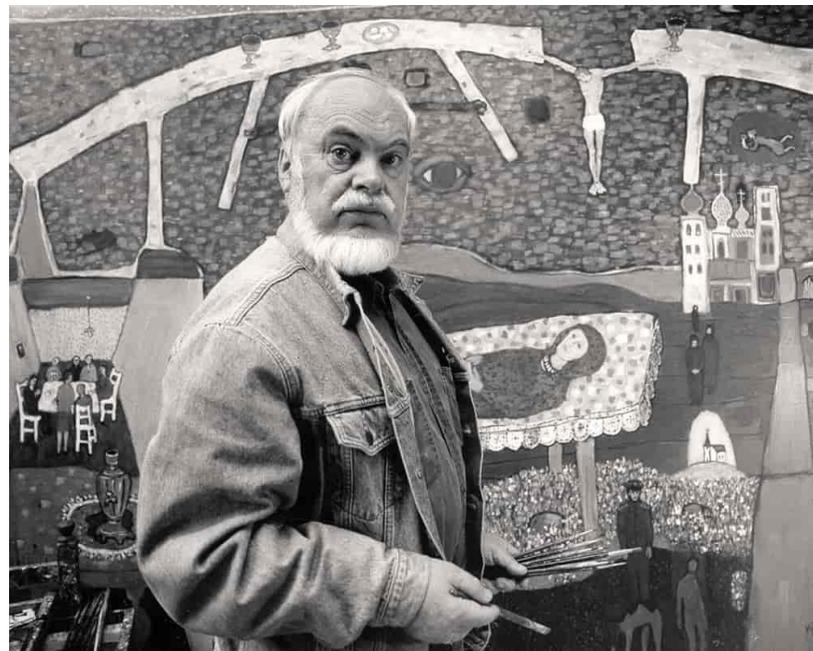
In 1997, the church building was renovated to accommodate and reflect the Jewish-Christian nature of the congregation. A Norwegian artist, Victor Sparre, created fascinating windows of stained glass. Paul Ott from Germany created the new pipe organ with 1,200 pipes and 18 stops. A Hebrew inscription of John 3:16 was installed behind the altar, the old pulpit was removed, and a new floor installed. Years later, in 2009, renovation of the clock tower was begun.

FROM THE ARTIST – VICTOR SPARRE

This church, which serves a Jewish Christian community, is situated in the biblical town of Joppa (today a part of Tel Aviv). It is therefore natural for me to let the decoration of the church be characterized by its Christian religious origin from Judaism.

As light streams through the stained-glass windows today, they not only cast light and color into the church and unto the congregation; but the windows also reflect the victory of faith throughout the world, as it was advanced by the first Christians, who all were Jews.

The technique used in the windows was developed first in France about 1930. It is the “La Dalle” method, in which 2-centimeter-thick colored glass is joined together with reinforced concrete.



THE STORY OF JONAH



Jonah 1-3

God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and tell the sinful people of Nineveh to repent. Jonah tried to run away by boarding a ship going from Jaffa to Tarshish. God sent a violent storm. The men cast lots to see who was responsible for this disaster. The lot fell on Jonah. Jonah told them to throw him into the sea.

God sent a huge fish to swallow Jonah. He was inside the belly for three days and nights. (You can see Jonah sitting in prayer inside the stomach of the fish.) When he begged God to forgive him for his disobedience, the fish vomited him onto the shore.

God again told Jonah to go to Nineveh, and this time he did. In Nineveh, Jonah preached the impending destruction if the people did not turn from their wicked ways.

The people of Nineveh did repent, and God when God saw they turned from their sinful ways, He reconsidered His threat to destroy them, and spared the town.



Jonah 4

Things didn't turn out as Jonah expected, and Jonah was offended and angry that God showed the Ninevites mercy when they repented. He was so upset that he asked God to kill him. He went outside the gates of the town and sat down in the heat to sulk.

It was then that God let a leafy plant grow up, which shaded Jonah from the blazing sun and eased his discomfort. Jonah was pleased and enjoyed the shade. But then God sent a worm to attack the plant so that it withered. God also sent a scorching east wind. Jonah grew faint and thought he'd be better off dead than alive.

In the end of the story, God says: "You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. Shouldn't I have concern for the great city of Nineveh where the people can't tell the difference between left and right?" God wanted Jonah to understand that this plant, which Jonah came to cherish for the shade it gave was less important to God than all the human beings and animals He had spared in Nineveh.

PETER IN JAFFA



Acts 9:36-41

Peter raised Tabitha from death

Tabitha was a disciple from Jaffa who was always doing good and helping the poor. She became sick and died. Peter was nearby, so they asked him to come quickly. When Peter arrived, many were crying and showing him articles of clothing that Tabitha had made.

“Peter sent everyone out of the room. He then got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, “Tabitha, get up.” She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers to come, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive.”



Acts 10:9-16

Peter has a vision from God

One time, while in Jaffa, Peter was praying on a rooftop. Suddenly he fell into a trance. He saw heaven open and something like a large cloth being lowered by its four corners. It contained all four-footed animals, reptiles and birds. Then a voice told him, “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.”

Peter answered that he couldn’t do that, because he had never eaten anything impure or unclean. Then God said: “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean”.

[It was via this revelation that Peter later understood that through Jesus Christ, God has destroyed any wall of separation and calls all people to Himself – Jews and Gentiles alike. (Ephesians 2:11-22)]



Acts 10:1-8 and 10:21-48

Peter baptizes Cornelius from Caesarea

Cornelius, from Caesarea, was a Roman centurion and a God-fearing man. One day an angel came to him in a vision and told him to find a man named Peter from Jaffa, so he did. Peter went to Cornelius and explained the vision God had given him earlier. He said: *“I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.”*

He shared with Cornelius and the others the gospel message and that the Holy Spirit was poured out to even the Gentiles. Peter realized that Gentiles are also a part of God’s family, and so should be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ—for salvation is for everyone who believes in Jesus as Messiah! (This was the first outreach of the gospel, outside the Jewish people to the Gentiles.)

THE GLASS WINDOWS IN IMMANUEL CHURCH

Created by Victor Sparre

The stained-glass windows are illustrations of the fundamental parts of Christian belief, and stories that happened in and around Jaffa. There are also stained-glass windows by the stairs, in the sacristy and in the clocktower. This explanation addresses those in the church sanctuary.



Left

An angel appeared to announce the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, to some shepherds, and to let them know they would find the infant lying in a manger. Then a large army of angels appeared with the angel, all praising God!

Middle

A symbol of God's love. A hand from heaven, centered in a heart, is reaching down to mankind, and below a drop of blood with a crown of thorns in it. He who bore the crown of thorns for all humanity was born within the chosen people of God – the Jews. It was through this people that God would bless and save all mankind. The crown is in the form of the Star of David to remind all that Jesus was Himself a Jew, and of the sufferings God's people, the Jews, have endured throughout time.

Right

This pictures the triumph promised us. Together with the rejoicing angels, the Holy Spirit (in the form of a dove) hovers over the New Jerusalem. The heavenly Jerusalem has twelve towers and twelve gates, representing the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve disciples of Jesus.



Depicts a lit seven-armed menorah with the hands of God blessing and keeping His people forever. This represents the way His returned people, the Jews, celebrate Shabbat.

The menorah is described in the Bible as the lampstand made of pure gold set up by Moses in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and later in the Temple in Jerusalem.

The rose has been a symbol for Lutheran churches since Martin Luther's time. A rose was used in the seal designed for him. Luther's seal is important because it explains his theology in a simple way.



THE FOUR EVANGELISTS

Evangelists – “people who proclaim good news”

Each of the symbols is depicted with wings, following the biblical sources first in Ezekiel 1-2, and in Revelation 4.



Matthew

A winged man
(Incarnation)

Matthew's gospel emphasizes Jesus' human nature, as it begins by tracing the human ancestry of Christ from Abraham.



Mark

Winged lion
Resurrection

Mark opens his gospel with John the Baptist preaching like a roaring lion.



Discipling

A small boat, an ancient representation for the church.

Symbolizes that God is in control as we sail through life.



Luke

Winged ox
Resurrection

Luke starts with Zacharias sacrificing in the temple, writes especially of the priesthood and sacrifice (of which the ox is symbolic) and includes a detailed account of Jesus as our atoning sacrifice.



John

An eagle
Ascension

John's gospel starts with an eternal overview of Christ, describing the incomprehensible dual nature of Jesus Christ in lofty words. Thus, the eagle, the highest figure of the sky, is used.

THE SYMBOLS FOR THE 12 APOSTLES



Judas Iscariot



Matthew



Simon the Zealot



Bartholomew



Thomas



Philip



Thaddeus



James the Younger



James the Elder



Peter



John



Andrew



Andrew – When he was condemned to die on a cross, he felt unworthy to be crucified on the same-shaped cross as his Master. So, he was crucified on an X-shaped cross. It is said that while Andrew was dying, he continued to preach to those around him.



Bartholomew – Armenia and India are believed to have been areas of his missionary work. Tradition says that he died in India as a martyr for his Lord. He was flayed alive with knives.



James the Elder/the Greater (son of Zebedee) – He was the first to be martyred when King Herod had him beheaded around A.D. 44 (the only apostle's martyrdom recorded in Scripture, in Acts 12:1-2). James is represented by a knapsack and a staff because after establishing the Christian religion in the Iberian Peninsula, he returned to Judea on a pilgrimage...which is when he was beheaded.



James the Younger/the Less (son of Alphaeus) – Tradition says that he was thrown from a pinnacle of the Temple in Jerusalem when he refused to deny his faith in Christ. When they discovered he survived the fall, his enemies beat him to death with a fuller's club.



John – It is said that an attempt was made on his life by giving him a chalice of poison from which God spared him. He died of natural causes. A chalice with a snake in it is his symbol.



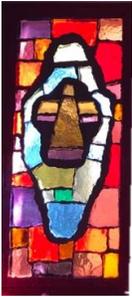
Judas Iscariot – He betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. After learning that Jesus was to be crucified, in remorse Judas attempted to return the money he had been paid for his betrayal to the chief priests. Then he went away and



Matthew (Levi) – Tradition teaches that Matthew, the tax collector who became a disciple, went to Ethiopia after preaching to the Jews in Palestine. He was martyred there, crucified and beheaded. The three money bags are a symbol of his profession as a tax collector.



Peter (Simon Peter) – The keys symbolize Peter’s confession of faith upon which the Church is founded: “You are the true Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). After Peter made his profession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of the living God, Jesus said, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Mt 16:19). Often one key is gold, the other silver.



Philip – Philip is represented by a cross lying down, for he stressed the cross as a sign of Christianity and victory. Though his death is not documented, some accounts indicate he was crucified upside-down on a cross, and that Philip preached from his cross.



Simon the Zealot – Simon, also called Simon the Zealot, was frequently the companion of Jude on missionary journeys. An early historian claims that Simon was martyred in Persia by being beheaded or sawn in pieces.



Thaddeus (Jude) – Jude, referred to also as Thaddeus and as Judas, son of James, traveled with Simon the Zealot on missionary journeys. The exact manner of Jude's death is unknown, but according to legend, religious leaders killed hewed him to death with an ax.

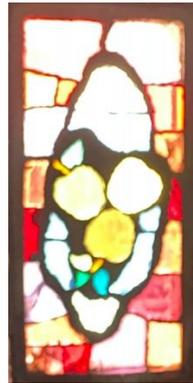


Thomas – It is said he was commissioned to build a palace for the king of India, and that he was killed with a lance as a martyr for his Lord.

THE TOWER OF THE CHURCH

The tower of the church also has some stained-glass windows:

- Three apples are symbolic of the congregation. (In ancient times apples symbolized the Jewish people in relationship to God.)



- A flower with three red petals is symbolic of the five wounds of Christ.



THE SACRISTY

In the sacristy there are two windows with the letters A and O (Alpha and Omega), and the symbols of Holy Communion. They remind the Minister that God's grace is the Alpha and Omega for his life and work.

