1744: Held first recorded Anglican services, Center Square courthouse.

1753: Completed limestone house of worship.

1762: Added frame steeple to house of worship.

1820: Built first portion of new red brick house of worship, incorporating 1762 steeple into new design.

1844-1845: Extended structure by one bay to the east.

1869-1871: Built apsidal chancel on east end of church.

1880: Completed ten years of restoration on exterior; replaced 1762 steeple with Romanesque Revival tower.

1904: Completed parish house on North Duke St.

1961: Attached memorial chapel and cloister to north side of Romanesque Revival house of worship.

This publication was co-sponsored by the Lancaster County Heritage Partnership (County of Lancaster, Pennsylvania Dutch Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County) and the Downtown Lancaster City Ministerium.

Funding and technical support was provided, in part, by the Pennsylvania Heritage Tourism Initiative, a project of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Center for Travel, Tourism and Film Promotion; and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program; and the Center for Rural Pennsylvania.

For more information about Lancaster County Heritage, contact:
Lancaster County Planning Commission
50 North Duke Street, P.O. Box 83480
Lancaster, PA 17608-3480
717-299-8333
www.lancastercountyheritage.com

For more information about this and other tours in Lancaster County, please call 717-299-8901 or visit www.padutchcountry.com

©2002 Lancaster County Heritage Partnership, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

119 North Duke St., Lancaster, PA 17602
717-397-4858
www.stjameslanpa.org
When the Rev. Thomas Barton served the congregation from 1759 until 1778, St. James parish was home to both loyal subjects of King George and a significant cross-section of American patriots. Members of the vestry, including Ross, Yeates, and Shippen, urged the Rev. Barton to stop reading prayers for the royal family. When he could not in good conscience do this, the stone church was boarded up. The Rev. Barton continued his ministry under house arrest, eventually persuading his fellow townspeople to give him and his second wife safe passage to New York. The church was closed to worshippers from June 1776 until December 1783.

In the 19th century, the rectors at St. James welcomed people like James Buchanan, Harriet Lane, and Dr. Thomas Burrowes, the great champion of free public schools. A friend of the abolitionist U.S. Congressman, Thaddeus Stevens, Burrowes wrote all of the important school bills that passed the Pennsylvania State legislature between 1836 and 1857. With the help of Stevens, who was serving in the State house at the time, the bills became law, opening the doors of education to all people, rich and poor.

James Buchanan, the 15th American president, supported various congregations during his years in Lancaster. He rented pew #21 at St. James for his niece Harriet Lane. Buchanan eventually became a communicant member of First Presbyterian Church. As for Lane, she remained a supporter of St. James throughout her life.

In 1857 she moved with Buchanan to the White House where she served as hostess for the bachelor president until the end of his term in 1861. While vacationing in Bedford Springs, Pennsylvania, she met Henry Elliot Johnston. They were married in 1866. After both of their early teenage sons died of rheumatic fever, the Johnstonos founded the Harriet Lane Home for Invalid Children in Baltimore. Today, it is the pediatrics center of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Upon Lane's death, her art collection was given to the nation, resulting in the establishment of the National Gallery of Art.

The architecture of St. James Church clearly shows a community in transition, beginning as a small Church of England mission outpost and evolving into the main house of worship for some of the leaders of Lancaster City in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Elegant renovations accomplished between 1869 and 1880 by the Philadelphia architect, Charles M. Burns, turned a somewhat nondescript structure into a handsome Romanesque Revival church.

The adjacent church yard, with its ancient markers bearing witness to people who lived and died as members of St. James parish, has been kept open to the street. Its flowering trees and shrubs, its arches, benches, and walkways, provide respite to many a weary visitor. At the dawn of the 21st century, St. James Episcopal Church strives to be an inclusive city parish, steeped in the liturgical and musical heritage of the Anglican tradition.