

Hungarian Reformed Church (Cambria City United Church
Cambria City Neighborhood of Christ)
822-24 Chestnut Street
Johnstown
Cambria County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5764

HABS
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Hungarian Reformed Church
(Cambria City United Church of Christ)

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Location: 822-24 Chestnut Street, Cambria City, Johnstown, Cambria County, Pa.

Description: The church is a simple single story over a basement structure. Rectangular plan, 42' x 58'. The structure has masonry load-bearing walls, faced with rough-faced stone on the basement and brick on the main walls. Three-bay principal facade with central tower and belfry. Central round-arched doorway in base of tower flanked by tall round-arched windows. Above the doorway is a plaque inscribed "Magyar Reform Templom - Hungarian Reformed Church." Four-bay side facades, with flat-arched windows in the basement and upper story. Datestone inscribed 1901.

History: Most of the Hungarian Protestants were Calvinists who belonged to the Reformed Church of Hungary. Cambria City Hungarian Reformed Church had its roots as early as 1896, when Hungarian employees of Cambria Iron Company began to organize. The parishioners held church services in their native language. In January 29, 1900, the group decided to build a church. Land was purchased and construction started in 1901. The church was completed the following year.

Between 1950 and 1970 the parish diminished sharply and in 1972 it served only 33 families consisting of 200 members. Of these only 3 families, consisting of 14 parishioners, were from Cambria City. The congregation continued to decline and in 1980 when the Windber Reformed Hungarian church burnt down, the two congregations were united and became the United Church of Christ Hungarian Evangelical and Reformed Church. The bells of the Windber church and the datestone 1905 are kept at the back of the Cambria City church.

Today there are only 20-30 people in the congregation, and it no longer has a full-time pastor.

Sources:

Johnstown Tribune-Democrat (10 June 1981), 20.

Kory, William. "The churches of Johnstown Pennsylvania Population Survey", (University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown), 1972.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP). An overview of history of the city (HABS No. PA-5669) and an overview of the neighborhoods of Cambria City and Minersville (HABS No. PA-5672) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the downtown and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Bernadette Goslin in August 1988 under the direction of Alison K. Hoagland, HABS historian, and Kim E. Wallace, the supervisory historian of the project. Goslin's and other project historians' work was published as The Character of a Steel Mill City: Four Historic Neighborhoods of Johnstown, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1989), edited by Kim E. Wallace. Illustrations in the publication include large format photographs taken by HAER photographer Jet Lowe and 35 mm photographs taken by the project historians.