

# Churches

The first Lutheran service held in Leonia was May 16, 1926 at the American Legion Hall. A split occurred in 1928 and Leonia had two Lutheran churches, **Holy Trinity Lutheran** and **Calvary Lutheran**. In May of 1938 the **Calvary Lutheran Church** was constructed. It was a frame structure in the English country style located on Woodland Place.



*Calvary Lutheran Church, Woodland Place, 1938*

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church** rented rooms in the Nelson Building on Broad Avenue and Fort Lee Road in 1928. By 1942 a new brick building was dedicated on Broad Avenue and High Street.



*Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Broad Avenue and High Street, 1942*

It was not until 1970 that both congregations approved resolutions to unite as **Holy Spirit Lutheran Church**. Remodeling went on at the Woodland Place location in the following years. It was closed in 2014 due to a lack of parishoners.



*Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, Woodland Place, dedicated in 1973*

The **United Methodist Church** was organized in February of 1890 at a meeting in the home of Mrs. A. P. Hurd. Services were held at the Leonia Lyceum, which was located on Fort Lee Road opposite Spring Street. Four years later the first church was built on Harrison Street.



*Leonia Lyceum, Fort Lee Road opposite Spring Street, circa 1885-1914*



*United Methodist Church, Harrison Street, 1894*

In 1912 a more central location was purchased on Woodridge Place. On May 16, 1915 a Gothic stone structure with an imposing bell tower was dedicated.



*United Methodist Church, Woodridge Place, 1915*

In 1938 Leonia artist Charles S. Chapman painted two murals, “The Nativity”, which is on the west wall of the sanctuary and “Another Commandment”, which is on the west wall of the church parlor.

In 1899, forty eight members from the Christian Reformed Church, formerly the True Dutch Reformed Church, were joined by ten members from other churches assembled in the auditorium at the Leonia Lyceum on Fort Lee Road to organize the **Presbyterian Church**.



*Christian Reformed Church, Grand Avenue at the foot of Prospect Avenue, 1822-razed 1933*  
Two years later, in 1901, a new church was built further up Fort Lee Road at the corner of Leonia Avenue.



*Presbyterian Church, Fort Lee Road and Leonia Avenue, 1900*

In 1907 the church building was enlarged and a pipe organ installed. Various church organizations necessitated additional space and in 1928 a “secular and educational” wing was added.

In November, 1893 citizens of the Episcopal faith opened their homes for services, the following year Sunday services were held in the Lyceum on lower Fort Lee Road. By 1898 **All Saints Episcopal Church** was built on Park Avenue and Orchard Place.



*All Saints Episcopal Church, Park Avenue and Orchard Place, 1897*

In 1906 a pipe organ was installed and a parish house was added which has served the community as headquarters for the Red Cross, American Legion, Players’ Guild and other organizations. The parish house guild room features a painting, “White Water Ahead”, by Leonia artist Charles Chapman.

The first Catholic Mass was celebrated on May 26, 1912 in a storefront on Grand Avenue. In 1914 the empty Methodist church at the corner of Harrison and Kingsley Streets was purchased and became **Saint John’s Catholic Church**.



*Saint John's Catholic Church, Harrison and Kingsley Streets, 1914*

As the parish grew there was a lack of seating in the small church, up to five Masses a day were being celebrated. By 1941 a new church was built on Broad Avenue and Harrison Street.



*Saint John's Roman Catholic Church, Broad Avenue and Harrison Street, 1941*

Over a decade later, due to increased attendance, the church was enlarged and a new façade was added in 1955.



*Saint John's Roman Catholic Church with new façade added in 1955, Broad Avenue and Harrison Street*  
**Mount Zion Baptist Church** was organized in 1928 and services were held in various homes. As the congregation grew, they relocated to a shed behind Essie Moore's house on Schor Avenue, and then to an empty store front in a building owned by Mrs. O'Connor at 121 Fort Lee Road. It has since been replaced by a modern office building. In 1938 land was purchased from the Borough as a site for a church on Schor Avenue. The new building was dedicated on Easter Sunday 1944.



*Mount Zion Baptist Church, Schor Avenue, 1944*

The African-American congregation numbered fifty-seven members at the time and has remained close to that number today as people have come and gone from Leonia and the surrounding area.





