

## St. John's cemeteries and church

Old St. John's cemetery seems to be the oldest organized cemetery connected to Lewisberry borough (other than private family plots and the Quaker Burial ground at Redlands Friends Meetinghouse at the intersection of Lewisberry Road and Old Quaker Road about 2.5 miles east of the borough).

In 1792 a one-acre land grant beside Bennett Run was given to the Lutheran and Reformed congregations by George Ensminger for establishing a church and cemetery. Historically, Lutheran and Reformed congregations often shared a building. A wooden church was built on land over which Rte. 382 now runs. The church was in use until 1873, although the Reformed worshippers were no longer in attendance there after 1840.

A portion of this original cemetery remains and is located just west of Rte. 382 off the Old Rossville Road (0.1 mi northwest of the blinking light). This cemetery has many names, including "Bat's Pen", "Bat's Nest", "Old St. John's", "Old Union Lutheran & Reformed", etc.. A sign at the cemetery erected by Lance Miller as part of his Eagle Scout project gives a brief history. (for pictures, see <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2219549/old-union-lutheran-and-reformed-church-cemetery>)

In 1873, a Mr. Wollet presented the Lutheran congregation with a deed to some of his farm land north of the town, on the current Heck Hill Rd. A new church was built there and a new St. John's Cemetery was established. This cemetery is still in use at this writing. Records indicate that by the early 1900's this church building was no longer used for weekly meetings but was still used for funerals. In the early 1930's, the building was up for sale and burned shortly thereafter. Oral history states that the congregation had merged with the Lutherans at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church just east of Lisburn.

When the roadbed for Rte.382 was cut through and later modernized, some of the original **Old St. John's** cemetery land was taken, and the affected remains were reinterred. Oral history differs on just where these remains were placed, some saying Emanuel Cemetery about 3/4 miles further **south** others saying it was in the newer St. John's Cemetery on Heck Hill Rd.