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Born: 13 Jan 1685 in Frankenburgin, , Hessen, Germany

Married: Elizabeth Unknown

Died: 1739 in Atlantic, Accomack, Virginia

Parents: Deitrich Stoever & Magdalena Eberwein

The first spiritual inspiration among the early congregations of Lutherans in Page Valley probably came from the Rev. John Casper Stoever, Sr. Born Jan. 13, 1684 or 1685 in Frankenburg, Hesse, Germany, Stoever was the son of Deitrich and Magdalena Eberwein Stoever.

The grandson of the Rev. Andrew Eberwien, it seemed inevitable that John Casper would play a role in the Lutheran Church. By the time Stoever was nearly 35-years-old in 1720, he moved to Annweiler in the Hardt Mountains in Bavaria.

Accepting a call to be minister at the Germanna Colony of Virginia, Stoever arrived in Philadelphia on Sept. 11, 1728, on the ship *James Goodwill*. Soon after arriving in Pennsylvania, the Rev. Christian Schultz ordained both John Casper and his son, John Casper Stoever, Jr., on April 8, 1733. The elder Stoever became the first pastor of the **Hebron Lutheran Church**(see next page), founded by the first Germanna colonists in 1717 and the first permanent Lutheran Church in the United States. His son became one of the most prominent Lutheran ministers in Pennsylvania during the 18th century.

The elder Stoever's stay in Virginia was relatively short. In 1739, after returning to Germany to raise funds for his Virginia congregation, Stoever died during his passage back to Virginia and was probably buried at sea in the Atlantic Ocean.

Notes for Rev. Johann Kaspar STOVER/ STOEVER:

John Casper Stoever, the elder, was a colonist and missionary, who with his son, Johannes Casper Stoever, Jr., a theological student, came from Strasburg, Germany to America on the ship "James Goodwill", Sept. 11, 1728. They were naturalized soon after, the papers dated Jan. 9, 1729.

The elder Stoever went almost immediately into Virginia.

John Casper Stoever, the elder, received his education at the University of Gussin, Grand Duchy of Baden. His records were kept in German, English, French, Dutch, Hebrew and Latin, have been preserved. He died at sea in 1738 when returning from a soliciting tour of Europe for financial aid for his school and church. His son, the Reverend John Casper Stoever, was the executor of his estate.

The following is from Charles Glatfelter, PASTORS AND PEOPLE (Vol. 1), Breinigsville, PA 1980

John Caspar Stoever, the elder, b. 1685 at Frankenberg, Hesse. Was a schoolmaster. Married and had at least two children prior to emigration named John and Elizabeth Catherine. Arrived Philadelphia 11 Sep 1728 as a Missionary," accompanied by a younger man named John Caspar Stoever, a "Theological Student."

# Hebron Lutheran Church

Located just north of Madison, VA, the Hebron Lutheran Church is the oldest continuously operating Lutheran Church in the U.S. and is one of a handful of wooden Virginia churches that pre-date the Revolutionary War. It was built in 1740 by the Germanna immigrants of 1717 (the second Germanna Colony). They had moved down to the Madison area from the Germanna settlement (located where Virginia Route 3 crosses the Rapidan River) in about 1726 and took out land patents. They had finally won their freedom from their indenture to Gov. Spotswood, and it was in this area that they began building lives for themselves and their children.

The settlers first built a log chapel on the current site of the church, then set about attracting a minister. Initially they were not successful, and made do with Michael Cook as lay reader. In 1733 they were able to attract **Johann Caspar Stoever** to be their pastor. They then commenced a fund-raising drive to finance the construction of a real church. Rev. Stoever and two of the immigrants, Michael Smith and Michael Holt, went to Europe to raise money and find an assistant pastor. On both counts they were successful, securing the needed funds and hiring George Samuel Klug. Rev. Stoever died on the return trip, however, leaving the task of building and consecrating the church to Rev. Klug.

