



**PRESS RELEASE  
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**Lancaster Public Library Board Announces Agreement of Sale of Duke Street Building**  
*Building Sale and Capital Campaign Will Support Move to Ewell Plaza*

LANCASTER, Pa. (June 23, 2021)— The Board of Trustees of Lancaster Public Library (LPL) announced today the agreement of sale of the library building located at 125 North Duke Street. The building is under agreement to a group of investors with strong ties to the community and who are purchasing the property for its ultimate use by Saint James Episcopal Church located at 119 North Duke Street. The two long-time Lancaster community pillars have been neighbors for more than 100 years.

The agreement of sale comes ahead of the move by LPL in a couple years to a new library location at Ewell Plaza on Queen Street and adjacent to a strategic capital campaign in support of that move. LPL Board of Trustees President Aaron Sherman said, “The most fiscally responsible decision the board can make in preparation for the library’s move to Barney Ewell Plaza is to first secure the sale of the Duke Street building.”

The Rector of Saint James, Reverend David Peck said, “Only once in a century does an opportunity like this appear. As a parish that continues to grow, the lay leadership of Saint James is grateful for the chance to explore every option for this property, with insight from our many ministry partners, including our bishop and diocese, as well as members of the congregation and wider community.”

Until the new facility is ready, the library will retain ownership of and continue to operate in its current location. Once the library move is complete and the sale transaction is closed, the property will most likely be converted to office use until Saint James has finalized the long-term plans for the building. In the meantime, Saint James will begin a discernment process to assess how the property will add to its ongoing commitment to civic and spiritual renewal, sustainability, and community focused growth.

The Lancaster Parking Authority has invited LPL to occupy the first two floors of a new nine-story structure facing the former Lancaster Square. After the shell of the space is complete, LPL must finish, equip, and furnish the interior. The new building will improve library services to the Lancaster community with expanded and improved interior and exterior spaces, ADA compliance, and closer proximity to the heart of downtown Lancaster.

The purchase price of the current library property will be disclosed once the transaction closes, which is anticipated to occur within the next two years.

LPL had retained Lancaster-based PPM Real Estate Brokerage Firm to manage the sale.

### **History of Saint James Episcopal Church**

Saint James Episcopal Church has been on the corner of Orange and Duke Streets for 275 years, on a historic campus that includes the 200-year-old sanctuary, churchyard, recently renovated rectory, and parish house, all significant in the life of the church and community. The conservation and preservation of such an important heritage landscape in the heart of the city will be among the important considerations of the future use of the 125 Duke Street property.

### **History of the Library**

Lancaster Public Library was founded on December 4, 1759, when the Lancaster Library Company was formed with 54 members at the home of Benjamin Price at 37 North Queen Street. For the next hundred years, the library occupied several sites, including the county courthouse, and in 1898 moved into the donated home of A. Herr Smith at 125 North Duke Street. In 1903 the library merged with Mechanics Society Library and reorganized into the Lancaster Free Library, incorporated in 1933. Over the years the library expanded with a book mobile and five branches, and in 1954 a new building was constructed on the Duke Street site. In 1963, the Library System of Lancaster County (LSLC) formed under the auspices of Lancaster Free Public Library, and further administrative and name changes came later: Lancaster County Library (1969) and Lancaster Public Library (2006).

While the ways people use libraries have changed over the past 260 years, LPL's commitment to being the community center for learning and information has never wavered. To read more, go to the library's history web page: [lancasterpubliclibrary.org/history](http://lancasterpubliclibrary.org/history).

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### **ABOUT SAINT JAMES CHURCH**

Established in 1744 Saint James is a parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania. Since its inception in the colonial era, members of its congregation have and continue to be instrumental in the support of public education and social justice. It is an open and affirming congregation of LGBTQ+ communities and is known for both its innovative and traditional worship as well as its Urban Well retreats that explore contemplative spirituality. Additional ministries support the addiction recovery efforts of individuals and groups. Find out more at [www.saintjameslancaster.org](http://www.saintjameslancaster.org).

### **ABOUT LANCASTER PUBLIC LIBRARY**

As one of the oldest public libraries in the country, Lancaster Public Library has earned the reputation of a dynamic center of knowledge and a cornerstone of a thriving Lancaster community. After more than two and a half centuries, Lancaster Public Library continues to inspire, empower, and strengthen our community by connecting people with information, ideas, and enriching experiences. LPL serves approximately 211,000 Lancaster County residents in fourteen municipalities. For more information about the library, please visit [lancasterpubliclibrary.org](http://lancasterpubliclibrary.org).