

The organ was built in 1968 by Gustav Steinmann, a firm in Vlotho. Three keyboards are used to play up to 40 stops. Furthermore, there is an Orgelpositiv in the sanctuary.

On the wall below the organ there is a memorial stone reminding us of Engelbert Kämpfer, a famous researcher of Japan. He was born in the parish rooms next to the church and is buried near the memorial stone.

There is also a memorial stone on the pillar in the north west of the church in honour of Andreas Koch who was the vicar of the church from 1647 until 1665. The stone was carved in 1991 by Dorsten Diekmann from Lemgo. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century 500 women and men from Lemgo were accused of witchcraft, convicted and murdered. Andreas Koch spoke up on their behalf but was himself accused, found guilty and sentenced to death. He was shown leniency and executed with the sword rather than the normal burning at the stake.

Between 2006 and 2011 our church and its forecourts were renovated at a total cost of 4.5 million Euro (about 3.7 million pounds). The main problem was the two towers. Over the years they leaned away from the nave and new foundations were necessary. Additionally, the church interior was extensively repaired and renovated.

In 2011 an apple tree known as the Luther-tree was planted in the forecourt between Papestraße and the southern tower. It is there to remind us of Martin Luther and his comment: „If I knew that tomorrow the world would come to an end, I would today still plant an apple tree“. Outside, on the northern church wall you will see a black marble stone from Dorsten Diekmann entitled ‚Place of Hope‘. This was erected in 2012 to remind us that from the 13<sup>th</sup> century until 1820 the area around the church was the Lemgo cemetery. On the base of the stone is an inscription in German which says „I know that my redeemer liveth.“ (Job 19, 25).

This can only be a short description of our church. Should you wish to know more, we recommend you read the DKV-Kunstführer Nr. 396/2. You can buy the booklet in the entry room (price 3 €) or order from the church's internet website: <https://nicolai-lemgo.de>

We hope you will enjoy a pleasant visit to our church and offer you our very best wishes.

Translation: Colonel Peter Reader, Lemgo

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[www.nicolai-stiftung.de](http://www.nicolai-stiftung.de)



We welcome you heartily in the

## **Saint Nicolai Church in Lemgo.**

Our church is approximately 800 years old. Construction started sometime between 1200 and 1220 but an exact date is not known. It took 50 years to erect the church in the Roman style. The church remained unchanged for the next 30 years but then the Lemgo citizens wanted a more modern church in the Gothic style. It was, therefore, decided to remove the narrow side aisles and replace them with wider and higher aisles. So it came about that the church changed to what is known as a ‚hall church‘. However, if you look at the area of the tower you can still see the Roman style. You will also see the remains of the narrow and low Roman side aisles.

You will notice that the area in the east side of the church is predominantly Gothic. It took about 100 years to complete. It was intended to have an even bigger altar and choir area but in 1375 a pest epidemic reached Lemgo and all building work came to a halt.

The patron saint of our church is the holy Nicholas, the protector of all sailors and travellers. In those days it was normal to bestow this name to the main church of any town belonging to the Hansa guild.

Our church has two towers but only the southern tower is property of the church. It is here that the tuned bronze bells hang. These bells could not be replaced by steel bells in times of war because the tower had no opening through which they could pass. Probably the bronze bells were forged at the bottom of the tower and then hoisted up to their playing position.

In 1663 the southern tower received a twisted roof, popular at that time. A replacement roof was necessary because a tornado had blown off the original construction.

The northern tower belongs to the town and until 1854 it was used as a watch tower. These days the carillon tolls every two hours with a melody selected electronically from a console in the town hall.

In 1533 Lemgo accepted the Reformation and became Lutheran. In 1605 the region's over-lord, earl Simon VI, adopted the Calvinist faith and expected the population to follow suite. Angered that the stubborn, unruly folk failed to follow him, Simon moved his seat of government from Lemgo to Demold. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Simon's family line had died out and was replaced by another side of the family. The descendants survived to this day still live in Detmold.

During the reformation period the church was visited by iconoclasts, a group opposed to worshipping saintly pictures and statues. In the sacrament they smashed the statues, leaving only the pelican untouched. Also, the statue of a woman above the candle table lost the objects she was holding in her hands.

The before mentioned destruction is the reason why we now have only a few works of art from the reformation period. Above the candle table, let into the wall, is an altarpiece from 1280. Also untouched are frescoes on the east and south walls dating back to 1380. On the left-hand side of the east wall one can see Jacob the Elder and John. To the right are Paul and Peter. The ,+' in the circles represent consecration crosses. On the south wall stand Jacob and John, Bartholomew and Thomas. The large crucifix hanging above the entrance to the choir area is dated prior to the reformation. Visitors who crossed themselves before the figure of Christopher, carved on the pillar opposite the north entrance about 1300, were believed to be blessed for the day.

After the reformation all works of art were created in the Weser-renaissance style. The baptismal font and screens were made in this style by the Lemgo artist Georg Crosman in 1597. The pulpit was erected around 1600 and the richly decorated surround in 1630.

The epitaph for Captain Moritz von Donop was finished in 1587 and also stems from Georg Crosman. The motive for the epitaph was inspired by a woodcut by Lukas Cranach the Elder. A tree with withered branches on its left side and a healthy, green branch on the right divide the picture

into two halves. In the left half Moses stands with a snake on a cross (Numbers 21) and in the right half the donors of the epitaph (wife and brother of Captain Moritz) pray under the crucified Jesus in Jerusalem. The parrot, the symbol for Maria, on the dead branch side of the tree is intended to convey that the donors were Lutheran and no longer prayed for Maria. The top of the epitaph depicts the final judgement.

The Lemgo carver Herman Vos made the high altar in 1643. During the thirty years war he belonged to a group of sentries in a tower on the town's defence wall. Sadly, the sentries all fell asleep, allowing Swedish soldiers to enter and ransack the town. After the Swedish soldiers withdrawal the sentries were to be punished but Herman Vos managed to escape. A few years later he approached the town council for forgiveness and to regain possession of his family home. As an atonement he offered to carve, at no cost, a high altar for the St. Nicolai church. The council agreed to his proposition. The paintings belonging to the altar are the work of Berent Woltemate and depict that holy communion with wine and bread is a Lutheran tradition.

The oldest window in our church was made in 1863 from fragments of earlier broken windows. The window lists the names and family emblems of all who donated to it. The majority of the window was finished in Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) between 1922 and 1924 by the Hanoverian artist Franz Lauterbach. The three windows behind the high altar show scenes from St. John's revelations. The east window with Christ giving blessing is also from Franz Lauterbach. The bible window in the middle of the south wall is the 1965 work of Erhard Klönk from Marburg. It shows a number of scenes with the concept of ,sacrifice', together with pictures of the apostles and prophets. The group of windows in the middle of the west side of the church are from 1992 and are the work of Paul Weigmann from Leverkusen. They symbolise in the lower six windows the disorder of the created world. This is achieved with twisted squares, whereas the three upper windows have exact squares for the orderliness of the holy world.

Since 1991 our church is a member of the ,Cross of Nails' community. As a sign of membership a cross of nails plus associated prayers is attached to the pillar in front of the organ.