The Jackson Evangelical Church was organized in May 1867 by twenty-eight interested German-American residents who united to worship and study in their native mother tongue and to enjoy the benefits and companionship that a church organization would offer them. Most of the members had been born in Germany and had migrated to the United States, seeking a freedom that was no longer possible in Europe. The Baptist Church offered the new congregation the use of their sanctuary for Sunday afternoon meetings.

The group was without a pastor and decided to obtain the assistance of Rev. John Frederick Kies who was living north of Pocahontas on the road to New Wells, where he was teaching school and preaching at the Bethel Church of Pocahontas.

The Jackson congregation knew that Reverend Kies was assisting a similar group in the Whitewater Community, now Tilsit, to organize into a church body.

One day, while Rev. Kies was waiting in Wagner's Bakery in Jackson for a driver from Tilsit and his team to take him to the Whitewater Community, several of the older men from the Jackson congregation met him and expressed the desire of their group that he hold regular services for them in Jackson. He agreed and, for the next few months, services were held every third Sunday afternoon in the Baptist Church. When Reverend Kies lacked transportation, he walked from Pocahontas to Jackson (about ten miles).

A church building was completed by that winter, and the Rev. G. Press (father of Rev. Dr. Samuel Press) preached the dedication service. He was serving as pastor at the Salem Evangelical Church, in the Umbeck Community six miles south of Jackson on the Benton Road. Rev Kies was asked to serve as the first permanent pastor. He accepted and moved his family and household belongings to Jackson in wagons furnished by the congregation.

In securing the services of Rev. Kies, the Jackson church was fortunate. He was a scholar, a strong leader, a man of high religious principles, and his guidance enabled the young congregation to lay a firm foundation that would withstand many rigid tests, especially in the years that followed 1872, when Reverend Kies left Emanuel's pastorate to write religious material for a Chicago publishing house.

Since 1867, Emanuel has evolved in many ways. We have grown and built a newer sanctuary, education wing, and parsonage. Our name has changed multiple times over the years before becoming Emanuel United Church of Christ. We currently have vibrant music and education programs, many young families, and active circles, missions, and ministries. One must note that, at our core, there remains a scrappy, "mustard seed" faith and spirit to our congregation, and a heart for ministry and mission that has carried us in the past and will carry us into God's bright future.