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The great freeze' caused church to move

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ST. CLOUD --- The little church with the tall spire that is now a St. Cloud landmark once stood in the nearby community of Narcoossee. But the Great Freeze of 1895 virtually wiped out that town and the Episcopal sanctuary was moved.

Narcoossee was "essentially an English colony, where English customs prevail and prayers for the Queen and Royal Family are said," according to Pennington in his "Episcopal Church in Florida." The freeze made the village a ghost town.

St. Luke’s Church had one of the highest wooden spires in the state --- 72 feet ---- and resembled Holy Cross church in Sanford. First services were held in 1884, although the building wasn’t finished until 1898. It was consecrated by the Rt. Rev. William Crane Gray, D.D., bishop of the Missionary District of Southern Florida.

The English people reportedly brought many of the carvings and ornate decorations for the church interior with them from the mother country. Proud of its gothic architecture, the church has long been noted for its purity and beauty.

In 1930, it was decided to transfer the building from Narcoossee to St. Cloud, where another church, St. Peters, was going. The structure was dismantled piece by piece, each piece being marked so the church could be reerected in its original form.

It was rededicated on Easter Sunday, 1931. Out of deference to the first occupants, the congregation at St. Cloud renamed their building the Church of St. Luke and St. Peter.