

## Zlēkas Lutheran church



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The church was built in 1645 and for its rich interior was formerly called Zlēkas Cathedral. Contemporary stone building of the church was built in 1645, but the tower – in 1834. The interior of the church is magnificent and artistically valuable, especially the altar with the altarpiece “Blasphemy of Christ” made by the woodcarver Hoffenstedt from Bremen around 1650 and the pulpit, which is considered one of the brightest examples of mannerism in Kurzeme. The altar is bricked according to old tradition, only covered with a wooden board. Two centuries later (in 1875), a baroness gave the altar two wonderfully embroidered altar covers, red and black, which still adorn the church today. The altar includes two panels The Last Supper and Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, while the painting of Christ’s blasphemy is in the upper part. Under the altar room, the tombs of the von Behr family of the Barons of Zleki were built. Also peculiar are the paintings on the ends of the church pews, which preach Christian instructions in the language of symbols. To the left of the altar is a richly ornamented confessional bench, the oldest in Latvia (end of the 16th century), to the right is a confessional bench from the 17th century. The first organ of the Zlēki Church was made by Rāneuss senior, father of the prominent organ builder Rāneuss. The organ has not survived to this day. The present organ (1875) was made by Liepāja organ builder K. Hermanis.



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