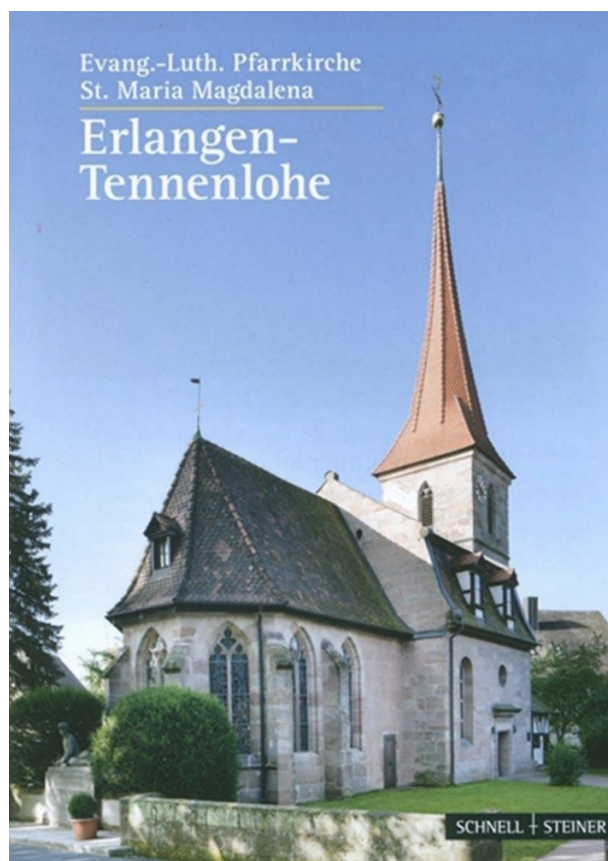


## Aspects of Erlangen – Tennenlohe

On Harvest Thanksgiving Day (*Erntedankfest*) I happened to be cycling past Tennenlohe and noticed an intriguing event taking place called “*Nachhaltigkeitstag*”. I decided to stop and investigate. The term “*Nachhaltigkeit*” (“sustainability”) comes from the forestry sector and simply means that you shouldn’t fell more trees than you can grow or replace, which obviously makes perfectly good sense. In fact, I would say that we have felled so many trees over the last couple of centuries that we’ll never be able to catch up with what we’ve lost. Tennenlohe is aware of this, of course, as it’s been home since 1976 to the very first of the dozen “*Walderlebniszentren*” in Bavaria. This one is situated in the forested area known as the Brucker Lache and its goal is to educate people about trees, how they are managed and how important they are for the environment – animals and humans alike.

As it happened, the “Sustainability Day” was taking place just outside Tennenlohe’s charming parish church, the Church of St Mary Magdalena, so I couldn’t resist poking my head round the door.



Harvest Thanksgiving had been celebrated in the morning and the congregation had done a splendid job of decorating their church. So much of it is Gothic in style, and typical of the Nuremberg area. The stone used, a fine-grained reddish-grey sandstone, was quarried locally and indeed dressed by craftsmen

associated with Nuremberg churches, as evidenced by numerous stonemason marks. The first mention of the church is 1421, where reference is made to a “Frühmesse” (early mass) conducted for the village inhabitants before they began their day’s work, the mother church at the time being the parish of St. Peter and Paul in Bruck and a considerable distance away. With Nuremberg being so very close it is clear that Tennenlohe would soon come under its religious sway. In 1528 its first “Lutheran” vicar was appointed by the Nuremberg Council.

There are, however, many aspects of the church which are definitely not Gothic. The altar seen above is Baroque and dated 1720, while the roof above the nave is a mid-18<sup>th</sup> century “mansard” style affair which, to my mind, looks a little out of place on a church. The modern stained-glass windows in the chancel are late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and successfully incorporate eight 16/17<sup>th</sup> century stained glass rondels which were rescued after the bombing raid in February 1943. This reminds me, of course, of our own church in Kraftshof which was completely destroyed in that same year.

Tennenlohe is now (since 1972) part of the City of Erlangen and what was once a village with attractive half-timbered buildings has expanded into a suburb of some 4,300 inhabitants. High-Tech companies abound here, perhaps the most famous being the Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits IIS. Some of you will remember our visit a few years ago. And who hasn’t heard of Der Beck, a bakery that has its roots in Tennenlohe, to be precise opposite the village church? From a small village bakery, it has grown to be one of the biggest industrial-scale bakers in Germany with 150 outlets in our immediate area.

And now I need to continue my journey home, which on this sunny day could have taken me past one final highlight.



Close to Tennenlohe is a large nature reserve once used by the German and later the American military for manoeuvres. With the departure of the Americans in 1993 part of this large sandy area was turned into an enclosure

for “Przewalski” horses (2003), an endangered equine species native to the steppes of central Asia and regarded as an ancestor of the modern domesticated horse. But today, with the sun already low in the sky, I’ll leave them in peace and simply take the cycle path home alongside the B4. I don’t think they’ll mind.

Frank Gillard