

HISTORY OF ST. GEORGE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1972 – 1976

The bound copies of The St. Georgians carry the History of St. George's Church to the Vestry Meeting on September 18, 1972. From June 1, 1972 to September 1, 1972 St. George's rector exchanged rectorships with The Rev. Cecil Kirkpatrick, rector of St. Dunston's, Hunsdon, Herts in England and St. John the Baptist, Welford, Herts, in England.

On his return at the Vestry meeting on September 18, 1972 the rector read the following statement:

"During almost 27 years of the best years of our lives Mary and I have always tried to put the welfare of St. George's Church first in our thinking. Again it is with the welfare of St. George's in mind that I make the following statement to you.

On June 18, 1973 I shall be 65 years of age and eligible for retirement. In view of this fact and in order that we all may better plan for the future, if everything can be put in order by June 30, 1973, Mary and I have decided that it will be best to tell you now that I plan to give up the rectorship of St. George's Church as of June 30, 1972.

In informing you of this decision our chief emotion is gratitude to God and St. George's congregation for the opportunity of having been allowed to serve both Him and St. George's Church for 27 years. At the present moment we have no plans whatsoever. I haven't even told the Bishop of my plans in June. Sufficient to say, though, that unless he has

something for us to do, we do hope that we can arrange to stay in Fredericksburg. Beyond those thoughts the future will have to take care of itself".

The meeting adjourned without any action on this statement.

At the Vestry meeting on October 16, 1972 the rector read a request from Mr. Fisher Kee, Senior Warden of Christ Church, Spotsylvania for consultation with the Vestry of St. George's Church regarding arrangement for resident ministerial help.

Mr. Faulkner suggested that the wardens of the two churches meet and discuss the feasibility of such an arrangement. A motion to this affect was passed by the Vestry with instructions to report back to them.

The committee reported to the Vestry at its meeting on November 20 that Christ Church is willing to have further meetings and that they were receptive to the several plans discussed. The Vestry thereupon authorized the Senior Warden to appoint Russell Roberts, Matthews and Neely as a committee to continue discussion with Christ Church.

At our December 18 meeting the Vestry voted to continue the practice of having a visiting preacher once a month. The Vestry also recommended that St. George's continue its participation in a joint Vacation Bible School with the Presbyterians.

During the meeting the Rector stated that he thinks St. George's really needs two clergymen (partially based on the fact that we have 500 active and 150 inactive communicants) and

recommended that we reduce our pledge to the Diocese to \$7000.00 setting aside \$500.00 for the region and \$7500 for an assistant rector. After much discussion it was moved and seconded that St. George's pledge to the Diocese be \$5000.00 rather than the \$7000.00 recommended by the Rector.

At the Vestry Meeting on January 15, 1973 the Rector reported that he had received a letter from Bishop Hall commending the Vestry's discussions with Christ Church, Spotsylvania. Mr. Fisher Kee of Christ Church has been appointed to negotiate with St. George's.

During the meeting the Register reported that he had written to the Rector as instructed by the Vestry requesting that he withdraw his resignation.

On the basis of the recommendation by the Senior Warden, Mr. Greenup, the Vestry voted to make itself a committee of a whole to carry out the identification and selection effort to recruit and issue a call for an associate rector. In order to implement this action a special Vestry meeting is to be held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, January 22, 1973 in the Family Room of the church.

At the special meeting of January 22, after much discussion about the Rev. Churchill J. Gibson, Jr. of Alexandria, who on his preaching engagements at St. George's and other occasions had much impressed St. George's congregation, members of the Vestry, attending the approaching Council, were to sound Mr. Gibson out to determine if he was available to serve as associate

rector of St. George's Church; determining his interest and general philosophies and report to another special Vestry meeting.

At the same meeting the Vestry, with Mr. Faulkner, voted unanimously to permit the Faulkners to remain in the rectory as long as they desired.

On January 29 at a special called meeting of the Vestry a report was to be heard from the committee appointed to consult with the Rev. Churchill J. Gibson, Jr. in regard to the possibility of his considering a call to become rector of St. George's Church.

Before the report was given, Mr. Faulkner, St. George's rector, stated that since an associate rectorship appeared in his opinion to be fraught with possible difficulties he had decided that it would be best for St. George's Church for the idea of an associate rector to be scrapped as he has previously planned to resign the rectorship on June 30, thus leaving the way open for the Vestry to extend a call to someone to become full time rector of St. George's Church as of July 1.

After Mr. Greenup gave a favorable report on the special committee's consultations with the Rev. Churchill J. Gibson, Jr, following some discussion a motion was made and seconded to extend a call to the Rev. Mr. Gibson, chaplain at St. Stephen's Church, Alexandria to become rector of St. George's Church on July 1, 1974. Nine out of the ten vestrymen present voted to

extend the call with the understanding that the 5 vestrymen absent be polled as to their thinking on this motion.

Since this January 29th meeting Mr. Greenup, the Senior Warden reported to the rector that the 5 vestrymen absent at the aforesaid meeting had concurred with the motion to extend the call to Mr. Gibson. The rector, therefore, authorized Mr. Greenup to extend the call to Mr. Gibson with the understanding that at the Vestry meeting on February 18 he will make a report of this action and his conversation with Mr. Gibson.

On February 19, Mr. Roberts, the new Senior Warden, distributed a memorandum from Mr. William Greenup stating that he had conveyed the Vestry's call to the Rev. Churchill J. Gibson, Jr. to be the new rector of St. George's Church and that Mr. Gibson desired to have a letter from the Vestry describing the needs of St. George's and the Vestry's expectations of him as the new Rector prior to further discussions. A committee was appointed to prepare such a letter, copies of which would be sent to vestrymen before being sent to Mr. Gibson. The committee to prepare the letter would be made up of the Executive Committee of the Vestry, Chairpersons of the various Committees of the Church, the Director of the Church School, Mr. Faulkner and any other vestrymen who might desire to attend. The meeting of this committee was set for February 26 at 7:30 p.m.

Before adjournment a letter from the Trustees of the Herndon Memorial Trust Fund was read informing the Vestry that they were

paying Mr. William Bond 5% of the annual income of the Fund for overseeing the Fund. A discussion ensued as to whether Mr. Bond should be paid for managing other funds, but the matter was tabled.

At the Vestry meeting on March 19 Mr. Roberts reported on the latest developments on the Vestry's call to Mr. Gibson: The call was not official because protocol was incorrect. (The Bishop was not informed of the Vestry's intentions before they extended the call to Mr. Gibson.) Since Mr. Gibson was a clergyman who was a canonical resident of the Diocese, the Vestry did not realize that the Bishop had to be consulted before they should have extended a call to Mr. Gibson).

Later the Rev. Mr. Gibson indicated that he wanted to remain at St. Stephen's School. As a result he would probably not accept the call even if it were according to protocol.

At the same meeting the Constitution and By-Laws of the recently established Interfaith Council were approved and copies given to St. George's first representatives on the Council. Lula Quenzel and Clyde Matthews and the Rector was its first president.

At this meeting a motion was also passed requesting Mr. Faulkner, the rector, to rescind his resignation and to remain as rector for three more years, during which period attempts will be made to procure an assistant rector, with the assistant and Mr. Faulkner to serve both St. George's and Christ Church in

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Spotsylvania, provided a satisfactory arrangement can be made with Christ Church. A letter from the Vestry was to be written to the congregation explaining the action which the Vestry was taking concerning the future of St. George's Church.

At a special Vestry meeting on June 26, 1973 the Rev. Richard Buzby, rector of Christ Church, Buena Vista, Virginia was called to be assistant rector of St. George's, if the Bishop approved. Mr. Faulkner was to inform the Bishop of this action and obtain his approval before a definite call was extended. The assistant rector was to receive a maximum salary of \$18,000 per year including all benefits. The Rev. Mr. Buzby declined this call.

At a special meeting of the Vestry on August 5 a call was extended to the Rev. Mr. Randall Prior at an annual salary of \$9,500 plus the usual fringe benefits for a single clergyman.

A bequest of \$50,000 in memory of Mary Kent Buffington by her husband, Ralph R. Buffington was acknowledged with appreciation. The Vestry voted to use this bequest to establish the Mary Kent Buffington Trust Fund, earnings from which were to be used at the discretion of the Vestry.

The Sunday School under the direction of Mrs. Avis Harris was doing well. A monetary gift of appreciation for her services was given to Mrs. Harris.

Mr. Faulkner stated that he had received a letter from Mr. Randall Prior saying that he could not accept the call to St. George's Church. Mr. Faulkner also informed the Vestry that

letters had been sent to 28 younger clergymen to find out if any of them might be interested in the assistant rector position at St. George's.

Mr. Roberts and Mr. Faulkner have been in consultation with the Rev. Charles R. Sydnor, Jr., whom Bishop Baden had suggested to the Vestry as a possible candidate. Mr. Sydnor is in charge of the mission at Sterling, Virginia.

At a special meeting of the Vestry on October 7, 1973 the major portion of the meeting was taken up with a report from a group who had visited a service which Mr. Sydnor had conducted, after which they met with Mr. Sydnor. This report was quite favorable. After hearing this report considerable discussion followed which resulted in a call being extended to Mr. Sydnor to become assistant rector of St. George's Church. Following this action a motion was made that Mr. Faulkner and the wardens work out a suitable salary and benefits for Mr. Sydnor.

At Mr. Faulkner's request it was agreed that he be named Rector of Christ Church, Spotsylvania in addition to being Rector of St. George's, and Mr. Sydnor, if he accepts the call to St. George's be named Assistant Rector of Christ Church in addition to being Assistant Rector of St. George's. (As its financial share in this arrangement Christ Church agreed to contribute to St. George's Church \$4800 a month).

At the October 15 Vestry meeting it was reported that Mr. Sydnor would preach his first sermon at St. George's on November

4th. prior to his moving to Fredericksburg.

During the period before and after Mr. Sydnor was called Rappahannock Big Brothers Office and the New School for austistic children was located in St. George's McGuire Hall.

At the time that Mr. Sydnor became assistant rector at St. George's the rector, because of Mr. Sydnor's three year experience as an ordained priest, treated Mr. Sydnor as a associate rector rather than as an assistant. As a result he gave Mr. Sydnor the responsibility for St. George's youth, young adults, both single and married and the Sunday school, while he as rector was to have the oversight of the whole congregation with special responsibility for the older members of the congregation and Christ Church, Spotsylvania. The conduct of Sunday morning services at St. George's and Christ Church was to be divided on alternate Sunday basis between Mr. Syndor and St. George's rector. Since there was a thirty minute differential between the hours of Sunday services at St. George's and Christ Church, St. George's rector and Mr. Sydnor were to alternate meeting persons before the second service at St. George's. St. George's rector and Mr. Sydnor were to have the eight o'clock service at St, George's on the Sundays they had the service at Christ Church.

Mr. Faulkner as rector of both St. George's and Christ Church was to have the oversight of both congregations and their visitors, with special responsibility for St. George's older

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congregation and Christ Church's entire congregation.
(January 1974 minutes missing.)

At the February 18, 1975, \$400.00 was allocated as a discretionary fund for the rector and assistant rector to entertain members of the congregation in their homes.

Mr. Willis reported tht Mr. Bond was preparing to invest the \$50,000 from Buffington Bequest.

St. George's to participate in Vacation Bible School sponsored by seven local churches. St. George's will contribute \$125.00.

St. George's to sponsor the Boy Scout Troop now meeting at the Lutheran Church.

Peggy Johnson reported that the Jr. High Young People are planning a carnival to raise money for a trip to Boys' Home in Covington, Virginia.

At the April vestry meeting it was reported that St. George's Scout Troop organizational meeting will take place on April 22 at 7:00 p.m. At the same meeting it was decided to donate half of the Easter Offeirng to help make up the deficit in the United Givers Fund. The other half had already been designated for Bloomfield.

Singing of America at Sunday morning services to occur more often.

\$132.00 voted to defray expense of Mr. and Mrs. Sydnor's attending conference at Kanuga in North Carolina.

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\$500 was allocated for expenses of Seminary Field Education for Mike Devine under Mr. Sydnor's supervision.

Features of the worship service on April 22 to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the consecration of St. George's present building were outlined by Mr. Faulkner. (All notes destroyed. For details will check Free Lance Star).

\$338.00 designated for the purchase of a folding machine for the office.

The Vestry approved of a special celebration of Pentecost to be held at St. Clair Brooks Park in Stafford at 11:00 a.m. to be followed by the annual church picnic. Regular 8:00 a.m. service to be held at the church.

At the May 20, 1974 meeting it was voted that the sexton, if possible, be put on Social Security.

Mrs. William Munsie will direct St. George's portion of the joint Vacation Bible School.

In August the Presbyterians to be worshipping with us on the first two Sundays in the month at 11:00 a.m. and we with them on the last two Sundays.

Mr. Willis and Mrs. Fitts were designated to be licensed to administer the chalice at Sunday Communion services.

Tentative date for the Every Member Canvass under the leadership of Mr. Wilhour, set for November 3.

Dr. William Munsie and Clyde Matthews to be delegates to the Diocesan Council.

Manufacturers of American and Church Flags in/~~exchange~~^{chancel} to replace those whose colors had run.

Fuel cost increase of \$800 in 1974.

At the July '74 meeting all employees were put under the Social Security Act.

At the September '74 meeting it was suggested that the \$1000 from the Houston Sweetser Estate be used to purchase larger hymnals for the congregation.

Tentative budget for 1975 approved for salaries \$32,830.00.

The following organizations use St. George's facilities free of charge: The New School, AA, Senior Citizens, Mental Health Social Club, and Ann Hamrick House, Big Brothers. It was suggested that income from some of the Trust Funds assist in covering the expenses for organizations using St. George's facilities.

Seventy-one persons to attend special retreat at Roslyn to discuss parish goals.

The Vestry authorized writing The Rev. Churchill Gibson, Dr. Charles Price or Dr. John Wolverton to preach and lead the adult class on December 8 and 15 respectively.

\$1000 from Inez Thomas accepted and deposited in Fredericksburg Savings and Loan for further allocation.

Carpeting of Nave suggested but action delayed.

Seminars on "Stress in Marriage", "Morality Problems" and "Money Management" to be held.

Vestry approval for Sydnor - salary - \$8000; \$3000 living cost; \$60 - travel expense and necessary charges for pension, Social Security, medical and hospital coverage, moving expenses.

At January 27, 1975 vestry meeting purchase of an IBM typewriter for office approved, cost \$615 plus \$50 a year for maintenance.

Authorized Bi-Centennial Service to be held at St. George's. Vestrypersons, Mason and Holloman working on plans for St. George's to participate in this Bi-Centennial.

Rev. Jack Beckwith to conduct "Instructive Services" on Holy Communion on Sundays in February and March.

To contribute \$600 for college work at M.W.C.

Rector thanked Mrs. Richard Johnson for her work with the young people.

The following 1974 contribution for work outside of congregation reported: New School, \$761; Bloomfield, \$797; Diocese of Barbados, \$240; Philippine Parish, \$240.99; Legal Aid Society, \$764.39; United Givers Fund, \$362.83; Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, \$790.61; Hamrick House, \$932; Boys' Home, Covington, Virginia, \$433.14; Communion Alms, \$418; miscellaneous, \$91.80; Philippine Priest, \$600; totalling, \$6,804.70.

Fr. Donald Barnett, Archdeacon Milton Leroy and Mr. Ira Lechner to speak to interested persons in Lent.

Mason Richards to be trustee in place of Judge J. M. H. Willis, Jr., who became ineligible when he became Judge.

Easter Offering: \$160 to Bloomfield, remainder to Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief.

In view of the Rector's anticipated retirement in June 1976 a committee of 10 to 12 persons to be formed to recommend characteristics of a new rector.

Vestry Meeting - April 21, 1978

\$655.00 from Inez Thomas Estate for IBM office typewriter.

Outdoor service on Pentecost at Alum Springs authorized.

Plans for convening the committee of 10 or 12 persons to recommend characteristics of new rector.

Senior and Junior Wardens with Mason, Woodward and Backus to be a vestry committee to assist Faulkners with plans for their future.

May 19, 1975- Faulkners letter to Bishop Hall, Vestry responses -

Vestry authorized purchase of a \$995 copying machine.

June 16, 1975 - First religious event of the Fredericksburg Bi-Centennial to be at St. George's on July 13, 1975 at 7:30 p.m. Every Prayer to be conducted as nearly like a 1775 service with a historical address by the Rev. George Cleveland who is writing a history of the Church in Virginia before the Revolution.

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Bi-Central Committee authorized to publish a brochure about St. George's and construct a plot chart of the cemetery. \$50 was allocated for this purpose.

Mr. Nelson and Mr. Wilhour recommended to be licensed as "chalicers" and lay readers.

(To be copied from July 16th minutes) July 16, 1975 - vestry letter to the Faulkners; July 21, Faulkners' letter in response.

Mr. Sydnor outlined plans for a preaching mission to be held at St. George's from October 11 through October 15.

The following Mission Planning Committee was appointed: Chairman, Jim Wilhour; Publicity, Alis Bailey and Al Campbell, Bi-mission preparation, Charles Hotchkiss; Arrangements, Martha Roberts; Follow-up, David Fitts. with authority to invite guest ministers and start arrangements.

Mr. Sydnor urged the Vestry to expedite the profile recommendations for the new rector "who can take care of the strength and weaknesses of the congregation discovered in the survey of the congregation and not just someone who can preach well."

September 15 - Vestry Meeting

William G. Bond duly appointed trustee.

Vestry informed that Christ Church, Spotsylvania might with assistance from St. George's have its own rector. Motion passed by St. George's Vestry to accept the challenge and include a goal of \$2500 for this purpose in its budget for 1976.

Sunday morning service on a new schedule with children leaving the service before the sermon and offertory being placed at end of service - Loss of choir members due to this change reported by Mr. Fitts and Miss Arnold, vestry members.

"Joyous Renewal in Christ" to be held at St. George's October 5-8 with the following clergymen participated as leaders: Rev. Carl Praktish, assistant to the Director of the Space Program; Rev. Clyde Angel, Rev. Churchill Gibson, Rev. Fletcher Lowe, and Rev. Peter Way. Preaching services to be held each evening followed by group-discussions gathering in various homes in the congregation. Special Holy Communion to be held October 8 at 10:30 a.m.

"Renewal" poorly attended but quite beneficial for those who did attend. Making it an annual event with the leaders of the Church generating more interest in the entire congregation participating.

Seddon Nelson assisted by Marge Arnold, in charge of Every Member Canvass.

The Archer Smith Family have decided to make their memorial in the form of enlarging the organ. Lewis and Hitchcock, organ builders to be giving estimates.

Delegates to Council to be Mr. Wilhour and Mr. Matthews with Mr. Singleton and Mrs. Moore as alternates.

Session on "Sex Education" to be held each evening at Trinity Church - November 9, 16 and 23 with various local doctors, psychologists and school counselors participating.

closing with a session of Christian Interpretation of Sex led by Rev. Churchill J. Gibson, Chaplain of Stephen's School in Alexandria.

At the December 1, 1975 meeting it was reported that the Every Member Canvass to date was \$7000 short of its goal of \$58,000.

In view of this fact the Rector read the following letter to the Vestry: (minutes 12/1/75)

At the same time Mr. Sydnor submitted the following letter to the Vestry:

When Mr. Faulkner retired as rector of St. George's Church on February 1, 1976, he continued as rector of Christ Church, Spotsylvania until August 1, 1976, when with the aid of the Diocese Christ Church was able to have their own resident clergyman, a deacon, who was later ordained and became their full time rector for the first time in many years.

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Vestry and Officers - 1972

Howard W. Greenup, Senior Warden
Clyde W. Matthews
William E. Akin
Charles S. Hotchkiss, Junior Warden
Peggy H. Johnson
Samuel P. Mason
Dr. William J. Munsie
Lula A. Quenzel
R. Miles Spiller, Treasurer
David M. Fitts, Register
John D. Neely
Russell H. Roberts
Peter V. S. Myers
William R. Hollomon

Vestry and Officers - 1973

Russell H. Roberts, Senior Warden
Clyde Matthews, Junior Warden
William J. Munsie, Register
R. Miles Spiller
William E. Akin, Jr.
H. Clay Haymes
William R. Hollomon
Peggy H. Johnson
Samuel P. Mason
Lula A. Quenzel
Ruth L. Smith
J. M. H. Willis, Jr.
James W. Wilhour
Edgar E. Woodward
David M. Beck? (George)
Dr. S. O'Brien Payne
Margery E. Arnold

Vestrymen and Officers - 1974

Seddon C. Nelson
William J. Munsie, Senior Warden
Peggy H. Johnson, Junior Warden
David M. Fitts, Register

Vestrymen and Officers - 1975

James M. Wilhour, Senior Warden
David M. Fitts, Register
Ruth L. Smith, Junior Warden
Curtis B. Backus
James A. Branscome

Margery E. Arnold