

HISTORY OF ST. GEORGE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI

The beginnings of St. George Church probably trace back to the earlier days of the establishment of civil government in the north Delta region of Mississippi following the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit in 1832. It was then, after the Choctaw-Chickasaw Cession of the Indian lands in most of north Mississippi, that American settlers began moving into the swamps of the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta, clearing the vast virgin timberlands, developing drainage and levee systems, and farming the deep, rich alluvial soil.

Prior to the Civil War, most of the development in Coahoma County was along the Mississippi River from Delta landing south through Friars Point to Stovall, Green Grove, Hillhouse and Pushmataha.

In the Diocesan records there is a reference to Episcopal missionary services being conducted in Coahoma County (site unknown) in 1857 (circa) by the Rev. William Girault H. Jones in "an old log house."¹ Later, services were held in the home of Col. H. C. Chambers. (sic)² Mr. Jones reported that a parsonage was finished in November 1857 as well as a school, used also as a church, on forty acres of land given by Col. Chambers. An application by this group of communicants for admission to the Diocese as the Church of the Redeemer was denied in 1859 as "incomplete". Bishop William Mercer Green visited this community and held services of the Church, writing in his Journal that "quite a large number was in attendance, as this was the first time that many present had ever witnessed our services."³

In 1892, the Chapel of the Peace Church was organized as a Mission in Friars Point, Mississippi, and admitted to the Diocese in 1893.⁴ The Mission had no settled clergymen. Services were held by visiting clergymen, notably the Rev. George C. Harris, Archdeacon, who was in charge of work in the Delta during the life of this

¹Bishop Journal, 1858 p. 7 and 52; The Episcopal Church in Miss. 1763-1992 p. 354

²This is probably Col C. C. Chambers, who, according to Linton Weeks in Clarksdale and Coahoma County, A History p. 35 and 76, fought in the Civil War with the Coahoma Invincibles and purchased Green Grove Plantation from Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest in 1867.

³Bishop's Journal 1861, p. 37

⁴Bishop's Journal 1893, p. 22

Mission.⁵ The membership consisted of sixteen communicants in 1895.⁶ A frame chapel was erected in 1896 on a plot of ground donated by Mr. Frank L. Puckett of Friars Point.⁷ The Rev. Thomas H. Woodward served this Mission in 1896-97 and the Rev. William Stokes visited during 1900.⁸

With the coming of the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Railroad to the Clarksdale area, Friars Point began to decline. Steamboat travel and commerce on the river was on the wane. In 1868, Mr. John Clark⁹ platted and dedicated the Town of Clarksdale. The town was chartered in 1882 and became a county seat in 1892.

The first Episcopal services in Clarksdale were held that year during Lent. No member of the Clergy was present. The service was held by Mrs. W. A. Alcorn, Sr.¹⁰, Mrs. S. T. Rucks and Mrs. J. W. Gray, Sr.¹¹ in what had been a plantation cabin near the site of our present church.¹² Since 1888, this cabin had been used as a school for white children.¹³

⁵The Episcopal Church in Miss. 1763-1992, p. 355; Bishop's Journal 1897, p.6; and Bishop's Journal 1903, p. 19

⁶Bishop's Journal 1895, p. 71

⁷Bishop's Journal 1896, p. 51

⁸The Episcopal Church in Miss. 1763-1992, (Supra.)

⁹Mr. John Clark was the grandfather of Mr. Charles W. Clark, Jr., and Mrs. Alida Clark Heidelberg

¹⁰Mrs. W. A. Alcorn, Sr., was the grandmother of Mrs. A. M. ("Genie") Harlow

¹¹Mrs. J. W. Gray, Sr., was the grandmother of Mr. J. W. Gray, III

¹²Study of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Mississippi, General Division of Research and Field Study of the Executive Counsel of the Protestant Episcopal Church, April 1965, page Church-4; and Yearbook and Directory for Episcopal Church, November 1932.

¹³This cabin may be the building located today in the rear of 111 Leflore Avenue where Mr. and Mrs. Lavitor Alex Gilliam built their home. The cabin was used as servant quarters by the Gilliam family from 1915 to 1940, and Mrs. Gilliam remembered attending school in the building.

At the request of Mrs. Gray, the Rt. Rev. Hugh Miller Thompson, the Diocesan Bishop of Mississippi, who at that time was living in Oxford, Mississippi,¹⁴ came to Clarksdale in March 1893 and conducted the first service ever held in Clarksdale by an official of the Episcopal Church. While here, Bishop Thompson baptized J. W. Gray, Jr.¹⁵, Alice Gray Rucks, (both infants), Fort Alcorn (age 8), and Turner Alcorn (age 6)¹⁶. This service was held at the Mt. Moriah Methodist Church atop an Indian mound on the plantation of Mr. John Clark, the founder of Clarksdale. The mound was located on the east bank of the Sunflower River about in the middle of what is today the 300 block of Sunflower Avenue.¹⁷ This particular Indian mound had been the center of Christian worship services in the area since as early as 1851. It was in that year that Rev. James M. Scott made his way on horseback to the plantation of Mr. Clark. Mr. Clark and his wife, Mrs. Eliza Jane Alcorn Clark, invited the minister to stay in their home and to conduct services in the area. Services were held first in the Clark home and later, under a grape arbor, on top of the Indian mound.

During the year 1869, Mr. Clark completed the building of his fine new home (commenced prior to the Civil War and which still stands at 211 Clark Street); and he instructed the carpenters to select the best logs and timber from his old house and to use this material with new logs cut from the surrounding forest to build a log church where the grape arbor stood on the Indian mound. The church was built and was named Mt. Moriah. It became a place of inter-denominational worship although the Clarks and the ministers who served it were Methodist.¹⁸ Title to this property was conveyed 8 years later by Mr. Clark to the Clarksdale Methodist Church on March 21, 1877, for \$1 "cash in hand paid".¹⁹

The following year Mrs. Clark became the prime mover in the effort to replace the log church with a new church on the mound. It was mostly through her efforts that money was raised to build a new

¹⁴The Episcopal Church in Mississippi 1763 - 1992, page 59.

¹⁵Mr. J. W. Gray, Jr. was the father of Mr. J. W. Gray, III

¹⁶Mr. Fort Alcorn and Mr. Turner Alcorn were uncles of Mrs. A. M. ("Genie") Harlow

¹⁷Yearbook and Directory for Episcopal Church (Supra).

¹⁸Clarksdale Press Register, August 30, 1973.

¹⁹Deed Book Q, page 608, Land Records of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

frame church in 1878. It was said to have been small, but dignified, and fronted by white pillars. The interior reportedly was finished in oak. The Methodists used this building for almost 20 years. Called Mt. Moriah, like the original log church, it became a community center. Coahoma Countians traveled long distances by carriage to attend services, weddings, christenings, funerals and other religious events in the church, which even boasted a small reed organ.²⁰

At a Diocesan Council meeting on April 25, 1894, it was unanimously resolved that "St. George Mission at Clarksdale be recognized as an organized Mission."²¹

Later that year, Bishop Thompson again visited the Clarksdale Episcopal congregation and this time, confirmed a class.²² This service, like the one the preceding year, may have also been held in the Mt. Moriah Methodist Church building, although the small Episcopal congregation sometime during that year and continuing to 1896, rented Grange Hall in the old Grange Cemetery for church services.²³ During this period, visits to the congregation were made by the following Episcopal Priests: Rev. Nowell Logan (1893-94), Rev. George C. Harris (1895-96), and Rev. Thomas H. Woodward (1896-97).²⁴

During Mr. Woodward's tenure, Mr. E. L. Dorr, Warden, reported to the Diocese that the Mission consisted of eight families including seventeen confirmed persons.

Their own membership, having outgrown the little church on the mound, the Methodist Church purchased three lots at the corner of what is now East Second and Leflore for a new and larger church building, and on January 1, 1897, sold their Mt. Moriah Methodist Church building to the Episcopal congregation. Trustees acting for the Methodist Church were Messrs. J. J. Price, J. W. Cutrer, G. W. Greenhaw, W. P. Wildberger, G. R. Page, R. N. Harris, G. P. Clark,

²⁰Clarksdale Press Register (Supra).

²¹Bishop's Journal 1894, p. 28

²²Yearbook and Directory for Episcopal Church (Supra).

²³Yearbook, (Supra).

²⁴The Episcopal Church in Mississippi 1763-1992, page 323.

C. W. McCroy, and Lang C. Allen, Jr. The conveyance by them was made to Ida May Wildberger, Elizabeth G. Dorr, and Lizzie B. Campbell acting as Trustees for the St. George congregation. The sale was for \$500 cash in hand paid and two \$500 notes due July 1, 1897, and January 1, 1898. The property was described in the deed as being the same as that conveyed to the Methodist Church by John Clark on March 21, 1877.²⁵

The Episcopalians used the little church on the mound for only a few years. Priests who visited during these years included Rev. Thomas H. Woodward (1896-97), Rev. Austin F. Morgan (1898-99), Rev. Charles Morris (1899-1900), Rev. Charles W. Hinton (1901-02), and Rev. Alfred Todhunter, a native of London, England, (1902-08)²⁶ who, at first lived in Rosedale, Mississippi, and came to Clarksdale twice a month to hold services; he later moved his residence to Clarksdale where he served the church until his death in 1908.²⁷

It was during this period that one of the most elegant events in the history of the church on the mound occurred. On April 18, 1898, Ada Hancock, daughter of Mrs. Elizabeth Gwynn Hancock Dorr, married Alfred Dorr, a brother of the bride's step-father. The wedding prompted Mrs. Dorr to have pathways opened and a footbridge constructed so that the bridal party could proceed along a flower strewn, regally ornamented bridal trail from Mrs. Dorr's residence (the former Spencer Bobo antebellum mansion on the site of the current Clarksdale High School) on the west bank of the Sunflower River to the church atop the mound on the opposite bank.²⁸

During their occupancy of the church on the mound, the Episcopalian congregation had to borrow money, using the property as security,

²⁵Deed Book 1, page 564, Land Records of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

²⁶The Episcopal Church in Mississippi, (Supra)

²⁷Yearbook, (Supra); and The Episcopal Church in Mississippi, (Supra).

²⁸Clarksdale Press Register, March 8, 1980

to improve or repair the aging building.²⁹ Probably because of the building's deterioration, the congregation in the fall of 1903 began holding services each alternate Sunday at the courthouse.³⁰

Recognizing their need for a permanent church building, the congregation in 1901 purchased a lot on the corner of First Street and Sharkey Avenue. The lot (described as Lot 18, Block R in the City Land Records) was purchased from Mrs. C. J. Wildberger on February 4, 1901. Mrs. E. L. Dorr, Mrs. Ida May Wildberger, and Miss Lizzie Campbell acted as Trustees again for the St. George congregation.³¹

With the growth of the church in Clarksdale and removal of many of the members from the church in Friars Point to Clarksdale, the Chapel of the Peace Church building in Friars Point was sold in 1902. At the 75th Diocesan Council meeting in 1902, it was ordered that the Trustees of the church Property Funds be instructed to pay over to St. George Mission the funds arising from the sale of the building in Friars Point.³²

At about this same time, plans were being made in Clarksdale for the congregation to become more formally organized as a church corporation. A proposed "Charter of Incorporation of St. George Episcopal Church at Clarksdale, Mississippi" was signed by Messrs. R. H. Wildberger, Rucks Yerger, D. A. Scott, A. L. Dabney, and W. A. Alcorn, Jr.³³, and was approved by A. H. Longino, Governor of Mississippi, on March 17, 1902. The Charter was filed for record in the Coahoma County Chancery Clerk's office on February 26,

²⁹Deed Book 2, page 376, Land Records of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

³⁰Clarksdale Challenge, September 10, 1903.

³¹Deed Book 7, page 50, Land Records of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

³²Bishop's Journal 1903, p. 57

³³Judge W. A. Alcorn, Jr. was a great-uncle of Mr. L. Alex Gilliam, Jr. and Mrs. Inez Gilliam Lundy

1904.³⁴ Immediately thereafter on March 2, 1904, Mrs. E. L. Dorr, Mrs. I. M. Wildberger³⁵, and Miss Lizzie Campbell, acting as Trustees for the St. George congregation, conveyed the newly purchased property on the corner of First and Sharkey Streets to the St. George Episcopal Church, "a corporation legally chartered and organized under the laws of the State of Mississippi."³⁶ The construction of the new church building, however, had already begun the previous January, 1904.³⁷

According to a local newspaper account³⁸, "The cornerstone of St. George Episcopal Church was laid with appropriate ceremonies last Sunday afternoon (January 31, 1904) at 3:00 p.m., the Masonic fraternity officiating. The Grand Lodge convened at their Hall at 2:00 p.m. and marched to the lot where the ceremonies were to take place. After prayers and music by the choir, led by Mrs. McIngvale, the usual order of Masonic exercises were followed. Coins and books were deposited, as also was a list of the Ladies' Guild, which was read, as follows: "Mrs. W. A. Alcorn, Sr., President, Miss Lizzie Campbell, Secretary/Treasurer, Mrs. W. A. Alcorn, Jr.³⁹, Mrs. Oscar Baugh⁴⁰, Mrs. E. L. Dorr, Mrs. D. A. Scott, Mrs. J. J. Pleasants, Mrs. R. H. Wildberger, Mrs. Ida P. Myers, and Mrs. M. T. Mosby. After an earnest appeal for help was made by the Pastor, Rev. Alfred Todhunter - to which liberal response was made - Major T. G. Dabney, Grand Chaplain was introduced and delivered a fine oration, "charity" being his subject. A large number were present despite the severe weather to

³⁴Corporate Charters, 1892-1920, page 115, Chancery Clerk's office, Coahoma County, Mississippi.

³⁵Mrs. I. M. Wildberger was an aunt of Mrs. W. H. Frazer, Jr.

³⁶Deed Book 10, page 339, Land Records of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

³⁷Clarksdale Press Register, April 15, 1982.

³⁸Clarksdale Challenge, February 5, 1904.

³⁹Mrs. W. A. Alcorn, Jr. was the great-aunt of Mr. L. Alex Gilliam, Jr. and Mrs. Inez Gilliam Lundy

⁴⁰Mrs. Oscar Baugh was the grandmother of Mrs. Stella Connell Salmon and Mr. Oscar Baugh Connell

participate in the solemn ceremonies and to speed the good work with their earnest and heartfelt prayers."

On April 1, 1904, the same newspaper reported,⁴¹ "The Episcopal Church is rapidly assuming finished proportions, and gives promise of being an attractive architectural addition to Clarksdale. It is Gothic in style, brick veneer, and with its handsome stained glass windows and steep roof, lacks only the historical climb of ivy to make it conform to all the old traditions of what an English Church should be."

The "handsome stained glass windows" referred to in the newspaper article were apparently the St. George window which is still located behind the Altar today and the two tall, narrow stained glass windows on either side of it. The St. George window was installed in memory of Bishop Thompson (1830-1902), the first official of the Episcopal Church to hold services in Clarksdale. The two tall, narrow windows on either side of it were given by Mrs. E. L. Dorr; the one on the left, in memory of her first husband, Russell Hancock, and the one on the right in memory of her parents, Elizabeth Gwynn (1825-1895) and Nicholas Gwynn (1825-1891), both natives of Kentucky. The large stained glass window at the rear of the Church was installed after his death on June 2, 1908, in memory of the Rev. Alfred Todhunter (1851-1908), the Church's first resident Priest.

At the 78th Diocesan Council meeting on May 6, 1905, it was ordered that the Mission of St. George at Clarksdale, Mississippi, be "admitted as a parish into union with the Council."⁴² In his address at the same meeting, Bishop Theodore Dubose Bratton was quoted as saying: "On Saturday, June 11, I went to Clarksdale via Vicksburg, arriving at 5:00 A.M. the next morning. I wonder if other Bishops are as much inconvenienced by their memories as I am by mine. There was a better schedule, but I forgot it. On Sunday, June 12, at 11:00 A.M., the Rev. Alfred Todhunter and I conducted the service. I preached, confirmed six candidates, addressed them and celebrated Holy Communion. Offering: \$14.40 at 8:00 P.M., I preached again at Evensong. The new St. George Church is a suitable and beautiful building. The Rector and the congregation have done well, and I congratulate them. It is expected that all bills will be settled within a year and the Church will be ready

⁴¹The Clarksdale Challenge, April 1, 1904.

⁴²Bishop's Journal 1905, p. 42

for consecration."⁴³

Three years later, at the Diocesan meeting in 1908, Bishop Bratton reported that "the Rev. Alfred Todhunter, in July last, succumbed to the strain of constant work and malarial affliction and was carried to a hospital in Cincinnati by his devoted wife, where he is now slowly improving, his Parish being served meanwhile by the Lay Reader."⁴⁴ It was announced on June 2, 1908, that "after a protracted illness, the Rev. Alfred Todhunter fell asleep at the home of his beloved wife in Memphis, and was buried the next day by his Bishop, assisted by the Rev. Dr. Winchester of Calvary Church."

The Rev. William K. Cross became Rector in 1908. He served St. George Church and also the Swan Lake community for several months before accepting the charge of churches in the Canal Zone.⁴⁵ He was followed by the Rev. Percy W. Jones who served from 1909 to 1916.⁴⁶ Mr. Jones lived in Rosedale and his good humor was well known. In an article that he once wrote about himself in the Church News, he said: "I minister to six places that are sprinkled over three counties, and the problem to be solved, forever and ever, Amen, is how to get around to all before the people in any have forgot the deep learning, fervent zeal and majestic presence of this missionary in the Delta."⁴⁷

During Mr. Jones' tenure, Bishop Bratton announced at the Diocesan Council meeting in 1912 that "St. George Church in Clarksdale, built some years ago, was completely freed from debt on Sunday, May 14, 1911, and was consecrated to the service of God's people."⁴⁸

In February, 1917, the beloved Rev. Walter E. Dakin came to Clarksdale as Rector. Mr. Dakin was born in Harveysburg, Ohio on April 23, 1857. He married Rose Otte in 1883 and later attended the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee where he was ordained a Deacon in 1895 and a Priest in January, 1896. His first

⁴³Bishop's Journal 1905, (Supra.)

⁴⁴Bishop's Journal 1908, P. 71

⁴⁵Bishop's Journal 1909, p. 62

⁴⁶The Episcopal Church in Mississippi, (Supra).

⁴⁷The Church News, 1932.

⁴⁸Bishop's Journal 1912, p. 73

church was in South Pittsburg, Tennessee (1895-96), followed by two years in Springfield, Ohio (1897-98), after which he returned to Cleveland, Tennessee (1899-1900). He served three years in Port Gibson, Mississippi, before moving to St. Paul's in Columbus, Mississippi (1905-13). Two more assignments followed: at the Church of the Advent in Nashville, Tennessee (1913-14) and at Grace Church, Canton, Mississippi (1916-17), before he arrived in Clarksdale.⁴⁹ He was the first Rector to have a long tenure at St. George, remaining until 1932.⁵⁰ When he came, the congregation was still small and struggling for existence. His ministry was productive of many improvements and a substantial growth in numbers. The church building was improved, a pipe organ was installed, a Rectory was purchased and a beautiful new Parish House was erected.⁵¹ In 1918, the local newspaper announced that services at the Episcopal Church would be resumed on May 26, the church building having been closed for necessary repairs. "The walls have been newly decorated by the same firm which did the work in the new Marion Theater. The exterior, including the roof, has been newly painted. A new Moller pipe organ has been installed which will add greatly to the music of the fine choir. Mrs. P. H. Fuller will be the organist. New choir stalls have been ordered, and it is hoped to have a vested choir by Fall."⁵² Upon Mrs. Fuller's departure from Clarksdale, Mrs. Esther Holmes was engaged as organist, and later, Mrs. H. G. Downing. Miss Minnie Shannon served during the remaining period of Mr. Dakins' rectorship and also during the period when his successor, Rev. Raymond E. MacBlain was here (1932-1936). These organists had been preceded by Mrs. J. O. Baugh, Mrs. E. O. Moore, Mrs. Eidelman, Miss Ada Chapman, who taught piano for over 50 years in Clarksdale, and her brother Mr. Walter Chapman, a well-known concert pianist.⁵³

⁴⁹Episcopal Clerical Directory (1956), p. 95

⁵⁰The Episcopal Church in Mississippi, (Supra).

⁵¹Yearbook, (Supra.); Study of Episcopal Churches in Mississippi, (Supra.)

⁵²The Clarksdale Register, May 24, 1918.

⁵³Historical Museum Project Number 2984. Coahoma County Fine Arts Assignment Number 16, September 28, 1936.

The first Rectory at 106 Sharkey Avenue (located on Lot 17, Block R) adjacent to the Church building was purchased on November 14, 1919, from Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Neal⁵⁴ for \$5,000, cash in hand paid, plus the assumption of two notes of Mr. M. L. Neal's for \$1,000 each, due November 20, 1920 and 1921, and an additional \$4,000 evidenced by three notes for \$1,333.33 each due October 1, 1920, 1921, and 1922.

It was while Mr. and Mrs. Dakin occupied the Rectory that their grandson, Thomas Lanier Williams, who later became famous as the playwright, Tennessee Williams, came there as a youth to visit. Tennessee Williams lived in the Rectory with his mother and grandparents while he attended the first and fourth grades at the Oakhurst Elementary School in Clarksdale.

After the death of her husband, Mr. John Oscar Baugh⁵⁵, in 1923, Mrs. Baugh had constructed in his memory the large, two-story, brick Parish House located directly behind the Church and connected to it by a bricked, arched colonnade. Above a large basement containing the heating plant, the main room downstairs was originally built with hardwood floors and movable partitions permitting its division into several smaller rooms. A raised stage occupied the south end of the main room, flanked by a bathroom on one side and a kitchen on the other. The upstairs floor was designated for Sunday School rooms.

Stained glass windows installed in the Church while Mr. Dakin was here included the two companion windows on either side of the chancel: - the one on the left, given by Mr. Marshall Jones Bouldin in memory of his wife, Mrs. Helen Alcorn Bouldin (1870-1923)⁵⁶, and the one on the right, given by Mrs. John Oscar Baugh in memory of her children, John Oscar Baugh, Jr. (1899-1900) and Virginia Francis Baugh (1901-1901); - also, the two windows in the nave of the Church on the south side in memory of Mrs. Hazel Bateman Skipwith (1931), who taught in the local schools and her husband, Mr. Frank Polk Skipwith (1926), a local cotton buyer. The marble font was given by Mr. Robert H. and Mrs. Ida May Wildberger in

⁵⁴Deed Book 58, page 30, Land Records of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

⁵⁵Mr. John Oscar Baugh was the grandfather of Mrs. Stella Connell Salmon and Mr. Oscar Baugh Connell

⁵⁶Mrs. Helen Alcorn Bouldin was a cousin of Mrs. Eliza Jane Alcorn and the mother of Mrs. Inez Bouldin Gilliam, Mrs. Florence Bouldin Marley and Mrs. Mary Bouldin Baird

memory of their daughter, Katherine Elizabeth Wildberger (1894-1896).⁵⁷

Mr. Dakin retired in 1932 and spent his remaining days with his grandson, Tennessee Williams. Several years after his death on Valentine's Day in 1955, a stained glass window was installed in the nave of the church on the south side in his memory and that of his wife, Mrs. Rose Otte Dakin.

In May, 1932, the Rev. Raymond E. MacBlain moved from Aberdeen, Mississippi, to assume the Rectorship of the Parish.⁵⁸

Mr. MacBlain was born February 2, 1900 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He attended Virginia Episcopal School and the University of the South, graduating with Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Divinity degrees. He was married to Harriet Echols and they had one child. He remained in Clarksdale until 1936, after which time he served at churches in Holly Springs, Mississippi, Waynesville, North Carolina and Jacksonville, Florida. He retired in 1968, after serving as the Chaplain of the Florida State Penitentiary from 1952 to 1968.⁵⁹ In Clarksdale, Mr. MacBlain was followed in 1936 by the Rev. E. Lucien Malone who had the longest tenure of any Rector at St. George's - 21 years (1936-1957).

Mr. Malone was born in Durham, North Carolina, on August 4, 1885, the son of the Rev. Charles Daniel Malone and Clara Elizabeth Joyner. He was educated at the University of North Carolina and the Virginia Theological School. Mr. Malone was ordained a Deacon in 1910 and a Priest the following year, in June 1911. He married Alice Tye Morrison and they had two children: The Rev. E. Lucien Malone, Jr. and Mrs. Elizabeth Malone Roughton. Before coming to Clarksdale, he had served at churches in North Carolina and Alabama; and the following churches in Mississippi: at St. Paul's Church, Columbus; Trinity Church, Hattiesburg; All Saints Church, Grenada; and the Church of the nativity in Water Valley.⁶⁰ Mr. Malone was a "loving shepherd", not only to the Parish but to the community. He was beloved by the town and he presented the Church to the public in a caring, concerned manner for two decades.

⁵⁷Katherine Elizabeth Wildberger was a cousin of Mrs. William H. Frazer, Jr.

⁵⁸Yearbook, (Supra).

⁵⁹Episcopal Clerical Directory (1956), p. 253

⁶⁰Episcopal Clerical Directory (1956), p. 257

During this period, the Church seemed to "come alive" and to show every sign of a new life and great promise of moving forward. The physical plant continued to be improved. Additional stained glass windows were installed, including the following in the nave on the north side: one given by Mrs. Guy Hartwell Price in memory of her daughter, Jeanella Frances Price, First Lieutenant Army Nurse Corp. (1915-1946)⁶¹; another given by Mrs. Price in memory of Mr. Henry Temple Mask (1855-1925) and Mr. Charles Rowland Stephenson (1860-1945), who at one time served as Church violinist; one given by Mrs. Hu Wilie⁶² in memory of her parents, Mrs. Frances Howe Sutton (1877-1937) and Mr. Herbert Leonard Sutton (1874-1941); one given by Mr. James William Gray, III, in memory of his grandfather, James William Gray, M.D. (1865-1935), one of the pioneer medical doctors in the town, his grandmother, Mrs. Margaret Roberts Gray (1867-1939), one of the organizers of the St. George congregation, and his father, Mr. James William Gray, Jr. (1899-1951), a local planter. The following windows were installed on the south side of the nave: one given by the Shelton family in memory of Mr. James Richard Shelton (1868-1960) who served the longest term of any Senior Warden, and his wife, Mrs. Hallie Cochrane Shelton (1869-1965) who gave many years of service as a member of the choir⁶³; and one given by Mrs. Markie Brown Morris⁶⁴ in memory of her son, Mr. Mark Childress Rodgers (1891-1929), a local planter. The two stained glass windows in the rear of the Church on either side of the large window in memory of Mr. Todhunter were given by Mrs. William King Anderson⁶⁵ in memory of her parents, Mrs. Gertrude Snyder Stiles (1865-1948) and Mr. Harrie Farrar Stiles (1869-1951). The two stained glass windows in the narthex were given by Mr. Bouldin Alcorn Marley in memory of his mother, Mrs. Florence Alcorn Marley (1893-1945) and by Mr. and Mrs. F. Bobo Keeler in memory of their daughter, Katherine Keeler (1940-1948)⁶⁶.

⁶¹Mrs. Guy Price was also the mother of Mr. George H. Price, Mrs. Mary Fontaine Price Malvezzi and Capt. Charles H. Price

⁶²Mrs. Hu Wilie was the mother of Mrs. Sally Wilie McCaughan

⁶³Mr. James Richard Shelton and Mrs. Hallie Cochran Shelton were the grandparents of Mrs. Marguerite Shelton Bolen

⁶⁴Mrs. Markie Brown Morris was the grandmother of Mr. Harvey Brown Rodgers and Mrs. Mildred Rodgers Powell

⁶⁵Mrs. William King Anderson was the mother of Mr. William King Anderson, Jr.

⁶⁶Katherine Keeler was the sister of F. Bobo ("Bo") Keeler, Jr.

While in Clarksdale, Mr. Malone served as Deputy to the General Convention in 1937 and as Dean of the Northern Convocation from 1936 to 1940. He retired in 1958 and moved to Thomasville, North Carolina, to be near his daughter. Mr. Malone died April 8, 1973.

Increased attendance and increased activities during Mr. Malone's tenure necessitated the hiring of a Curate to assist the Rector. The Rev. Thomas J. Lundy, Jr., of Greenville, Mississippi, served in this capacity from 1954 to 1956.

Mr. Lundy graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi with a B.S. Degree in 1950 and from the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee, with a Bachelor of Divinity Degree in 1954. He was ordained as a Priest the same year. In 1956, he married Inez Gilliam and they had two children. Following his departure from Clarksdale, Mr. Lundy served as Priest in Charge at the Church of the Holy Cross in Trussville, Alabama; and as Rector at Grace Church, Canton, Mississippi, at Christ Church in Holly Springs; and at St. John's church in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Divorced in 1970, Mr. Lundy currently lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he occupies a non-Parochial status.

Prior to the arrival of its next Rector, the Church purchased a new Rectory at 1442 Shady Lane. The house and lot (Lot 1 of the Grove Subdivision plus an additional strip 30' by 150' adjoining Lot 1 on the east side of Lot 9, Block 7 of the Oakridge Subdivision) was purchased from Mrs. Carolyn C. Bryan for \$25,000.⁶⁷ The Rev. Charles T. Chambers, Jr., moved into the new Rectory on his arrival in 1958.

Mr. Chambers was born March 14, 1924, in Little Rock, Arkansas. He graduated from the University of the South in 1947 with a B. A. degree and in 1950 with a B. D. Degree. He was married to Margaret Ann Harris on September 3, 1949, and they had three children. Before coming to Clarksdale, he served as the priest in charge of St. mark's Church in Hope, Arkansas, and at St. James Church in Magnolia, Arkansas (1950-54). He then came to Mississippi and served four years as Rector of the Chapel of the Cross in Rolling Fork and Priest in charge of St. Paul's Church in Hollandale from 1954-58.⁶⁸ He remained in Clarksdale for nine years until 1967.⁶⁹

⁶⁷Deed Book 276, page 454, Land Records of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

⁶⁸Episcopal Clerical Directory (1993), p. 111

Under his strong commitment and leadership, a Parochial School was begun in the Fall of 1959 and a Mission Chapel was formed in Sumner, Mississippi, 20 miles to the south in 1962. The Mission chapel in Sumner was made possible by a substantial bequest to St. George's from the Estate of Mrs. Mary Ellen Wright, a devout parishioner who served as Director of Music for the Clarksdale Public Schools for many years. The chapel has now become a thriving Parish. Named Church of the Advent, it is presently served by the Rev. Shannon S. Johnson, the sixth Priest since the establishment of the Parish.⁷⁰

It was during Mr. Chambers' tenure at St. George's that the laity probably reached its zenith in active participation in the parish. The women of the church had 4 guilds with 20-30 active members each who met twice monthly and were responsible for the very successful farmer's markets held for years in November. The guilds also provided the popular luncheons during Lent.

The Brotherhood of St. Andrews had an active membership providing leadership for parish suppers and rogation picnics.

The Alice Malone Chapter of Daughters of the King (named for The Rev. Lucien Malone's wife) was active and in the late 50's, Mrs. W. H. Frazer organized and directed a chapter of the Junior Daughters which enjoyed 4 or 5 years of fellowship.

These years saw members actively working with the young people in EYC; delegates went to state conferences; and were well represented on Dioscean committees. Mr. Chambers directed sessions each summer at Camp Bratton Green taking a large staff from the parish to assist him.

It was also during Mr. Chamber's tenure that the vestry authorized the largest and most successful stewardship campaign. This was led by a professional in this field.

The St. George Episcopal Day School had its beginning in September, 1959, with Mrs. Charles W. Clark, Jr., as the kindergarten teacher of 15 students. The purpose of the school, as envisioned by the Rector and by Mrs. Clark, was to offer kindergarten training in a Christian setting and to make a start of a six grade Day School.

⁶⁹The Church in Mississippi, (Supra.)

⁷⁰Ibid.

Beginning in 1961, one additional grade was added each year.⁷¹ The school was a success from the beginning - first, in makeshift facilities in the old Rectory; later in the Parish House; and eventually in a large, modern building on 8 acres of land in West Clarksdale. The land was purchased from King & Anderson, Inc. on December 10, 1959.⁷² The Day School received its Charter as "St. George Episcopal Day School of Clarksdale, Mississippi" on May 20, 1961.⁷³ The first school board members were Mr. Oscar C. Carr, Jr., Dr. Wilson Calvert, Mr. Edward C. Brewer, Jr., Mr. W. M. Butler, and the Rector, Mr. Chambers.⁷⁴ In January, 1964, the Day School moved its kindergarten and three grades with an enrollment of 74 to its new, handsome facilities at 1040 West Second Street, built at a cost of \$350,000.⁷⁵ Mrs. Clark served as Principal and kindergarten teacher. In the Fall of that year, grades 4, 5 and 6 were added, the school reaching its capacity of 145 students. It received "AA" accreditation by the State of Mississippi the same year.⁷⁶ St. George Day School is a major undertaking for a church the size of St. George's and it has provided excellent programs for Parish children and other children in the community as well. Episcopal children comprise only 20% of the total number of students.

During his tenure in Clarksdale, Mr. Chambers served as a member of the Diocesan Executive Council (1956-59 and 1963-66); as Chairman of the Department of Christian Social Relations (1958-59 and 1964-66) and Trustee of the University of the South (1963-67). After

⁷¹A Study of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Mississippi, (Supra.)

⁷²Deed Book 292, page 519, Land Deeds of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

⁷³Corporate Charter Book 8, page 53, Chancery Clerk's office, Coahoma County, Mississippi.

⁷⁴School History, September, 1985.

⁷⁵A Study of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Mississippi, (Supra.)

⁷⁶School History, (Supra.)

Smith, Arkansas from 1967 until his death on December 4, 1982."

Prior to the resignation of Mr. Chambers in 1967 and his departure to Arkansas, the second curate to serve St. George, the Rev. Ray W. Pradat arrived. He and his wife moved into the old downtown Rectory and were here until 1968. Mr. Pradat continued the work of the Church and served as acting Headmaster of the school after Mr. Chamber's departure. Mr. Pradat later served as Vicar at St. Thomas Church in Belzoni and at All Saints in Inverness, Mississippi (1968-70). He spent three years (1970-73) as Vicar of Calvary Church in Cleveland and of Grace Church in Rosedale, before moving to Tuscaloosa, Alabama as Rector of Christ Church, where he has remained for over twenty years.⁷⁸ His son, the Rev. Paul G. Pradat, is serving as Rector of Trinity Church in Yazoo City, Mississippi.

The Rev. Roy C. Bascom succeeded Mr. Chambers in 1967⁷⁹ as Rector of St. George Church and assumed the position of Headmaster of the Day School. He and his family occupied the new Rectory on Shady Lane.

Mr. Bascom was born in Birmingham, Alabama on May 25, 1923. He received his undergraduate and seminary training at the University of the South, graduating with a B.A. in 1949 and a B.D. in 1955. He was ordained a Priest by Bishop Duncan Montgomery Gray, Sr. in October 1955. On June 9, 1951, he married Dorothy McClendon and they had three children. He served as Priest in charge at St. Mary's in Lexington, Mississippi (1955-58) and as Rector at Christ Church in Vicksburg (1958-59). During this time, he also served on the Diocesan Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees at All Saints School. In 1959, he moved to Louisiana where he was Rector of Grace Memorial Church in Hammond prior to his coming to Clarksdale. While he was in Louisiana, he served on the Bishop's Council and as Chairman of the Department of College Work.⁸⁰ In 1968, the Rev. Charles E. Mabry arrived to serve as Assistant

leaving Clarksdale, he served as Rector of St. John's Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas from 1967 until his death on December 4, 1982.⁷⁷

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⁷⁷Information from St. John's Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas

⁷⁸Episcopal Clerical Directory (1993), p. 656

⁷⁹The Episcopal Church in Mississippi, (Supra.)

⁸⁰Episcopal Clerical Directory (1993), p. 45

Rector and remained for two years.⁸¹ He and his family lived in the downtown Rectory. After leaving Clarksdale in 1969, Mr. Mabry became Vicar of the Church of the Good Shepard and Chaplain at Mississippi University for Women in Columbus (1969-79). He served as Vicar at St. John's Church in Monroeville, Louisiana from 1980 until his retirement.⁸²

During Mr. Bascom's tenure, serious questions arose among the parishioners and the leadership of St. George's about the mission of the Church as it related to the Day School and its admission policies. Private and parochial schools in Mississippi were being attacked as "havens for segregationists" and accused of weakening the public school system. Following months of discussions and after consultation with Bishop John M. Allin, the Vestry on February 25, 1970, declared that, "the Day School will continue to function under an open policy of admitting all qualified students without regard to race in accordance with the original Charter which dedicates the School to quality education in a Christian and Church related environment".⁸³

In March, 1970, Mr. Bascom informed the Vestry that he had accepted a call to St. Peters-by-the-Sea in Gulfport, Mississippi. His resignation was effective May 1, 1970.⁸⁴ Mr. Bascom remained at St. Peters until his retirement in 1983.

After Mr. Bascom's departure, Mrs. Clark asked to be relieved of her duties as Principal of the Day School so that she could devote more time to the kindergarten. Mrs. Helen Bounds was hired to fill the position beginning with the 1970-71 school year.

St. George's was without a Rector from Mr. Bascom's departure until the Rev. Richard W. Clark arrived in August, 1971.⁸⁵ As the decade of discord in the State was coming to an end, so was the dissension

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Episcopal Clerical Directory (1993), p. 505

⁸³Minutes of Special Meeting of the Vestry, February 25, 1970.

⁸⁴Minutes of the Vestry, March 11, 1970.

⁸⁵The Episcopal Church in Mississippi, (Supra.)

that had arisen among the parishioners as a result of racial tensions. Mr. Clark's arrival ushered in a period of strong leadership that united the congregation again.

Mr. Clark was born in Parkerburg, West Virginia, on May 5, 1914. He attended the University of the South where he was ordained a Deacon in 1954. He was ordained a Priest in June 1961. He and his wife, the former Marguerite S. Hughes, had three children. He served as an Assistant Rector, first at St. Bartholomew's in Petersburg, Florida (1954-57) and then at Columbia, Tennessee (1957-61) before moving to Union City, Tennessee where he was Rector of St. James Church and Priest in charge at St. Johns Church in Martin, Tennessee (1961-69). Before coming to Clarksdale, Mr. Clark was the Priest in charge at Grace Church, Paris, Tennessee (1966-69) and Rector at Christ Church in Whitehaven, Tennessee (1969-71).⁸⁶

While Mr. Clark was in Clarksdale, an opportunity presented itself to purchase the vacant First Christian Church building located across the alley and east of the Parish House. With an eye primarily towards additional parking facilities for the Church, the Vestry decided to purchase the property.⁸⁷ Mr. Clark, almost immediately, put it to use as a place for the Youth Breakfasts he had inaugurated. These breakfasts were a great success during his ministry with dozens of high school students from every denomination in town getting up to be at breakfast at 7:00 o'clock in the morning with Mr. Clark.

In 1973, Mrs. Bounds resigned as principal of the Day School and Mrs. Clark took over the duties again until the position was filled by Mrs. Linda Johnson in 1974.⁸⁸ In 1976, the school was further accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and became the only private school in Clarksdale, and one of the few in the State, to have this status. In the fall of 1978, St. George Day School consolidated with the First Methodist Day School and housed all of the students at St. George's facilities on West Second. A portable building was assembled behind the school to

⁸⁶Episcopal Clerical Directory (1993), p. 149

⁸⁷Deed Book 434, page 510, Deed Records of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

⁸⁸School History, (Supra.)

accommodate the additional students.⁸⁹

During Mr. Clark's tenure, a sizeable two-story addition to the Parish House was erected. The addition created space for expanded kitchen facilities, another bathroom and a choir room on the first floor; and for additional Sunday School classrooms on the second floor. Improvements were also made in the Church itself. The sacristy was redecorated including a large stained glass window donated by Mrs. Guy Hartwell Price. A similar sized stained glass window on the opposite side of the chancel in the choir loft was donated by Mr. William Harry Frazer and his wife, Mrs. Katherine Lea Frazer. In the same area, another stained glass window was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Franklin Ellis, Jr., in memory of his father, Mr. Joseph Franklin Ellis (1892-1965), and their son, Joseph Franklin Ellis, III, (1950-1973). A stained glass window over the entrance to the Sacristy was donated by Mrs. Guy Price in memory of her grandparents, Major and Mrs. Lamar Fontaine; another stained glass window over the entrance to the choir loft was donated by Mrs. Guy Price. The wooden Reredos, behind the Altar, designed by Mrs. Dot Hector, was donated by Mr. Lavitor Alex Gilliam, Jr., in memory of his father, Mr. Lavitor Alex Gilliam (1876-1963), a long-time member of the Vestry. Additional memorials placed in the Church during Mr. Clark's tenure included:

Bishop's Chair donated by Mrs. A. M. "Genie" Harlow in memory of her son, William Gadsbury Harlow, II.

Priest's Chair donated by Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Peter Fisher in memory of the Rev. E. Lucien Malone.

Altar Cross donated by his family in memory of Mr. Raymond Clay Williams (1888-1956).

Brass Pulpit donated by her children in memory of Mrs. Inez Bouldin Gilliam.⁹⁰

An Allen Organ donated by Mr. and Mrs. Horace H. Twiford, Jr.

Communion Table donated by Mr. Lavitor Alex Gilliam, Jr., in memory of his aunt, Mrs. Mary Bouldin Baird.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Mrs. Inez Bouldin Gilliam was the mother of Mr. L. Alex Gilliam, Jr., Mrs. Inez Gilliam Lundy, and Mrs. Mary Helen Gilliam Rasberry

Communion Rail Kneelers, designed by Mrs. Ronnie McElroy, and needlepointed by the Women of the Church. The kneeler with the figure of St. George is in memory of the Rev. and Mrs. E. Lucien Malone. The two kneelers placed at the Altar are in memory of Mrs. Mary Bouldin Baird and Mrs. Blanche Busby Carr.

On March 17, 1980, Mr. Clark announced his decision to retire effective June 1, 1980.⁹¹ He was succeeded by the Rev. William L. Smith, Jr.,⁹² who moved to Clarksdale on November 17, 1980, to assume his duties as Rector of St. George Church and Chairman of the School Board.

Mr. Smith was born in Memphis, Tennessee, on November 19, 1947, and was married to the former Julia Caroline Laney. He received his B.A. degree at the University of the South in 1969 and his Master of Divinity degree there in 1976. He also attended Emory University (1969-70). After working as a Bank Trust Officer (1970-73), he was ordained as a Priest in 1977 and served as an Assistant at Christ Church in Nashville, Tennessee, before coming to Clarksdale.⁹³

During his four years in Clarksdale, Mr. Smith emphasized the music of the liturgy in the Church and led the School to a financial position independent of the Church, where all of its operating expenses were financed through tuition, major fund raising and memorial gifts.⁹⁴ In February, 1981, Mrs. Debra Griggs Ballard was employed as Choir Director.⁹⁵ She had been preceded by Mr. Keith McNabb, Mrs. Madeline Kimbrell, Mrs. Rosemary McInnis, Mrs. Carol Brasher, and Mr. Larry Lovelady. Mrs. Allen Shackelford served as the Church Organist.

In January, 1982, the old First Christian Church building was sold to the Federal Land Bank for \$35,000. Proceeds of the sale were used for the renovation of the secretarial area of the Church

⁹¹Minutes of the Vestry, March 17, 1980.

⁹²The Episcopal Church in Mississippi, (Supra.)

⁹³Episcopal Clerical Directory (1993(, p. 763

⁹⁴School History, (Supra.)

⁹⁵Minutes of the Vestry, February 16, 1981.

Office (the old Rectory), the Rector's office, and for the installation of new heating and air conditioning in the Church Office.⁹⁶

The Rev. Robert W. Trent arrived in May, 1982, to fill the dual role of Assistant Rector and Headmaster of the Day School, replacing Mrs. Linda Johnson in the latter position.⁹⁷ After one year, during which he was ordained at St. George's as a Priest, Mr. Trent resigned to accept a job in an Episcopal High School in New Orleans. Mrs. Louise McGee, who had been teaching kindergarten for sixteen years at the Day School, became the Principal and she continues in that position today.⁹⁸ Mr. Don Smith accepted the position of Church Organist/Choir Master in July, 1982.

Miss Susan B. Curtis was welcomed to the Parish as an Assistant to the Rector in the Summer of 1983. Born in Boston, Massachusetts, on May 18, 1954, Miss Curtis had been educated at Trinity College (B.A. 1976) and the Virginia Theological Seminary (M. Div. 1983)⁹⁹ She was ordained into the Diaconate on December 27, 1983, in her home Diocese at Ipswich, Massachusetts,¹⁰⁰ and thus became the first woman Deacon to serve at St. George's.

Mr. Don Smith resigned as Church Organist/Choir Master on June 1, 1984, and was replaced by Mr. David Stokes in July of that year.¹⁰¹ In the Fall of 1984, St. George School, seeking to provide continuity in young students' lives, added a Day Care program, which allowed children of working parents to stay at school until 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon. Children were also allowed to be at school before 8:00 a.m. if both parents had to

⁹⁶Minutes of the Vestry, January 11, 1982.

⁹⁷School History, (Supra.)

⁹⁸School History, (Supra.); and The Episcopal Church in Mississippi, page 388.

⁹⁹Episcopal Clerical Directory (1993), p. 187

¹⁰⁰Minutes of the Vestry, November 28, 1983.

¹⁰¹Minutes of the Vestry, April 9, 1984, and July 9, 1984.

leave home early.¹⁰²

At the September 27, 1984 Vestry Meeting, the Rector announced that he had accepted a call to leave St. George Church effective January 15, 1985, to become Sub-Dean and Canon-Missioner at the Cathedral Church of St. John in Albuquerque, New Mexico.¹⁰³ Miss Curtis agreed to become the Church's interim Rector until a successor to Mr. Smith could be found.¹⁰⁴

A four year old class was added to the Day School in the Fall of 1985 increasing the total enrollment to 164 students. Besides the basic curriculum for an elementary school, St. George students are offered weekly classes in physical education, art, music, library, French, and chapel/religion. Every classroom is equipped with a computer and opportunities are extended to students in grades 4, 5 and 6 to engage in enrichment activities in a variety of areas, including smocking, cooking, creative writing and karate.¹⁰⁵

The Rev. Susan Curtis resigned as interim Rector on November 3, 1985.¹⁰⁶ After leaving St. George's, Miss Curtis became Interim Assistant at St. Mark's in Foxboro, Massachusetts (1985-86); Associate Rector at Trinity Church, Concord, Massachusetts (1986-91); and is presently serving as Associate Rector at St. Bartholomew's in Yarmouth, Maine.¹⁰⁷

The Rev. Benjamin H. Nelson, Jr., arrived in Clarksdale from Cullman, Alabama, in August, 1986, to commence his duties as Rector of St. George Church and Chairman of the St. George Day School. Mr. Nelson had served as Rector of Grace Church in Cullman from 1980 to 1985. Educated at Millsaps College (B.A. 1974) and the University of the South (M. Div. 1977), he was ordained a Priest by

¹⁰²School History, (Supra.)

¹⁰³Minutes of the Vestry, September 27, 1984.

¹⁰⁴Minutes of the Vestry, November 12, 1984.

¹⁰⁵School History, (Supra.)

¹⁰⁶Minutes of the Vestry, January 12, 1987.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

Bishop Duncan Montgomery Gray, Jr. in March 1978. He served as a Curate with the Rev. Roy Clark Bascom at St. Peters by the Sea in Gulfport, Mississippi, from 1977 to 1980.¹⁰⁸

Mr. Nelson is presently in the ninth year of his ministry in Clarksdale, which has seen a remarkable growth since his arrival in outreach programs to those in need.

In 1987, a "soup kitchen", which later became known as the Care Station, was inaugurated by a member of the Methodist Church.¹⁰⁹ From its inception, the Care Station has been supported by St. George Church, first with donations of food and then with monthly contributions and volunteer staffing. Hot meals are delivered from the Care Station by volunteer parishioners to over 70 people four times each week. During this same year, a substantial money grant was applied for and received by the Church from Hands Across America, to assist in the funding of some of these outreach projects.¹¹⁰ Under the leadership of Mrs. Sid Graves, an After School Tutorial Program was begun with 11 tutors assisting 35 young students with their school work two days a week in the Parish House. This successful and ongoing program is financed partly by a Diocesan grant and partly by a grant from the United Thank Offering program. With St. Georges' sponsorship, a four bedroom house was completed in 1990 under the Habitat for Humanity program. The family to occupy the house provided 500 hours of labor, each Vestryman contributed 10 hours of labor and the Church contributed the \$10,000 cost.¹¹¹ The Parish House is regularly used for meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and similar groups.¹¹² Programs for personal growth in Christian faith such as the "Cursillo" movement and the ministry to prisoners called "Kairos" have been introduced to St. George Church and participated in by many members of the Parish.

¹⁰⁸Episcopal Clerical Directory (1993), p. 597

¹⁰⁹Minutes of the Vestry, January 12, 1987

¹¹⁰Minutes of the Vestry, August 11, 1987, and August 8, 1988.

¹¹¹Minutes of the Vestry, November 4, 1988, June 18, 1990, and September 10, 1990.

¹¹²Minutes of the Vestry, January 21, 1990.

During Mr. Nelson's tenure, physical improvements to the Church and to the Day School have also continued to be made. In 1987, a sound system and new electrical wiring was installed in the Church, brick steps and brick paving at the Church entrance was added, and new lights and ceiling fans were installed.¹¹³ With funds from a bequest to the Church by long time choir member Miss Louise Arrington, brass rails were purchased and installed at the entrance of the chancel.¹¹⁴ Water damage necessitated a new roof on the Day School in 1990.

In August, 1988, Mr. Vic Steen was hired as Music Director and Choirmaster for the Church and the Day School. His wife, Mrs. Gayle Steen, was employed as organist to replace Mr. David Stokes.¹¹⁵

To provide larger living quarters for the Rector and his wife, the former Cammille Brock, and their three children, a new Rectory at 321 Westover Drive was purchased on January 26, 1989, at a cost of \$133,000.¹¹⁶ The Rectory at 1442 Shady Lane was sold at the same time for \$70,000.

A new stained glass window in the sacristy was donated in April, 1992, by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph McCaughan in memory of their son, William Willie McCaughan (1958-1991),¹¹⁷ and later that same year, a beautiful little garden called "Katherine's Garden" with a gazebo and fountain, in memory of Katherine Reynolds Dickerson (1990-1992), was donated for the Church courtyard by her family and

¹¹³Minutes of the Vestry, February 9, 1987.

¹¹⁴Minutes of the Vestry, May 16, 1988, and February 19, 1990.

¹¹⁵Minutes of the Vestry, August 8, 1988.

¹¹⁶Deed Book 615, page 718, Land Records of Coahoma County, Mississippi.

¹¹⁷Minutes of the Vestry Meeting, April 13, 1992.

friends.¹¹⁸ The Reception Rooms in the downtown Rectory have

¹¹⁸Minutes of the Vestry Meeting, September 5, 1992.

Other memorial gifts made to St. George Episcopal Church over the years include:

Chalice and Paten donated in memory of Katherine Elizabeth Wildberger, May 21, 1986;

Altar vases in memory of Mrs. Edna Smith Lea by Mrs. Jessie Lea Rogers and Mrs. Katherine Lea Frazer;

Ciborium in memory of Bishop William Mercer Green, II, by Mrs. Sally Sutton Wilie;

Hymnal Board in memory of Mrs. Marye B. Miller Payne;

Hymnal Board in memory of Mrs. Hallie Bobo Keeler, mother of Mrs. Elizabeth Keeler Henderson;

Candleholder for Paschal Candle in memory of Miss Jeanie Wilson Fontaine, an aunt of Mrs. Guy Hartwell Price;

Small Altar for the Parish House in memory of her mother by Mrs. Gertrude Stiles Anderson;

Lavabo in memory of Joseph Ronald McCaughan, Jr., by Mr. William C. Connell, Jr., July, 1954;

Baptismal Bowl in memory of Dr. Guy Hartwell Price, Vestryman and Junior Warden by Miss Jeanella F. Price, Mr. George H. Price, Mrs. Mary Fontaine Price Malvezzi and Captain Charles Price;

Pair of Candelabra in memory of Katherine Keeler, by Mr. and Mrs. Bobo Keeler;

Pair of Flagons in memory of Mr. William C. Connell, Jr. by Mr. and Mrs. William C. Connell;

Processional Cross donated by Mr. Farley Salmon;

Chandeliers in Parish House donated by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph F. Ellis, Jr.;

Sanctus Bell donated by Mrs. Guy Hartwell Price;

Church Bell in memory of Mr. James Connell Rainer by the Twiford Family;

Lecturn Bible donated by Mrs. Louise Moseley Heaton;

Guest Register Desk for narthex in memory of Mrs. Omie Del Payne Dickey by Mr. Haywood Thomas Dickey;

Missal in memory of Oscar Clark Carr, Jr., and in honor of Billie Fisher Carr Houghton, Oscar Clark Carr, III, Blanche Busby Carr, Palmer Scott Carr Adams, John Thomas Fisher Carr, and Elaine Tucker Carr given by the Rev. Alandon B. Houghton, Lent 1986;

Home Communion Set in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Carr, given by Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Carr, Sr.;

Eucharistic Lights in memory of her husband, Dr. Guy Hartwell Price, and her brother, Captain Henry Lamar Fontaine, given by Mrs. Guy Hartwell Price;

Ciborium in memory of Mr. William King Anderson by Mrs. William King Anderson;

recently been redecorated by the women of the Church and by Mr. William C. Connell and his children, Mr. Oscar Baugh Connell and Mrs. Stella Connell Salmon, in memory of Mrs. William C. ("Tankie") Connell.

Presently, to assist the Priest in services, there are 6 licensed Lay Readers, all of whom are also licensed to bear the Chalice, and 18 Lectors, male and female. St. George has an active junior choir and adult choir, both under the leadership of organist and choir director Mr. Vic Steen, who also acts as Music Director of the Day School. There is also an active Altar Guild whose ministry includes preparation for all of the regular, as well as special, services of the Church.

The former System of Women's Guilds has given way in the past few years, to an Active Episcopal Church Women's Group which boasts approximately 182 members at present. For young people, there is an active program for Acolytes, male and female, in the seventh through twelfth grades.

The Parish participates in an annual blood drive conducted under the auspices of the Mississippi Blood Services, in which a sufficient number of members donate blood to cover the needs of the entire congregation during the following year.

The primary lay leadership group is of course, the Vestry, consisting of the Rector, Senior and Junior Wardens, and 12 Vestrymen. Each year, four Vestrymen are elected for a three-year term, providing continuity to the Vestry. The Senior Warden is

William King Anderson;

Flagon in memory of Mr. James Francis Fontaine, an uncle of Mrs. Guy Hartwell Price, and his wife, Mrs. Teen Syme Ratliff Fontaine;

Pulpit Book of Gospels given by the Rev. W. L. Smith, Jr., 11/19/80 - 1/6/1985;

Pair of Processional Torches in thanksgiving for Frances Wilie McCaughan by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ronald McCaughan;

Processional Cross in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Hu Wilie by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ronald McCaughan;

Chalice in memory of Mrs. Harriet Boyce Wilson by Mr. Yerger Wilson;

Ewer in memory of Bryant McClellan Moore, Jr., by Mr. and Mrs. Bryant McClellan Moore;

St. George Banner in memory of Mrs. Edwin J. Mullens, Jr., by Mr. Edwin J. Mullens, IV, and in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Morris J. Keesee, Jr., by Mrs. Morris J. Keesee, III.

elected in even-numbered years for a two-year term and the Junior Warden is elected in odd-numbered years, also for a two-year term. The Vestry meets monthly, all the meetings are chaired by the Rector, or in his absence, by the Senior Warden. The Vestry acts by majority vote. Members of the Vestry volunteer to chair various programs of the Church including administration, education, stewardship, worship, physical property, youth, and the like.

At present a full-time secretary, Mrs. Joe (Peg) Bryant performs a great deal of the administration work of the Church including the reproduction of the various Church publications, the maintenance of records and reports, typing correspondence and acting as the "Voice of St. George's" to all who call.

The Parish also employs a part-time secretary, Mrs. Lynn (Libby) Pitts, whose duties include the collection of all funds, making deposits, issuing checks (counter-signed by the Rector, either Warden and/or the Treasurer), keeping the books and preparing the financial statements presented to the Vestry every month. The office of the Treasurer in St. George is an appointed one now held by Mr. Edwin J. Mullens, IV, who performs the duties required by Canon or assigned by the Vestry.

The cleaning and maintenance of the Church, Parish House and surrounding grounds is the responsibility of the Sexton, Mr. Arthur Lee Horton, who is employed full-time for that purpose.

At present, the congregation consists of 590 baptized persons and 203 family units.

As St. George Church celebrates its Centennial birthday, it seems fitting to repeat what appeared over 60 years ago in the Church's Yearbook and Directory for 1932:

"Every Good Thing has a Small Beginning. This Church began in humble surroundings. May God grant that we may grow in grace as we have grown in other ways."

Centennial Committee

MR. L. ALEX GILLIAM, JR.

MR. JOSEPH F. ELLIS, JR.

MRS. CHARLES W. CLARK, JR.

DATED: October 16, 1994