

Built Upon A Rock

By David T. Andrews

The First 100 Years of Christ Church
Bronxville, New York

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“...a house of God, built upon a rock
and out of rock,
a product of its natural surroundings
and not a thing merely made.”



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Author's Note

I feel humbled by the opportunity to contribute to a centennial history of Christ Church. My parents brought me to the parish on October 19, 1920, to be baptized by Dr. Charles Robinson. For half a lifetime thereafter, the parish was very much “home” to me.

In the vestry minutes from the early 1950's Harold Hohly commented that David Andrews had volunteered to write a 50th anniversary sketch of the parish. The record stops there. I don't know why I never picked up the task, but I did not, nor did anyone else. In the winter of 1960, our then rector, George Barrett, asked me to write an historical sketch and this time the commitment and execution came together. I had great pleasure in finishing that booklet. I think it is fair to say that the idea of expanding on the history never really left me.

My part in this centennial history is indeed a labor of love. I stepped away from the project after writing a rough draft because retirement to Arizona became a necessity. Two skilled and trained editors took over the task of shortening, smoothing and adding to the narrative. I am most grateful to Liz Folberth and Patti Owen for bringing order and grace to our effort. They are as much the authors of this history as I am.

We have tried to tell a story. Someone once said that God loves stories and that is why he made people. Enjoy your part in our story and worship with thanks.

David T. Andrews

Preface

Anniversaries provide the opportunity to do two things: to reflect on the many gifts that we have received from those who went before us and in a complementary way to reflect on those treasures that we will pass to those who follow us.

When contemplating a history of which we are a part, there is a rich experience of remembering not only our own contributions, but those of beloved brothers and sisters who have gone before us.

When the anniversary being marked is that of a church, we truly strike a motherlode of remembrances because life in a church, and especially the life of any one Christian family, such as Christ Church, Bronxville, is particularly rich. It has the richness because it is deeply real. The totality of human experience is encompassed in the life of the congregation over the years; times of joy, times of sorrow, of birth, of death, of marriage, of disagreement, of companionship—in good times and in bad.

My own personal connection to Christ Church stretches back nearly one-third of its history, to 1970 when I arrived as a curate. My time as a part of that worshipping, serving and loving community, shaped me, just as it has shaped so many over so many decades. It has drawn together the “train and engine” that drive the Christian life: worship and service.

The story in these pages is our story. May it be that those who come after us will be enriched by our story which is theirs as well.

The Rt. Rev. Mark S. Sisk
XV Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York

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CHAPTER 1

From Casino to Storefront to Arts & Crafts Gothic

RICHARD HAYWARD: 1901-1904



Christ Church was filled to capacity on May 21, 1927, for the funeral service of William Van Duzer Lawrence, who had died two days before of a sudden illness. He was 84 years old.

Lawrence's death may be seen as a milestone in Christ Church history, not so much because he was a major benefactor in the creative financing that helped the parish get started, but because his role as Bronxville's master builder, his plans and his visions, coincided neatly with the development of Christ Church.

Several years before Lawrence took his famous tour of Prescott Farm and began to formulate his vision of Westchester's first planned community,¹ a report to the Episcopal Diocese of New York noted that the area was "as much missionary ground as many of the western states." Although there were already 37 Episcopal churches serving Westchester's population of 108,000, places like the hamlet of Bronxville existed whose inhabitants had been "left as sheep without a shepherd." To remedy the situation the Diocesan Convention of 1885 named the area of Westchester that ran in part along the wooded hills and valleys of the Bronx River an Episcopal church missionary district and appointed the Reverend Frederick Brinsmade Van Kleeck, rector of Grace Church, White Plains, its archdeacon.

By the 1890's, William Van Duzer Lawrence's vision of Bronxville as a model of the "modern" upscale railroad suburb was becoming a reality. Besides selling lots,

1. In the late 1880's, William Van Duzer Lawrence purchased the 86-acre Prescott Farm, which he developed into a colony of homes and studios for his artist and writer friends. This became known as Lawrence Park. In addition, his vision helped Bronxville develop into the well-known suburb it is today. He was the founder of Sarah Lawrence College and Lawrence Hospital.

designing houses and supervising their construction, Lawrence was pursuing his idea of a well-planned, self-contained community, including a hotel, a village hall, a hospital and an athletic/social center. The latter, called the Casino, was an interesting stone and shingle building overlooking the present-day Garden Avenue tennis courts, with a large assembly room for meetings and parties, plus facilities for billiards, archery and tennis—an earlier version of the Bronxville Field Club. In Lawrence’s words: “I built a Casino building which in the early days of the Park proved a valuable asset in bringing the residents together and making them contented and happy.” As it turned out, the Casino also became the birthplace of the informal mission group that comprised the nucleus of Christ Church.

In 1898, the year Bronxville was incorporated, a retired clergyman, the Rev. William Epiphanius Wilson, bought a house just off Pondfield Road West in Armour Villa Park. He soon realized that something needed to be done for the Episcopalians in the area who had no church close by and so he began to conduct Sunday services in the Casino. The group of new Bronxville residents and summer people intent on worshipping together had found their ideal pastor in Wilson.

Epiphanius, as he was called, was born in England in 1847 on the Feast of the Epiphany. Descended from a long line of Anglican clergymen including a bishop or two, Epiphanius distinguished himself brilliantly as a schoolboy in Latin, Greek and English. He went to college in Newfoundland and, after taking holy orders, he left for Labrador to work among the deep-sea fishermen and the Eskimos.

But his true love was teaching classics. He moved to Nova Scotia where he taught at the University and later to St. Paul’s School in Concord, New Hampshire. He became the editor of the Episcopal journal *The Churchman* and soon after was called to be rector of St. Mark’s Church in Mt. Kisco, New York. He spoke seven languages, wrote many scholarly books and, with his wife Jane, raised five talented, artistic children, all of whom were founders and pillars of the new church in Bronxville.²

In addition to the remarkable Wilson family, there were a number of other incorporators of Christ Church who pitched in at the Casino with so much energy and

2. Wilson’s son Cecil was the church’s first choirmaster and served on the vestry for the first 15 years; his son Michael was an incorporator of Christ Church and a vestryman also. Wilson’s daughter Mary, known as Mollie, was a gifted artist and painted the church’s nativity triptych, which depicts the life of the Holy Family against a background of Bronxville scenes and for many years was used as the reredos for the children’s altar. His daughter Emily Morgan served as directress of the Altar Guild and kept the church supplied with flowers from both her garden and from her business, known then and now as Mrs. Morgan’s Flower Shop. Wilson’s daughter Jean, the indomitable “Miss Jean,” ran the Sunday school for many decades with, it is said, a Bible in one hand and a police whistle in the other.

enthusiasm that within two years a more permanent lodging was sought. Most of these incorporators were young. In 1900, Robert Webb Morgan was 34, Michael Lambert Wilson was 28, and Cecil Wray Wilson was 20. Frederick Geller, 30, was an attorney who had built one of the most attractive homes in Lawrence Park in 1897 and was to serve three terms as Bronxville's mayor and as village counsel.³

John Quinby was the first parish treasurer, and a resident of Lawrence Park with his wife and two daughters until 1907, when they moved to their farm in Brewster, New York. Robert P. Potter, James S. Brownson, Jr., and William J. Williams were other incorporators about whom little is remembered.. Finally there was William H. Thacher, a successful insurance broker in Manhattan who was always called "Judge" by his friends.⁴ Before long, word of the informal Sunday worship at the Casino in Bronxville reached Archdeacon Van Kleeck at his command post in Grace Church, White Plains. Discussions between the Archdeacon, Epiphanius Wilson, and the Morgan-Geller group soon bore fruit. By September, 1900, the room in the Casino was replaced with a rented room on the second floor of a newly built frame building owned by Edward Stiles, and located near the present site of the west side branch of the Bank of New York.

Archdeacon Van Kleeck recorded that the first service was held "over store" on September 23, 1900. The 10:30 service of Morning Prayer and sermon was attended by 55 people, whose offering totaled \$10.50. On Sunday, October 14, the fledgling church had its first service with their interim priest, appointed by the Archdeacon. William Walter Smith, 32, a graduate of Princeton University, had both a Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree from General Theological Seminary and a medical degree from Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons. Dr. Smith's diary notes that on Sunday, October 28, his parishioners, by a vote of 27 to 7 (attendance having been kept low by a severe storm on that day), agreed to take the name, Christ Church. By November 18, the parish offered a 7:30 a.m. Holy Communion and 16 people received Communion at that early hour.

Their growth was so rapid that by Easter Day, 1901, the congregation had moved to more spacious quarters downstairs in Mr. Stiles' building and, with the efforts of cabinetmakers and hobbyists among the new flock, an altar, a communion rail and hymn boards had been built and a portable organ powered by foot pedals appeared. Chairs were borrowed from the Gramatan Club, former co-tenants of the Casino.

3. When the cornerstone for the Goodbye church was set in place in late 1925, Mr. Geller was the senior warden. He died the following spring, having been an absolute cornerstone himself of his beloved church.

4. Mr. Thacher moved to Florida in 1926, having seen the new church become a reality.

...with the efforts of cabinetmakers and hobbyists among the new flock, an altar, a communion rail and hymn boards were built and a portable organ powered by foot pedals appeared.

By the spring of 1901, the new group of Episcopalians had hardly paused for breath. They were actively seeking their first rector, they were looking for land, making plans and consulting local architects, and they were no doubt drawing the attention of William Lawrence. (Lawrence was not one to overlook new plans and promising developments in the new village.) Perhaps, on his walks about town, Lawrence mused that something could be done to enhance the parcel of land in the shadow of Sunset Hill, a steep, rocky outcrop not very suitable for residential or business use, but perhaps ideal for a parish hoping to build a church.

On April 27, 1901, the State of New York granted Christ Church a charter as an incorporated parish. The minutes of the founders' first vestry meeting, held the following day, note that plans were already in hand for a new church. On May 27, William and Sarah Lawrence signed a deed conveying the pie-shaped parcel of land situated between Dusenberry Lane (now known as Sagamore Road) on the east and Gramatan Avenue (today's Kensington Road) on the west to Christ Church.

In a series of meetings that spring, the vestry consulted with William Bates, who was the close associate and architect of many of the Lawrence enterprises now spreading over the old Prescott Farm. In spite of considerable fundraising efforts, the vestry knew they would be well short of the \$6,000 to \$7,000 figure that local builders were estimating it would cost to construct the new church.

Someone must have discussed the problem with Lawrence. Certainly he was ready to help, but not with cash or an outright gift. Years ahead of what is now common in philanthropy, William Lawrence threw down a challenge: If the vestry and its new congregation could raise \$1,000, Lawrence would donate another \$1,000 and also provide a mortgage of \$4,000 on very generous terms. An early matching gift therefore made it possible for the parish to proceed to let out bids.

In June, 1901, the Rev. Richard Hayward accepted the vestry's call to become Christ Church's first rector, at a salary of \$900 a year. In a treasured photograph,

Richard Hayward looks pensive, sad, poetic, rather like a character out of a novel by Anthony Trollope or a play by Oscar Wilde. In fact, Hayward's appearance belied his achievements during a varied, adventuresome life.

Born in Tallahassee, Florida, in October, 1849, Hayward, who was only 12 when the Civil War broke out, was a drummer boy in the Florida volunteers. At 15, he moved to Racine, Wisconsin, where he graduated from the city college at 20. After receiving his theological degree from Nashotah House, Hayward was ordained to the priesthood in Baltimore in 1874 and served there at Grace Church for two years. Commissioned a chaplain in the U.S. Navy by President U.S. Grant in 1876, Hayward served 10 years with the Navy's Asiatic squadron. At some point during that long service, while on shore leave, the chaplain walked the length of the islands of Japan. Apparently the young chaplain prided himself on his physical condition. In a letter asking for a transfer, Hayward wrote: "I passed seven winters in Wisconsin where the mercury at times fell 38 degrees below zero and have shown myself able to undergo severe fatigue by walking through the Alps, the White Mountains, and parts of Minnesota and Dakota...and more than a thousand miles through the interior of Japan..."

After marrying Lydia Ann Otis of Chicago in 1885, Mr. Hayward resigned as a chaplain and served as rector of St. Mark's Church in Evanston; as the first rector of St. James Church, a new parish in Upper Montclair, New Jersey; and as an assistant at the Church of the Holy Trinity (later to become the American Cathedral of the Holy Trinity) in Paris. He was then called to be the first rector of Christ Church.

Although Richard Hayward served as rector for only a short time, resigning for health reasons in November, 1904, his family continued to devote their time to the parish until Dorothy, the last of the four Hayward children, died in 1984 at the age of 93. While their father was rector, the Haywards lived in Grey Arches at 12 Sunset Avenue, later moving to 100 White Plains Road. When new owners were cleaning out the attic of 100 White Plains Road, they discovered a cache of Richard Hayward's sermons in blue booklets, carefully dated and logged in, and gave them to a local realtor who brought them to Christ Church, where they remain in the archives.

Stand in the columbarium of Christ Church today and try to envision the small fieldstone church that stood there for nearly 58 years. Its design, by William W. Kent and William A. Bates, bore a slight resemblance to the American country churches built by Henry Hobson Richardson with whom Mr. Kent had trained as a young architect. Its interior was described years later by Bronxville resident and architect Dan Hopping as "arts and crafts" Gothic. The Vestry hired John Borup of Tuckahoe to build the new

*...a house of God,
built upon a rock and out of rock,
a product of its natural surroundings and
not a thing merely made.*

church at a cost of \$6,250, adding as an afterthought, a belfry for \$140. When completed, the first church could seat about 100 parishioners and had some space for a future choir.

The new rector was on hand throughout the building project, often, according to his granddaughter's account, seeking out loose stone and building material on his daily walks and handing the found objects over to the workers. Early photographs of the church show it standing almost alone on its triangle, resplendent in new fieldstone and fresh paint, before age and ivy began to obscure its simple lines. One reporter described the new edifice as "...a house of God, built upon a rock and out of rock, a product of its natural surroundings and not a thing merely made."

Years later, when the *New York Times* reported on the newly built second Christ Church, their writer commented on what William Lawrence had grasped: "By a fortunate geological formation, the foundations of the new church rest wholly upon solid rock, underlying an area larger than that covered by the Church."

On October 18, 1901, slightly over one year after the service "over store," Archdeacon Van Kleeck came to Bronxville to lay the cornerstone of the new church. By Passion Sunday, March 16, 1902, Christ Church was able to hold its first full service, presided over by Bishop Henry Potter, who confirmed seven people that morning.

In May, the vestry of Christ Church was ready to take the important step of applying to the Diocese of New York for full standing as a parish. They were accepted. At the Diocesan Convention that year the Archdeacon summed up the new parish's exciting first year and described the church:

"The building is of rough rubble, within and without, and is an adaptation of early English Gothic. Its suggestion is of massiveness and permanence. The timbers of the roof are exposed and slightly stained in brown and red. The furniture is of dark oak, all of which has been given by members of the parish. A debt of between two and four thousand dollars rests upon the building."

In May, 1903, Christ Church elected its first delegates to the Diocesan Convention, the final step in attaining full parochial standing. And in the Spring of 1904 the church had a new organ and a fully vested choir of men and boys.

In November, 1904, the Rev. Richard Hayward resigned as rector of Christ Church. Although no reason was given at the time, his oldest daughter revealed some years later that her father had progressive arteriosclerosis that was to shorten his life. The strenuous “heartly” man of the parish’s first years now had to bow to illness. During a brief interim period, the Rev. Epiphanius Wilson once again led the services.

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“A DOORKEEPER IN THE HOUSE OF GOD”

In the early history of Christ Church no figure stands out more vividly than Andrew Johnson. For 30 years, from 1902 to 1932, he was the sexton, serving faithfully and patiently and winning the love of the entire parish. Born in Mt. Vernon during the presidency of Andrew Johnson, of African-American parents, Andrew was named for the president whose impeachment in 1867 was one of the most disgraceful episodes in our nation’s history.

At first, his job as sexton was only one of many jobs he held in Bronxville where he tended furnaces, carried out ashes, cleaned cellars and was a coachman for several Bronxville families before there were automobiles. But soon he gave up his other jobs to care only for the church. In 1902, Andrew began to preside at the church door for all services including weddings and funerals and there he remained until 1925 when the old church became too small and the present church was built. At the first service in the new church, Andrew, dressed in his customary black cloak, took over the new set of doors and remained on duty there until his retirement.

Almost every single day for 30 years, Andrew walked back and forth from his home in Tuckaboe. In severe winter weather when the snow was too deep for him to make his way, he would spend the night in the basement of the church near the furnace. Only one Monday was he unable to make it to work. According to the Bronxville Review, that was the Monday following the breakdown of the organ on Sunday. When the organ failed, Andrew took his place pumping the bellows. Dripping with perspiration, he walked home. The next day he was too tired and stiff to walk the distance back from Tuckaboe.

When fire struck the Hotel Gramatan in June, 1908, Andrew saved the church from possible loss. The night of the blaze he heard the fire whistle from his home. He came running down Sagamore Road, climbed onto the roof of the church and with the help of a brigade of parishioners poured buckets of water on the sparks tossed from the burning hotel across the street. When his own house suffered severe damage by fire, the vestry immediately paid to have it rebuilt.

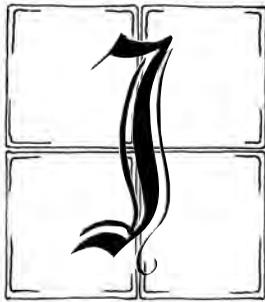
Easter Day, 1922, marked Andrew's 20th anniversary at the church. He was called to the chancel rail by the rector. The vestry presented him with a gold watch and chain; the congregation gave him a purse of \$200 in gold coins.

Andrew died on July 11, 1934, at his home on Washington Street in Tuckaboe. Long a widower he was survived by a large family of sons and daughters. A grand funeral service was held at the church he served so long, with the music that he loved so well and the fourth rector, the Rev. Harold F. Hobly, presiding.

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An Important Center of Village Life

ALBERT D. WILLSON: 1905-1920



In February, 1905, the Vestry extended a call to a man, then just 45, who had a lasting influence on the parish. Albert Daniels Willson was born in Canandaigua, New York, in April, 1860. Willson first pursued the law as a career. As many attorneys apparently did in those years, he apprenticed to a lawyer, then read and clerked until he was deemed ready to stand for his bar examinations. He opened an office and established a practice in Rochester in 1887.

A spiritual leaven, or “call,” was already at work on Christ Church’s future rector. A letter of reference from the Rev. James A. Bolles, Willson’s great-uncle who was a rector in Cleveland, Ohio, described him in this way:

“His good moral character and studious habits have distinguished him from childhood. In Rochester under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Cropsy of St. Andrews, Albert became very much attached to the worship of the Church and manifested his devotional feelings to an unusual degree, not only by attending the services of the church but by making himself especially helpful to the Rector.”

In August, 1890, Willson closed up his law office in Rochester, and moved to New York City to begin his studies as a postulant for Holy Orders in the Diocese of New York. His lengthy letter of October 24, 1890, to Bishop Henry Potter, one of the steps in the approval process for postulancy, spells out his steady determination to seek the priesthood:

“I have now taken up my residence in this city and am a member of St. Ignatius parish. I can only say in closing that I adopted my present course because of my belief in the position and teaching of the church and because I wanted to have a hand in the

great work which it is doing and is undoubtedly destined to do in this country and elsewhere.”

Having passed his canonical examinations for ordination, Albert Willson was ordained a deacon in 1893 by Bishop Whitaker of Pennsylvania. He was ordained a priest in 1895 by Bishop Potter while he was an assistant at Annunciation Church in Philadelphia. In November, 1898, Willson was called to assist at Trinity Church in Manhattan where he served as curate until he accepted the call from the vestry of Christ Church, beginning his duties as rector in Bronxville on Ash Wednesday, March 8, 1905.

As Bronxville continued to grow, reaching a population of 1,224 by 1906, so did Christ Church. Within two months of his arrival in Bronxville, Willson, along with Mr. Geller and Mr. Morgan, was looking into the matter of securing the lot north of the church and were beginning discussions with Mr. Lawrence. By September the vestry had established two funds, one for the building of a parish house and rectory and another for extending and enlarging the church.

In the summer of 1906 the vestry accepted Lawrence’s “kind offer” to give Christ Church the lot immediately to the north of the church building. This lot extended to the border of a short connecting lane, originally called New Street, later to be renamed Church Street, between Sagamore and Kensington roads. The gift completed parish ownership of the triangle that contains the church and columbarium today.

For some months, the plans to extend the church building and to build a parish house were considered concurrently by the vestry, but financing and the financial downturn that struck in 1907 led to delays. Finally the parish house project received vestry approval and John Borup of Tuckahoe was again called upon as the builder. He proceeded with plans drawn up by the architectural firm of Jardine and Kent. At the same time, while the plans to build a rectory were shelved, the church expansion plans went forward. The cost estimate was \$3,500, a sum that was raised or pledged within 11 weeks. John Utz, a local builder and real estate developer, extended the church building 40 feet to the south, allowing room for a baptistry and four additional bays, and increasing the seating capacity by 100. The finished parish hall was described in the *Bronxville Review* of December 5, 1907:

“The new parish house has a cozy auditorium and a good broad stage with convenient entrances, another large meeting room downstairs with kitchen and pantry attachments and a smaller room or two on each floor for reception rooms, committee rooms, etc. Located as it is and planned as it is, with the spirit of good fellowship back of it... the parish house will soon become the ‘Village House’ if the promoters have

their way.” And indeed for many years it was considered “the most useful building” in Bronxville.

During Willson’s pastorate two notable artistic traditions grew up within the parish—music and stained glass—whose consistent high quality has contributed mightily to the warmth and worship in the church in the years since.

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“SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN...”

Picture the small stone church built in 1902 as it stood just south of the present church in what is now our columbarium.

By 1906, across the way on Sunset Hill, William Van Duzer Lawrence’s new Hotel Gramatan was considered one of the most exclusive suburban hotels in America. Everything about it was entirely modern and luxurious, and to it came the rich and the famous. The local paper printed weekly guest lists; some patrons stayed for the season and some even made the hotel their home.

In the fall of 1906, Mr. and Mrs. W. Henry Brown and their daughter Margaret of Pittsburgh came to the hotel for an extended visit. The family soon found its way to Christ Church and to the attention of the rector, Albert Willson. But not long after, tragedy struck. Margaret fell ill with influenza, and without antibiotics and modern medicine it proved fatal. Throughout her lingering illness, the rector crossed the street every day to visit and pray for Margaret. She was just 15 years old when she died on January 16, 1907. Her grief-stricken father told the rector he wished to give the church its first stained glass window in her memory. This window today rises above our main altar (it was re-leaded, restored, and cleaned in 2000) and we see it once again as it must have looked when new. However, in its original setting in the old church it was placed opposite the altar at the south end where the sun streamed through it. One could actually stand in front of it and examine it as perhaps one would a painting.

The subject of the window is taken from St. Luke: “Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.” A red-robed Christ dominates. In his right arm he cradles a baby. He is surrounded by adoring mothers and children while elders and disapproving disciples look on. Above the scene, celestial musicians play an array of instruments. The window is brought to a whole by canopies of grisaille glass. It was designed and made by the English firm of Heaton, Butler and Bayne, and enlarged by them in 1926 to fit its present setting above the high altar in Christ Church.

On January 24, 1908, an admiring parishioner writing to the Bronxville Review declared it to be the finest window in the diocese.

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The Rev. Albert Willson later expanded upon the placement and use of stained glass within the enlarged church. Noting that the building had 15 windows “suitable and available for memorials,” Willson advised that for “the sake of assuring an artistic and harmonious development of this sacred and important feature of church enrichment, it is advisable that the parish should adopt a consistent scheme or series of subjects...leaving as much scope as possible for individual preferences.”

The second memorial stained glass window was given in memory of Christ Church’s first rector, the Rev. Richard Hayward, by his widow, Lydia, and their four children. Their donation, a portrait of Christ ascending, which was made by the English firm of Heaton, Butler and Bayne, was installed above the altar in the original church; today it is located above the altar in the Lady Chapel.

In the same sense that Albert Willson began the tradition of stained glass at Christ Church, it is thought that Robert Webb Morgan began the tradition of choral excellence in the parish.

Ephiphanus Wilson’s daughter Emily had married Robert Morgan in Christ Church in June, 1902. They were apparently not only one of the shining first couples of the parish but athletic and popular, often mentioned in the social notes of the *Bronxville Review*. Morgan, as a prime mover of the Casino group and senior warden of the church, and as a hands-on mechanic and carpenter in its furnishing, was a key figure in the church’s early history. Suddenly, on April 17, 1911, the fledgling parish suffered a severe loss. Robert Webb Morgan died unexpectedly of pneumonia at age 47.

Little record of Morgan’s life remains, other than that he was a well-regarded New York lawyer, but his spirit and devotion to Christ Church have become legendary. Luckily we can grasp some measure of Morgan’s contributions to his much loved church from the vestry minutes of that time:

“...our loss has been brought home to us during the past few weeks by Mr. Morgan’s notable absence from the choir on Sundays and especially by the present sad necessity of coming together in a regular meeting without the familiar presence and the cheering support of our dear brother and leader. To his efforts was largely due the establishment in Bronxville of religious services according to the use of the Episcopal Church and the movement started for this purpose was in great measure the outgrowth of his own zeal. Gifted by nature with an inventive mind, a fine artistic sense, and with rare skill in the use of mechanical tools, it was his chief delight and his avocation to devote all his abilities to the service of Christ Church.”

Morgan foreshadowed later generations of men and women who reached out

beyond their own parish to contribute to the work of the larger church: “But Mr. Morgan’s interest in the Church was not confined to the affairs of his own parish. He was usually one of the delegates to the annual Convention of the Diocese and he even felt the responsibility of attending, whenever possible, the meetings of the Archdeaconry, where his presence was once spoken of by the Archdeacon as a tower of strength.”

Emily Gabrielle Morgan and her sisters remained faithful servants of their parish and their community for decades to come. Emily herself lived until 1952 but never remarried. She always wore black, shading to white and gray in warmer weather. For her own reasons, she seldom permitted any references to Robert Morgan in her presence. Perhaps that is why there is so little record of his life that comes down to us. Appropriately, the silver cross that leads the procession of choir and clergy into the church every Sunday, was given by Emily to the parish in Robert Morgan’s memory.

About a year before Robert Morgan’s death another musical leader came to Christ Church. George Matthew Jr., the parish’s first official choir director was hired in March, 1910, for a salary of \$200 annually. Mr. Matthew, who had been trained by the legendary Edward McDowell, was a fixture at Christ Church until 1937. He directed the Bronxville Men’s Chorus, and tutored at Bronxville’s Brantwood Hall, a private girls’ school on Woodland Avenue, and at the Massie School for boys at 15 Hemlock Road. He also maintained a studio for his voice students and was active in village-wide musical events, especially the annual Christmas pageants.

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THE CHRIST CHURCH CUSTER CADET CORPS

The year is 1908. William Howard Taft has just been elected president of the United States. President Theodore Roosevelt, having refused to run for another term, has taken off for Africa on a big game hunting expedition.

In Bronxville, the Christ Church Custer Cadet Corps is front-page news. On January 30, the Bronxville Review reported, “Christ Church has a cadet corps getting into the swing of military tactics with its drill instructor, Mr. Robert Grey of the first signal corps, United States National Guard. Fifteen lads, nine years of age and upwards, are being put through their paces from three to five every Saturday afternoon at the armory in the basement of the new parish house.”

In the spring, the cadet corps of Christ Church formally adopted its new name after General Custer, the distinguished veteran of the Civil War who, in 1876, along with 264 of his men, was killed

by an army of Sioux Indian braves led by Crazy Horse at the battle of Little Big Horn. Custer became a hero to boys growing up in that era. Mrs. Custer, a long-time resident of Bronxville and good friend of Sarah and William Lawrence, gave permission to use her late husband's name and, in a special ceremony, presented the boys with autographed copies of her books and a fine portrait of the general, the hanging of which was an impressive feature of the occasion. The rector, the Rev. Albert Willson, made a timely talk and the portrait was hung while the boys stood at attention. The ceremony ended with three cheers for Mrs. Custer.

The corps soon grew to 30 members and their first public drill was scheduled for Decoration Day (later renamed Memorial Day). Uniforms of khaki with leggings and soft hats were purchased at \$2.50 each. A rifle fund was established and a regulation silk flag with proper inscription was ordered. The paper reported: "The boys are drilling like Spartans and Trojans, every mother's son taking his pounding like a man."

At the end of June, the boys marched in parade dress to the Village Hall to have their picture taken. On the 4th of July, in their new uniforms and carrying their new flag, the cadets marched down Pondfield Road to be reviewed by Rector Willson, every boy in attendance shouldering a nine-pound Civil War carbine loaned for the occasion.

In December, an evening's entertainment by the boys packed the parish house and raised nearly \$200. It started with the "sound off" from the bugler and the crowd at the door made way for Mrs. Custer, the honorary reviewing officer of the evening. Drills, tableaux, and a minstrel show followed.

The corps flourished for several more years, but by 1916 it was gone. Perhaps the horror of the First World War made it less appealing. Soon after, a poignant note appears in the vestry minutes: It was agreed it was time to sell the rifles and the vestry members so moved.

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From our vantage point 80 years later, Christ Church's history before the First World War includes not only a rich kaleidoscope of parish activity but also the tendency to play an ever more vital role in the vibrant village of Bronxville.

Can we imagine swimming today in the Bronxville Lake, north of Alger Court, which the new parkway created? Picture the vacant acres, farmland, and meadows, just west of the parkway as it bisected the western end of the village and the Yonkers city border. Lawrence Park West and Cedar Knolls were currently under development. New parishioners were building or renting houses in Armour Villa Park and on Palmer, Millard, and Ellison Avenues. The pleasant, by now slightly weathered, stone church welcomed newcomers in a steady current. There were services in the church every day, and the parish house was constantly in use for parish activities—a men's club and the Woman's Auxiliary—as well as for village theatricals, concerts, and choruses. The

Sunday school was growing and Miss Jean Wilson was presiding over her first generation of pupils.

Celebrations were many. In October 1912, Christ Church marked the 11th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the stone church. By Easter that year, the choir had reached a total of 30 members and was beginning to build a reputation. Archdeacon William Pott of White Plains, having succeeded the Venerable Frederick Van Kleeck, was the preacher at the cornerstone commemoration.

One year later the church was free of debt and so was consecrated by Bishop David Greer on November 16, 1913. Retired Archdeacon Van Kleeck, Epiphanius Wilson, and Albert Willson assisted the bishop.

By the summer of 1912, Albert Daniels Willson had firmly established himself as a village leader and a much-loved rector. An August profile that was published in the Eastchester town paper, *The News*, provided a deeper look at the second rector of Christ Church and was highlighted by the following tribute by an anonymous parishioner:

“Under Mr. Willson’s care the parish has prospered wonderfully. He early conceived the necessity for a workshop for the different guilds and organizations in connection with the church, and a properly appointed hall for the Sunday school and weekly choir rehearsals. As a result, the building of a parish house was undertaken, and the benefits accruing from its erection in enlarging the scope of work done in every direction, cannot be overestimated. The church itself has also been enlarged to more than twice its former capacity during his rectorship.

“He has a happy knack, also, of fitting so many of his parishioners into a niche of some sort to which he or she is particularly adapted, carrying out his belief that all should put their shoulders to the wheel and feel the pride of part-creators of the work accomplished.”

Much as Willson was loved, Christ Church had a longstanding problem providing housing for its rector. During the brief tenure of Richard Hayward, his home, Grey Arches, at 12 Sunset Avenue, served as a rectory. Willson, who was a widower, lived with and cared for his invalid mother during his rectorship in Bronxville. From 1905, early telephone directories list Mr. Willson as living on Pondfield Road. But later a solution to the rectory question did appear.

Early in 1913, the Gramatan Court Company was formed for the express purpose of building a new 21-unit apartment house at the corner of New Street and Sagamore Road, immediately to the north of Christ Church and its parish house, on land owned by the Lawrence Park Realty companies. The new six-story complex was to

...the Sagamore Road surface was vastly improved, allowing the drivers of the newly acquired model T's to gun their engines up the hill past the church.

be built of stucco on hollow tile--the most modern style of construction. Denizens of the Sagamore/Meadowdale region were hopeful that the new building would mean that finally a sidewalk would be built along the west side of Sagamore, north of the church, eliminating the need to climb "over gutters, wash-outs, front lawns, boulders and tree stumps, to the crest of the hill, whence all runs down beyond to Tuckahoe."

Not only a sidewalk materialized, but the Sagamore Road surface also was vastly improved, allowing the drivers of the newly acquired model T's to gun their engines up the hill past the church. Vestry minutes make note of a motion to put up a sign on Sunday mornings: "Quiet, church service in progress."

For Albert Willson, the building provided another opportunity. He was listed in a March newspaper article as an early subscriber for an apartment in Gramatan Court, which was fully occupied by the autumn of 1913.

The rectory question, however, did not go away. At the Annual Parish Meeting in December, 1913, with the rector installed just across the street from the parish house, parish treasurer Stanley Ward⁵ talked about the need for "one more spoke" in the wheel—namely a house to be owned by the parish, a home not only for clergy and their families but for parish gatherings. Although a Rectory Committee was named two years later, it was some years before the goal, often delayed by fiscal needs and the advent of a wartime economy, was attained. Meanwhile, from late 1913 until his death in 1920, Willson inhabited Gramatan Court and, in effect, lived over the store.

When the "Guns of August," sounded in 1914, it took some time before the impact of the European turmoil sank in. William Lawrence and his wife were traveling abroad when war broke out. The delays and adventures they encountered in returning home were chronicled in Lawrence's later memoirs. As news of the German atrocities in the Low Countries filtered back, the Christ Church parish house became the setting for meetings to sew dressings for the English and French troops, bazaars, and a Belgian

5. Mr. Ward's service to Christ Church is commemorated by the Christ in Gethsemane window in the little chapel off the undercroft.

...the Christ Church parish house became the setting for meetings to sew dressings for the English and French troops, bazaars, and a Belgian relief benefit.

relief benefit.

In November, 1914, the rector received a letter from William Chauncey Langdon, master of pageantry in America and well known in the village as the producer of the Westchester Historic Pageant of 1909, a fundraiser for the new Lawrence Hospital. Langdon offered to write and produce a Christmas mystery and masque for the parish. In it he suggested bringing together the Christmas story, a glimpse of local Bronxville life, and the war in Europe, particularly the plight of the Belgians. The rector was delighted with the idea and it was decided that admission would be charged for the relief of the Belgian sufferers.

On January 4, the play was presented in two performances in the Christ Church parish house. The cast consisted of approximately 50 parishioners with Rector Willson taking a prominent role. Mrs. Langdon designed the costumes and the sets. The music, both vocal and instrumental, was under the direction of George Matthew.

There were three scenes presented on a stage with three levels—Bronxville, Belgium and Bethlehem. The first scene represented a Bronxville home at Christmastime with carols being sung and gifts exchanged. The second scene depicted a Belgian battlefield with Red Cross nurses attending the wounded and a Belgian mother searching in vain for her loved ones. The third scene, representing the first Christmas day, was slowly revealed beyond the battlefield. At the finale a group of angels appeared, representing the universal spirit of Christmas—around the manger, on the battlefield, and with the happy children of a peaceful Bronxville.

Although Bronxville already had an outdoor Christmas Eve celebration, it was very different from what we know today. It consisted of a choir of villagers dressed in medieval costumes approaching the village hall, then located at the corner of Kraft Avenue and Pondfield Road, where they gathered around the community Christmas tree while singing carols. The mayor made a short address of welcome and the tree was then blessed and lighted.

The following year, Langdon decided to recreate the Bethlehem scene of the

Christ Church mystery play as the village Christmas pageant, and so it is to this day. Mrs. Langdon supervised the Woman's Auxiliary of Christ Church in the making of the costumes, copies of which are still in use. The hillside of the Gramatan Hotel was chosen as the site, and the rector of Christ Church was asked to give the invocation. Slowly the scene unfolded above him—Mary, riding on the donkey, the wise men approaching; the angels appearing on the hillside, and the invisible choir singing. Several of our parishioners remember attending the pageant before it was moved to its present location at the Reformed Church, and the sense of magic and beauty they felt at the time.

On Wednesday, August 4, 1915, the merchants of White Plains closed their doors for an hour in the early afternoon as a tribute to the Very Reverend Frederick Van Kleeck who had died three days before. His funeral service was attended by over 1,000 people who jammed into Grace Church at the corner of Church and Main streets in White Plains where Van Kleeck had served as rector for 45 years.

Van Kleeck's death placed a loving milestone on the first 15 years of Christ Church's parish life. With Van Kleeck's passing the vestry minutes recalled his solicitude and "tender watchfulness" over the new parish from its earliest beginnings. He was the key figure in the diocese who assisted and motivated the Casino group to go forward with their dream of an Episcopal church in their growing village. The vestry recalled his attendance at the laying of the cornerstone of the new church in 1901, that he was "always a welcome visitor, and from his own lips we always knew that he shared with us in the pleasure of these visitations." It was through his kindred feelings for Christ Church that the parish became "imbued with spiritual strength for the continuation and furtherance of our parish labors."

Less than a year later, in May, 1916, the parish family suffered another loss. After an illness of about a year, Epiphanius Wilson died at the age of 71. The scholarly cleric, his contributions to the early Casino group, and his continual ministry to Christ Church were extolled by the vestry at a special meeting on May 17.

Epiphanius had been a bulwark of assistance to Albert Daniels Willson. It is likely that the former's death must have had some relation to a vestry action taken on June 7, 1916, authorizing the Rector to "engage clerical assistance" for a year at an annual stipend of \$600. This step formalized an assistant ministry at Christ Church for the first time. The first assistant, the Reverend Charles Wellington Robinson, joined Christ Church on a part-time basis that summer.

As early as the winter of 1915, when Albert Willson wrote the pageant producer William Chauncey Langdon a belated thank you letter for the success of his mys-

tery play, he spoke of his own weakness and fatigue while trying to take care of the parish and of his mother, Happy, who was failing. It was evident through the war years that Albert Willson was failing as well. An anonymous history of the parish states that “during the latter part of his life Mr. Willson was an invalid and not able to meet all the demands which his position made on him.”

It was fortunate, then, that Charles W. Robinson was on board. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Robinson, his wife Emily, and his daughter Betty, had come back east from Oregon, where Robinson had been rector of St. Paul’s Church in Oregon City, to resume his graduate studies at Columbia University in pursuit of a Master’s degree in Semitic languages. Like Christ Church’s first rector, Richard Hayward, Robinson was a graduate of Nashotah House and had been born and raised in Racine, Wisconsin, where Hayward had moved as a young man.

In late 1917, as Willson’s illness progressed, the vestry signed Robinson on for another year at a stipend of \$1200 with the title of associate minister. In January, 1918, the vestry granted Willson a three-month leave of absence in the hope that the rest and release from duties would improve his health.

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THE PARISH HOUSE BECOMES A HOSPITAL

The September 27, 1918, issue of the Bronxville Review carried a disturbing article on the advent of a dangerous “bug” called the “Spanish influenza.” “Local residents are warned to protect themselves against the spread of the disease. Yonkers has more cases than other localities and there is danger that the malady may spread.”

Bronxville’s favorite doctor, H.R. (Dick) Charlton had enlisted in the Air Force. His absence and the lack of the trained nursing personnel who were on active duty with Red Cross and Medical Corps units abroad was strongly felt when the Spanish Flu hit Eastchester. Bronxville did not have a large population of physicians in those days. Oliver Austin, Brock Dear, and John W. Smith handled a heavy caseload.

As Charles W. Robinson predicted in a letter to the parish in early October, 1918, the Spanish Influenza soon tried to “enclose the Town of Eastchester in its meshes.” Lawrence Hospital was quickly overcrowded; their wards filled up and beds had to be placed in the corridors. By the week of October 12, village authorities and the Red Cross had selected Christ Church’s parish house and the Hodgman Rubber Company building in Tuckahoe as emergency hospitals. The vestry quickly assented, beds were donated by the hospital and by village residents, and by Monday, October 14, the parish house was converted into separate wards for men and women. The conversion of the parish house was described as a labor of love. The local

chapter of the Red Cross recruited nursing volunteers who were hastily trained. Members of the parish and the associate rector himself became night orderlies. Medical advice of the time directed that flu sufferers be fed plentifully; donations of rations and money flowed in. An emergency headquarters was set up across from the parish house at the apartment of Mrs. Jackson Chambers in Gramatan Court.

The “pandemic” that spread throughout the eastern United States ran its course in Bronxville within a short time. The scourge took the lives of some 40 residents, including 17 who died in the parish house wards. The December 6, 1918, issue of the Bronxville Review noted that the emergency hospital in the parish house had closed, and was undergoing a very thorough fumigation and receiving a new coat of paint. Another article announced that the Bronxville Home Defense Guard would hold a final assembly and dinner. Demobilization of volunteer wartime efforts took place rapidly.

An editorial in the same issue thanked the Red Cross and Christ Church profusely, calling the service of Mrs. T. Channing Moore, a Christ Church parishioner and one of the village’s leading citizens active in volunteer work, and many others as faithful and untiring as any in the frontline hospitals in France. The editor noted that “out of the tragedy of the epidemic has arisen a pride and confidence in our town to meet together its emergencies.”

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But throughout 1918, to the sorrow and concern of all, Albert Willson’s illness and frailties continued. His mother’s death was a devastating blow. Willson had offered to resign on the grounds of chronic heart disease as early as March, 1918. Despite frequent rest and the energetic support of Charles Robinson, Willson became weaker. On June 12, 1918, informing his vestry that “it may still be some time before I am able to take up again with full vigor the evermore exacting duties and responsibilities which in these increasingly busy times are involved in the leadership of such a rapidly growing parish as this,” he asked them to accept his resignation as rector, effective October 1, 1918.

The vestry acted upon Willson’s request within 24 hours. He was asked to withdraw his offer to resign and instead to accept a leave of absence for one year, beginning July 1, at his present salary. Effective October 1, 1919, his salary would be reduced to \$1,500 annually and Charles W. Robinson would be asked to continue as associate rector at a salary of \$2,500 per year. The rector accepted the vestry’s terms with great thanks.

Even though Willson was on leave and also, the records show, absent himself from Bronxville, he became the chief advocate and lobbyist for a new church building. A year after his furlough began, on October 8, 1919, Albert Willson attended one of

his last vestry meetings. It was in fact a defining moment in Christ Church history.

After the usual reading of the minutes and reports of the treasurer, the rector spoke at length “for the good and welfare of the parish,” commenting on the marvelously rapid growth of the size of the congregation and the inadequacy of the seating accommodations despite the enlarging of the original stone church to twice its size only nine years earlier. Although he recognized that others might not see the necessity for prompt action, he urged the vestry to accept his recommendation that “when the time comes, as come it must, to choose an architect,” they consult with Mr. Ralph Adams Cram, of the prestigious, Boston-based architectural firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, renowned for its beautiful church buildings. According to Willson, Cram’s help would assure Christ Church of “having a correctly designed church worthy of this beautiful suburb and adequate to meet the needs of its rapidly increasing population for years to come.” This, of course, led the vestry directly to Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, a former partner of Cram’s, now established in New York.

Willson, suffering for some time from chronic heart disease, and having twice tried to resign for reasons of health and twice been refused by his sorrowful and concerned vestry, died in office less than a year later. When he died in August, 1920, Christ Church’s second rector had built such a reservoir of love and good will that parish growth and major capital commitments continued without missing a beat.

This is from the resolution of Christ Church’s altar guild in memory of Albert Daniels Willson, December 1920:

“May we not believe that in that larger life into which God has called him, he carries with him the needs, hopes and aspirations of his Altar Guild, even as Aaron of Old bore on his heart the names of the children of Israel when he entered into the Holy Place. He indeed fought a good fight and kept the faith and through God’s grace finished his course and will one day receive the crown of glory which fadeth not away. May God give us grace to follow in his footsteps.”



People

(overleaf) THE REV. WILLIAM EPIPHANIUS WILSON . A missionary, born in England and ordained in Newfoundland, Wilson came to the United States at the age of 41. A Latin and Greek scholar, he taught at St. Paul's School in Concord, N.H., and later became rector of St. Mark's church in Mt. Kisco, N.Y. Moving after retirement to the Bronxville area, he conducted informal services which led to the founding of Christ Church.



THE REV. RICHARD HAYWARD *(right)*. Before he became the first rector of Christ Church, Hayward's career included 10 years as chaplain in the United States Navy and five years as associate rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity (later the American Cathedral) in Paris. Under his leadership, the first Christ Church was built at the intersection of Kensington and Sagamore Roads.

THE MEN'S CLUB *(below)*. On Sunday, May 7, 1921, the Men of Christ Church and their guests met at the parish house for an informal supper and to listen to an address by Dr. Milo H. Gates, vicar of the Chapel of the Intercession, New York City. In the front row may be seen such well-known villagers as John Bates (first on left), brother of Sarah Lawrence; Charles Sperry Andrews (seventh from left), chairman of the event and later senior warden; the Rev. C.W. Robinson (eighth from left), rector; and Dudley Lawrence (ninth from left), youngest son of William and Sarah Lawrence. Both wardens of Christ Church are present: Frederick Geller (second row, second from left) and William Thacher (third row, second from left).

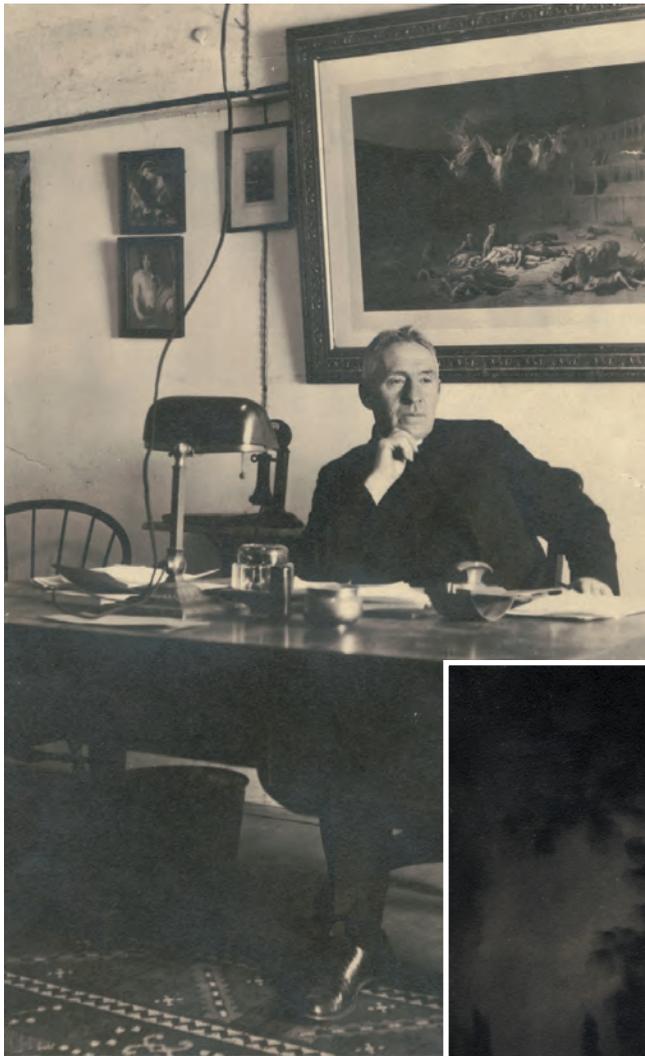


THE REV. ALBERT DANIELS WILLSON came to Christ Church in 1905 as its second rector after serving six years as curate at Trinity Church in New York City. A lawyer by education, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1895. A much loved and respected priest, he oversaw the building of the first parish house. The first church was also enlarged to twice its former size during his rectorship. His last years were plagued with illness and he died in office in 1920.

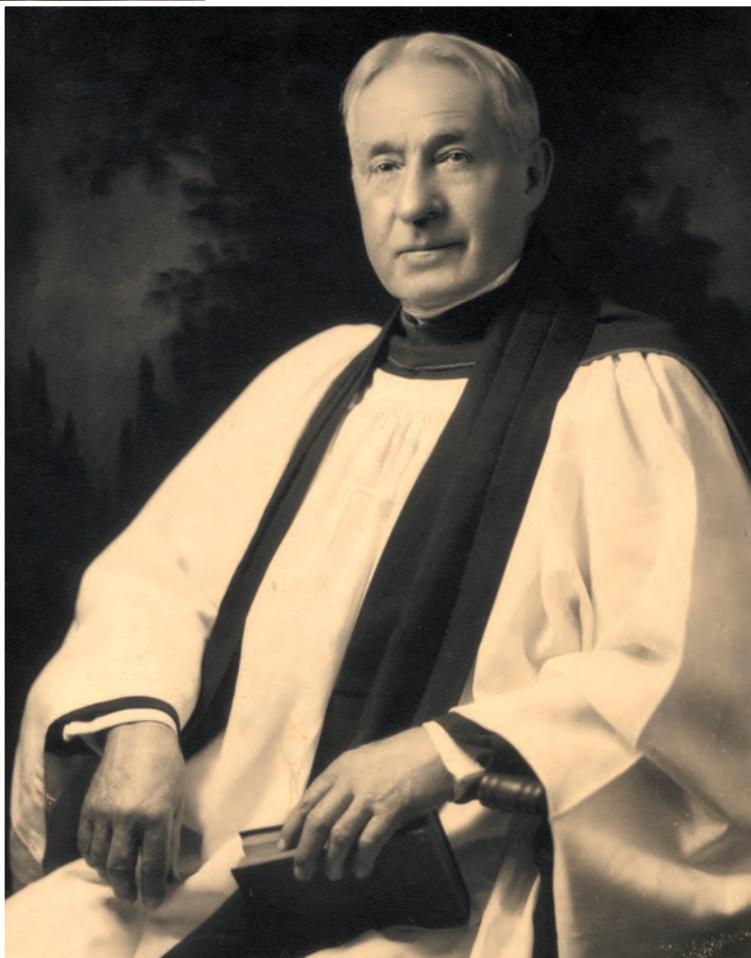


FREDERICK GELLER was an incorporator of Christ Church. He was elected to the first vestry in 1901 and served until elected senior warden of the parish in 1911, a post he held until his death on Ascension Day, May 13, 1926. He also served for many years as a teacher in the Sunday school. A distinguished graduate of Williams College and Columbia Law School, he was also the first counsel of the village of Bronxville and served three times as its mayor. Obituaries of the time spoke of his unusual clearness of judgment, creative ability, gentleness, sense of honor, endearing personality and special affection for Christ Church.

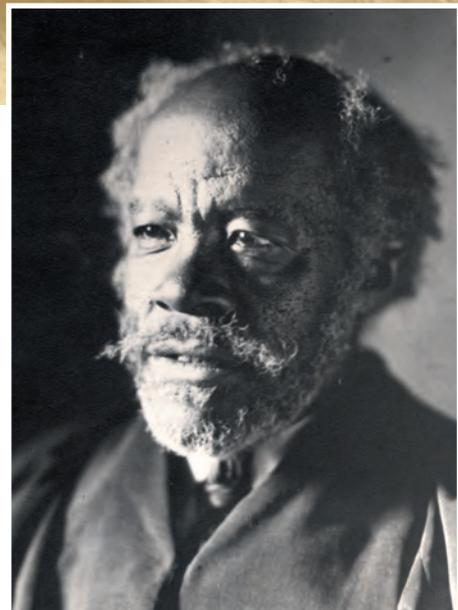




THE REV. CHARLES WELLINGTON ROBINSON served as assistant rector of Christ Church for five years before becoming rector in 1920 after the death of the Rev. Albert D. Willson. The rectory at 62 Tanglewylde was purchased and the new church built during his tenure, with Dr. Robinson personally overseeing every detail and decision during the construction period. Dr. Robinson was appointed a charter trustee of the new Sarah Lawrence College and served on its board until 1936. Robinson House at the college is named for him. Dr. Robinson was known as a forceful and outspoken preacher. He criticized the church for not taking a positive stand against war for any cause. He was fluent in Semitic languages and enjoyed reading and speaking Russian. The degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him by the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee.



THE RT. REV. WILLIAM THOMAS MANNING, *presided at the formal laying of the cornerstone of the new Christ Church, designed by Bertram Goodhue, on All Saints Day, Nov. 1, 1925. Bishop Manning, born in Northampton, England, served as the bishop of New York from 1921 to 1946. During this time Christ Church was considered one of the noteworthy parishes outside of the city, listing 902 communicants on its roster. The Depression, which followed the collapse of the stock market in October 1929, left many churches in financial trouble and Christ Church struggled for many years to pay off the debt on the new building.*



ANDREW JOHNSON *was the sexton of Christ Church for 30 years. Beginning his service in 1901 when the first Christ Church was only half built, he served until forced to retire in 1931, when illness left him unable to make the daily walk to the church from his home in Tuckaboe. Over the years his devotion to Christ Church won him the love of the entire parish.*

THE REV. WILLIAM OSCAR JARVIS, (right) formerly rector of the Church of St. James the Less in Scarsdale, served without remuneration under Dr. Robinson from 1922 until 1931, when he accepted a position as chaplain of the City Mission of New York, with special responsibility for Grasslands, then housing a penitentiary, hospital and county home for the aged. A resident of Bronxville, he did not sever his ties at Christ Church and continued to assist at services under Father Hobly. He had a special relationship with teenagers in the parish and is remembered for keeping in touch when they were in college. The triptych, painted by Alice Hendee Price, which forms the reredos in the Lady Chapel, is dedicated to Father Jarvis.



SYNOD. (below) On January 12 and 13, 1932, Christ Church had the great honor of welcoming the Provincial Synod of the states of New York and New Jersey and the missionary districts of Puerto Rico and Haiti (the plan of dividing the church into provinces had been adopted in 1913). The Rt. Rev. Ernest M. Stires, D.D., Bishop of Long Island and President of the Second Province, presided at the Synod. Two events of the Synod were open to the public. The first was a meeting on Tuesday evening, January 12, in Christ Church, where the speakers were Bishop Stires and Bishop William T. Manning, Bishop of New York. The second public event was dinner at the Hotel Gramatan on Wednesday, January 13 (pictured below). The keynote speaker at this dinner was the Hon. Herbert H. Lehman, Lieutenant Governor of New York.





MRS. MORGAN'S FLOWER SHOP. *Emily Gabrielle Morgan, daughter of the Rev. William Epiphanius Wilson, the founder of Christ Church, is a legend in Bronxville. Here she stands (back to camera) in her flower shop, which is still a flourishing business in Bronxville. Many of the flowers in her shop were grown in her beautiful garden at Land's End in Armour Villa, where she lived with her two sisters, "Miss Jean" and Molly Wilson. Miss Jean was the bookkeeper in the shop and Molly painted the floral decorations just visible over the mirrors. Widowed after only 11 years of marriage to Robert Webb Morgan, the senior warden of Christ Church, Emily devoted the rest of her life to her flower gardens, her flower shop, and to the Altar Guild. For many years she wrote "Mrs. Morgan's Column," a weekly article on various aspects of flowers and flower arranging, for the Bronxville newspaper.*



THE REV. HAROLD F. HOHLY (left) assumed the rectorship of Christ Church in 1933, a position which he held for 21 years. Father Hohly was best known for introducing the pre-Reformation English liturgy known as Sarum as the standard for Christ Church. He also gained wide respect for his defense of academic freedom on the campus of nearby Sarah Lawrence College in its battle against charges of pro-Communism during the McCarthy era. His involvement in political and social issues which threatened Christian values, and his genuine love for the people of his parish and village characterized his ministry. Mrs. Hohly, a consummate hostess affectionately known as Nellie (below in the doorway of the rectory at 62 Tanglewylde Avenue), taught the Sunday school kindergarten at Christ Church for many years.

THE REV. SHIRLEY CARTER HUGHSON (far left below), a monk of the Order of the Holy Cross, was a regular and much-loved visitor to Christ Church and its rectory. Father Hughson conducted Quiet Days for the women of the church and often preached to the congregation. He was best known as a spiritual director, perhaps a giant among spiritual directors, and was the author of many books on spirituality.





THE REV. MORTON CHARNLEIGH STONE, *associate rector of Christ Church from 1934 to 1954, served as priest in charge in 1954 and 1955. A graduate of Yale University and General Theological Seminary, he also served parishes in New York City, Madison, Wisconsin, and Chicago before coming to Christ Church in 1934. Father Stone worked closely with Father Hobly in shaping the pattern of worship at Christ Church, re-establishing many of the ancient English customs known as Sarum. For many years he taught liturgics and was the secretary of the Standing Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Church. Father Stone was deeply interested in drama and art. He wrote plays and is remembered especially for a series of dramatic scenes on the development of the Eucharist which drew national attention to Christ Church and a pictorial article in Life magazine. In retirement at his home in Plymouth, N.H., he enjoyed painting in his studio.*

“DEBT FREE BY FIFTY-THREE.” (below) *Whitsunday, May 24, 1953, was an historic day in the life of Christ Church. After many fund-raisers and a final spring consecration drive, spearheaded by Mrs. Margaret Norton, the remaining debt of \$23,500 of the original \$75,000 mortgage on the new church was at last paid off and the mortgage was burned at the festive Sunday morning service. Standing left to right: Helen Hobly, Margaret Norton, Father Hobly, Father Stone, Gwynneth Stone.*



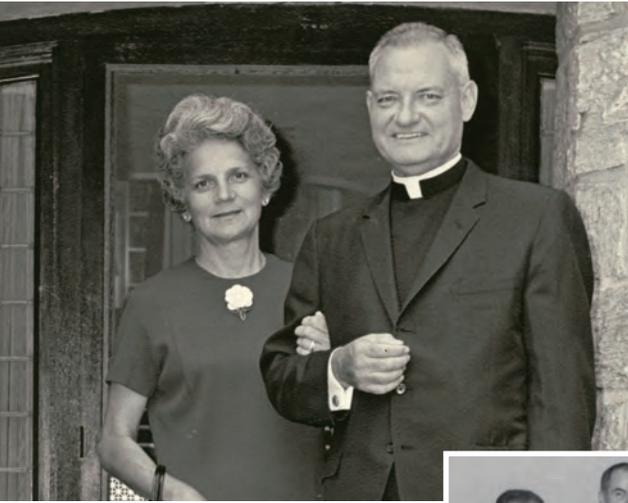
CHARLES SPERRY ANDREWS (at right, pouring coffee at a parish dinner in the undercroft). In recognition of 33 years of faithful and devoted service as vestryman and warden, Charles Sperry Andrews was elected to an honorary life term as Warden Emeritus of Christ Church in 1954. Mr. Andrews was founder and president of the Bronxville Trust Company, which later evolved into a branch of the Bank of New York on the western side of Bronxville, and served for a number of years as treasurer of Sarah Lawrence College.



THE REV. GEORGE WEST BARRETT (left) came to Christ Church as rector in 1955 from General Theological Seminary where he was professor of pastoral theology. His rectorship in Bronxville was characterized by his tireless pastoral care, wise leadership, superb preaching and teaching, and an ability to unify the congregation around a major new parish house project. He left a greatly strengthened Christ Church to become Bishop of Rochester, New York, in 1963. After retirement he became an advocate for women who wished to become Episcopal priests, and took part in one of the first ordinations.

PARISH LEADERS (early 1960's). Standing left to right: Dr. Frederick Kirkham, vestry; The Rev. Charles W. Scott, associate rector; Jack McLean, vestry. Seated left to right: Dr. Barrett; Molly Gayer Lyles, president of the Women's Auxiliary of Christ Church and the first woman to serve on the vestry; and Robert Owen, organist and choirmaster.





THE REV. RAYMOND TUTTLE FERRIS and his wife, Mary Kate, in the doorway of the rectory at 13 Sunnybrae Place. Father Ferris, the sixth rector of Christ Church, was a native of Westchester County. Before coming to Christ Church, he served three years as General Missionary and Dean of the Cathedral of St. Luke in the Canal Zone, and for 10 years as rector of Christ Church, Nashville, Tennessee. Serving Christ Church Bronxville during a time of transition and change, Father Ferris was known to start work at 6 a.m. and to stay at his desk until long after dark. On days off, he enjoyed hiking and bird watching along the Hudson Palisades.

THE VESTRY OF CHRIST CHURCH

(right 1970). Standing from left to right: Stewart MacGregory, Arnold Stebinger, Louis Frohman, Gordon Newcombe, William Petersen, Horace Rosenquest, and Charles (Bud) Hawes. Seated: Hugh McIlrevey (also known as Hugh James); Edwin Russell, senior warden; the rector, Raymond Ferris; Ernest Beebe, junior warden.

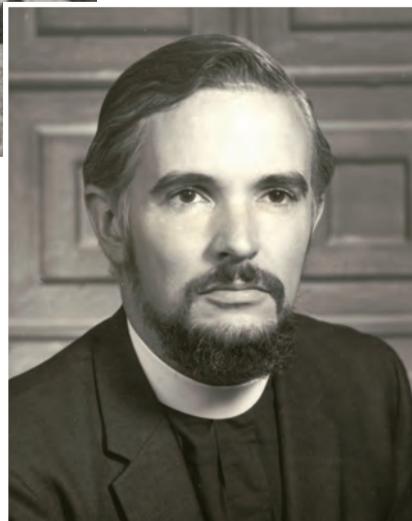


THE WOMEN OF CHRIST CHURCH EXECUTIVE BOARD (c.1960). Seated left to right: Bessie Beacham, Elizabeth Lloyd (president), Mary Gladys Moore, and an unidentified woman. Standing: Betty Russell, Harriet Irwin, Barbara Thorsen, and Betty Leslie.



CHRISTMAS BAZAAR, 1971 (right). The Young Women's Group of Christ Church meet with Dorothy Steere, chair of the Parish Relations Committee, to plan the annual Christ Church Bazaar. Among the enticements, a special reminder was sent out to the parish to bring the family blue jeans to the bazaar so that colorful patches could be machine appliquéd.

THE REV. CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE WEBBER, who was instituted as seventh rector of Christ Church on Dec. 13, 1972, by The Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, Jr. (above), served until June 1994, the longest tenure of any Christ Church rector. During his ministry the parish house became a beehive of activity, serving as a home for mentally retarded citizens, housing refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam, as well as a counseling center and pre-nursery school. Father Webber was known for his preaching and teaching skills, and in retirement, while overseeing three parishes, has written a number of books. On May 9, 1976, at the gala 75th anniversary celebration of the parish, the Webber family gathered in the close (below) with Virginia and Gordon Newcombe, warden, and the Rt. Rev. John Allin and Mrs. Allin.

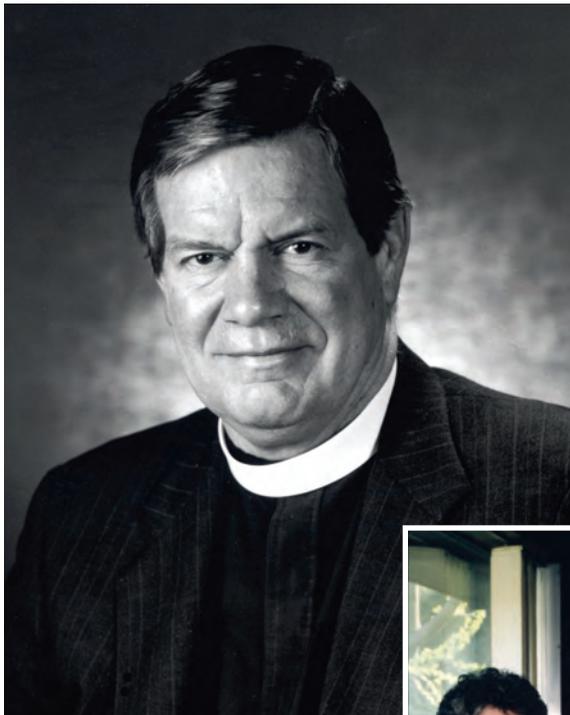




CALVIN HOLLAND (right). When he retired, after 36 years of faithful service as sexton and vergers of Christ Church, January 9, 1994 was declared Calvin Holland Day. At the 10 a.m. service, a new Lenten verge was consecrated and dedicated to Calvin. That evening hundreds gathered for dinner and testimonials to the man whose patience, good humor and helpfulness made everyone's job at Christ Church easier. On retirement, the Altar Guild made him an honorary member for life.



ROBERT OWEN. Famed as a concert organist here and abroad and as a consultant to churches installing new organs, Robert Owen was an inspiration to hundreds of young choir, organ, piano and harpsichord students, many of whom went on to careers in music or the ministry. At his retirement in 1988, the vestry named him Organist and Choirmaster Emeritus and voted to install a set of stained glass clerestory windows in the nave to honor Robert Owen's 45 years of service to Christ Church.



THE REV. CHARLES "CHAD" JACKSON MINIFIE became the eighth rector of Christ Church on January 1, 1995, with gifts and skills which benefited the church in a number of ways. A consummate fundraiser and administrator, he oversaw the most successful capital campaign in the parish's history, the replacing of a weakened spire with an exact replica and a major renovation that provided handicap access to various levels of the church buildings. A long wished-for elevator and a new Kensington Road lobby became a reality, dedicated to Dorothy Osborne Steere (seated below), Christ Church's first female senior warden, and an important member of the parish and community for nearly half a century.



ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

A highlight of Father Minifie's tenure was a festive year celebrating the centennial of Christ Church, capped by the daylong visit on April 22, 2001, of the Rt. Rev. George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury (at left with Chad and Dottie Minifie), who presided at confirmation in the morning and was the keynote speaker at a formal dinner in the nave of the church that evening. Since Dorothy Steere (above with the Minifies and the Careys) was too ill to attend the festivities, the Archbishop visited her at home; she died early the next morning.



THE REV. MARK SEAN SISK (early 1970s)
as celebrant at the high altar of Christ Church

BISHOP SISK. *The Rev. Mark Sean Sisk moved to Bronxville in 1969 to be the new assistant priest at Christ Church, with special responsibility for the church school, youth groups and young adults of the parish. Upon the resignation of the rector Raymond Ferris in 1971, Father Sisk became priest in charge and remained through the first year of Christopher Webber's rectorship. He was elected and consecrated bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of New York in 1998 and, on Sept. 29, 2001, succeeded the Rt. Rev. Richard Grein as Bishop of New York.*

STEWART MACGREGORY. *Combining his love of "Church Things," drama and the ceremonial, Stewart MacGregory has served Christ Church for over 40 years as a lay reader, sub-deacon, director of lay readers and acolytes (he trained 138 of the latter), and sacristan. In honor of Stewart's 80th birthday the "Vestry" was restored and he was named Sacristan Emeritus, commemorating his long service to Christ Church.*





CHRIST CHURCH CENTENNIAL (clockwise from top left). The yearlong commemoration of Christ Church's past achievements and its future vision culminated in a visit on Sunday, April 22, 2001, by the Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. George L. Carey, 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury, and his wife Eileen. The Archbishop presided at confirmation in the morning and was feted in the evening with cocktails in the columbarium, followed by a gala candlelit dinner held in the nave of the church. Seated at the head table (left to right): Paige Nagle, chair of the event, Archbishop Carey, Colleen McMahon Sica, junior warden, and Karen Sisk; (standing l. to r.) The Rt. Rev. Mark Sisk, Bishop of New York, Glen Robertson, Eileen Carey, Chandler Clarke, Dr. James Clarke, senior warden, and Arthur Nagle.

Build That Church!

CHARLES W. ROBINSON: 1920-1932



Charles Wellington Robinson, who had been Willson's associate since 1917, was installed as Christ Church's third rector on October 14, 1920, and became the steward who guided the parish to the final realization of two long-term goals: the purchase of a parish rectory and the building of a new church.

The vestry first made an offer to buy the property the parish had rented for Robinson, but was turned down by the owner in March, 1921. Barely a month later, however, the vestry authorized a contract with Mrs. Kate Clark to purchase her house and grounds at 62 Tanglewylde Avenue for \$18,500, part in cash and the balance of \$9,000 in a purchase money mortgage payable to the owner.

Thus 62 Tanglewylde became the rectory of Christ Church for the next 35 years, until it was sold as part of new living arrangements made for the parish's fifth rector, George W. Barrett. Kate Clark built 62 Tanglewylde, probably from plans and designs developed by the architect William Bates, who designed similar homes constructed on Tanglewylde and Park Avenues by the Lawrence Companies. Mrs. Clark was the sister-in-law of Will Howe, the first artist to take up residence in Lawrence Park almost three decades before. The house looks much the same today as it did then, its cottage-like appearance accentuated with a broad veranda.

With a rectory finally in place, the vestry wrestled with the idea of enlarging the existing church yet again, or moving to a new site altogether. Willson's suggestion must have been heeded because in February, 1922, the call went out to Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. Soon after, the well-known co-architect with Ralph Adams Cram of the recently completed St. Thomas Church in New York took the 28-minute train

ride from Grand Central station with his photographer in tow.

Mr. Goodhue was unwilling to undertake any alteration or enlargement of the present church building. In a flash of inspiration, he said: "Stay where you are, and I will build you a gem, a perfect gem." It was his idea to take down the parish house that occupied the base of the triangular lot and to build the new church on its footprint. He offered to draw up preliminary plans and sketches for \$1,500. There was some discussion and resistance but in the end, perhaps after a visit to St. Mark's Church in Mt. Kisco, another recent Goodhue creation, the vestry voted unanimously for the Goodhue plan.

Goodhue himself wrote of St. Mark's, which he built in 1909 in partnership with Ralph Adams Cram:

"At Mount Kisco, we have almost completed the best...church I have so far done; and though the tower isn't on, the various details have been so carefully carried out and the atmosphere is so much that of an English church of the right period that it would give you a better idea of my dreams and my gods (architecturally speaking) than anything else."

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BERTRAM GROSVENOR GOODHUE: 1869-1924

"Innovative," "romantic" and "daring" are adjectives that best describe the architectural designs of Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. Goodhue displayed an affinity for Medieval and Hispanic design, while constantly searching for modern methods and materials. Noted for having helped popularize Gothic design and revolutionize ecclesiastical architecture, Goodhue also demonstrated a multifaceted talent with his interest in typography. He created the Cheltenham typeface.

Born in Pomfret, Connecticut, Goodhue never attended college. Instead, at age fifteen, he went to New York City and studied for six years under James Renwick, architect of Grace Church and St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan. In 1891 he entered the office of Ralph Adams Cram in Boston. Later he was made a partner in this firm but left it in 1914 to begin independent practice.

According to his biographer, Richard Oliver, Goodhue was an "impulsive and ebullient personality...a mercurial but engagingly attractive individual...devoted to architectural principles but skeptical of binding stylistic rules." Goodhue had a "natural sense of steely independence and self-reliance," but his lack of European professional training at the Ecole Des Beaux Arts in Paris made him an "awed, reticent, and defensive outsider among his peers."⁶ Goodhue was particularly successful in evolving a distinctive style for his ecclesiastical work, which was Gothic in form yet permeated with a modern spirit. In his later years, his

6. Richard Oliver, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue (New York: The Architectural History Foundation, and Cambridge, MA, The MIT Press, 1983), pp. 10-11.

*work tended toward simple, classical lines, as seen in the Nebraska state capitol in Lincoln and the National Academy of Sciences building in Washington, D.C. Today Goodhue is considered an American modernist who inspires “contemporary architects who struggle to recapture his confident handling of mass, his sure sense of detail realized through craft, and his faith in the capacity of the past to enrich the present.”*⁷

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Soon the whole parish was involved, committees were formed, a huge fund-raising effort was underway, and the cry went out: “Build that church.” In October, 1923, a Ways and Means Committee presented the case for a new church:

“The parish house has served its purpose. It is of the simplest and cheapest construction and is much depreciated and unworthy architecturally of its prominent location....Christ Church Parish is probably the most rapidly growing parish in the Diocese of New York. It can well afford a church beautiful in architectural design and adequate for its needs. It owes a duty to this unique community to build a house of God worthy of its object, an adornment to the village and a joy to future generations in the parish. The dignity and helpfulness of the church will be increased thereby.”

At the time that the campaign for funds was announced and a large committee appointed, no final plans for the new building had been approved. Sketches were made available at parish meetings that spring and parishioners were given the opportunity to comment and make suggestions. A study was made to determine whether the parish could raise the capital outlays required. The vestry stated the case:

“The only points decided are that the buildings must be permanent in construction, beautiful in design, both within and without, must have a seating capacity of 450 and contain liberal accommodations for the rapidly growing Sunday School. While no definite amount has been established for the Building Fund, the Vestry feels that at least \$200,000 should be raised at this time to make possible the dignified and beautiful building desired. As a part of the building, the Chapels, the organ, the altars etc. offer opportunities for several permanent and inspiring memorials.”

The response from donors large and small was excellent. One Sunday school class saved their pennies and made a contribution of \$9. By May 8, 1924, the rector reported to the vestry that 377 subscribers had already pledged \$120,000 toward construction of the new church.

A *New York Sun* article of October 25, 1924, titled “Makes His Church a Community Force,” included a picture of the rector, Charles W. Robinson, alongside an

⁷ *Oliver, p.xi.*

early Goodhue sketch of the proposed new church. In truth, by the date of the Sun's article, Bertram Goodhue had been dead for six months. On the night of April 23, 1924, at the age of 54, he died alone in his study in New York City after suffering a massive coronary attack.

After the initial shock of his death, the vestry voted to continue their arrangement with Goodhue's associates in New York. By late June, 1924, a second set of plans was submitted to the executive committee for approval, a contract was signed and the architects went ahead on the working drawings and specifications. The parish archives contains a complete set of those "specs" and blueprints. The plans made final the provisions for a nave seating 450, a gallery over the entrance seating 50 and choir stalls for 38. A principal objective of the plan was to erect a gem of gothic architecture, "which will be really a product of Westchester, as almost nothing but local material enters into its structure." The estimated cost was about \$175,000. The present "Church building will then be used as a Parish house...nor will services or Sunday school be interrupted during construction. Other parish guilds, clubs, and lay endeavors can be based in the stone church and undercroft until the new building is finished."

The high hopes of June, 1924, took almost a year to become actual progress on the new church. The momentum, gathered after the meetings in the spring, slacked off during the summer and there were delays in receiving the plans and drawings from Goodhue's office that could be submitted for bids. The parish goal was approximately \$200,000, by far the largest campaign in Bronxville up to that time, except for the Liberty Bond drives of World War I. By late April, just over half had been pledged from about half of the giving units in the parish. From then on commitments slowed and the furnishing and equipping of the new church actually required considerable funds over the optimistic targets of early 1924.

In spite of obstacles, Christ Church's members plunged ahead. Each pledging unit received a certificate with 36 coupons attached to cover three years of payments. The committee stressed to all members that "every subscriber to the new church is a builder of Christ Church."

Treasurers' reports from this time until mid-1926 when the new church was actually in use reveal that the bright hope for \$200,000 in cash pledges was too sanguine. In the end, about \$135,000 was subscribed in total and about \$23,000 of that sum proved hard to collect.

However, by faith and trust, the parish moved ahead. The vestry met in October, 1924, and voted to try to hold overall costs for the building to \$150,000. In

On the afternoon of the Feast of All Saints, 1925, Sagamore Road was lined with representatives of the community assembled to witness the Right Reverend William T. Manning, Bishop of New York, lay the cornerstone on the northeast side of the half-completed church.

March the building contract was awarded to Cuzzi Brothers and Singer, a Mount Vernon firm.

Shortly after ground was broken for the new building in the spring of 1925 the vestry members committed themselves to inviting the Diocesan bishop, William T. Manning, to a cornerstone ceremony at the new site no later than October, 1925. There was much hope that the church would be completed and in use by then. The date was probably too optimistic; many delays occurred, some financial, some material. But after a two-week delay requested by the Bishop himself, it was decided to proceed and lay the cornerstone for the half-completed church.

On the afternoon of November 1, 1925, the Feast of All Saints, Sagamore Road was lined with representatives of the Boy Scouts, members of the American Legion in full uniform, all of Christ Church's guilds and auxiliary organizations, the ladies of the American Red Cross, members of Masonic orders from both Bronxville and Tuckahoe, the village presidents, the Eastchester supervisor, the Bronxville board of education and members of the governing bodies of the Dutch Reformed Church. The large crowd was assembled to witness the Right Reverend William T. Manning, Bishop of New York, lay the cornerstone on the northeast side of the half-completed structure.

In line before the bishop and his escorts were many of the county's Episcopal clergy, as well as clergy of the Reformed Church and the Russian Orthodox Church. There were flags, parish banners, and colorful vestments as the crowd assembled on the sidewalk under the lee of Gramatan hill.

Frank H. Warner, organist, and George Matthew, choirmaster, provided a stirring backdrop of militant hymns, suitable for the growing strength and vigor the new edifice

represented. The dignitaries processed into place for the setting of the stone to “Ancient of Days.” “The Church’s One Foundation” was sung as the stone was lowered into place, and the congregation processed back into the old church singing “Christ is made the sure foundation.” Bishop Manning read this prayer after the cornerstone was set:

“O God, who art the all-pervading glory of the world and hast taught us to worship Thee in the beauty of holiness, we praise Thee for the power of beauty to gladden our hearts. We praise Thee for our brothers, the masters of form and of color and sound, who have the power to unlock for us the vaster spaces of emotion and to lead us by their hand into the reaches of nobler passions. Especially we praise Thee for the life of Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. May the good work begun in him be perfected in the place of perfect love and peace.”

Despite the original hopes that Goodhue’s “perfect gem” would be debt-free and could be consecrated at completion, the parish did not reach that goal. Cuzzi Brothers fulfilled their contract but the furnishings of the church itself, especially the organ installation and the equipping of the sanctuary, ran ahead of estimates. Most importantly, cash pledges fell almost \$80,000 short. During construction the parish borrowed short-term capital but by October, 1925, the vestry sought permission from the Standing Committee of the Diocese of New York (as the canons require) to mortgage the property, and to adopt a plan to repay the bank. Within five years, the country and its economy were in deep depression and consecration was long delayed. In subsequent years the mortgage became the linchpin of numerous vestry efforts and painful budget presentations. Interest charges alone were difficult to meet in the worst days of the economic slump. The debt was a spur for special bazaars and benefits and feast day offerings, but in the long run these efforts probably aided parish unity.

Throughout 1926 the local press carefully tracked progress on Sagamore Road. In January, 1926, when the cross was placed on the fleche, a special service was held to express gratitude to all the parishioners and villagers who had supported the building effort. Before the service, the Sunday school was invited to come forward and sit at the foot of the cross. Pitkin Smith, a member of that group, still recalls today that service when he “sat on the Spire.” Since no cranes or cherry pickers were available in those days, scaffolding had to be built to the very tip of the spire and then ascended by a courageous workman for the final placement of the cross itself.

By April, the scaffolding was peeled away from the stone masonry, slowly revealing the beauty of the fleche and its cross. A contemporary article tells the story: “Take the train from New York City to the station in Bronxville, turn to the left, and

go up the rise of a slight hill and Christ Church is before you. The old church still stands at the point and at this approach somewhat obscures the massive granite structure just beyond. But your eye will not fail to catch at once the rise of the rugged outlines of the Norman tower at the rear and the exquisitely graceful cross-mounted fleche that completes it. Then you are suddenly aware of something real looming above you with the suggestive sculptured touch of a Rodin emerging from the heart of nature itself.”

The use of native materials undoubtedly added to the church’s aura of simplicity and honesty. The new building was literally founded on rock, as was the original church and parish house. Christ Church is solid masonry; no steel beams were used in erecting the piers, columns, or walls. The granite came in part from the foundation of the old parish house; the balance was North River bluestone, quarried near Kingston, New York.

The vestry’s decision to outfit the nave and side aisles with traditional Cathedral chairs was a stroke of good fortune. Not only would generations of rectors and ushers be able to use a variety of seating arrangements to suit the occasion, but the chairs give an airy lightness to the building. Pews tend to lower the sight lines and darken the interior of a church.

Within the church, the polychromed, coffered ceiling was slowly being painted, stained glass windows were reinstalled, and the new organ assembled. The parish held a fete in the new undercroft and raised \$4,200 specifically for new furnishings for the church. Bit by bit, day by day, the parish’s gem progressed. Ellen Gifford, a daughter of Michael Lambert Wilson and granddaughter of Epiphanius Wilson, provides us with her recollections of a service in the new church interior: “The church was magnificent and one could imagine they were in a medieval fort. The massive stone walls, stone floor, wide nave, [rows of] single chairs with latticed bottoms, the velvet [kneeling] cushions, flags..., the long processional, choir, acolytes and finally, the Cross of Christ.”

October (which includes the Feast of St. Luke) will always be a blessed month for Christ Church. The church was founded in October, 1900, the cornerstone was laid in October of 1901, and now the blessing and official opening of the new church, celebrated by Bishop Manning, took place on October 17, 1926.

On Monday, October 18, St. Luke’s Day, the full organ with its four manuals, 5,000 pipes, 87 stops and 25 miles of wiring was ready for use. Palmer Christian, chairman of the organ department of the University of Michigan, was the guest soloist in

the opening recital, setting a standard of excellence in music that has continued to resound in Christ Church to the present day. From the beginning, Goodhue's stone structure was renowned for its excellent acoustics. A local newspaper critic noted that there are larger organs than the one at Christ Church but "none better anywhere. The power and beauty of tone which this organ possesses will be a surprise and delight to all who hear it."

Perhaps one hymn sung at that service best describes the spirit of the day, expressing the parochial effort of those busy "Goodhue" years:

"Christ is made the sure foundation, Christ the head and cornerstone, Chosen of the Lord, and precious, Binding all the church in one; Holy Zion's help forever, And her confidence alone.

"To this temple where we call Thee, Come, O Lord of Hosts today; With thy wonted loving kindness, Hear thy servants as they pray; And Thy fullest benediction Shed within its walls away."

The worship and ministry of Christ Church went on during the construction, with hardly a pause in parish activity. The rector and vestry kept their eyes on the parish's future. The graceful American Gothic building, elegant in its simplicity, could not carry out its mission just by standing there. The building had to be filled with devotion, great music, an exultant liturgy, and the mystery of faith.

In the fall of 1929, after the original church had been deconsecrated and converted for parish house usage, Charles Robinson commented on his sense that the liturgy and the new building belong together:

"I have to minister to people of all shades of feeling and religious conviction and training and of none. To such a constituency, exactness of definition is no argument for their vague spiritual needs and desires. They will respond, however, to the ancient cultural atmosphere and tradition of the Church's worship. I use, you see, all these ornaments and ceremonials and ancient usages. They belong to this edifice and I let them speak their own word, as they will, to this varied constituency. I offer no explanations and defend no ecclesiastical usages. It is sufficient to create an atmosphere that this is a holy temple and that the Lord is in it."

In fact, Charles Robinson was largely responsible for the fact that the new church was the triumph it turned out to be. He made sure that the best architect and artisans available worked on the building, and supervised even the smallest detail of its construction.

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HENRY CHAPMAN MERCER:
 ARCHAEOLOGIST, COLLECTOR, HISTORIAN, TILE MAKER

This beautiful church, that we enjoy today and, perhaps, take somewhat for granted, was created by a number of talented artisans during the last efflorescence of the Arts and Crafts movement, which flourished in this country in the first three decades of the 20th century. This movement, a reaction to the industrial revolution and the rise of machine manufacturing, sought to revive the art of handicraft and decorative design in America. Unfortunately, the First World War brought an end to all construction, but by 1922 the country was into a building boom that lasted until the onset of the Depression. During this period three major churches were built in Bronxville.

In 1925 the rector, Dr. Robinson, stood on the sidewalk in front of the not quite finished new Christ Church. We know from a written account that Mrs. Margaret Chambers Warnsbuis, a long time resident of the village, came up Sagamore Road that day on her way home. She stopped to chat with the rector who proudly said, "Come inside and see my new church!" They strolled around, watching for a few minutes the young Italian sculptor working on the little symbolic figures on the pillars in the nave. Then she followed Dr. Robinson into the chancel. "See these tiles," the rector said. "You can't imagine what I put up with."

The subject of his comment was Henry Chapman Mercer. Between 1900 and 1925 Mercer transformed the art of the ceramic tile in America and to this day his reputation places him beside Louis Comfort Tiffany's glass and Gustav Stickley's furniture. Early in his career he received his first major order from Isabella Stewart Gardiner for her home, Fenway Court, creating the background for her famous art collection. At the Society of Arts and Crafts in Boston, Mercer met Ralph Adams Cram and Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, the architects most responsible for neo-Classic Gothic church building in the early years of the 20th century. Soon they were using Mercer tiles to pave their churches, including, in 1909, the Chapel at West Point.

Mr. Goodhue sent the well-known tile maker to Bronxville. Mercer was then 68 years old and the holder of two honorary doctorates. Temperamentally difficult, he was aloof, egotistical, eccentric, demanding, and, as the rector soon found out, there was no give and take with Mr. Mercer. But Goodhue knew Mercer was the man for Christ Church. "Why did I put up with him?" the rector asked. "Just look at these tiles."

Look at these tiles in the chancel and in the sanctuary. Set into the two steps leading to the altar you will see a series of four designs in deep relief depicting the symbols of the four evangelists. Like many of Mercer's biblical tiles they are derived from a medieval source. In particular, the four evangelists are taken from a 14th-century handbell in the archaeological museum in Reims, France. Mercer traveled to Europe a number of times in search of medieval paving tiles, took notes on their history, designs, and color and in some instances even made wax impressions.

In the chancel, many years of footwear have worn the tiles unevenly, causing the surfaces to undulate softly and to reflect a glowing patina. Mercer knew that time would enhance his tiles, making them even more beautiful, just as medieval tiles have become more beautiful in their original setting.



All during the construction period, Robinson was keeping an active parish going. Morning Prayer was said every day but Friday and Saturday, when there were services of Evening Prayer. Holy Communion was celebrated every day but Monday. On a typical Sunday the rector held a service of Holy Communion at 7:30 a.m., a Sunday school service at 9:30, followed by Morning Prayer and a Sermon at 11 a.m., and sometimes finished the day with an Evensong that included an “address.”

It is no wonder that, early in 1923, the vestry had authorized the employment of William O. Jarvis as a full-time assistant to serve with Robinson. Jarvis was rector of St. James the Less in Scarsdale from 1908 to 1917, and served as chaplain at several military hospitals, including the Naval Base Hospital in Brooklyn. In 1918, he was assistant field director with the Red Cross. Jarvis’s gentle manner particularly suited him for pastoral care, and his instruction of Sunday school pupils meant much to the second generation of Christ Church parishioners.

Jarvis’s presence on staff was a boon in many ways because the rector was asked in the early 1920’s to lend some of his energy and know-how to the national church. During that time the Episcopal church in the United States did not have the in-house staff that exists today. Instead, they “borrowed talent” through various diocesan bishops and, for some years, Dr. Robinson spent a few hours each week on the national mission staff. He also became a vice chairman of the Church Mission of Help, a charitable arm of the Diocese of New York. During this same period Dr. Robinson was elected a member of the American Oriental Society, in recognition of his accomplishment at Columbia University, and he became a charter trustee of Sarah Lawrence College.

In 1930, after seven years of service to the parish, Father William Jarvis resigned to become chaplain at Grasslands, the county hospital in Valhalla. The vestry promptly hired Arthur Styron as an assistant with the Sunday school as his special interest. Styron, a North Carolina native and a graduate of New York City’s General Seminary, had served as chaplain at Manhattan’s Seaman’s Church Institute and as assistant priest at churches in Pittsburgh, Newport, and New York City. His writings in the *North American Review*, *Scribners* and other magazines were well known to many people at the time.

As if to put a capstone on the decade of building, Christ Church held a special service in December, 1931, to dedicate all the memorials given since the building of the new church, including the magnificent rood beam, a gift in memory of James McNaughton, a former vestryman, and the first stained glass window in the nave—a beautiful “White Friars”⁸ depiction of “The Resurrection” given in memory of Alice Peterson Andrews, by her husband and vestryman, Charles Sperry Andrews, Jr.⁹

The immediate parish family was not without sorrow and tragedy. As if to mark a village rite of passage with the death of a beloved citizen, Mrs. Lydia Hayward died in August, 1925, roughly halfway through the building of the new church. She was 69 and outlived her husband Richard, the first rector, by some 15 years. Mrs. Hayward had been the first president of the women’s board of the new Lawrence Hospital and took part, as the *Bronxville Review* noted in its obituary, “in every good work done by this town during the past 25 years.” The chapel to the right of the main altar, popularly known as the Lady Chapel, was given in memory of Lydia and her husband Richard by their four children.

On a dark, rainy night in the spring of 1930, Doctor Robinson was hit by an automobile while he was crossing Sagamore Road. During Robinson’s recuperation from the accident he was unable to lead the parish for some months. The death of Alfred Dressler, almost exactly one year later, was a significant blow to Dr. Robinson. Dressler, 19-year-old nephew of choirmaster George Matthew, was a leader of the church’s youth group as well as the church’s talented organist. Robinson was devoted to the young man, who was almost like a son to him. In April, 1931, when Dressler was in New York City to register for New York University, he died after falling from a window at the Hotel New Yorker. Robinson suffered greatly from the loss and in particular from newspaper reports speculating that Dressler’s death might have been a suicide, an allegation that Dr. Robinson strongly denied.

In early 1932, Charles W. Robinson was almost 61. He had started his 17th year at Christ Church, and his 12th year as Rector. He must have drawn joy and pride from the new church building and its furnishings. Although the vestry minutes of 1930 give a hint of somewhat smaller congregations at Sunday services, the Rector was much

8. This window was the work of a famous English firm, James Powell and Sons, which in 1834 took over a glass-making factory based at Whitefriars, City of London, since the 17th century. The trademark of the firm, a white friar, is found in the lower right corner of the window.

9. Mrs. Andrews was the wife of Charles Sperry Andrews, Jr. (known as Sperry), who became the senior warden in 1933. She died young of a blood infection, leaving Sperry with five children, among whom is David, our author, who was almost 10 years old at the time.

admired. His contributions of time and spiritual support to the village were well known. He was notable in the diocese and was often a guest preacher at nearby parishes. His vigorous sermons favoring pacifism and the abolition of war were in harmony with a postwar culture that was looking toward disarmament, but remained very controversial in Bronxville.

Janet Hayward, a daughter of the parish's first rector, wrote Bishop Manning that "every stone in our church is a visible symbol of our confidence in Dr. Robinson and of our faith in his ability to be our spiritual guide."

We will never know just what forces were at work in the winter of 1932 that compelled the vestry to insist that their rector take a year's leave of absence, to begin at the end of March and continue until Easter 1933. He had not been well at times in 1930 and had been laid up with his injuries from the pedestrian car accident in April of that year. Christ Church's vestry, elected at the annual meeting, taking advantage of a change in the Religious Corporations Act that allowed vestries to have 14 members, had expanded by adding six new men.

We do know that the vestry asked Dr. Robinson to take a leave and he accepted their stipulations, including full salary and use of the rectory for the year to come. Then in early February, 1932, the vestry met without the rector being present and put together a plan insisting that he take a leave and agree to resign by Easter 1933 if a suitable new rector had been found. Robinson was stunned by this vestry action.

In January, 1932, the new vestry had approved hiring the Reverend Carl Bothe from the Diocese of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, to replace Arthur Styron who had resigned as assisting priest in June, 1931. Bothe had been in charge of the Sunday school and parish youth but in April, 1932, with the approval of Bishop Manning, Bothe became priest in charge.

Members of the parish probably knew little of the conflicts in church leadership. Dr. Robinson himself had insisted that the proviso covering his resignation when a replacement was hired remain confidential within the vestry. The secret was well kept. A parishioner underwrote the salary for another assistant and the Reverend John A. McDonald was added to the staff in September, 1932, to assist Father Bothe.

It was at this point that Dr. Robinson, aware of the turmoil and uncertainty within his parish, appeared before the vestry and offered to come back and unite the parish. If the vestry did not agree to that proposition, Robinson would make his resignation public. On October 28, after four days' deliberation, the vestry reconvened. They accepted Bothe's resignation "with deep appreciation of the Christian spirit that guides

*The parish year 1932 ended on an uncertain note.
The Robinsons left the parish, seldom to return...*

his actions,” and rejected Robinson’s offer to return to his charge, agreeing that he should resign at once. There was only one dissenting vote.

There was a widespread feeling that most of the parish family had not been consulted or advised. Few parishioners could grasp why their rector in effect was told to leave. An opposing slate of wardens and vestry nominees was hurriedly put forth for the annual meeting on November 29, 1932, just a month after the rector’s resignation. The annual meeting turned back the challenge of a new group, accepted Albert Stratton’s resignation as warden and elected Sperry Andrews as warden to serve with J. August Mitchell. In a lengthy report to the bishop, John Fedden wrote:

“I would like to tell you that the present vestry is composed of the very best type of men in Bronxville and that they are in my opinion the finest vestry we have ever had since I attended the church. The vestry was upheld last night in the annual parish meeting by a vote of almost two to one against organized opposition.”

Furthermore, Fedden reported: “I believe the atmosphere in the church was cleared at the meeting last night; that the vestry may be trusted to do what is best for the parish, and that the work of rebirth and progress which began last spring will go forward under the vestry’s direction.”

The parish year 1932 ended on an uncertain note. The Robinsons left the parish, seldom to return, although Dr. Robinson came back in the spring of 1934 to officiate at the funeral of Robert Otis Hayward, brother of Dorothy, Janet and Lydia, and a former vestryman. At that time Dr. Robinson was serving as priest in charge at Christ Church in New York City. In 1941 he took charge of St. John’s Church in the Wilmot area of New Rochelle where he remained until his retirement from the ministry in 1946.

Father John McDonald remained as priest in charge at Christ Church until a new rector could be found and the vestry empowered him to hire an assistant priest for a three-month term. J. August Mitchell, long-time treasurer, warden, and a key member of the parish since 1906, resigned as warden, perhaps out of loyalty to Charles Robinson. The vestry appointed Arthur Nosworthy, Sperry Andrews, Frederick Fowler, and George Hussey as a committee to select a new rector.

Sarum Rite Bronxville-Style

HAROLD F. HOHLY: 1933-1954



he Right Reverend William T. Manning, Bishop of New York, wrote Senior Warden Charles Sperry Andrews on March 10, 1933: "I have your letter telling me the Vestry of Christ Church, Bronxville, wish to call to the Rectorship of the Parish the Reverend Harold F. Hohly of Grace and St. Peter's Church, Baltimore, Maryland, and I hereby give my consent to this action."

As Warden Andrews put it to the vestry when they met on March 14 for final approval of Harold Hohly, "we have found our man." Before he left Baltimore, Hohly had written Bishop Manning: "I realize the responsibility of this call and the magnificent opportunity it presents. May it please God that I prove adequate." The new rector preached his first sermon in Christ Church on Easter Day, April 16, 1933. By that June, the Hohly family, including his wife, Helen, and children Margaret, and Harold Jr., were in residence in the rectory at 62 Tanglewylde Avenue.

Harold Hohly, just 37 years old, arrived on a wave of enthusiasm and optimism, due in no small part to his scholarship, charm, splendid voice, and zest for his new post. A native of Toledo, Ohio, Hohly was the only child of Otto and Mabel Hohly. Otto Hohly was an architect, which helps explain his son's love affair with Bronxville's new church and his passion to make the liturgy fit the setting.

The rector held a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Kenyon College and in 1919 was granted a divinity degree from Bexley Hall, the seminary allied with Kenyon. In June of 1921, the year he was ordained to the priesthood, he married Helen Wade, known as Nellie to most of her devoted fans in Bronxville. At the time of his marriage, Hohly was rector of Christ Church in Hudson, Ohio. After two other posts in his home

state, he was called to Baltimore in 1930.

On their first visit to Bronxville the Hohlys were taken to view the rectory. We know by firsthand account that Helen Hohly burst into tears at the sight of the dark and gloomy interior. The senior warden immediately promised to send Penrose Stout, the well-known Bronxville architect and Christ Church vestryman, to the rescue. Fresh paint and structural changes transformed the rectory to Mrs. Hohly's delight and satisfaction.

Upon his arrival at Christ Church the new pastor found the administration of the parish in the capable hands of an energetic vestry led by interim priest John McDonald. McDonald had come on a short-term contract basis in late 1932; that arrangement continued through Father Hohly's first year in the parish. The Rev. Albert Hind, a priest hired by McDonald to help out on Sundays, did depart at the end of April 1933. The Depression had hit Bronxville. Economy was preached at every vestry meeting and the new rector was well aware that a debt of nearly \$80,000 had to be paid off to permit consecration of the new church building.

Harold Hohly is remembered in many warm and loving ways at Christ Church even today, just as his challenging manner and controversial stances are recalled. One of his most memorable contributions was probably his gradual installation of what is often called the Sarum Rite, which had its origins in the medieval liturgy of England's Salisbury Cathedral.¹⁰ The rector did not do all the work himself. He sought out and hired the Rev. Morton Charnleigh Stone, who joined Christ Church as associate rector in December 1934. Both men were knowledgeable liturgical scholars and served as adjunct professors of liturgics at Philadelphia Divinity School and at General Theological Seminary. Father Stone and Father Hohly worked together for almost 20 years, instituting the ceremonial practices that made Christ Church a centerpiece within the Episcopal Church for the customs of the early English Church.

The Episcopal liturgical revivals of the 19th and early 20th centuries had followed the Roman pattern, forgetting that there had once been a distinctive English pattern of liturgy. A second wave of liturgical renewal looked back to the English tradition and found there something unique and, indeed, simpler and clearer than the late 19th-century Roman custom. The pattern Hohly and Stone set for Bronxville was based on the usage of Salisbury Cathedral in pre-Reformation England, known as the Sarum Rite. But they did not simply try to copy medieval customs; they also studied the liturgical style of the early Christian church and attempted to learn from it as well.

10. Much of the inspiration for liturgical change in Bronxville came from The Shape of the Liturgy by Dom Gregory Dix and The Parson's Handbook by Percy Dearmer.



Liturgy

INTRODUCTION *Christ Church has long been known for its Sarum or English Use in its services. The greatest period of liturgical growth in Christendom was the fourth to the seventh centuries. The worship that developed from that time remained almost unchanged until the Anglican Reformation of the early and middle 1500's. In the Middle Ages the Sarum Rite (named for the Rite used at Salisbury Cathedral) came to be widespread throughout England and, by decree from Canterbury, throughout Scotland and Ireland as well. After the Reformation, two new influences appeared in the Church of England, that of the non-conformist clergy (Puritan) and that of Rome (Roman Catholic), causing the famous high church, low church dispute and much liturgical confusion which still exists today. ☩ In the 1930's, the Rev. Harold F. Hobly became convinced that Christ Church should return to the Pre-Reformation English Use. A beautiful church called for beautiful and authentic ceremony. With the help of the Rev. Morton Stone, a well-known liturgical scholar, and with the guidance of Percy Dearmer's *The Parson's Handbook*, the English Use was gradually introduced to the congregation. Interest became widespread in what Christ Church was doing and seminarians and scholars from near and far came to observe the liturgy, some of which is now common practice throughout the Episcopal Church. Today, Christ Church's worship remains, with some modifications, essentially Anglican.*

*(overleaf) THE ABSOLUTION, c. 1944
The Rev. Harold F. Hobly stands facing the congregation and, making the sign of the cross, pronounces the absolution.*



PREPARING THE INCENSE *The Rev. Morton C. Stone, as deacon, fills the censer which is held by the thurifer, Harold F. Hobly, Jr., in preparation for the Gospel procession. Chester Price (to the right) holds the incense boat.*

THE READING OF THE GOSPEL, c. 1944 *The deacon, the Rev. Morton C. Stone, stands on the chancel step. The sub-deacon, Harold Austin, holds the Gospel book. The clerk, Gordon Price, stands behind the sub-deacon, grounding the shape of the cross while the taperers elevate their candles.*





THE VESTMENTS, rich in Sarum colors, were originally purchased from the Warham Guild in London. Many of them are still in use today. The colors of the altar hangings, the frontal and riddle curtains which frame the altar, coordinate with the vestments and the colors indicate the season of the church year.



THE RESERVED SACRAMENT was originally brought in procession from the Lady Chapel. The sub-deacon is wearing a humeral veil. Before the aumbrey was built into the side wall of the Lady Chapel in 1968, the Reserved Sacrament was kept in the hanging Pix (shown at right) and covered with a veil.



CHOIR RECESSIONAL *The choir recesses the “short” way, through the baptistry, in December, 1950. Full processions of choir and clergy down the center aisle were reserved for festival days, such as Easter, Christmas, and All Saints’ Day.*



PALM SUNDAY, 1958 *The Rev. Lloyd G. Patterson (above) begins the blessing of the palms and yew branches at the 9 a.m. Eucharist. To his right is the Rev. Robert C. Cromey and to his left, Brand Beacham. The Rev. George W. Barrett, the rector, is seen in the far left background. John Thompson, vergier (left), leads the ministers in the procession around the nave. The Lenten processional cross is crowned with yew branches.*



EASTER DAY, LATE 1950'S
(above). The adult choir sings the Gradual as the ministers prepare for the Gospel procession. The boy choristers are seated in the two front rows on either side of the chancel.



CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST, 1966 The Rev. Raymond T. Ferris, rector, and the Rev. Charles W. Scott, face the congregation at the start of the offertory procession. The sub-deacon, Stewart MacGregory, the taperers and the clerk are in "open" position.

YOUTH SUNDAY, EARLY 1970's *The Rev. Mark Sisk, curate, celebrates the Eucharist on Youth Sunday at a freestanding altar set up in the nave.*



FIRST WOMAN, 1974 *Susanne Garrett, standing to the left of the Rev. Christopher Webber, and the Rev. John Zacker, was the first woman to serve at the Christ Church altar as a lay Eucharistic minister.*



OUTDOOR EUCHARIST AT SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE, c. 1975 *The Rev. Christopher L. Webber celebrates a “folk” Eucharist on the campus of Sarah Lawrence College, assisted by the Rev. John Zacker. Christopher Alkins, who still serves as a lay Eucharistic minister, stands to the right of the center guitarist, and Patricia Owen, Christ Church archivist, sits in the lower right.*



FATHER MINIFIE RETIRES, JUNE 2003 *The Rev. Charles J. Minifie and the Rev. S. Elizabeth Searle wait in the vesting room for the beginning of the final service of the eighth rector’s ministry at Christ Church.*



THE GIFTS OF GOD FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD *The three sacred ministers, the Rev. S. Elizabeth Searle, the Rev. Daniel Gunn and the Rev. Dr. William Rich, offer the gifts of God to the people of God at a Eucharist in January 2004. James Sutton (left) and Glen Robertson, lay chalice bearers, stand on either side.*

BAPTISM *first Sunday of Epiphany, 2004. The Rev. S. Elizabeth Searle baptizes two children and two infants, assisted by Sacristan Vicky Carter.*



Music



(overleaf) A CHRIST CHURCH CHORISTER Robert Webb Morgan, an incorporator of Christ Church in 1901 and its first senior warden, is credited with beginning the tradition of musical excellence in the parish which has carried down to the present day. By 1904, the church not only had a new organ, but a fully vested choir of men and boys.



THE FIRST CHOIR (left) poses in the woods north of Christ Church with their choirmaster Cecil Wray Wilson, the musically gifted son of the Rev. Epiphanius Wilson. Cecil Wilson served as choirmaster from 1902 to 1909.

EASTER IN THE NEW CHURCH (below) in the late 1920's shows the altar and the Last Supper window before the renovations of 1937. The rector, Dr. Charles W. Robinson, is to the right. Standing in the back row near the organ console are the organist Frank H. Warner, and George Matthew, the choirmaster. This picture is notable for the young chorister standing in the left front row, the second from the end near the altar; he is Robert Cyrus Vance, who grew up to be Secretary of State during the Carter Administration.





THE CHOIR is standing on the steps of the first Christ Church (where the columbarium is today) in 1916. The rector, the Rev. Albert Daniels Willson, and his assistant, the Rev. Charles W. Robinson, stand side by side in the back row. To the right of the flag, behind the flag bearer, is George Matthew, choirmaster from 1920 to 1937. The young choir boy on the far left is Markham Rollins, founder of the Rollins Agency, still a flourishing family insurance business in the Bronxville area. Mrs. Walden Laskey, the organist, sits in the front row. The picture is also unusual for a father-son combination: Frederick W.B. Fowler is in the back row on the left and his son Roger is the small blond boy seated in the front row.





THE CHOIR poses on the steps of the new church in 1931. Dr. Robinson, the rector, stands with his hands on the shoulder of a young chorister. The associate rector, Rev. Arthur Styron, is first on the left in the second row.



WARTIME CHOIR The somewhat smaller Christ Church choir in 1941 perhaps reflects that the United States is now at war. Ray Francis Brown, the organist and choir-master, stands in the middle of the back row. Brown was also the director of music and organist at General Theological Seminary in New York. The boy choristers are wearing Royal School of Church Music medals.

ROBERT G. OWEN is seated at the console of the newly dedicated Aeolian Skinner organ in 1949. According to the local newspaper, 800 people, including the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, attended Owen's opening recital on Trinity Sunday, June 12, 1949. Over the years Robert Owen achieved fame as a recitalist and recording artist and teacher.



CHOIR MOTHERS A large corps of dedicated choir mothers is on hand in 1956 to tie the ties, straighten unruly locks of hair and keep order in the undercroft before the main service on Sunday.





CHOIR REHEARSAL Robert Owen leads the choir through their paces in the choir room in 1968. The adult choir by then consisted of men and women, several of whom were professional musicians.

YOUNG CHORISTERS, wearing their Royal School of Church Music medals, gather during coffee hour in the undercroft sometime in the 1960's. Identifiable in this picture are Peter Guzzardi, Frank Plumley Jr. and Frederick Buck.

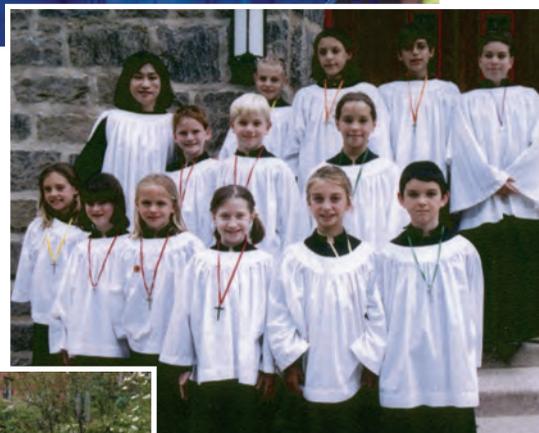




THE ADULT CHOIR stands on the sanctuary steps in 2002. Anne Timpane, director of music and organist, is at right on the front row; assistant organist Elizabeth Wong stands on the left. The choir sings regularly at the 10 a.m. service, as well as at special services throughout the year.



THE SANCTUARY RINGERS (above), a handbell choir of elementary school children, stands on the church steps in 2002 with assistant director, Elizabeth Wong.



(clockwise, from above right) THE GALLERY RINGERS, the adult handbell ensemble, pictured in 2002. Dottie Minifie, the rector's wife, is in the front row; (second row, l. to r.) Ada Gunn, wife of assistant to the rector, the Rev. Daniel C. Gunn; Julie O'Connor, Paige Nagle, Cindy Abmuty; third row (l. to r.) Lisa Harrington, Glen Robertson, Barbara Deller, Bob Singleton. THE CHILDRENS CHOIR, boys and girls in grades 2 through 6, on the steps of Christ Church in 2002. THE PRIMARY CHOIR boys and girls in Kindergarten and first grade on the steps leading to the columbarium. The two choirs sing on Youth Sundays throughout the year.



THE GIRLS' CHOIR (left) poses in 1968 in front of the high altar which is dressed in traditional Lenten array. Robert Owen, choir-master, is to the left. The choir sang at the family Eucharist on Sundays at 9:15 a.m.



LESSONS AND CAROLS, *December 2003.* The annual service of Advent lessons and carols is a long-standing tradition at Christ Church, in which the Adult and Voice for Life choirs participate. In the foreground may be seen the wrought iron Advent Wreath, designed by Eugene Elliott, in memory of William R. Peterson, a former vestryman. Director of Music and Organist, Christopher Wells (right) at the organ .



VOICE FOR LIFE, *the Royal School of Church Music, is reinstated at Christ Church in 2003, under the leadership of Christopher Wells, director of music and organist. At a special moment at the 10 A.M. service young choristers are formally inducted into the program and receive their cottas and medals. Here they are surrounded by their sponsors as well as the Rev. Dr. William Rich, interim rector, and Christopher Wells.*

Frs. Hohly and Stone were said to have had three standards for what they did: does it reflect the pattern of the early church, does it help to clarify the meaning of the liturgy, and does it involve lay people? These are still excellent standards.

Thanks to the efforts of these two priests, Christ Church was probably the first church in North America to revive the Offertory Procession. Now it is common for members of a congregation to bring the bread and wine to the altar. When the custom was revived in Bronxville, it seemed so radical a step that at first it consisted of a procession of clergy and acolytes to bring the bread and wine from the chapel altar. Only later did they use lay people to bring the elements from the back of the church. This is not actually a matter of Sarum Rite but a matter of restoring an ancient Christian practice. Fathers Hohly and Stone were more interested in good liturgy than a slavish recreation of medieval English customs.

Christ Church also led the way in restoring the Easter Vigil, one of the most beautiful and significant services of the year. Because it was so long-forgotten a custom, they did not hold it at midnight as the early church did, but at 5 p.m. Thus a service that ought to begin in darkness often began with the sun streaming through the window over the altar.

Other unique aspects of the Sarum customs are the use of blue vestments in Advent, a color suggestive of the Virgin Mary and of heaven, and sackcloth vestments in Lent. The latter usage marks Lent as a time of simplicity, putting away of luxury, and “spring cleaning” as contrasted with the heavy penitential purple of the Roman custom. Also in accordance with Sarum custom, a painted wooden cross (not veiled) is carried in Lent instead of the silver processional cross.

The Sarum custom also marked the last two Sundays of Lent as Passiontide. The American Prayer Book still called the Fifth Sunday of Lent “Passion Sunday” until 1979 when the Roman custom was finally adopted of calling Palm Sunday the Sunday of the Passion. The vestments of Passiontide are dramatically different, blood red with black markings.

The Maundy Thursday liturgy at Christ Church is a further evidence of the liturgical work of Hohly and Stone. In her book of recollections called “Switch Back,” privately printed in 1979, Lucia Meigs Andrews, widow of Charles Sperry Andrews, recounts going to church on Maundy Thursday, 1935. Her first husband, Penrose Stout, had died suddenly the previous autumn. The young, grieving widow responded to the symbolism Father Hohly had introduced into this service:

“Tenebrae (shadows) is a dramatic service, almost a mystery play, held on the

Thursday night before Easter. It symbolizes the darkening of the world during the three days of the Lord's passion.

"When Jesus washed his disciples' feet he performed an act of sublime humility. This is remembered by the ceremonial stripping and cleansing of the high altar at the beginning of the tenebrae service. Then the action moved to the front of the choir where a tall, triangle-shaped candlestick held thirteen lighted candles representing Jesus and his twelve disciples.

"The priest was Father Stone, who had an expert intoning voice. He read a part of the passion from St. Matthew, paused for the antiphon chanted by the choir, 'And they all forsook him and fled.' The acolyte then snuffed out one candle and the church lights were slightly dimmed.

"This ritual was repeated over and over until only the one candle at the peak of the triangle remained lighted and all the church lights were extinguished. The priest took that candle in his hand, the procession formed behind and proceeded soundlessly out of the dark church. The light of the world had entered the tomb of darkness. Tenebrae is a sad and moving service for everyone, but I found myself peculiarly in tune with it, thinking, 'Surely, all the light has gone out of my life too.'"

It is important to note that the intricate ritual embodied in the new rites did not come overnight to Christ Church. There was some resistance, and certain changes disappeared over time. But the parish responded, on balance, with enthusiasm. The new rector was a vibrant and challenging preacher. The services were read with grace and style and complemented by first-rate choral music provided by the boys' choir and a semi-professional adult choir, first under Raymond Francis Brown, who was also director of music at the General Seminary in New York City, then under Robert G. Owen, who was already acquiring a national reputation as an organ recitalist.

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ROBERT G. OWEN, ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER EMERITUS

In the fall of 1991, on the occasion of the installation of officers of the Memphis Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, the Rev. Peter Hawes, Rector of St. George's Episcopal Church in Germantown, Tennessee, reminisced about being a boy soprano in the choir at Christ Church.

"The first time I remember seeing 'the Son of Man. . .coming with the clouds of heaven' [Mark 14:62] was on Easter Eve 1951. It was during the singing of the Great Te Deum. As the incense floated aloft and the rays of the setting sun filtered through it and the stained glass windows, I knew God was in his holy temple and I was right there with him.

"And it was all because of Bob Owen, my red-headed organist-choirmaster, who had put me in

his choir and in that place at that time. . . . And so tonight I dedicate my remarks and much of my ministry to Bob Owen, who showed me all the wonders of God without ever opening a Bible, without ever preaching a sermon, without being anything other than who he was, a superb musician.”

Thus, without realizing it, Peter Hawes summed up the effect of Robert Owen’s 45-year tenure as organist and choirmaster of Christ Church.

The Texas-born son of a Presbyterian minister and an accomplished pianist, Robert Owen became a professional church musician at age 13. After graduation from the Conservatory of Music at Oberlin College with a major in organ and piano, he returned to Texas where he taught at the University of Texas at Austin while commuting to Houston as organist and choirmaster of the Episcopal Church of St. John the Divine. After war was declared, he served in the U.S. Navy until a severe illness led to a medical discharge in July 1943. While convalescing in Philadelphia he made several weekend trips to New York, which led soon after to Bronxville where Christ Church was looking for an organist. With a rector who was keen on the finest English church music and a tradition of a men and boys choir, he felt it was an ideal musical situation. Thus began a remarkable partnership that carried the musical life of Christ Church to a new level.

Robert Owen’s first undertaking was the organ. The four manual, 90 stop Hall organ had been in need of repeated repairs since its installation in 1926; the combination action had not worked since its dedication. Robert persuaded the vestry that the instrument should be redesigned tonally to accommodate the eclectic musical styles from the 16th century to the present. G. Donald Harrison, president of the Aeolian Skinner Organ Company of Boston, who had revolutionized the concept of organ building in this country, came to Bronxville and was thrilled by the acoustics of the church. Specifications were pored over, discussed and changed and at last, a contract was signed. Delivery was set for December, 1948.

In February, 1947, a surprise call came from the Dean of the American Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Paris, offering Robert the job of reorganizing and directing the cathedral’s music program which had been in disarray since the German occupation. The Christ Church organ was being rebuilt but it would be some time before it was ready. The vestry agreed to a leave of absence and Gordon Jones, an Oberlin classmate, took over for a year. In Paris, Robert, in addition to his post at the Cathedral, became the first student at the Paris conservatory on the G.I. Bill, where he joined the ranks of a long line of distinguished musicians who came under the tutelage of Marcel Dupre and Nadia Boulanger.

Back in Bronxville, the organ was finally finished in the late spring of 1949. Robert Owen played the opening recital on Trinity Sunday, June 12, with temperatures in the high 90’s and with 800 people in attendance (according to the local paper), including the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church.

Many wonderful years followed. Robert Owen became famous as a concert organist performing numerous recitals in this country and abroad and acting as a consultant to many churches installing new organs. He was an inspiration to hundreds of young choir singers and students of organ, piano and harpsichord, many of whom went on to careers in music. Several former choir boys, including Peter Hawes,

entered the priesthood. In addition, Robert memorialized the organ by recording the instrument for several recording companies. However, music for Christ Church was always top priority and was frequently augmented by festival concerts (a series in the 1960's brought a New York audience to Bronxville) and visiting organists, including the legendary E. Power Biggs.

At his retirement in 1988, the vestry voted to install a set of stained glass clerestory windows in the nave to honor Robert Owen's 45 years of service to Christ Church. Robert chose in turn to honor the French composer and organist Olivier Messiaen, who had recently died and whose compositions Robert had frequently played on the Christ Church organ. The three windows together recall the themes of suffering, death, resurrection and ascension as developed in Messiaen's work. The center window is etched with the name Owen. The musical triptych, completed in 1994, joined two other sets of windows dedicated to art and literature to become the "Revelation" windows (described on p. 154).

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The English tradition survives within the parish to this day. Of course, there have been further changes. The liturgy is somewhat simplified, the pageantry lessened, although on high feast days such as Easter and Christmas, when the memorial cross honoring Robert Morgan is hoisted in front of the procession and the choir and congregation burst into song as the organ resounds, Christ Church comes alive in the spirited, glorious way that Harold Hohly envisioned.

In the first years of Hohly's tenure there were fears that his modification of familiar ceremonies would drive people away from Christ Church. Much to some members' initial discomfort, the new rector preached about world unrest and growing international tensions long before they were on every tongue. He made the dangers of Adolf Hitler, Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia, and the collapse of the European economy matters of concern to his congregation. Suddenly the parish had a rector who wanted to wake up his flock, who was quick to remind the occasional visitor that he or she should go to church more often, who was not afraid to show his vulnerability, and who even addressed the congregation as "Beloved."

However, those early fears proved to be unfounded. In 1930 the parish claimed 1,144 communicants. Ten years later the communicant count was 1,097, hardly a massive defection. The records show an increase in attendance at the Sunday morning Communion that attracted younger parishioners and became linked to Sunday school. Financially the parish budgets were still modest but debt service on the \$82,461 mortgage rising from the new church building 15 years earlier put a heavy load on the congregation. On more than one occasion the Woman's Auxiliary's annual Christmas bazaar

There were three standards for what Frs. Hohly and Stone did: does it reflect the pattern of the early church, does it help to clarify the meaning of the liturgy, and does it involve lay people?

helped balance the parochial budget. In one year, 1948, the entire receipts of the bazaar were pledged to reduction of the mortgage.

Other signs indicated that Father Hohly's leadership was bearing fruit. In June 1936, 54 candidates were presented to the bishop for confirmation. Through the generosity of the McNaughton family, a reredos designed by Chester Price ¹¹ and carved in the studios of Leo Lentelli was installed behind the high altar, complementing the Rood Beam, also a McNaughton memorial gift. The reredos, a beautifully carved screen of English oak and limewood depicting the Last Supper, was devised to eliminate the glare of the sun, which shone so brightly through the lower stained glass window that it was difficult to see what was going on at the altar. The small figures of St. Mark, St. Paul and the riddel angels were added at the same time. In 1941, the vestry extended Father Stone's contract indefinitely. After years when the task was the prerogative of the vestry, the parish began to develop an "ushering corps" giving many more members of the parish a chance to serve, although it was not until many years later that women were permitted to usher.

Father Hohly spent several prewar summers in England, researching early English liturgy and, when money permitted, purchasing rich vestments and sacred vessels for the parish. Winchester Cathedral was one of his favorite places; the bishop of

11. The legacy of architect Chester B. Price, an eminent teacher and specialist in architectural illustrations and etching, can be seen in almost every area of Christ Church. Upon his death in 1962, Father Harold Hohly wrote an appreciation of him in the Spire, outlining how important Price's impeccable taste in design, color and composition were in preserving the beauty of the parish church that he loved: "We never made any architectural changes, nor added any 'ornaments,' without Chester's counsel and advice. . . the wrought iron work, by Samuel Yellin. . . the windows, executed by Wilbur Burnham. . . were all submitted to him for his judgment, suggestions and criticism. . . Chester designed the beautiful candlesticks the taperers carry. . . and the alms box in the narthex. . . I believe the last 'ornament' he designed was the vergers' staff, in memory of Charles Sperry Andrews and Philip Shaffer. . . He was the first layman of Christ Church to volunteer for training as a server and sub-deacon. These two offices he performed faithfully and reverently for many years. I have often thought what satisfaction he must have derived while serving before the reredos he had such a large part in designing. . . I am sure the trumpets have sounded for him on the Other Side, and knowing Chester he will shortly be busy designing and building things of beauty in the spacious Fields of Eternity. . . If I were to write his epitaph it would be, 'He was a great artist and a gentle man.'"

Bath and Wells became a special friend. In this way Father Hohly recharged his batteries, increased his own learning, and returned with greater understanding of the liturgy to share with his parish.

Father Hohly became known for his many acts of kindness, the helping hand that required no reciprocity. In one instance, a young man found that his attendance at the rector's classes for confirmation clashed with his efforts to make the high school track team. The boy chose to pursue track, but kept his parents in the dark. At the ninth hour, with the bishop's visitation just hours away and the young man dressed in his confirmation best, the runner confessed all to Father Hohly and his parents. The boy was allowed to take part in the ceremony and to receive the Holy Spirit as planned with no one but his relieved mother and father the wiser. The young man reported to the rector later for intensive "makeup" confirmation classes.

Father Hohly's tenure at Christ Church brought him to the attention of many scholars within the Episcopal establishment. For some years he served as an adjunct professor of pastoral theology at General Theological Seminary in lower Manhattan. He gained fame among his students not only for his presentations on liturgy but for his use of a baby doll in teaching the rite of baptism and the delicate art of holding an infant at the font. Years later, bishops of the church recalled traveling out to Bronxville as seminarians to study the Sarum Rite.

The *Spire*, a publication started by Harold Hohly in September, 1946, in order to improve communication with the parish, became an instant success and survives as a monthly parish newsletter to the present. In the 1940's the *Spire* outlined upcoming Sunday services on a weekly basis, spelled out parish events, and nearly always featured a "think piece" on church history, theology, or spiritual concerns that the clergy felt needed congregational attention. Its aim was to be: "A weekly publication for Members of Christ Church and Friends, which aspires to inform them on matters of faith, doctrine and worship and to lead them to a fuller understanding of the Practice of Religion."

The *Spire* was widely read and its authors could be alternately charming and critical. The team of Hohly and Stone reserved the right to wake up their flock if needed. Witness the tone of a 1953 rebuke called "Slipping a Bit":

"It is some time since we have written about Worship and the part the congregation should take in the services. Perhaps that is the reason why we have slipped a bit and grown slack. Worship is something we do. It is not done to us or for us. The congregation in Church has its own liturgy just as do the clergy, acolytes and choir. To have a real and vital Worship each group must perform their part of the liturgy. Hymns can-

not be sung with closed mouths...I was shocked and appalled that not a single Amen was distinctly audible at the Altar. It is quite impossible to convey to you the deadly effect this lack of response has on the priest at the altar. It is like having your favorite joke go flat at a dinner party...The Amen is part of your liturgy. When you fail to say it audibly you sap the spiritual vitality of every worshipper in the Church.”

The rector’s commentary in the *Spire* of December 7, 1947, best sums up his worship objectives, his love of liturgy and ritual, and his knowledge of the Anglican faith. In his humorous presentation, Hohly pictures himself as “puzzled and troubled” by the general conception of the parish as “high.” Consulting the Oxford Standard Dictionary Hohly finds that its definition does describe Christ Church practices. “Yes, we the clergy, at least, of Christ Church are high church. We believe there is authority vested in the Episcopate and in the priesthood...We believe in the saving grace of the sacraments. We believe that God, through the Church, which is the body of Christ, does use outward and visible means to achieve inward and spiritual ends. We believe in the supernatural element in religion. We believe that when you eliminate the supernatural from religion you get only a cold, brittle philosophy which has proved in the past and is proving now completely incapable of saving the souls of men. Yes, we are ‘high church.’ We believe that this doctrine, this point of view is thoroughly ‘evangelical’ and therefore grounded in Holy Scripture as any thoughtful reading of Scripture will make clear...There is nothing sectarian in beauty. We do not believe that we can accept beauty in Nature, have beautiful homes, have beauty in our Art Museums, and listen to beautiful music and then because of prejudice exclude beauty in our worship...Everything that high church seeks to do is an effort to deepen the life of the spirit...the daily Eucharist is the church at work conveying to a hungry world the Bread of Life.”

Harold Hohly was a man who loved gourmet cooking, good wine and warm friendships. He could be called a romantic, a man unafraid to show feelings, but perhaps too hasty in doing so. Towards the end of his years as rector, Harold Hohly’s willingness to speak out against ideas or political positions that he disagreed with brought anger and dislike down on his head. But he was never a rector who sought popularity.

He and his colleague, Morton Stone, with the help of a devoted corps of laity put on dramatizations of the Last Supper that brought Christ Church friendly attention and publicity, including an article in *Life* magazine. Other events, notably T. S. Eliot’s “Murder in the Cathedral,” brought more attention, as well as sharp criticism, for staging such a play in a church.

But through it all, the Rector kept his focus on worship and on the spiritual life

of his flock. He often asked his own spiritual advisor and confessor, Father Shirley C. Hughson of the Order of the Holy Cross in West Park, New York, to preach and to be available within the parish for Quiet Days.

Father Hohly could literally throw himself into single-minded pastoral attention to parishioners such as Emily Morgan, one of the daughters of Christ Church's first priest, the Reverend Epiphanius Wilson. He was by her side and responded to her family's call as often as needed through a long and lingering illness. His care was not confined to church members. In one instance a woman came to Christ Church late one autumn afternoon in shock and grief, having just learned that her husband had been killed in an airplane crash over Washington. Unable to enter her own church she found Christ Church open and Harold Hohly there to support her in her anguish.

During the war years, Father Hohly again attracted criticism for erecting between the church and the parish house a stark black cross with the word "Pax" painted on it in bright red as a reminder of the sacrifice being made by parishioners' sons and daughters in uniform. At one point, when some 115 young church members were serving their country, the rector insisted that their names be read, one by one, at every Sunday service.

The Hohly years seemed to be full of drama. Just before the procession on Christmas Eve 1944, Mrs. James McNaughton keeled over in the packed, hushed nave. Harold Hohly's daughter, Margaret Cowen, described the scene:

"...And Mrs. McNaughton suddenly slumped over...just collapsed. Very quietly...And something inside me told me that this lady has died. So I got out and went back to the Sacristy. Father was vesting and he hadn't got his cope on yet or anything. He was standing there and I said, 'Come out, Mrs. McNaughton has died.' And he came with me. You know, he administered the Last Rites right there where she lay. And they got her out very quietly. It was amazing how quiet. Everybody was so still. No panic, no nothing."

It is difficult to pinpoint when Father Hohly and his congregation began to head in different directions. After the peace in 1945, the parish came together to raise a fund for the rebuilding of the organ as a war memorial for the men and women who had served their country. The unity and spirit that was evident during the war years slowly disappeared, though there was little peace in the world. The Russians dropped the iron curtain on Europe and took over large parts of Eastern Europe. Korea exploded into an undeclared war between its north and south and the United States came to the rescue of its South Korean friends. Political debate abounded within the parish community as the Truman administration wound down. Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin

announced that the U.S. government, especially its Department of State, was a hotbed of “communists” and spies. The trial of Alger Hiss who had held highly sensitive jobs within the Democratic administration seemed to give credence to the espionage accusations. McCarthy created an atmosphere of distrust that affected many a family discussion and led to a nationwide flurry of apprehension over the “Red menace.”

The atmosphere of distrust did not go unnoticed by Father Hohly. The parish was a place of worship and prayer but it was not a retreat from the world. Its members came to services troubled by political, economic, and personal concerns, which they expected their rector to address.

Early in 1952, Harold Hohly leaped to the defense of Sarah Lawrence College. The American Legion of Westchester County had accused the college of harboring Communists on its faculty and asked the college to answer 14 questions about their policies, notably one relating to some of the college’s undergraduates marching in the previous year’s May Day parade in Manhattan. The rector of Christ Church made haste to reply, writing to the commander of the local Bronxville American Legion chapter to warn him their inquiry threatened the basic principles of American liberty:

“The type of thinking as indicated in your questions is making it increasingly difficult for honest liberals and conservatives to espouse any cause or movement directed to the removal of social injustice for fear of being called “Communist” and being exposed to vicious scurrilous attack. If the methods you are using are persisted in, Stalin will win America without spending a ruble or firing a shot.”

“Hohly Sees Legion Attack on College Threat to Freedom” trumpeted the headline in the *Bronxville Reporter*. Fifty years later, such a reaction may appear overwrought but it underlines the courage Father Hohly displayed standing up against red-baiting within his own community.

“Labels are libels,” Father Hohly wrote in the February 3, 1952, *Spire*. “To call a man a Communist merely because he differs with us about some economic principle or belongs to some movement which he feels will help to right some social wrong is to have a closed mind...I am afraid that some of us are going to be sorely tried. Let us exercise just a little more patience and watch our tempers. Let us be on our guard lest the discussions of these issues divide us.”

Before long, Harold Hohly became involved in another controversy. The Presidential campaign of 1952 was memorable for its heat and passion. Late that summer, after a fruitless search for a place to hold a meeting and rally in support of the Democratic candidate, the local group of Adlai Stevenson volunteers asked the Rector

Father Hohly established a liturgy that was a model for much that is commonplace in our faith today, such as the Easter Vigil, the gospel procession, and the offertory procession of the elements.

for permission to use Christ Church's undercroft for their admittedly political purpose. After considerable debate with himself and consultation with the canons of the Diocese, Father Hohly granted his approval.

In the Bronxville/Eastchester area, where registered Republicans outnumbered Democrats by as many as 40 to one in some districts, a minor firestorm erupted. In a lengthy essay in the *Spire* called "A Time for Greatness," Harold Hohly took pains to describe his view of the parish's role in its community:

"I believe that a parish priest has the duty to minister to all the people of his community in so far as that is possible. I believe that the facilities of the parish house should be made available to this whole community as long as that does not interfere with our own meetings. For that reason the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts have used these facilities. Alcoholics Anonymous meet in the undercroft every week; the Masons once every month; the Village Cooperative Nursery School every day; for many years the American Legion used our parish house; a music teacher has had one of our rooms; there is now a class in ballet dancing meeting in the parish as well. Every year at the proper times these facilities are available for registration and voting. I find it difficult to draw the line between these activities and the needs of sincere, honest—though possibly mistaken—people whose political views happen to differ from the majority of the people of this village and of this parish."

In the same essay, Father Hohly went on to set forth his faith, a faith that still challenges us today:

"I do think that before your very eyes we have something of a living symbol of what I am trying to say—I say it in all humility. Father Stone has an 'I Like Ike' sticker on his car. I don't happen to have a Stevenson sticker on mine. I am just too lazy to bother with trying to get it off after it is all over. I did not tell him that he had no right to put such a sticker on his car; nor did I tell him that unless he took it off he would have to look for a new job. This morning at this altar he received from my hands the

sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. There is a oneness, a unity which binds us together which far transcends the transitory and fleeting differences we have as to politics. We are one in Christ Jesus our Lord, as I hope you and I may become. I do not think any differences in our political or social thinking should or can break our unity if we hold fast to the faith in Christian charity.”

Harold Hohly did not remain rector long enough to see the conclusion of the parish’s need for more space and its development of an even more active role in the village community. His outspoken views, a strong move within the parish to tighten its organization, and some health problems combined to bring things to a head.

Christ Church, which had never been a parish supported by only a few families, became in the postwar period far more diverse, youthful, and energetic. The age of the commuter had arrived. The village that seemed so rural until the Depression was now occupied by a managerial class of citizens, used to setting goals, judging performance, and demanding results. There was talk of the need for revision of the church’s bylaws and a push for job descriptions and agendas.

Indications are that the rector was not entirely in favor of the push for “organization.” Harold Hohly was always ready to admit that he was not particularly well organized; indeed he rather liked the seat of the pants, romantic style of leadership. He was not happy when his vestry drew up detailed bylaws for the parish, especially those that eliminated the indefinite terms of the church wardens. The senior warden in 1954 had held that office for 21 years; he and the rector were deeply hurt when his term was not renewed.

Perhaps the rector’s sense of losing control, extreme fatigue, symptoms of heart stress, and discouragement over social issues combined to cause him to resign precipitously. Once again a rector and his vestry squared off and worked out a leave of absence coupled with a resignation that was tabled for only a short time and then activated. The leave, granted to Father Hohly in May, was converted to a resignation on June 24, 1954, to become official on October 31 of that year, allowing time for the rector of 21 years to return for a formal farewell and reception.

Whatever the reasons for the end of Harold Hohly’s long pastorate, it was a sorrowful time for the parish. He had accomplished much during his tenure. He established a liturgy at Christ Church that was a model for much that is commonplace in our faith today, such as the Easter Vigil, the gospel procession, and the offertory procession with the presentation of the elements. A strong Sunday school and an admirable music and choral tradition were in place.

The parish, with some 1,200 communicants, carried a budget of just under \$60,000. In the fall of 1953, in a swift and enthusiastic campaign led by Mrs. Margaret Norton, enough funds were raised to retire the mortgage on the church. On November 9, 1953, after 28 years of debt, Christ Church could at last be consecrated.

When Father Hohly resigned, the vestry asked Morton C. Stone to stay on as priest in charge until a new rector was called. The Rev. Harvey Guthrie, a young faculty member at Manhattan's General Seminary, was hired as a part-time assistant and the Rev. Donald Stuart was also employed for summer services.

Father Hohly was soon called to be the rector of St. Paul's Church in Kinderhook, New York, in the Diocese of Albany. The parish was three hours closer to the Hohly's lakeside retreat on the shores of Big Wolf Lake in the western Adirondacks, so Father Hohly was able to continue his trout fishing. A few years later he wrote to Arch Campbell, the clerk of Christ Church vestry for many years: "We are very happy here. I have enough to do to keep me busy and yet there is not the pressure there was in Christ Church."

Harold Hohly was a memorable man. In his final message to Christ Church in the *Spire*, one of his many notable projects, he wrote: "I had rather fondly hoped to end my days as Rector of Christ Church. That was not to be. And so I have seen with my own eyes and heard with my own ears the very tangible expressions of your love and affection. However, we are not leaving you, nor are you leaving us. One of the great privileges of belonging to 'this Holy fellowship' is the fact that distance cannot separate us. You may be very sure that as I stand at the Altar at St. Paul's...you will always be in my prayers. And I know that as you kneel before the altar in Christ Church, we shall be in yours."

In the October 17th issue of the *Spire*, Morton Stone summed up Father Hohly's legacy: "For twenty-one years Father Hohly has been Rector of Christ Church. For most of that time I have been associated with him. We have prayed together, we have argued with each other, we have worked together, in a very close fellowship. I think I know as well as anyone what he has done for the parish.

"Christ Church will seem very strange without him. It is not merely that he has improved the physical aspect of the church, or strengthened its organization, but rather that, for a multitude of people he has been a dear friend and wise counselor, one who has brought comfort to them in time of trouble, or given them, perhaps, their first real grasp of the meaning of religion."

Reaching Out and Building Together

GEORGE W. BARRETT: 1955-1963



The following months were indeed a period of healing and rest for the parish. The established orders of worship and liturgy were kept intact. The much-admired Father Morton Charnleigh Stone (known to most people as “Charn”) steered the parish carefully through an interim year. The Rev. Harvey Guthrie and Robert Owen gave strong support to Father Stone's leadership.

During the summer of 1954, a search committee was formed; unlike the informal procedures of the parish's early years, this committee met with Bishop Donegan, drew up a plan and specifications, and began the process that is now a standard part of clergy deployment. After a year of careful effort, a special meeting of the vestry on August 3, 1955, extended a call to the Rev. George West Barrett, then a professor of pastoral theology at the General Theological Seminary.

Morton Stone met with the new rector in September and wrote the senior warden, George Burpee, “I think we shall get along famously together. He has asked me to stay until next summer.” Doctor Barrett preached his first sermon at Christ Church on the second Sunday in October, 1955. An era of change and yet welcome stability and adherence to much loved liturgical customs began.

The new 47-year-old rector was a westerner, a native of Iowa City, who grew up mainly in Pasadena, California. A graduate of the University of California at Berkeley and the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, George Barrett had held important pastorates in the Diocese of Los Angeles, serving as secretary of their annual conventions and as a deputy to the church's General Convention in 1949. His service at one of the cardinal parishes of Los Angeles, St. James on Wilshire

Boulevard, fitted him well for the sophisticated, urbane, and critical congregation that awaited him in Bronxville.

Since the new rector, his wife Dee, and their three children were expected in Bronxville by early September, the vestry and its real estate committee had an immediate task at hand. The rectory on Tanglewylde Avenue, which had been in use for almost 36 years, was deemed inadequate for the new family. On August 26, 1955, Elliot Bates and William McRitchie were authorized to place the old rectory on the market and to intensify their search for a new rectory. Meanwhile an apartment in Alger Court was found for the Barrett family, and their children were entered in the Bronxville School.

In orderly fashion, starting in the late summer of 1955, the old Tanglewylde Avenue rectory was sold for \$25,000. In mid-January 1956, the church purchased 13 Sunny Brae Place for \$52,000 and it became home for the Barretts and served as the rectory until the seventh rector of Christ Church, Christopher L. Webber and his wife, Margaret (known as “Peg”), moved as “empty nesters” to a church apartment in the parish house for the balance of his ministry.

Back in the parish's dim past, a directive stated that whenever a rectory was purchased it should be within walking distance of the church itself. Sixty-two Tanglewylde had offered a pleasant lunch hour stroll, but 13 Sunny Brae Place, off Pondfield Road at the village's eastern end, was a much longer hike. No matter, as Doctor Barrett told the church at his first annual meeting, “this house is ideal in every way. We are grateful to you for having purchased it and very happy to be living in it.”

The parish's new rector turned out to be a master of conciliation; a pioneer in what came to be known as conflict management, getting away from the concept of “I win, you lose,” in favor of working toward a solution by which both sides could benefit.

As Barrett recalls, in his “Recollections of Christ Church,” the parish held on to members who had identified with Harold Hohly's strong liberal and social concerns. Many people had been attracted to Christ Church by Hohly's forceful personality and liturgical style, but others had left the parish, using the charge of “high churchmanship” to register their dislike of what they deemed the former rector's arrogance and challenging style.

Throughout his tenure at Christ Church, George Barrett struggled with his own feelings about the Sarum Rite. Just as his predecessor had installed Sarum slowly and let his parishioners come to love it and welcome it, he did not make sweeping changes. In his informal memoir, written in 1987, Barrett reflected on the changes he did make:

“After a few experimental moves, I left things pretty much intact, with a few

modifications. We gave up incense (a symbol of considerable discontent) at the 9:00 a.m. service and used it only at weekday high festivals, stopped singing the Creed and Lord's Prayer at 11:00 on Sundays, and simplified the offertory with the elements brought by lay people from the rear of the church rather than in procession from the chapel. Those were about the only changes over my eight years there. I always thought our rite was basically sound, and even tended to anticipate some of the more recent changes in the liturgy."

George Barrett's liturgical concerns were just one area of his leadership at Christ Church. He took charge with considerable energy and determination. For example his report for his first full year as rector, given at the Annual Parish Meeting in December, 1956, listed many accomplishments, achieved with the help of new staff, as well as renewed parochial objectives.

Church School attendance was at 296; annual pledge income had grown to almost \$58,000 in one year. The parish's role as a source of daily worship and comfort to all continued unabated. The report listed 164 Sunday services, 127 on holy days and 695 services on other weekdays. The offices of Morning and Evening Prayer and the Holy Eucharist were said daily with the help of Morton Stone, until July, 1956, when Father Stone retired to New Hampshire. At that point his duties were taken up by two new curates, Robert Cromey and Lloyd Patterson. In addition to changes in the office staff, John Thompson arrived as sexton, replacing Woodburn Brewster, a gentleman of girth and old country charm. "From all this you will see," the rector pointed out to the annual meeting, "that Mr. Owen and I are the only ones on the staff a year ago who are still here today."

In that first annual report the rector struck two keynotes; firstly, the future of the parish and its needs and secondly, Christ Church's possible role as a missionary church. The latter was a theme that Barrett was to stress throughout his ministry in Bronxville, seeking ways and means to spend as much on mission and on outreach as on overhead and operating budget. This was a difficult goal and a never-ending journey that caused someone in George Barrett's tenure to comment that he would like to find a "stagnant" parish and have some rest. Christ Church was beginning to find that the work of the Woman's Auxiliary, direct support of church-related programs, and fundraising for specific purposes added up to valuable missionary outreach.

As to future planning for the parish, the rector with the help of community leaders Warren Clark and Carleton Proctor, helped the parish focus on definitive steps to tackle the desperate need for more space. That 1956 Annual Meeting also marked

The official opening of the new parish house took place on Sunday, October 31, 1960, concurrent with the parish's observance of its 60th birthday.

the first concrete steps towards the building campaign of 1958, the construction of the present auditorium, and the merger, it might be called, of Gramatan Court and the Christ Church properties.

Once the long-range planning committee had concluded that there were some 2,600 people in the Bronxville area who looked to Christ Church for pastoral ministry, it was possible from that number to postulate a Sunday school of perhaps 450 to 500 children and a congregation that would put great pressure on Christ Church's existing facilities. The committee went on to point out that the square footage of space for each church school pupil was far below public school standards and that if nursery space were to be provided on Sundays there would not be sufficient room for classes for the older children.

There were other needs arising out of this growth along with the wear and tear on the 30-year-old facilities. The women of the parish needed a larger, modern kitchen. The choir rooms were too small for vesting; indeed choir members donned their robes in a closet holding cleaning equipment, the generator, and the motor for the organ.

Above all, there stood Christ Church, a striking edifice, firm on its rocky outcrop, hemmed in on the north by a village street and a sturdy apartment complex. Access to the church in the day of the car was confined to Sagamore Road, a main route to the north, and Kensington Road, to the west, which was little more than a lane. Parking had been a problem since the old stone church was built.

The planning committee headed by the two wardens, George Burpee and William McRitchie, joining hands with the rector and vestry, were fully authorized to continue their study and to seek architectural advice and possible alternative designs. Despite the church's needs and crowding, it was an exciting era in the parish's history when, as in Charles Robinson's time, considerable courage and community effort were going to be required. Commenting on Christ Church's expansion effort during those years, George Barrett recollected:

“All during my time in Bronxville we had some unusually strong leaders on the vestry, in the educational program, in fund raising and in outreach. I wouldn't want to start listing them for I am sure I would leave out too many.... many had distinguished

business and professional careers.”

Carleton Proctor deserves special mention in our history, however, because as a construction engineer of success and prominence he was a key player in the building program that grew out of the Kensington-Church Street puzzle. The church's archives are indebted to Proctor for a memoir, presented to the Annual Parish Meeting in 1959, which details what happened, and underlines the background of the structural challenges that Christ Church has faced in recent years and addressed during its centennial period.

Just as the parish was considering its options, the village of Bronxville came up with a master plan for the widening and development of the Kensington Road area that included the construction of a two-story parking structure directly across from the church's property. The village plan, although it took time to carry out and had several major changes along the way, refocused the church's ideas on Church Street itself and the apartments to the north. The parish discovered also that William Van Duzer Lawrence's gift of the land to the north of the stone church and along what was then known as New Street for the 1908 parish house included in the deed half of the bed of the street. In other words, Gramatan Court and Christ Church shared ownership of the bed of Church Street. Mr. Proctor therefore noted in his memoir that this ownership made “all of our problems susceptible to solution and immediately the atmosphere, the desirability, and the serviceability of our church location became just about ideal.”

In the meantime, again “most fortunately,” the Lawrence family stepped forward and suggested that the parish consider purchasing the two closest Gramatan Court buildings, made of stucco on hollow tile, which had been built in 1913. The suggestion was backed by Dudley B. Lawrence, youngest son of William V. Lawrence and a one-time vestryman of Christ Church. Once discussions and design concepts led to the plan of owning Church Street in full and being free to conceive of an auditorium in that hillside, the parish asked the Lawrences to set a price for the properties. In the winter of 1958, both parties agreed on a figure of \$128,000, one-half the appraised value, and title passed to Christ Church.

Looking back now, it is easy to say that the two apartment buildings with many different levels and nooks and crannies did not fit easily into the church building, and that joining the wiring, plumbing, and heating systems made little engineering sense. But the idea was imaginative and fulfilled so many of the needs of the church that momentum carried the parish along.

It took 42 years for “the special angel” of the elevator to appear and it took



(overleaf) THE ALTAR DRESSED FOR EASTER in the original Christ Church, c. 1910. The round window above the altar was moved to the Lady Chapel of the new church in 1926.

THE CASINO (right) built by William Van Duzer Lawrence as a recreation center for the young people in his family and their villager friends was the location of the first informal services for Episcopalians in Bronxville. It overlooked the present-day tennis courts on Garden Avenue.



THE FIRST SERVICE was held “over store” in a new building (below) owned by Edward Stiles on the western side of the railroad tracks just south of the underpass. After first renting rooms on the second floor, this small group of Episcopalians moved to a larger space on the first floor, where they remained until the original Christ Church was built in 1901-1902. The altar (left) in Mr. Stiles’ building is dressed for Easter.





THE ORIGINAL CHRIST CHURCH, 1902, at the intersection of the present-day Kensington and Sagamore Roads, where the columbarium is today. This early picture shows the church before it was covered by vines and before Sagamore Road was paved.





WOODEN PARISH HOUSE, 1924. Sunday school children gather in front of the parish house just before it was taken down to make room for the new church.

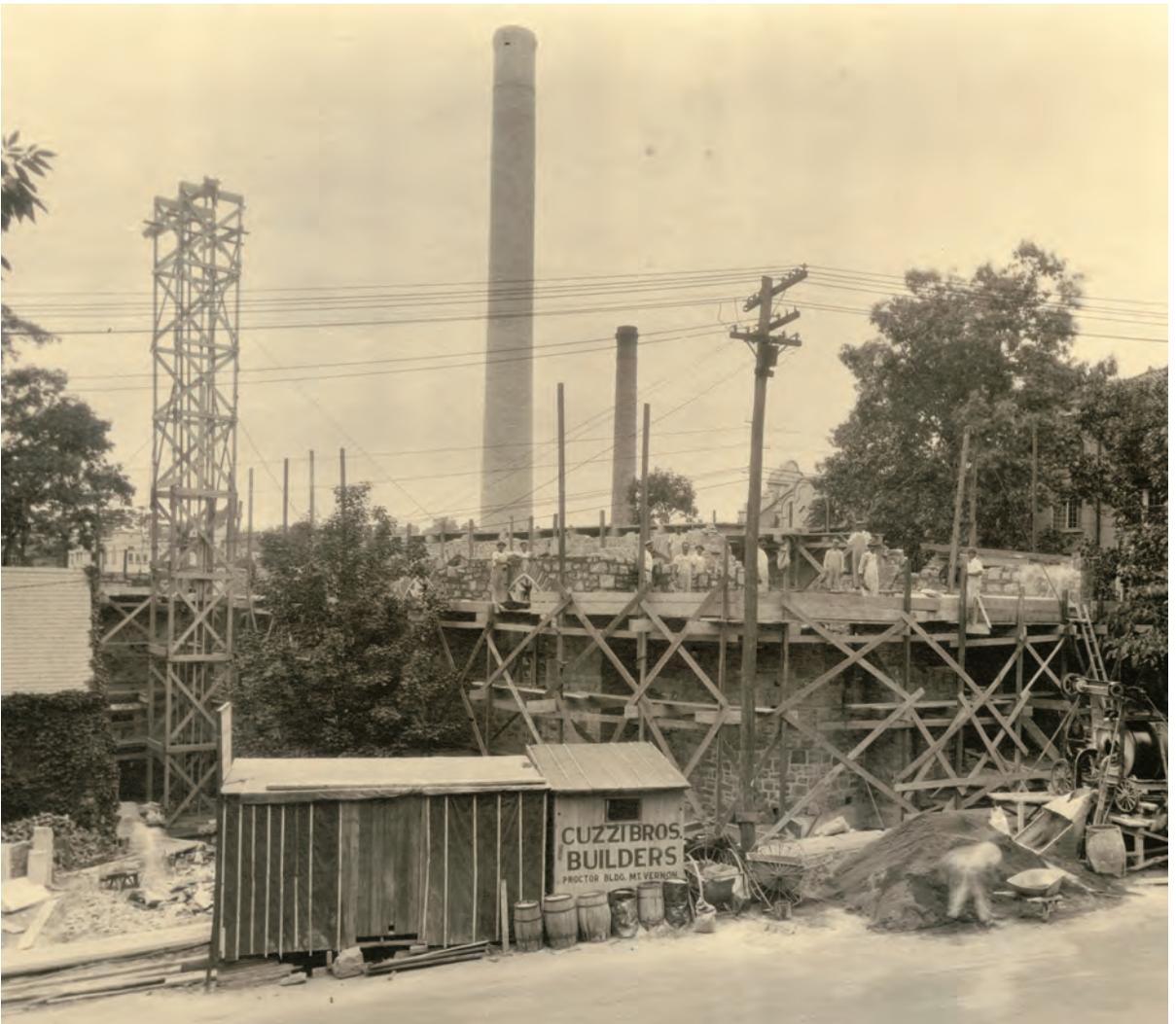
THE INTERIOR of the original Christ Church is shown after the building was extended 40 feet to the south in 1907.





SELECTING STONE. Dr. Charles Robinson, rector, and Andrew Johnson, sexton, stand in the rubble after the demolition of the old parish house in the spring of 1925. They are examining rocks to be reused in the foundation of the new Christ Church.

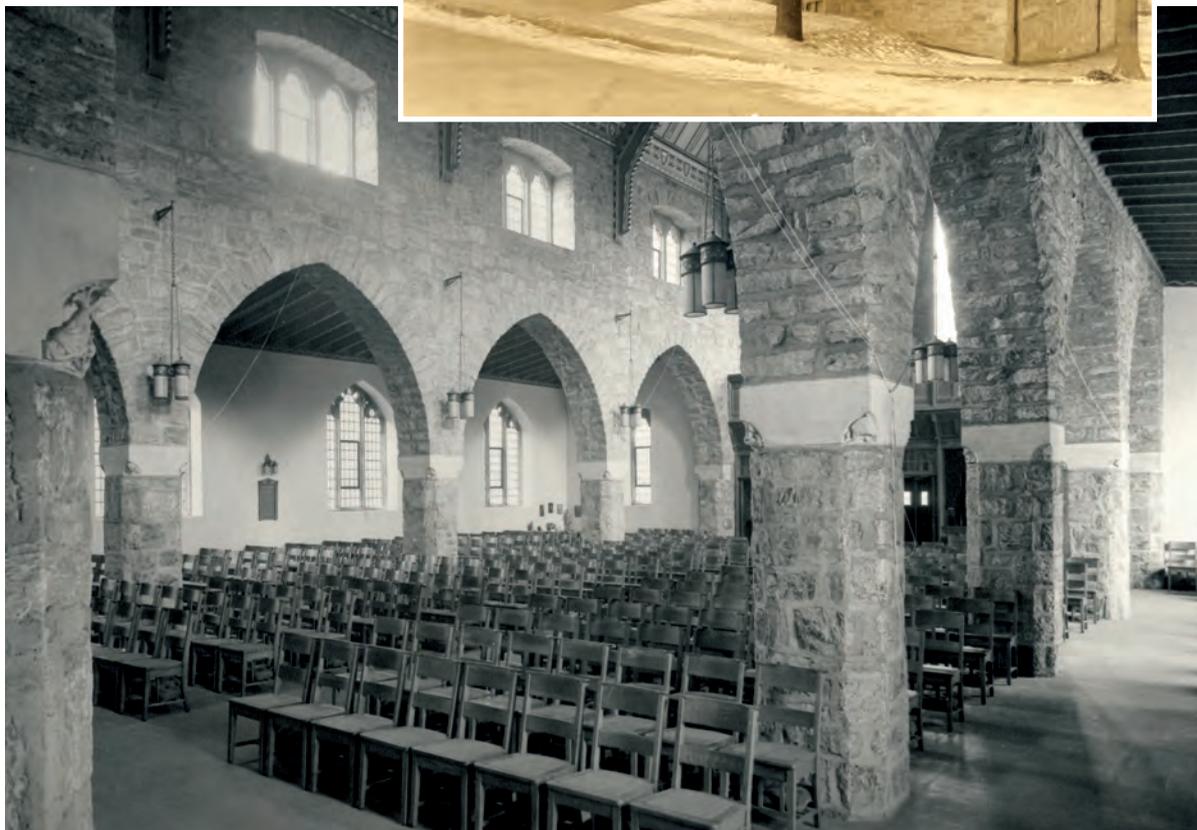
CONSTRUCTION. The new Christ Church under construction in the late summer of 1925. Note the smokestack of the Lawrence Park Heat Light and Power Company, located on Kensington Road, which towered over the church spire until its demolition in 1988.



THE NEW CHURCH. *An early picture of the newly completed Christ Church. Note Church street, which no longer exists, turning down the hill to connect to Kensington Road.*



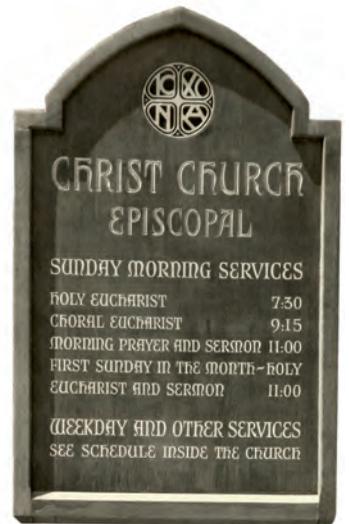
VIEW OF THE NAVE (below) before the installation of stained glass windows.



THE LADY CHAPEL. (right) *The Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary was a gift in memory of the first rector, the Rev. Richard Hayward, from his wife Lydia and their children.*



A VIEW OF CHRIST CHURCH looking across the railroad tracks from Alger Court.



THE PARISH SEAL with the Greek inscription "Jesus Christ conquers" crowns the exterior sign announcing the Sunday Services. The sign was designed by Chester Price and anchored to the stone façade of the church in July 1955.



THE TWO CHRIST CHURCHES are seen from the bottom of Sagamore Road (above). The group of buildings to the left predated the modern medical building of today and housed shops and a bar and grill. The smoke stack of the old power plant is also to be seen rising behind the shops to the back of the church. (below left) The new church rises above the original church at the intersection of Kensington and Sagamore Roads, a view that was seen from 1926 until the demolition of the original church in 1960. For 34 years the original church functioned as the parish house. (below right) In 1960, the semi-circular drive and covered walkway connect the new parish house to Christ Church.



THE NAVE. *Christ Church architect, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, spoke of the use of vistas to heighten the sense of space and of the play of light and shadow to create a feeling of lightness. Here we see his concept at work. The slate floors, rough stone piers, arches and white walls are warmed by the reflection of the colors of the stained glass windows. The use of chairs instead of pews adds to the overall effect of space.*



NAVE CEILING, 1926. *After the style in English village churches of the 13th century, the wood ceilings, ridge beams and rafters in Christ Church are richly decorated in polychrome, painted by Cuzzi Brothers' house painter, M. Ruzza of Mt. Vernon, following the architect's drawings and color samples. A frieze of Christian symbols set in shields runs down both sides of the nave where walls and ceilings meet.*

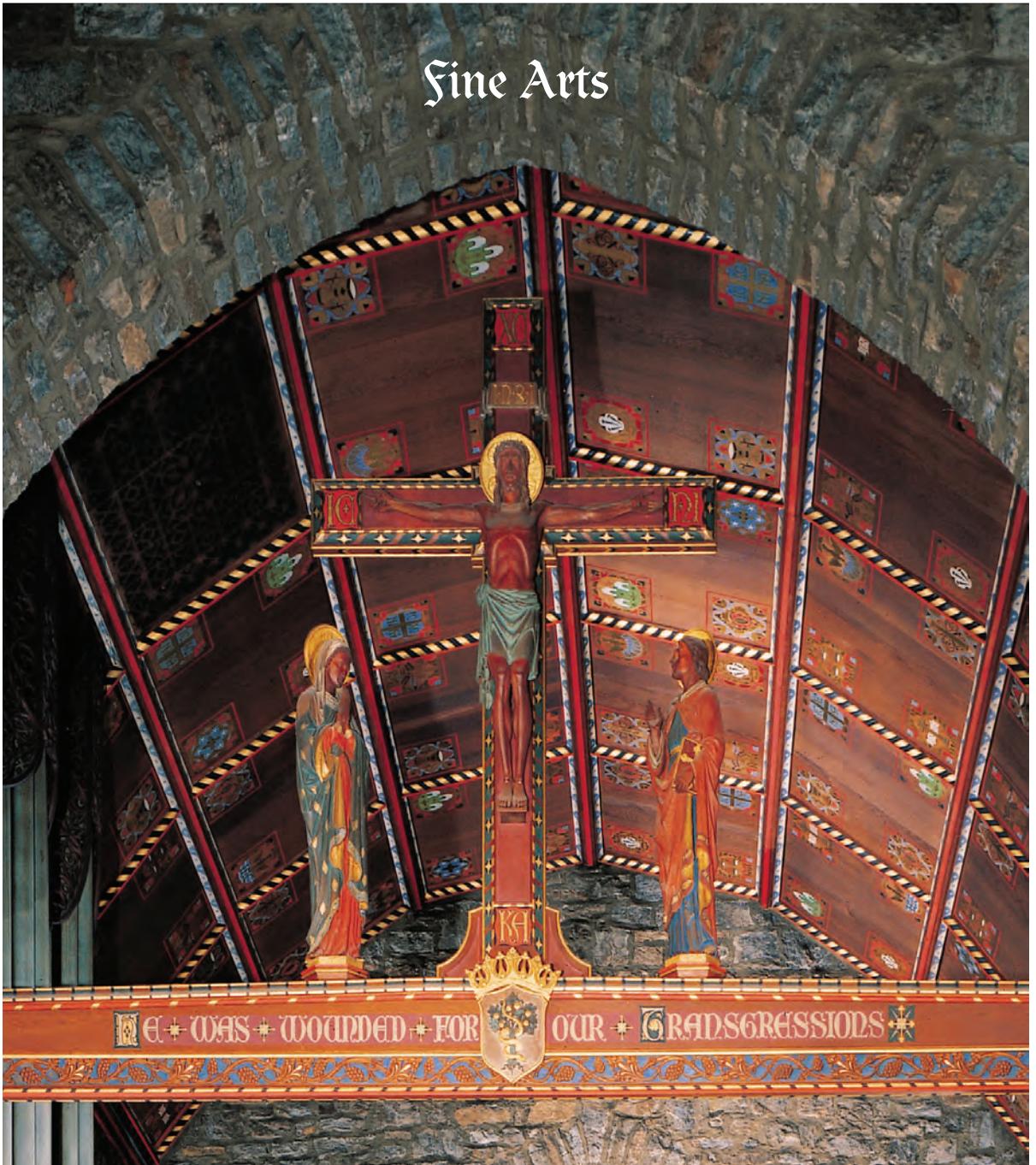


THE REREDOS, 1938. Chester Price was the architect designer of the wooden reredos and the two tall riddel posts bearing carved angels holding sconces of hand-wrought iron that flank the altar at either side. Leo Lentelli was the sculptor of the Last Supper and Rene Chambellan sculpted the figures of St. Mark and St. Paul and the riddel angels. The work was fabricated in English oak and lime wood by Frank Wadelton and erected in the church by him. Chester Price oversaw the alterations to the sanctuary including the resetting of the altar and the addition of the cross and candlesticks made by Samuel Yellin.

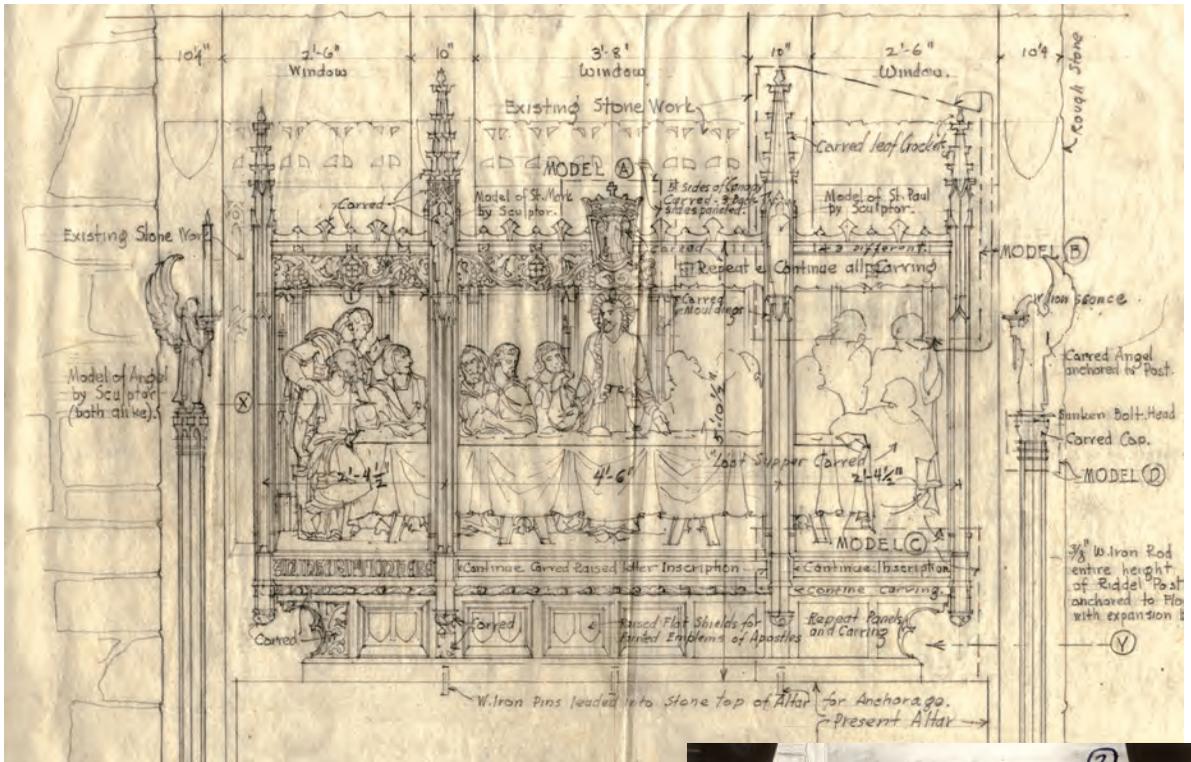
THE SPIRE. In December 1997, the original spire was taken down after a week of high winds caused it to sway dangerously. Years of water damage, aging dried wood and the appetite of post beetles had destroyed its underpinnings. On December 18, 1998, a gleaming new copper spire, an exact replica of the original spire, swung into place. Contributions from the community as well as the parish helped the village once again have this treasured landmark visible for miles around.



Fine Arts



THE ROOD, 1928. Spanning the arch which marks the transition from nave to chancel is a great beam on which stand the Rood, or Crucifix, and the figures of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the beloved disciple, John. The words from Isaiah, "He was wounded for our Transgressions," are inscribed under the figures. The Crucifix bears the monograms ICXC (Jesus Christ), NIKA (victor), INRI (Jesus Nazarene Rex Iudaeorum). The rood beam, which was designed and made by the firm of Calvert, Herrick and Heidinger, was given in 1928 in loving memory of James McNaughton, vestryman of the parish, by his wife Elizabeth.



THE REREDOS. (above) The Archives of Christ Church is fortunate to house Chester Price's specifications for the fabrication, creation and completion of the reredos as well as many of his sketches and drawings as he developed his vision into reality. The Reredos (at right) under construction in the studio of Leo Lentelli.



EVANGELIST TILES.

Set into two steps leading to the altar in the sanctuary are a series of tiles, symbolizing the four evangelists, Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, designed by Henry Chapman Mercer and made in his factory, the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works in Doylestown, Pennsylvania.





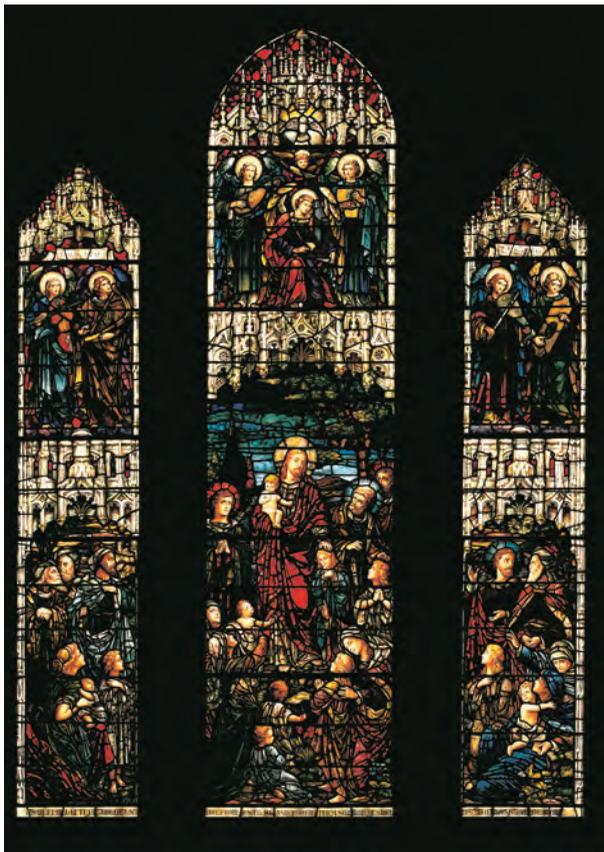
THE NATIVITY

TRIPTYCH. (below) *The nativity triptych was painted by Mary Wilson, daughter of the Rev. Epiphanius Wilson, sometime in the mid to late 1930's, for the children's altar in the old church. The background of the triptych includes Bronxville landmarks. There are several saints on the side panels, all of whom were chosen for their interesting lives that would appeal to children.*

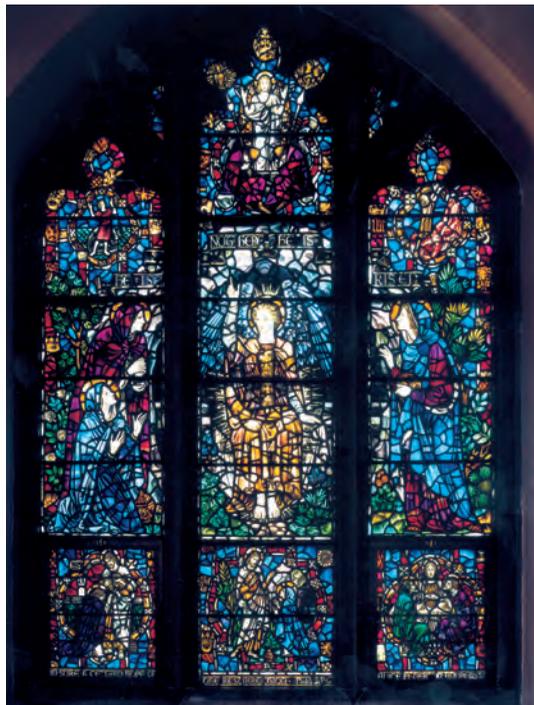


THE LADY CHAPEL. (above) *The blue walls of the Lady Chapel are stenciled in gold lilies and roses, symbols of the Virgin, and her monogram MR (Maria Regina) may be seen on the north wall. The altar of the Lady Chapel, which is usually covered by an embroidered frontal, is surmounted by a reredos (the painting rising behind the altar) by Alice Hendee Price, a talented portrait painter and member of the parish. It pictures in the center the Virgin and Child; the left panel is a shepherd modeled after the Rev. William Oscar Jarvis, assistant priest, to whom the reredos is dedicated and the right panel shows a youth representing the young people of the parish with whom Father Jarvis worked tirelessly.*





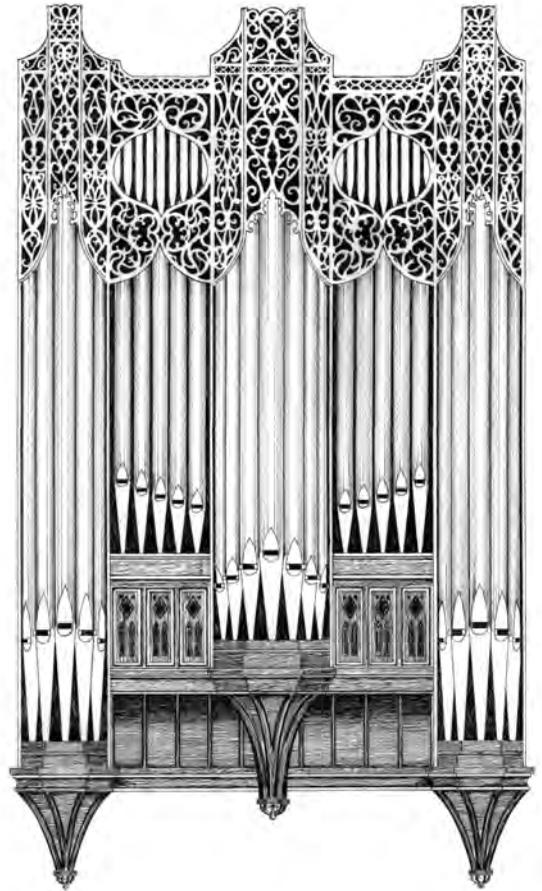
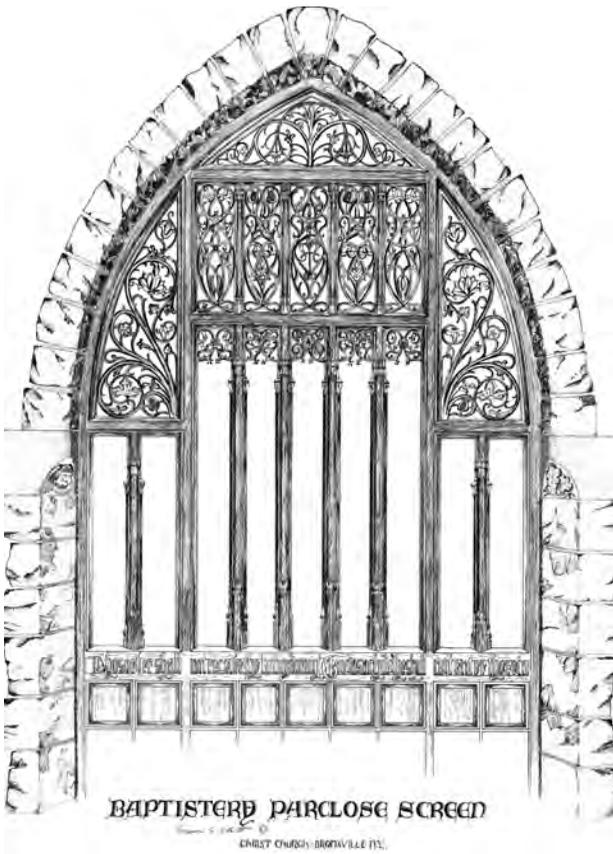
CHRIST BLESSING THE CHILDREN, 1907. This window which today rises above the high altar was made for the original Christ Church of 1901 by the English firm of Heaton, Butler and Bayne and enlarged by them in 1926 to fit the present setting. It is a memorial to Margaret Brown, a girl of 15, who died in Bronxville.



THE RESURRECTION WINDOW, 1932, is popularly known as the White Friar window because of the small white friar in the lower right hand panel, the trademark of the famous old English firm, James Powell and Sons, a company dating back to A.D. 1680. The inscription along the base of the window reads, "In sure and certain hope of the Resurrection. In loving memory of Alice Petersen Andrews, A.D. 1930." Mrs. Andrews was the wife of Charles Sperry Andrews, warden of Christ Church for 22 years, and the mother of the author of this history.

THE REVELATION WINDOWS on the upper north wall consist of nine lancets arranged in groups of three, which celebrate the roles of art, music and literature as sources of God's revelation in the world. To the right are the music windows honoring the ministry of organist and choirmaster Robert Owen and highlighting the compositions of French composer Olivier Messiaen.





THE BAPTISTRY PARCLOSE SCREEN is dedicated to the memory of Nicholas Brady Tucker. The inscription reads: "Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein." THE ORGAN CASE designed by the architect consists of a screen with a carved wooden grille which fills the opening of the Swell chambers, and a case with three towers of pipes bracketed in front of the Great and Positive chambers. Displayed on the case are some of the pipes of the Pedal organ. Both renderings are by Eugene Elliott.

THE PROCESSIONAL CROSS. The processional Cross of repoussed silver, developed from an English design of the 15th century, was crafted in 1927 by Kantack and Co., Inc., at their workshops in New York City. Each arm of the cross bears a symbol of an Evangelist: at the top, the rising eagle (St. John); on the right arm, the winged ox (St. Luke); the bottom arm, the angel (St. Matthew) and the left arm, the winged lion (St. Mark). At the intersection of the arms is the figure of the Crucified Christ. The processional cross is the gift of Emily Gabrielle Morgan in loving memory of her husband, Robert Webb Morgan, incorporator and first senior warden of Christ Church.



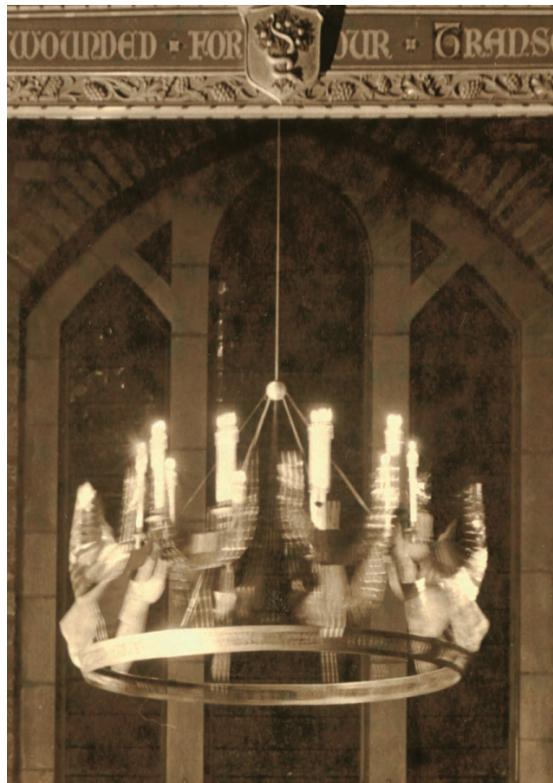


THE SMILING CHERUB. Gothic arches divide the nave and the arches are supported by stone piers each surmounted by Indiana limestone capitals. Symbols (14 in all) are carved on each of the four capitals. Altogether the cherubs with some variations are used eight times. The carving of all the symbols was done by Anthony Petrillo of Mt. Vernon, who learned his skill in his native Italy.

THE GOSPEL BOOK COVERS. (below) The silver Gospel Book Covers were made at the Warham Guild in London and are a gift in loving memory of Marie Fabnstock Garvey (1893-1944) by her husband, James McB. Garvey, and her children. Rendering by Eugene Elliott.



THE TRENDLE. (below) The custom of hanging a trendle in the chancel during the Christmas/Epiphany season derived from the Middle Ages in England, when parish churches and cathedrals hung a ring of candles in the chancel, symbolizing the star which guided the shepherds to the Christ child at Christmas and the Wise Men at Epiphany. The trendle in Christ Church is in loving memory of Margaret Murtagh Gray. George Doczi, a well-known architect and former parishioner, designed this beautiful wrought iron ring surmounted by brass angels holding 10 candles and it was made in the studio of Samuel Yellin, internationally known metal craftsman.



A WORK OF LOVE IN NEEDLEPOINT. (left) In 1974, the Rev. Christopher L. Webber, rector, asked Margaret Williams, a parishioner, if she would head up a project to design and make needlepoint kneelers and cushions for the church. Mrs. Williams brought together a group of expert needlewomen and four years later, 52 pieces had been completed: eight kneelers for the communion rail at the high altar, eight for the rail at the chapel altar, and 28 kneelers for the chairs in the chapel. Eight cushions were made, six for the sedilia (honoring the seven rectors to date), one for the rector's chair near the pulpit, and one for the organ bench, in honor of Robert Owen, long-time organist of the church.

years of private gifts and special fund raising to complete the new plant. In a sense, the history of the parish shows, the plant was never quite completed and required maintenance and repairs almost continuously throughout succeeding decades. But the acquisition of the apartment houses and the building of the auditorium began a new era for the parish in creative outreach and community services that are vibrant today.

Helpful as the village and Lawrence plans were, Carleton Proctor delayed Christ Church's fund-raising until 1958, when the Eisenhower economy turned soft; the recession, short as it may have been, affected the parish's efforts to reach a goal of some \$750,000. A note in the Vestry minutes of late 1960 sums up the difficulties that Dr. Barrett's flock faced: "we had tough years getting the new plant built and finished."

For the first time the parish employed a professional fund-raising firm. After the first major campaign, replete with graphic displays and brochures and a well-attended kickoff dinner, brought in just \$400,000, building plans had to be cut back. It was a stretch, but, as agreed, a portion of those funds was set aside for the diocesan capital drive to honor its 175th Anniversary year.

In late 1957, the parish had hired Randolph Evans, of Chapman, Evans and Delehanty, a New York City architectural firm, to design a building program that wisely allowed for postponements and delays of parts of the over-all project. The step-by-step building was not ideal; the architect, Evans, a Bronxville resident, and Robert Barr of Barr and Barr, a local builder, were in constant consultation. By the end of 1959, the rock bed of Church Street had been carved out and a pit for the auditorium created. An immense rotary saw had been brought in to saw off the front end of 17 Sagamore's entrance to create space for a cloister, driveway, and front entrance to the clergy offices and administrative spaces. After some more fund-raising in 1960 allowed the close and the flagstone deck on the roof of the auditorium to be completed, Christ Church had an attractive new elevation facing Sagamore Road and the Gramatan Hill. Not everyone was happy. One small section of new stone wall at the northeast corner of the church had to be altered later so it would not impede the daylight needed to illuminate one of the stained glass windows. Leaks and poor drainage raised their heads later.

In the June 7, 1959, issue of the *Spire*, Dr. Barrett enumerated the work yet to be done which he calculated would cost an additional \$187,000. Simultaneously, keen to complete the essentials of the apartment house renovations so those spaces could be put to work, the vestry decided to proceed with a loan of some \$200,000. Much as they regretted the step, since the church had only been consecrated in 1953 after a major effort to pay off the long-term mortgage, a new obligation was assumed. Once again,

Carleton Proctor captured the feeling of the parish:

“Those of us who have been closest to our parish house construction and to its financing are supremely proud of the results so far and completely confident that with a full parish realization of the beauty, charm and practicability of our parish house, all of us will insist upon being partners in this splendid undertaking, not merely as contributors to brick and mortar but as active participants in a virile spiritual community.”

The official opening of the new classrooms, offices, kitchen, and congregational space of Christ Church took place on Sunday, October 31, 1960, concurrent with the parish's observance of its 60th birthday. As part of the daylong celebration, Morton Stone and Harold Hohly both returned to celebrate and preach at the two morning services. The closure and highlight of the day was a full dress evensong and sermon at four o'clock. The Bishop of New York, the Rt. Rev. Horace W. B. Donegan, presided and led the dedication of the new building. Somehow, a faulty dishwasher had overloaded the Kensington side of the local power company's lines and the organ's motor as well as all the church's lights, except for a tiny section, lost all their power. Candles and a capella singing were hastily improvised by vestry and choir. Then, just as the bishop invoked the “light of the world” with his arms spread forth in greeting, all the lights came back on. It was an unforgettable moment. However, the electrical problems of the October, 1960, service of dedication foretold the heating and power problems that lay ahead for the parish, consuming funds and time well into the decade of the 1980's and beyond.

George Barrett's tenure at Christ Church was not all walls and plumbing and contractors. The Barrett years were marked by growth in ministry, a strong Sunday School program, and a considerable increase in membership and annual giving. But the rector was not willing to let his suburban congregation rest comfortably on its laurels. In a September, 1959, article in *The Witness* (an Episcopal journal of social justice), published in the midst of the building campaign, George Barrett wrote:

“In these days of high incomes, high taxes, high expenditures and intense competition for almost everyone's dollar, there is no substitute for stewardship. No longer can the Church live on the crumbs of her people's rich lives or on the pauperizing charity of those who never worship but think that the Church is a good influence and are therefore willing to cast largesse our way. Everywhere, in sermons, in confirmation classes and in the planning and thinking of our organizations, must be stressed the fact that a Christian gives significantly and that no area of the Church's work or the world's needs is outside his concern.”

In the same article, the rector summarized the requirement from the Offices of

The Sunday school census of 296 children in Dr. Barrett's first year of administration, grew, reaching as high as 480 pupils in 1962 and holding close to those numbers into the late 1960's.

Instruction in the 1928 Book of Common Prayer, "to do my duty in the state of life unto which it shall please God to call me." He concluded that "those of us who find ourselves working in suburban churches are, I think, grateful that in the mysterious Providence of God our lot has fallen here and we believe that few ministries are more demanding, more subtle or more rewarding."

In the fall of 1958, well into his second year as a curate, Lloyd Patterson received a call from the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge to join their faculty, provided his doctoral thesis was finished by April. Almost 50 years later, some members still recalled Patterson's ardor and love of his ministry, especially his scholarship. He worked so hard on his doctorate that he could be seen fully vested taking "cat naps" on the floor of the sacristy between services. He had the forthrightness to suggest to the rector that he should go on half time as a curate and take a reduction in salary as well until his thesis requirement was met. When George Barrett presented the arrangement to the vestry they would not hear of it. Scholarly work was vital for clergy in a suburban church too. "Needless to say I was very proud of them," the rector wrote.

Staffing was a key to Christ Church's life and strength in those years. In the summer of 1958, the Rev. Charles W. Scott came to Bronxville from California as an associate rector. His sermons, learning, and pastoral care became especially evident when he became priest in charge during the interim between rectors. Scott stayed at Christ Church until 1966 and is well remembered by many.

David Edman, a recent graduate of Manhattan's Union Theological Seminary, was hired in early 1959 to replace Robert Cromey who became rector of a parish in the Bronx. Edman came from an evangelistic family; his father was president of Wheaton College in Illinois. Edman himself had joined the Episcopal church in part because of his admiration for Dean James Pike of the cathedral in Manhattan. In his own occasional reminiscences, shared with his parish in Texas, David wrote: "Quite by chance I was offered a post that was regarded then as one of the choice parishes of the diocese,

Christ Church, Bronxville. My initial salary was \$4,800 a year, along with an apartment, a gasoline allowance, and Blue Cross coverage. I regarded myself rich as Croesus.” Dr. Barrett felt that David Edman was primarily responsible for the health of the church school during his tenure, especially in the training and direction of the teachers.

The Sunday school census of 296 children in Dr. Barrett's first year of administration, grew, according to the annual parochial reports, reaching as high as 480 pupils in 1962 and holding close to those numbers into the late 1960's. Annual giving in George Barrett's last full year as rector, 1962, reached a total of \$144,225 responding to his concept of stewardship.

The rector's sermons, cogently written and preached, drew a steady congregation. He wrote several books during his Bronxville years: *Key Words for Lent* in early 1963, and *Dialogue on Destiny*, written with the Reverend J. V. L. Casserly. The rector's association with Professor Casserly led to occasional unique presentations at Christ Church of so-called “dialogue sermons,” which were not debates but rather a dual approach to interpreting a message from the scriptures.

During those years of building and reconstruction the vestry took the first step, in December 1958, to permit women to become members of that body. The authorizing resolution was happily adopted at the annual meeting of 1959 and Mrs. James (Molly) Lyles joined the vestry. A feature of church polity taken for granted now was a major change some 40 years ago. George Barrett continued to be associated with forward-looking church policies when in 1975, as a retired bishop, he ordained four women as Episcopal priests. According to Barrett's obituary, printed in the *New York Times* of December 7, 2000, one of the four women whom Bishop Barrett ordained, the Rev. Lee McGee, later a professor at Yale Divinity School, said that the 1975 ordination had been “absolutely pivotal in moving the leadership of the Episcopal Church to change its canon law” to permit ordaining women, and that “this was borne out in the rapid action of the church in 1976.”

As planned when the new buildings were put to use, the old stone church that had served the parish so well since 1901 was demolished and that now vacant southern wedge of the parish's property became a challenge. It was fitting that the destruction of the old building and the clearing of the land was financed in part by the Lawrence companies as part of the Gramatan Court sale, another gift and blessing from the parish's first benefactors.

The challenge was soon answered. Almost simultaneously with the demise of “the pretty little church” there was mention of using the “triangle” as a columbarium. The

start of that project and its success as hallowed ground and a garden of deep spiritual meaning has been a story in itself since the 1960's. There was some opposition, but Colonel Louis Frohman, a talented photographer and faithful member of the parish, put together a case statement that won much support. An alternative scheme to have the new close between the church and the buildings serve as a columbarium did not survive and Randolph Evans, the architect, drew a plan for the memorial garden that won the day.

As a result of the acceptance of the new buildings and a flood of requests for their use, Dr. Barrett appointed the church's first parish house administrator, Mrs. William (Emma) McRitchie, to be the executive officer of the demanding shake-down cruise of the new facilities.

In 1962, David Edman, the curate credited by the rector with the success of the parish Sunday school, resigned to accept a call to a parish in an upstate diocese. Dr. Barrett filled his place with Alan Chisholm from the Diocese of Los Angeles. Alan and his wife, Linda, brought new energy to the parish. They remain in the New York metropolitan area almost 40 years later, Alan as director of the counseling center of St. Bartholomew's Church in Manhattan and Linda as president of the International Partnership for Service Learning.

In November, 1959, four years after George Barrett took over the pulpit of Christ Church, the Rt. Rev. Horace W. B. Donegan Bishop of New York had occasion to write a cathedral dean in another state about Barrett's qualifications to be a bishop.

"He has all the qualifications required," Donegan wrote. "I believe he would consider himself a central churchman. If he were elected, Doctor Barrett would be in every sense a true Father in God and give irenic leadership to the Diocese."

When George Barrett advised the vestry in February, 1963, that he had been elected Bishop of Rochester, New York, the parish felt a wave of regret; his tenure had been a dramatic success in many ways. But they felt joy as well in having been part of his ministry and in losing him to a higher mission.

George Barrett's learning and experience led him to describe Christ Church's liturgical tradition in concise and touching terms in his farewell message in the *Spire* of late April, 1963. His serious tone and expression almost mirrors Harold Hohly's short treatise on "High Church" of some 15 years before:

"I had been told that the worship of Christ Church had never been entirely understood within the parish itself. It seemed both to transcend and to defy the conventional distinctions between high and low church. To some who came here from other parishes Christ Church appeared high, to others low. This condition still persists and

to me is an illustration of the fatuous unreality of many of our terms and divisions.”

After making a strong case for the Morning Prayer service on Sundays at Christ Church, a tradition that has slowly disappeared, the rector summed up some of the standards of his ministry and worship at Christ Church:

“Two principles, it seems to me, help make the worship of any parish valid and Christian. One is the principle of objectivity, in which we are more concerned with offering ourselves to God than with what we are getting for ourselves from any particular act of worship, an objectivity that makes us aware that we are on trial before God more than any liturgical or ceremonial practice is on trial before us.

“Another principle is that of corporateness, by which we understand that we worship together as members of a community, that we eat and drink together at a family table, rather than regarding ourselves as patrons of a spiritual notion counter or an ecclesiastical cafeteria.”

After the necessary approvals by the House of Bishops, George Barrett formally resigned as rector, effective May 11, 1963. Over 100 parishioners traveled to Christ Church Cathedral in Rochester for the ceremony of consecration. The vestry had named Charles W. Scott as priest in charge, and once again the search committee began its work. George Barrett had left a mission for the parish and his successors in Bronxville when he wrote in his study of the suburban church four years earlier:

“All of this bears some relation to one of the dangers suburban churches often share with other aspects of suburban culture, a tendency toward ingrown insularity. This is particularly true of a suburb concerned to maintain its identity while the surrounding areas are being increasingly engulfed by the encroaching expansion of the nearby city, when one-family homes are yielding to large apartment buildings and where the character of the population is tending to change. It is fairly hard to disentangle the legitimate desire of such a community to remain as it has been for several decades and the prejudice and snobbish fear that certain kinds of newcomers will lower the quality and change the tone of the area. These concerns will lead to lassitude on the part of the parish; they will become preoccupied with their own needs and less zealous for the world around them.”

Barrett felt that such an attitude could be overcome by emphasizing the other parish mission; by insisting that the annual outreach quota be paid in full, as Christ Church had always done, but also by “maintaining contacts with missionaries near and far, supporting special missionary projects over and above the quota and by encouraging citizens inside and outside the parish to study and consider the Christian implications of current community attitudes on social problems.”

The Challenge of Turbulent Times

RAYMOND T. FERRIS: 1964-1971



In the *Spire* issued on May 12, 1963, the day after George Barrett's consecration as Bishop of Rochester, Bronxville's priest in charge, Charles W. Scott, defined his goals for another interim period. Father Scott made it clear that with the help of the curate, Alan Chisholm, he would rely on the principles Barrett had set down to guide his congregation. The parish had reached a level of unity and good feeling that no one wanted to lose and Father Scott indicated that the interim period was no time to stand still.

Charles Scott had a quiet way of going about his ministry, but his tenure as priest in charge brought forth his best. It was as if the able man, who by then had been on Christ Church's staff since July, 1958, suddenly blossomed with the added responsibility. As a preacher, Scott's serene, shy demeanor gave way to creative and challenging sermons that highlighted his wit and deep faith plus his knowledge of the Episcopal Church. He will always be remembered, too, for throwing the church doors open to invite people in to pray on the afternoon of President Kennedy's death and for leading a packed memorial service on the day of the President's funeral.

Throughout this period, Father Scott, aided by Alan Chisholm and Robert Owen, kept the central core of the parish's liturgy and music thriving. The facilities of the new auditorium and parish house were gradually being decorated, furnished, and used wisely. Attendance at services held steady, pledge and total income improved by almost \$10,000 over 1963's totals, and diocesan quotas were met.

Meanwhile, a "calling committee" (the term "search committee" came along later), which was formed at the same vestry meeting that accepted George Barrett's resignation, quickly went to work and reached a successful conclusion within nine months.

Raymond Tuttle Ferris agreed to accept a call from Bronxville and to move there in the late summer of 1964. Ferris was instituted as the parish's sixth rector on October 4, 1964, by the Rt. Rev. Horace W. B. Donegan.

Ray Ferris was a graduate of Hobart College and the Episcopal Theological School. After a dozen years as a missionary, chaplain, and cathedral dean in the Panama Canal Zone, he had been the rector since 1954 of Christ Church in Nashville, Tennessee. He and his wife, Mary Kate, had been married since 1946 and were raising two daughters, one of whom became a priest of the Episcopal Church many years later.

Ray Ferris' tenure at Christ Church was complicated by the unrest that enveloped both the country and the Episcopal Church during the decade of the 1960's. His arrival coincided with a period when parishes were called upon to do more for outreach and when the first stirrings of the liturgical changes that ultimately resulted in a new prayer book were afoot. Training was available to parishes across the country to help them develop ways and means of raising the level of their giving beyond that achieved through the traditional Every Member Canvass. George Barrett had put forth a tough challenge: that Christ Church, as a leading suburban parish, should be in the forefront of missionary support and outreach programs beyond its own walls, almost on a dollar for dollar basis. In the world at large, Roman Catholics were coping with the deep-seated changes of Vatican II, and the United States was reeling from the impact of the Vietnam War and Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty.

Perhaps Ray Ferris created difficulties for himself when, as he had every right to do, he asked Charles Scott to leave his post as associate rector by the end of July, 1966. The rector was determined to build his own staff and had already hired the Rev. J. Donald Bane, from a post in Texas, as an assistant.¹² Father Scott had a strong following within the parish and that group erupted with angry letters to Bishop Horace Donegan. The files in the Cathedral archives are filled with rage and disbelief, but the bishop pointed out in his gracious replies that Ferris' action was not out of bounds. Charles Scott, in his equally gracious way, left Bronxville to serve as acting chaplain at Hobart College. He later returned to Manhattan where he served the national church, assisted at All Saints Church and worked as editor in the religious books division in the New York office of Oxford University Press.

Whereas Harold Hohly was able to focus attention on liturgy and George Barrett could focus on buildings, Ray Ferris was faced with a polarizing challenge before

12. On Easter Day, 1968, the entire parish was plunged into mourning when Donald Bane's wife died giving birth to their second child.

Ray Ferris' tenure at Christ Church was complicated by the unrest that enveloped both the country and the Episcopal Church during the decade of the 1960's.

he had had time to get the lay of the land. When the hospital workers went on strike at Lawrence Hospital in the winter of 1965, their angry, raucous demonstrations were something that Bronxville had never encountered. Many community volunteers pitched in to keep the hospital going. In one instance the strikers appeared at the Wall Street office of the hospital's chairman, William McRitchie, who also happened to be the senior warden of Christ Church at the time. Many parishioners were shocked when a group of strikers came to Christ Church unannounced and after the service were welcomed by the rector. Ferris probably had some silent admirers but the consensus of the parish appeared to have been that his actions were misguided. In the words of one parishioner: "He was trying to be helpful and it boomeranged."

In an August, 1965, letter written to a senior doctor who represented "old Bronxville," the rector expressed the anguish he felt in supporting the walkout:

"Behind all this are the struggles in which men are engaged in the twentieth century. It raises the question of the Church's ministry. Should we be concerned only with the misery of an individual? Or, knowing that the individual's misery may be caused by the tremendous social, economic and political circumstances in which he is caught, must we also be concerned about those structures? In this latter area the clergy are not professionals, neither are they any less competent than the average citizen."

Ray Ferris' leadership style managed to upset a number of factions within the parish. Despite elaborate plans, position papers, and organized campaigns, in spite of exhaustive presentations of budgets and agendas that were new to the parish, Ray Ferris encountered criticism. One colleague recalls the rector's liking for speed in administrative work. Perhaps his enthusiasm and drive gave way to disappointment and rejection when a plan did not go his way.

Christ Church was one of the first parishes to implement what was then called "trial use" in its regular services. In his eagerness to be progressive, Ferris may have pushed these controversial prayer book changes too quickly on a reluctant parish. In an attempt to bring the parish together using something called "situation ethics," a fad

The parish stood out for its level of parish-wide participation. The building struggles and mortgage-burning crusades gave Christ Church members a strong sense of community and shared effort.

sweeping the church in the late 1960's, Ferris managed instead to alienate more people.

Although the rector's stay at Christ Church never seemed to be a happy one, he worked hard at leadership and the parish had some notable achievements. In the late 1960's, Ferris was also active in the affairs of the diocese. He was not afraid to express an opinion or two. Much as he admired Bishop Donegan, he was strongly opposed to the campaign to raise substantial funds in the midst of poverty and urban turmoil to complete the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Early on in his stay in Bronxville he let it be known that he did not plan to remain in that pastorate for more than 10 years.

Despite missteps and hurt feelings, Ray Ferris established a good record at Christ Church. The parish survived despite a recession and the added expense for the maintenance and the heating of the parish plant opened so proudly in 1960. As expenses rose, outreach demands and the diocesan assessment increases based on the mission of the larger church came into conflict. Every Christ Church rector had wrestled with budgets. Ferris did his best to handle them. For the first time in its history, the parish told Bishop Donegan that they would only meet roughly half of their share of the diocesan budget. That situation, a thorn to many who felt that their parish should be a leader in meeting its obligations, continued beyond Ferris' tenure.

Christ Church had never been a wealthy parish, loosely defined as a parish with landed wealth, or a church endowed largely by wealthy families. Far from it; annual giving, pew rents in the early days, and stewardship campaigns were always the rule in Bronxville. The parish stood out for its level of parish-wide participation. The building struggles and mortgage-burning crusades gave Christ Church members a strong sense of community and shared effort.

It was only after 60 years of growth that the parish began to receive substantial gifts. Property in Dover Plains, first offered to the vestry by Dorothy Hayward in June,

1962, was deeded to the parish corporation a year later. The possible uses and benefits of the 110-acre Hayward property occupied the thoughts of both clergy and laity for a good portion of Ray Ferris' tenure. Some of the time involved practical matters, such as posting the property to make hunting and fishing off limits. Another problem concerned a local farmer who insisted that if Christ Church did not have enough money to fence its property, then his cows had a right to wander onto it.

Of course, the crux of the dilemma was how to carry the new asset financially and how to use the acreage effectively. Should it become a camp or a summer retreat? Should it be sold off in parcels to provide funds for outreach and parish operating expenses?

In the spring of 1971, the parish house project of 1960 had a balance outstanding of some \$127,000. Dorothy Hayward, always a devoted supporter of Christ Church, made an offer to buy back the property in Dover Plains for \$100,000, provided the parish raise the balance of \$27,000 and retire the mortgage. The funds were raised in short order and the Dover acreage reverted to a role as a bird sanctuary.

The mortgage was burned in a ceremony on April 18, 1971, a celebration equal to the "burning" of the debt on the church itself in 1953. In his sermon that day, titled "Setting the House on Fire," Dr. Samuel Terrien, a respected Old Testament scholar and a distinguished professor at Union Theological Seminary, gave the Christ Church congregation an uncomfortable challenge: "What is the use of beautiful stones, even gothically carved stones, if they serve in the end only to be an empty shell?"

Terrien went on to admonish that "...a church is made, not of stones but of people; that a shelter is good, if it remains a means towards an end but that the end is the living community, open to the world, a community whose *raison d'être* is not the preservation of some hallowed rite, even the sacrament of the Eucharist, but the saving of man and the healing of the nations."

While the new auditorium was ideal for parish events and amateur theatricals and the new kitchen proved a boon, it was evident from the time of Ray Ferris' arrival that the parish house, the converted apartment building, needed considerable renovation and repair. The Sunday school and youth programs of the parish, claiming nearly 400 members during the period of 1964-1971, did not use all the space. Throughout the decade its utilization became a major concern.

During the 1960's, the Diocese of New York reflected the changes and renewal going on throughout the Episcopal Church in the United States. Not only did the congregation try out the new liturgies issued in a booklet entitled, "Services for Trial

Use,” they also held extended discussions on the Episcopal theme of “mutual responsibility and interdependence.” There were early stirrings of the idea that the diocese was too large geographically, covering far too many parishes at great distances from the Cathedral. By the end of the decade and after much study, a reorganization into regions and inter-parish councils came about. Also in an effort to strengthen weaker churches in areas where attendance and membership had dwindled, the concept of “paired relationships” was tried. Christ Church, through the auspices of the archdeacon of a new region including Westchester County, established a relationship with Trinity Church in nearby Mt. Vernon. Vestry members held meetings, exchanged ideas, and assembled data but despite their best efforts the proposal did not bear fruit.

Volunteers from Christ Church in many cases reached out on their own without direct support from the parish. Notably though, the parish supported an agency in Tuckahoe, the Tuckahoe Community Action Program, an effort that drew the attention and praise of Bishop Donegan. In February, 1969, David Kendig, the director of this typical war on poverty organization, wrote the bishop:

“This letter is being written without the knowledge of either the priests or the laity of Christ Church, Bronxville, because I believe you should know personally of the wonderful Christian commitment and involvement on their part in the work of the Community Action Program during the last three years.

“We are a small and struggling agency serving an area of intense poverty in the middle of one of the most affluent areas of Westchester County. The federal funds which we receive are hopelessly inadequate to operate our program. Consequently last year we turned to the churches in the area for both financial and moral support. Christ Church, acting under Father Ferris’ direction, responded in an amazing way.”

Kendig then went on to tell Bishop Donegan of the youth programs, a boys and girls club, and cultural trips that were made possible by Christ Church’s outreach funds along with individual contributions from parishioners. Best of all, he concluded, the laity taking part did not seek publicity, did not try to tell the agency how to run their programs and “it is to the credit of the leadership of the Church that the members have become respected in Tuckahoe for their works, and not for their press releases.”

Efforts such as the Community Action Program and the dedication that parish members under the leadership of parishioner Mildred Marshall brought to the East Harlem Protestant Parish Tutorial Program, evolved towards the end of the 1960’s into a Diocesan-wide, designated funding system. Under this type of funding each parish budget may include monies set aside to help support agencies within their own parochial area.

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Despite the energy and the focus on the world beyond the parish, Christ Church was not happy. Even though Ray Ferris did not look for lengthy pastorates and said so, he still must have had many painful moments in Bronxville when faced with several attempts to force his resignation. Although the vestry continued to support the rector with numerous votes of confidence, he began to look for opportunities to move on. In September of 1968, for example, he wrote Bishop Donegan that he would be pleased “to consider a call elsewhere in the Diocese if you see fit to recommend me.”

In 1969, the rector took a positive step in hiring a young priest from New Jersey, the Rev. Mark Sisk¹³, who immediately provided support to the parish programs. Sisk became another able and constructive priest in charge when Ferris resigned in December, 1971, to accept a call in Toledo, Ohio. In light of the criticisms he endured and the fact that he died within a year after his leave-taking, Ferris’s farewell message to his Bronxville flock was poignant:

“I owe to the members of this congregation a great debt of gratitude for the devotion and loyalty which you have demonstrated during these years together. You have worked long hours, long months in the service of our Lord, and you did it willingly. You did it with enthusiasm. . . . It is easy to work as a priest at Christ Church. You know that no man can represent the mind and spirit of God all the time and you do not require it. The rector of Christ Church is free to be right or wrong and you folks just keep right on going to church, whichever way it is.”

13. Mark Sisk was elected XV Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York in September, 2001.

A Brueghel Canvas

CHRISTOPHER L. WEBBER: 1972-1994



y 1972, clergy deployment was becoming a more structured affair. A diocese would supply names of potential candidates and ask a parish to interview and study the backgrounds of these prospects, along with the names of any clergy whose potential for the job might be brought up outside their bishop's channels. By early spring of 1972, Christ Church's search committee had been given five promising names: William Heffner, Allan Jones, later a cathedral dean, Daniel Miner, Clark Oler, and Christopher L. Webber.

At nearly the same moment that Webber's name appeared on a search report to the Christ Church vestry, the Webbers, then with four children and starting their seventh year at St. Alban's in Tokyo, had decided they should be "in play" for a new post back in the United States. Christopher Webber's brother, also a priest, had let his brother know that Bronxville was "looking." In addition, Rick Wheeler, an international Citibanker and Christ Church parishioner who had attended St. Alban's in Japan, told the Webbers they would be hearing from his church in Bronxville.

In Christopher Webber's memoir of his years in Bronxville, a document that provides much background for our history, he indicated why he was inclined to look favorably on an overture from Christ Church:

"After my first year at General, Doctor Barrett resigned to become Rector of Christ Church, Bronxville. That was the first time I heard of the place. After my second year in Seminary, my second year tutor, Lloyd Patterson left the seminary to become a curate at Christ Church. And after my third year in seminary, Robert Crome, who had been President of our class, went to Bronxville as a curate. I also learned that

Ray Brown, the seminary organist, had at one time been organist at Christ Church...so I had not been to the place but I had certainly heard of it and a parish which had drawn that much talent to itself in so short a time must obviously be something very special.”

Soon Dorothy Steere, wife of the then president of the New York Botanical Garden, appeared at St. Alban’s and spent two days during a busy Holy Week with Christopher and his wife, Margaret (“Peg”). Dorothy Steere, wife of one executive and mother of another, wasted little time; she wired the search committee back in Bronxville that she had found the next rector of Christ Church.

Formalities followed. Father Webber came to the States, met the search committee and had a tour of the parish’s facilities and the neighborhoods it served. His guide stressed that Christ Church was not just there for Elm Rock Road or Locust Lane but also for surrounding areas of blight and poverty.

There was one glitch on the way to a call to Bronxville. Just before their summer hiatus of 1972, the Bronxville vestry extended an invitation to another priest, not one of the original five “promising names,” who initially accepted the call but later declined for health reasons. Meanwhile the Webber family, somewhat disappointed, looked about and summered with family in much loved northwest Connecticut.

The Bronxville search committee reconvened in September, another interview took place and on Election Day, 1972, while the country went overwhelmingly for Richard Nixon, Christ Church went for Christopher L. Webber. Webber was instituted at Christ Church in December, 1972, as the parish’s seventh rector.

Before his call to Bronxville, Father Webber had served first as a tutor and fellow of the General Theological Seminary in New York, as rector of the Church of the Ascension in the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn, and then as rector of Christ Church in Lynbrook, Long Island. From 1966 to 1972 Father Webber was rector of St. Alban’s Church in Tokyo, which is the English-language parish of the Anglican Communion in Tokyo and serves the foreign community of that city. He was also in charge of the Fellowship of St. Alban, the Japanese equivalent of the American College of Preachers.

The new rector’s reflections on his arrival tell us that he sensed that Christ Church was in a “downward spiral” of attendance and support. Father Webber thought it unfair to blame the decline on the Ferris ministry.

First off, the Episcopal Church in the United States was in quiet turmoil, facing change, change, and more change. Many faithful church people disliked the proposed new prayer book: “Since when do we want to kiss and hug each other at the Peace” was one battle cry. Ominous rumors suggested that women might be allowed to

“...so I had not been to the place but I had certainly heard of it and a parish which had drawn that much talent to itself in so short a time must obviously be something very special.”

be ordained deacons and priests. In mid-1974, 11 women were ordained as priests unlawfully in Philadelphia. Not too long thereafter, a past rector of Christ Church, now Bishop Barrett, ordained several other female deacons to the priesthood, a process that was not approved by the Episcopal Church until the General Convention of 1976. In 1977, early in Father Webber's tenure, widespread disapproval and shock resulted from the ordination by Bishop Paul Moore of a lesbian in the Diocese of New York. Sadly, the Episcopal Church was in a ferment that still exists in the church in the United States today.

The perceived decline in local attendance and giving was due to other reasons, as well. Christ Church's neighborhood was changing. The last vestiges of the founding families who had a proprietary interest in Bronxville's "little stone church" had almost disappeared. Dorothy Hayward, daughter of Christ Church's first rector; Grace Todd, daughter of an early Mayor of Bronxville, and a few other stalwarts remained. The village was now a thriving suburb, not a summer haven. Many of its citizens were Roman Catholic or Reformed or members of the Lutheran Church on White Plains Road. There simply were not as many Episcopalians around. Pastoral hospital calls reflected the trend. Some days, Lawrence hospital's census revealed no Episcopal patients at all.

Even more striking was the economics of the decade of the 1970's. Chris Webber wrote of the oil squeeze in his first years as rector:

“While motorists lined up for gas on alternate days, many parishes had to give up heating their buildings. Some churches stopped using their church buildings in the winter and held services in the parish hall. Christ Church never had to adopt such extreme measures but when the cost of heat became one of the most significant items in the budget instead of a minor one, it did mean cutting other budget items, including staff.”

Reduced staff meant less program. Christ Church went into debt in the 1970's and while certainly not unique, it was different in one respect, because the change in



Parish Life

(overleaf) CHRISTMAS PAGEANT, 1931 (see page 135)



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BROWN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

THE BRONXVILLE CHRISTMAS MYSTERY, an indoor pageant in three scenes written and produced by William C. Langdon, was first performed in the Christ Church parish house on Jan. 4, 1915, as a benefit for Belgium refugees. Scene three of Langdon's production evolved into the village pageant that we know today. The angel to the right is Margaret Langdon at age 16. Miss Langdon remained a parishioner at Christ Church until her death in 1991.

**THE BRONXVILLE
CHRISTMAS MYSTERY**

1914

Christ Church Parish House

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE BELGIANS

MONDAY, JANUARY FOURTH

Nineteen Hundred and Fifteen

Four-thirty in the Afternoon
Eight-thirty in the Evening

Tickets - - 50 Cents

The Doors Will Be Closed Promptly at 4:30 and 8:30.
No One Will Be Admitted After The Performance Commences.

BOOKS BY MAIL, BRONXVILLE, N. Y.



SUNDAY SCHOOL.
In the mid-1950's, Sunday school teachers Edith Scannell (at the blackboard) and Petrina Nelson oversee the art work of 4th and 5th grade girls in the basement of the old church.

MISSION WORK, 1931. *With the help of sexton Andrew Johnson, the supply department of the Woman's Auxiliary of Christ Church fill boxes to be sent to nine mission stations throughout the country.*



PAGEANT. Sunday school children in the early 1920's put on a pageant on the stage of the old wooden parish house (taken down in 1924).

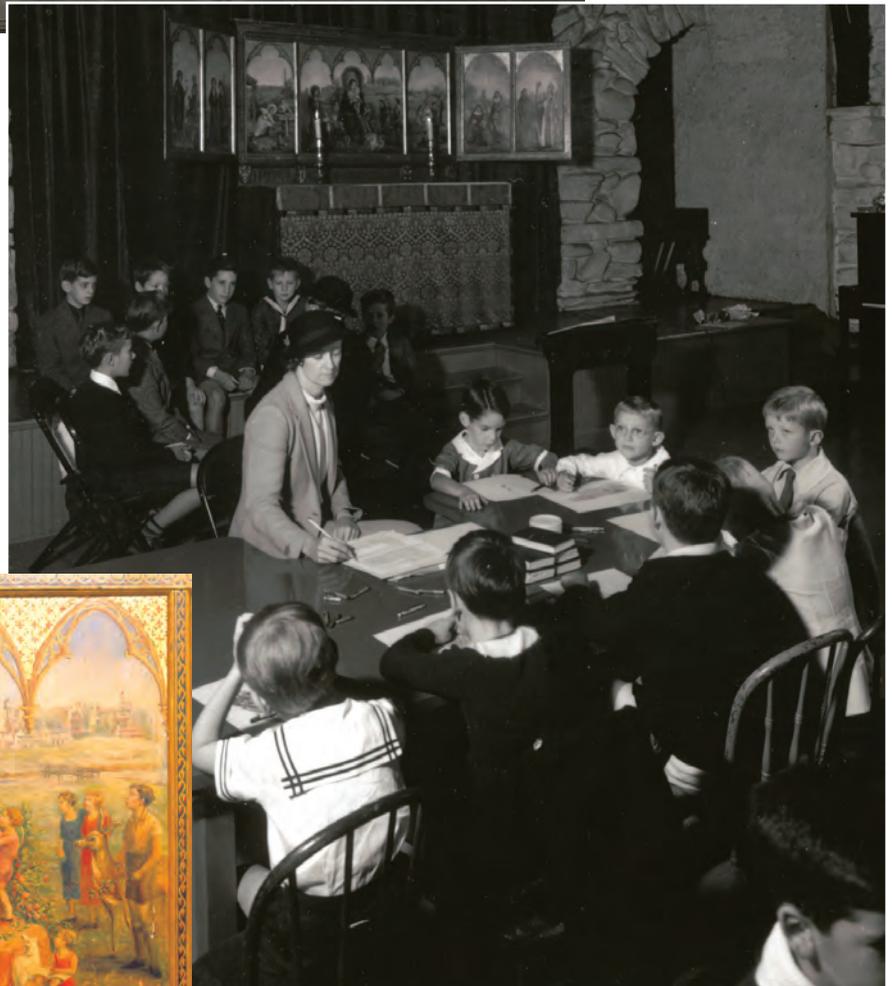


CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP DINNER, 1930, in the undercroft, given by the altar guild for the young people of the parish. Seated at the head table, second from left, is "Miss Jean" Wilson; to her right is Alfred Dressler, youth leader of the parish; to his right is the rector, Dr. Robinson. Facing left is the Rev. William Jarvis.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS
(below) in the former nave of the old church in the late 1930's. In the background is the children's altar with the original setting of the nativity triptych painted by Mary Wilson above it. (See below left and page 109)

IN THE CENTER PANEL of the triptych (below), the Blessed Virgin with the Christ Child is watched over by a guardian angel while children offer gifts. The little Scottie, Angus, belonged to the Rev. Harold F. Hobly, the fourth rector of Christ Church. The background includes many landmarks of the Village of Bronxville.





LAYING THE CORNERSTONE. On Nov. 1, 1925, the clergy, choirs and guilds of Christ Church leave the undercroft of the old church and process up Sagamore Road to the half-built new church for the laying of the cornerstone.

The Rt. Rev. William Manning, Bishop of New York (below center), presides over the ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone. To his left stand the Cuzzi brothers, building contractors, and to his right, the rector, Dr. Robinson. The clergyman in the background is Canon Pritchard of St. Mark's church, Mt. Kisco (also a Goodhue church), and hidden behind the rector is senior warden Frederick Geller.





IN FRONT OF THE NEW CHURCH. *The burgeoning Christ Church Sunday school, April 1931, poses on the steps of the church. The priest in the right background is the Rev. A. H. Styron, curate.*

INSIDE THE NEW CHURCH. *An elaborate Christmas pageant performed at the crèche service in 1931 by the young people of the parish.*





BREAKFAST after the 7:30 a.m. youth Eucharist, c. 1936. To the far left is the Rev. Morton C. Stone, associate, and to his left is the Rev. Harold F. Hobly, rector.

AFTER CHURCH, c. 1960. Note piles of snow to the left. To the right Ernest Beebe (hands in pockets) talks with William McRitchie and Florence Beebe. Mr. McRitchie and Mr. Beebe both served as senior wardens of Christ Church during the 1960's.





SUNDAY SCHOOL. In the early 1950's, a Kindergarten Sunday school class meets in the undercroft of the old church.

BREAKFAST in the undercroft of the new church after the early service in the early 1940's. Facing the camera (with glasses and cigarette) is vestryman Cap LaRoe and to his right, Mollie LaRoe and their daughter.



NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS of the Women of Christ Church, 1961-1962. Mrs. H. E. Bramston-Cook, president, shakes hands with retiring president, Katherine Burpee. Also in the picture left to right: Mary Jane Webster, Catherine Plumley, Betty Berry, and Ruth Doherty.



THE EVENING GUILD OF THE WCC, (below) 1960, meets in the conference room of the parish house to do their share of sewing. Seated in the foreground is Mrs. Ben Klein.



THE LAST SUPPER, (above) Bronxville version, 1951. The Rev. Morton C. Stone wrote, produced and directed six dramatic tableaux on the evolution of the Eucharist. Men of the parish played leading roles. Cameraman Peter Stackpole was on hand to record the production for an article which appeared in the March 1951 issue of *Life* magazine. Father Stone, (inset) using a two-handled Jewish laver, instructs the "apostles" in the washing of hands. In the Eucharist today, the ritual of the priest washing hands derives from this act.



HIGH SCHOOL CLASS meets with teacher David Schaffer, c. 1956. The group decided on discussion topics each Sunday, mostly having to do with adolescent issues, based on the Seabury series gaining popularity at the time.

THE CHRIST CHURCH PARISH PICNIC, (right) September 1959, an annual event held at the Boy Scout field. Fun, food and games were the order of the day.



WEDNESDAY MORNING SEWING SESSION of the Women of Christ Church, 1960. This once a month activity, followed by luncheon and a program, continued for many decades. Seated in the foreground, left to right, is Lucia Meigs Andrews, president of the WCC, Madeleine Flammer, long-time head of the Choir Guild, and Fanny McClintock.



CONFIRMATION. In the early 1960's a confirmation class poses in the auditorium with the Rt. Rev. Charles Boynton. Seated to his left and right are choirboys Toby Campion and Jimmy Sullivan. Dr. Barrett, rector, stands to the right in the picture. (right) The Rt. Rev. Horace W. B. Donegan confirms a young parishioner in Christ Church in the mid-1950's.



A NEW SET OF VESTMENTS and other items on display, c. 1960. Altar guild members, Elizabeth Bartlett and Meribab Starbuck (far left and third from the left), admire the embroidery along with parishioners.





CHRISTMAS BAZAAR. *In December 1960, in the new auditorium, the Women of Christ Church (WCC) show off some of the hand-made items to be sold at the upcoming Christmas bazaar.*

CONFIRMATION. *(right) A confirmation class poses in the undercroft in 1970. The Rev. Mark S. Sisk, curate, is on the left and the Rev. Raymond T. Ferris, rector, is on the right.*



CONFIRMATION. *Bishop Horace W. B. Donegan poses with the rector, Raymond Ferris, and curate, Donald Bane, and members of confirmation class on June 4, 1967. Altogether 33 young people and two adults were confirmed that day (three choirboys did not make it into the picture).*



REFUGEES. In 1976, refugees from Saigon, Vietnam, settle into their new life in the conference room of the parish house, converted for them into a small attractive apartment. Quyen and Phu Tuc Le lived in the apartment for a year and a half before moving to California and becoming successful American citizens.

ADVENT WREATH. (right) The Nov. 30, 1986, dedication of the advent wreath memorializes William Peterson, a former vestryman. The wreath was designed by Eugene Elliott and was made in the Samuel Yellin Studios. Elizabeth Buell, granddaughter of Mr. Peterson, lights the first candle with the rector, the Rev. Christopher Webber, standing by.



MARDI GRAS, 1970. A festive Mardi Gras with supper was celebrated for several years on the night before Ash Wednesday. From left to right are Pam Seaman, Martha Newcombe, Richard Walker (senior warden) as King, Pam Carter (now Foss) as Queen, and to the right, Sarah Clark. The little girl in the kerchief is not identified.





ELIZA CORWIN FROST CHILD CENTER provides children, ages 14 to 51 months, with a warm, caring and nurturing atmosphere. The Center is a memorial to Eliza Corwin Frost, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. Corwin Frost, who died at the age of three in 1973. (above) Students on recess bask in the sun on benches in the close. (right) Christ Church and the Center celebrated a fruitful 30-year partnership in 2003. Juli Arlt, the Center's director, sits in the center rear.



SUNDAY SCHOOL is still alive and well at Christ Church. Pictured is the first grade class in September of 2003. Teachers are (clockwise from top) Katie Elder, Karen Bowen and Mary Taylor Behrens.



ALL HALLOWS' EVE, 2003. Christ Church hosted a concert on Halloween, followed by a party in the Undercroft. More than 150 people of all ages attended, many in costume, to hear Bronxville's own a cappella group for High School age youth — SHAtcappella.

DOMESTIC MISSION TRIP. Each year Christ Church organizes a one-week domestic mission trip to work with needy communities. In 2003 the trip was to Carretta, WV, where a mobile home was remodeled.



PARISH PICNICS. Two Parish Picnics are held every year, one to kick off the church year in September, and one to end it in June. The parishioners furnish the food and drinks, and there is entertainment and activities for the children. (above) Parishioners socialize at the rectory on Elm Lane and (right) Father Gunn watches over the "bouncy castle."



ownership of the ancient power facility, Lawrence Park Heat Light and Power Company, provider for decades of heat and light to the parish, brought on several utility crises and painful solutions.

“I remember times when Lawrence Power went off line on Sunday morning,” said Father Webber, “and Bob Owen had to rush downstairs and get a capella music for the choir to sing! We finally installed our own heating system because Lawrence had become so expensive and unreliable.”

If there was a downward spiral at Christ Church, the new leadership did much to arrest it. In his first year, Chris Webber’s own meticulous statistics reported total attendance for 1973 at 17,985 as opposed to 13,664 for 1972; interestingly, the attendance count just six years before, in 1967, had been 22,691.

When Gordon Newcombe¹⁴ became senior warden of Christ Church in January, 1974, he wrote a fact-filled report to the entire parish. After a detailed explanation of income and expense, dwelling on how heating costs were eating up the budget, Newcombe closed with an eloquent paragraph that sums up the outreach efforts which Christ Church had made since George Barrett’s missionary zeal of the 1960’s:

“May I end this somewhat long epistle with the thought that we are called—each of us—to be stewards of the material gifts of God and to be so with responsibility and care. We are also called to be—as the Body of Christ—a redemptive community, one in which love and concern for each other and for those beyond our parish community are our most distinctive marks. Our corporate life together must be sustained and nourished and at the same time we must bear witness not only to ourselves but also to others.”

That parish “charge” acted as a keynote for the Webber years at Christ Church. The beauty and discipline of Christ Church’s liturgy continued, with gradual changes so that the services of the new Book of Common Prayer were all but totally accepted by the time the book itself was approved by the church in 1979. The Gospel and offertory processions, which caused much stir in the church at large, were actually parts of ancient rites that Harold Hohly and Morton Stone had instituted. By carefully preserving the solemnity and mystery of its special liturgy, enhanced by Father Webber’s thoughtful and educational preaching, Christ Church moved forward without jettison-

14. Gordon Newcombe, a Welshman by birth, emigrated with his mother to the United States at the age of eight, settling in Yonkers, New York. Soon after, he began attending Christ Church. A graduate of Kenyon College, with a postgraduate degree in history from Harvard University, he became headmaster of the Barnard School, and in 1973, provost and dean of Horace Mann School. In 1985, he became headmaster at Horace Mann until illness forced his resignation in 1990. He served three terms as senior warden of Christ Church, with a special interest in Christian education, and was for many years a devoted lay assistant.

ing the successes of its past history. As the Reverend David Newcombe, son of senior warden Gordon Newcombe, explained it: “Going to Christ Church never seems quite like church anywhere else.”

With that as a background, many outreach projects and revenue building moves were made in Chris Webber’s long tenure. Even before he was called, in the fall of 1972, the suggestion was made to the vestry that the parish should take a stand on the proposed housing plans for the development of Sunset Hill, site of the Hotel Gramatan, which had closed its doors and was about to be razed. Rumor had it that the hill would now be dotted with expensive condominiums, not at all the type of housing that Bronxville and its surrounding neighborhoods needed for seniors. Despite its ties to the Gramatan Hotel and their parallel history, the parish decided that fighting battles for affordable housing was beyond the province of Christ Church.

Another problem called out for the support and involvement of the congregation: Chris Webber called it under-utilization of space. Sunday school attendance and space requirements had dropped off. Sunday school classrooms that had been opened up by the Parish House project of 1960 were empty for most of the work week. Other than the fledgling Counseling Center of Southern Westchester, the 17 Sagamore Road apartments were nearly empty. In the Kensington building only the top floor apartments had long been occupied by clergy assistants: Charles Scott, the Chisholms, the Edmans, the Banes, and later by the Sisks. Another apartment on the ground floor of the Kensington Building served as home to Calvin Holland, a soft-spoken Virginian, who became Christ Church sexton in 1958 and served the church well and faithfully until he retired in January 1994 at the age of 64. Calvin was replaced by Noel Desmond, an Irishman, who was only the sixth man to hold the position. When Noel received his American citizenship, the parish celebrated that happy event with him, serving a special cake during coffee hour after the Sunday service.

+

“SEXTON WITH A MINISTRY OF HIS OWN”¹⁵

Laid off from his job at a Uniroyal tire factory in Detroit, Calvin Holland came to the area in the 1950’s to visit his sister and look for work. The employment he found, as sexton of Christ Church, became much more than a job; it became his calling.

15. From an article titled “Church Says Goodbye to Sexton with a Mission,” written by David Safford, Review Press-Reporter, December, 1993.

“He said to me once that my job is like yours—people need me at all times,” Chris Webber said of Holland. “His job is his ministry and he sees it as such. From birth to death. . . he is involved in the lives of people here.”

Webber recalled how Holland, after being hired, spent three months wandering through the buildings, tracing the electrical lines, the plumbing, and learning everything he could about the physical plant. “That typifies the man he is, that he takes the initiative to learn the job, and do it right,” Webber added. “I say, tongue-in-cheek, we’ll have to close the church when he leaves.”

When Holland’s assistant retired in early 1990, the church looked into hiring temporary help through a maid service, recalled Sharon Boles, a member of the vestry at that time. She said the owner of the service toured the buildings and remarked in amazement, “How does he do this by himself?”

Holland, who joined Christ Church as a member in 1958 even though he was raised a Baptist in Virginia, was a fixture at the church for nearly 35 years. During the last few years of his tenure his dog, Bugsy, a collie-shepherd mix, was almost always at his side. He was on call at all hours, in any weather, to take care of the buildings or to set up for meetings. His ministry, meanwhile, was something he pursued quietly, his work often going unnoticed. He might find work for people to do around the church to earn some money, or provide food and clothing for needy people. Often Holland helped people without fanfare, but with Webber’s knowledge and blessings.

“Getting the church building ready for the many organizations that meet at Christ Church is another part of his outreach,” Webber said. As part of his work and his love for the church, Holland was present at almost every service and event, including weddings and funerals, not only as a parishioner, but often as vergar, the person who leads the procession at the main service on Sunday mornings. Those duties were most important to Holland.

“There is an enormous dignity about him,” Webber said. “To see him head the procession in the church—the bishop would have a hard time doing it better.”

Looking back on his time in Bronxville, Holland spoke about a certain amount of destiny: “I was the 13th of 13 children. I had a little more freedom than the other children and (my mother) told me I would be the worst. I wish she could see me now,” Holland says. “God has been good to me since I’ve been here. I think God was the cause of me being here—he wouldn’t let me leave.”

Upon his retirement Holland returned to Virginia to be near family and places where he could fish and garden. To honor his long years of service, the church declared Jan. 9, 1994, Calvin Holland day, a celebration that began with a church service at 10 a.m. and ended with a dinner in his name.

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The utilization of space was answered in part in the fall of 1973 by a serious leap into childcare by the parish, creating a program which survives and thrives to this

day. The Corwin Frost family of Bronxville had been saddened by the death at the age of three of a beloved daughter. They sought a modest living memorial for their Eliza. After careful planning and an infusion of parish and community support, the Eliza Corwin Frost Child Center was opened to provide nursery care and some instruction to young children aged 18 months through 59 months during morning and afternoon hours. The program, which began with 16 children and has maintained a waiting list ever since, has been a success for the past 30 years. The children fill the parish house halls with happy faces and chatter and Christ Church members continue to lend their talents and participate on the steering committee that sees to the funding and quality of the memorial effort. In its annual report for the school year 2001-2002, the Center reported caring for 17 groups with six to 13 children per group, that meet either two, three or five times a week, under the direction of a staff of 18.

The heart of Christ Church was always its daily services and its Sunday worship. Its pastoral life centered on the needs, emergencies, and conflicts of its congregation. Chris Webber felt from the beginning that pastoral care was a first priority, a major mission for him. He persuaded the vestry to establish a neighborhood council program through which the parish was divided into areas with a chairperson in each. "The theory was that those individuals would keep me informed of pastoral needs in their neighborhoods and that I could call on them also to welcome newcomers, visit the sick and shut in and otherwise help build a stronger sense of community." During his tenure, Webber felt that the parish councils did build a pastoral ministry. He felt he was often able to learn of pastoral concerns early and avoid a breakdown of communication.

A brief history cannot do justice to all the activities that took place during Chris Webber's long tenure. He himself described the activity at Christ Church in those years as a "Brueghel canvas." Beneath the memorable and celebratory events at Christ Church during Chris Webber's pastorate, there was a strong undercurrent of financial needs and their relief, real estate plans and projects, capital campaigns, and finally the first receipt of substantial endowment funds.

In 1976, the parish celebrated its 75th birthday, and the 50th anniversary of the Goodhue church, with visitations by the diocesan bishop, the Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, and by the Most Reverend John Maury Allin, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States. On October 17, exactly 50 years after the first service in its new church, the celebration included a choral Eucharist, followed by an open house and guided tour of the church that attracted several hundred people. Daniel Hopping, an architectural historian who made his home in Bronxville, gave a lecture with slide

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photos on the design and construction of the present building. Displays of architectural renderings, early photographs of the first church, historical documents, vestments, and ecclesiastical furniture and vessels were exhibited in the auditorium.

Always on the cutting edge of change and experiment on the liturgical side of its ministry, Christ Church, thanks to the tutelage of Ray Ferris, Mark Sisk, and Chris Webber alike, adopted the proposed new Book of Common Prayer without the trauma and outcry that ran through some other parishes. By the time the “Book” was officially adopted in 1979, it was already accepted in Bronxville. The old 1928 prayer book was used for a time at the early morning Eucharist and then quietly dropped. In 1978 the parish sponsored an open meeting on the holocaust led by the rector and Rabbi James Perman of the Free Synagogue on White Plains Road in Mt. Vernon. In 1979, Christ Church tried another joint ecumenical venture with a long time neighbor, West Center Church, a Congregational Church on the edge of Cedar Knolls in Yonkers. Shared services and a common liturgy for summer use were worked out but the effort did not last.

“Through 1979, 1980, and 1981, attendance began to increase and things seemed to be going well,” Chris Webber reported. “The Rev. Neal Brown ended a seven year curacy in 1981 by moving to Florida and the church rented out an apartment to the Right Reverend George Edward Haynesworth, a bishop who had served in Central America and was now on the staff of the Executive Council in New York.”

By the time of his tenth anniversary, Chris Webber wrote, “the parish held a surprise party for me and presented me with two tickets to England and a crystal goblet etched with a picture of the church and the dates. They had been ten hard years in many ways with constant pressure to balance the budget and maintain the buildings. In spite of it we had accomplished a good deal, being involved in numerous outreach proj-

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ects, maintaining the parish tradition of music and liturgy and making far better use of our buildings....”

The rector, a number of years later, in 1985, featured the events of that one year in his report to the annual parish meeting. Guest speakers had included: Father Bruce Ritter, founder of Covenant House in Manhattan; Daniel Berrigan, a Roman Catholic priest active in peace efforts; the well-known author, Madeleine L’Engle; and a former assistant at Christ Church, Dean Mark Sisk of Seabury-Western Seminary. In the same year a lively youth group within the parish put on a “sensational” performance of “Godspell”; an amateur parish theatrical group produced “See How They Run”; the congregation put on a medieval banquet plus a 40th anniversary observance of Robert Owen’s tenure as Organist and Choirmaster.

Monetary concerns took varied forms at Christ Church. The vestry received a report in early 1980 that a parish safe and some Sunday collections had been stolen. Vestry minutes do not reveal whether the miscreant was ever caught or the money recovered. It was noted later in 1980 that it had been a good year, despite a litany of repairs needed within the parish buildings. The laity of the parish that year served up a series of dinners and tours of the parish facilities to invite and involve new members. They coincided with a major outreach effort that placed Christ Church in the housing business. By September of 1980 there were 21 people living in the parish house. Except for two clergy apartments, they were all tenants sponsored and placed by the Westchester Association for Retarded Citizens (WARC).

The parish’s collaboration with WARC, New York State’s “Willowbrook Decree,” and the efforts to have retarded citizens live and work in community residences and within communities like Bronxville is a lengthy success story in itself.

Working with WARC, the rector and senior warden, Dorothy Steere, took a

well-planned presentation to the vestry as a first step. There was some opposition but when it became clear that the parish and a majority of the vestry were for the proposal, the opponents stepped aside graciously. Then the parish leaders presented the plan to the neighborhood at an open meeting. WARC representatives discussed needs and financing. The opposition had their say, stressing the dangers to “property values” and expressing some animosity to the parish and its zeal for outreach. As Father Webber reported in his recollections: “I remember telling a man to sit down and behave himself, but it seemed that there was at least as much support as opposition and the Vestry decided to continue with the project.”

The program worked. It exists today. It slowly gained community support and acceptance that endures and provides the parish with a significant amount of income.

Upon reflection, looking back on Carlton Proctor’s and George Barrett’s visions for the Gramatan Court buildings, they pictured the parish using nearly all the space available for years into the future. They hoped, as did the parish, that stewardship and recurrent capital drives would enable the church to finish off the renovations that could not be made within the funds available in 1960. They had hoped also that the buildings would provide apartments for associate clergy or even a rector to live over the store (which the Webbers did from 1991 to 1994).

The emphasis on mission, so much a part of Dr. Barrett’s vision and leaders like Gordon Newcombe as well, came to the fore in new ways in these years. At a vestry meeting in 1984, vestry member Alice Ryan moved that the parish set aside a tithe of all bequests for mission and outreach. It was probably no coincidence that, shortly thereafter, the parish received its first major bequest, some three-quarters of a million dollars from the estate of Dorothy Hayward, daughter of Christ Church’s first rector. It is interesting to note that Miss Hayward’s concern also was for outreach; an equal amount went to the Church Mission to Seamen in Manhattan. While the endowment enabled the parish to help balance the books, the tithe for outreach enabled the parish to provide scholarships for several African students at the General Seminary over the next few years. These students, priests of the Anglican Communion from East Africa, came often to Christ Church on Sunday mornings to preach, preside at the Eucharist and share Sunday lunch at parishioners’ homes.

It was in these same years that the Vietnam War came to an end and the country was faced with a major influx of refugees. Acting on less than 24 hours’ notice, the rector proposed to the vestry that the parish use a meeting room and adjoining bathroom in the Kensington building as an apartment for a refugee family. Shortly there-

after, a Vietnamese family arrived and church members rallied around to provide furniture and clothing and help in finding employment. Quyen and Phu Tuc Le and their infant daughter spent nearly a year in Bronxville before moving to California and becoming an American success story with good jobs in the burgeoning computer industry and a comfortable house in a California suburb. They were followed by a Cambodian family, the Ploeungs, whose adaptation to American life was slower and more difficult, but, again, with support from a variety of parishioners, led them on to a steady job and good housing in Yonkers.

With the advent of the Dorothy Hayward legacy in 1985 and others not long afterwards, Christ Church's fiscal fortunes turned upward. The slings and arrows of pledge drives and operating expenses continued on but how fitting it is that a legacy from the family of the church's first rector gave a certain permanent asset strength to the parish.

Under Chris Webber's leadership, Christ Church, in the eyes of an experienced educator, witnessed spiritual growth. Alice Ilchman, then president of Sarah Lawrence College, wrote of her rector in honor of his tenth anniversary in Bronxville:

"Now the sermon is a wonderful period of time; it is sustained silence, uninterrupted by children and telephones. Over the years I have gotten used to using the sermon for my own particular purposes such as sorting out the problems of my work or arranging a whole sequence of holiday menus. Father Webber, however, compels, demands and requires that we engage with him in the work of his sermon. He insists that we grow. I do not promise that I have never thought about the financial problems of Sarah Lawrence College during the sermon, but Chris, you do make it hard."

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STEWART MACGREGORY, SACRISTAN EMERITUS

Stewart MacGregory became interested in "church things" as a youngster, first as a boy chorister and later as an acolyte and crucifer at Trinity Church in Norwich, Connecticut. While in grade school, the priesthood beckoned and Stewart wrote away to all the Episcopal seminaries, not realizing one had to go to college first.

In 1933, a traveling stock company appeared in Norwich, and Stewart was hooked. He became an apprentice with the company, and also was instrumental in starting a drama club at his high school.

After high school, he enrolled in Emerson College in Boston, played in many productions and studied speech and acting. Summers were devoted to stock companies, and Sundays to acolyting at various Boston Episcopal churches. It was at Emerson that Stewart met Bette Moore, a fellow drama student. In 2003,

they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.

After college, Stewart landed a job at NBC in New York City where he continued to work, first in radio and later as a production manager for NBC Television, until his retirement in 1982. There were years of military service and overseas duties while also assisting post chaplains.

Stewart and Bette started attending Christ Church in 1959 and not long after, Stewart became a lay assistant. His love of the ceremonial is well known to all. He served continually from 1961 to 2003 as a lay reader, sub-deacon, director of lay readers and acolytes, and sacristan. He is especially proud that during his tenure he trained 138 acolytes.

Stewart also served on the vestry, is well-known for his roles in various Christ Church dramatic productions over the years, and perhaps, most of all, for his engaging sense of humor and ability to mimic in dialect the famous and the occasional Christ Church parishioner.

In honor of Stewart's 80th birthday the "Vestry" was restored and a plaque placed therein, commemorating his long service to Christ Church.

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Although Chris Webber's rectorship was the longest tenure of Christ Church's seven rectors and his service and the terms of his vestries did not experience any fatal breaks in leadership, nor leaves of absence, his years as rector did record one serious attempt by a small dissident group to remove him or force his resignation. Fortunately by then the Episcopal Church at the national level had developed procedures and management guides to deal with conflict. Conflict management assisted parishes and helped vestries resolve discontent and battles over criticism of pastors.

An archdeacon of the diocese, a post recreated under the reorganization of the 1970's, was invited to act as a mediator. Father Webber's supporters stressed ministry, "the care given to particular people in their times of need, pastoral care, sermons and teaching." Ministry was Webber's strong suit and the parish remained in his care.

Chris Webber recollects in his memoir, speaking of his return from a sabbatical at the end of 1993:

"I came back to find that no progress had been made on the capital campaign and it must be noted, there was no unanimity on the Vestry on the possibility of raising the funds needed. I had come back with every intention of finishing out another three years as the rector but the lack of progress on the needed campaign meant those years would be spent largely on financial matters and that did not thrill me."

The rector was 62; the minimum retirement age set by the Church Pension Fund had been lowered and was attractive to clergy of a certain age and length of serv-

ice. Chris decided he could retire with his wife Peg to northwest Connecticut, to a life of study and writing, perhaps even a country pastorate. The prospect made good sense and on March 15, 1994, the rector announced his resignation. When his resignation took effect at the end of June, Chris Webber was by then the rector with the longest tenure in Bronxville. In a most fitting way, his ministry concluded with the dedication of three sets of clerestory windows honoring artists, writers and musicians, the latter in honor of Robert Owen whose 45-year tenure as organist and choirmaster of Christ Church had ended in 1988, capped by a festal Evensong and celebration with organists from neighboring churches and musicians from Sarah Lawrence College taking part.

Now living in semi-retirement in Sharon, Connecticut, Chris Webber still leads an active ministry and continues to write and publish critical and liturgical studies. Father Webber is known as a teacher and preacher who occupied a “bully pulpit” in Bronxville.

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REVELATION WINDOWS

The Revelation Windows consist of nine lancet windows arranged in groups of three, which celebrate the roles of art, music and literature as sources of God’s revelation in the world. Their ability to move us occurs when three elements are present: the artist’s vision, the viewer’s perception, and Light, without which illumination and meaning would be impossible.

The windows were created by renowned stained glass artist, Ellen Miret, fabricated at the Roblf Studios in Mt. Vernon, New York, and completed in 1994. Prior to that, the clerestory windows on the north side of the church consisted only of the three lancets on the far left dedicated to the prophet Isaiah. The unfinished windows were to be assigned to the other major prophets, but when Robert Owen retired from his 45-year ministry as organist and choirmaster, the vestry voted to dedicate a music window consisting of three lancets in his honor. At that point the remaining windows were redesignated as “Revelation Windows,” to highlight the crucial roles of art, literature and music in the life of faith. The Rev. Christopher Webber and Robert Owen collaborated on the content of the lancet windows, choosing prominent Anglican writers, as well as artists and artisans who had an essential role in shaping Christ Church. Sensitive to the spirit of each of the people honored in the windows, Ellen Miret created windows of astonishing beauty and variety.

The first lancet in the art window pays homage to Samuel Yellin, a master ironworker and craftsman, responsible for altar cross, candlesticks and several other furnishings in the church. The architect’s square and plumb can be seen in the second lancet which commemorates Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, the

architect of Christ Church. The final art lancet recalls the work of Episcopal artist, Allan Rowan Crite, and reflects the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance and the African American community which provided the settings for many of Crite's illustrations.

The three lancets in the literature window incorporate words from three prominent Anglican writers: John Donne, Evelyn Underhill, and T.S. Eliot. In Ellen Miret's composition they form a triptych in which the focal point is the Underhill window, with the simple words "the real" inscribed below the glass oval tinged with crimson. The real is that vision of God within the full reality of human life. As Underhill learned through experience, the mystical vision is not a bloodless spiritual journey to the summit, but one that is costly, the product of desire, suffering and struggle. Each of the three writers knew and wrote about the struggle intimately: Donne, as a priest, poet and preacher, Underhill as a spiritual director and authority on mysticism, and Eliot as a poet.

The music window honoring the ministry of Robert Owen pays tribute to French composer, Olivier Messiaen, who influenced and inspired Owen. The cubist design of the first lancet suggests the harsh conditions of the concentration camp where Messiaen was interred when he wrote *Quartet for the End of Time*. The second music lancet which bears Robert Owen's name incorporates annotations of Gregorian chant from the composer's "Death and Resurrection." The third lancet contains the opening measures of "Transports of Joy" from Messiaen's *Ascension Suite*.

Inspired by the Revelation Windows, Hondi Duncan Brasco, director of the Center for Spiritual Growth at Christ Church, embarked on a book project about the windows and began a creative dialogue with Ellen Miret. After 9/11 their work took a different form, which resulted in a spring 2004 exhibition at the Gallery of The American Bible Society, at 61st and Broadway in New York City, called *Images in Reflection: A Collaboration of Art and Prayer*. Here, the Revelation Windows, which had been the original impetus for the two women's meeting, had a second life, when six of the lancets from the literature and music windows appeared as a larger than life scrim, created from photos of the windows. The Revelation Windows had made it to Broadway where New Yorkers and visitors were able to have a glimpse of the remarkable windows from Christ Church.

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Celebration and Renewal

CHARLES J. MINIFIE: 1995-2003



Among Chris Webber's more radical (for Bronxville) contributions to Christ Church's pastoral leadership was the employment of several women priests, in the years when people still grumbled over the reality of female priesthood. The acceptance of women curates and assistants was not always wholehearted but in 1982, the Rev. Priscilla Wood accepted Bronxville's call and after several years of successful ministry left to become rector of an Ohio church. The Rev. Lynne Dawson Kochtitsky served the parish from 1986 to 1990, and the Rev. Karen Henry became associate rector in 1992, filling in nobly for Webber during his sabbatical. Under the rules of the search process, however, Henry could not be considered either as an interim or as a possible pastor for Christ Church.

While the Rev. George Easter, a retired priest who commuted from upstate New York for long weekends on duty at the parish, and a strong vestry kept Christ Church on course, the search process began. The current procedures suggested for clergy employment include the compilation of a list of promising clergy whose curriculum vitae and experience appeared to fit the special parish profile of the church that was looking. Therefore Christ Church's search committee set out to draw such a description together.

By October, 1994, the search committee had prepared a "profile" which stirred up some controversy. For example, how significant was the requirement that a new rector be friendly? But the profile, even in draft form, is valid today as a description of Christ Church on the cusp of its first century. The writers convey a sense of urgency when they describe Chris Webber's resignation and the departure soon thereafter of Karen Henry:

“...We feel (fairly we think) that Christ Church has been in an interim status since the rector’s sabbatical began. We started that period under a familiar but still ‘interim’ priest, full of plans and enthusiasm but after eighteen months we are feeling the strain of being without a leader for so long. We are fortunate to have strong, community-based wardens and a committed vestry. But many projects (notably the capital funds campaign) are stalled until a new rector can be found.”

The profile cried out for an extrovert, a fundraiser and a preacher. There did not seem to be enough time for the profile and a list of candidates to grind along.

The eighth rector of Christ Church, originally approached as a possible interim, materialized in the person of the Rev. Charles J. Minifie, who was already serving as an interim rector of a large suburban parish, three times the size of Christ Church, in Summit, New Jersey.

Charles (Chad) Minifie had had a notable career extending to both coasts of the United States, from an assistant’s post at St. Thomas Church on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan to a pastorate in Oregon and seven years at Trinity Church, Newport, Rhode Island. He had cemented his talents and his reputation as a fundraiser with positions at the Hartford Seminary, and at Mount Holyoke College. His leadership as president and warden of the College of Preachers in Washington, D.C., had literally brought that institution back to life.

The process of finding a new rector, after some negotiation, came to a sudden halt. Chad Minifie was called to Christ Church’s pulpit and its basket of challenges: to restore leadership, to raise the capital needed to renovate and maintain its buildings, and to restate and expand Christ Church’s role in its community.

The search committee and its profile had spelled out the new rector’s most important challenge, above all the tasks of money and outreach. The beauty and medieval artistry of Bertram Goodhue’s church still demanded attention.

The new rector wasted no time. Chad and his wife, Dorothy (Dottie), rolled up their sleeves and began renovating the kitchen of the newly purchased rectory at 39 Elm Lane, which soon became a focal point of parish social gatherings. In 1999, Dottie took over as parish secretary, managing the church office and generally lending support to her husband whenever it was needed.

Two years after Chad Minifie’s institution in March, 1995, the parish received a massive preliminary study of the capital and maintenance needs of the parish’s physical plant. The total sum required was in excess of three million dollars. The master plan, according to Minifie, “laid everything out for the parish; some of it we had to do

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immediately, some of it was dreaming, some of it was 'it would be nice if,' and that's the road map we have followed ever since, but we had some bumps along the way."

As if to underline the urgency of attending to the church's infrastructure, the spire, successor in 1925 to the tiny wooden cross that stood on the peak of the old stone church, had to be taken down before it fell down. Years of water damage, aging dried wood and the appetite of post beetles had destroyed its underpinnings. Depreciation and danger duly noted in more than one vestry minute came to life in early December, 1997, when high winds caused the spire to sway dangerously.

Minifie recalls: "That was probably the most frightening week I ever spent here. We continued to have high winds all week, I continued to watch the thing sway, and it took five days to get the scaffolding up and to secure the spire to it. Luckily we'd begun to put into place what we needed to do in order to fix the spire. We just had to collapse it all and make it happen in a week as opposed to a three or four week period."

By December 17, 1997, the spire, a village landmark, a note of serenity and peace for many citizens and commuters over the years, was gone. But the spire was such a landmark and symbol that the community responded generously. As if to crown the parish's renewed place in its community, Chad Minifie and the Christ Church congregation, with considerable financial support from the village (two of the first checks to arrive were from the Reformed Church and St. Joseph's Church), were able to raise the sum of \$400,000 to cover the replacement costs for the spire. On December 18, 1998, one year and one day after the spire was taken down, the temporary cap was replaced by a gleaming new copper spire.

"Steeple and spires have been constructed over the ages as beacons and fingers pointing to God," the Rector wrote. "Most important as a guide for the new century, the new spire will serve as a reminder to the people of Bronxville to continue to look

upward and beyond themselves.”

The next job was to raise the money needed to continue the renovations called for by Christ Church’s master plan. Instead of attempting to raise the entire \$3 million necessary to cover every expenditure outlined, the vestry opted to set a goal of \$1,060,000.

“Looking back,” said Minifie, “the capital campaign was a benchmark. We had an inferiority complex about ourselves. We pursued the capital campaign in the fall of 1998 and ended up raising \$1.4 million. It was a real turning point for this parish because I stopped hearing comparisons to the Reformed Church; the congregation got larger and larger; we began to talk about adding staff. Anne Timpane’s wonderful music program was taking off and we had two children’s choirs, two hand bell choirs, and a great adult choir. The word around town was that we had something going here.”

For the first five years of Chad Minifie’s rectorship, while grappling with financial restraints, he served the parish as the only priest. In September, 2000, the Rev. S. Elizabeth Searle joined the staff as associate rector. A graduate of Harvard Law School, Liz began her career as a lawyer in a New York City law firm and then for the city of New York before going to Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Prior to coming to Bronxville, she was assistant rector of All Saints Church in Manhattan. Liz Searle started several popular new programs here. The Sunday evening Come As You Are Eucharist (CAYA) quickly developed a devoted congregation, while Heritage Teas for the homebound elderly members of the parish and Supper Clubs for small groups were both successful from their inceptions. She was a gifted preacher and a compassionate pastoral counselor.

After Robert Owen’s retirement in 1988, Geoffrey Clark-Smith took over as organist and choirmaster and served until 1996. Clark-Smith, who began his love of music as a choirboy in his home church, earned a bachelor of music degree from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. Before coming to Bronxville, he served as organist and choirmaster of Christ Church in Shaker Heights, Ohio, and at St. Paul’s in Fairfield, Connecticut.

Anne Timpane joined Christ Church as music director and organist in September, 1996, with a mandate to expand its music program. Timpane, who graduated magna cum laude from Westminster Choir College and earned a master of music degree from the Manhattan School of Music, had previously served as assistant director of music at St. Columba’s Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C., assistant organist at New York City’s Brick Presbyterian Church, and assistant director of music at

Christ Church in Greenwich, Connecticut. Thanks to a generous 1997 donation of three octaves of Malmark Handbells, Timpane was able to start two hand bell ensembles, the Gallery Ringers for adults, and the Sanctuary Ringers for children, and expanded the children's choir.

In 2002, Timpane resigned because of increasing family responsibilities and Christopher Wells was hired as organist and director of music. Wells had an undergraduate degree in organ performance from the Conservatory of Music at Oberlin College and received his master's degree in organ from the University of Michigan, where he also served as assistant organist of Christ Church Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills. Expanding on Anne Timpane's initiatives in Bronxville, Wells injected new vitality and energy into the music program. In 2003, he reinstated the Royal School of Church Music chorister training program called Voice for Life for grades two through eight, and began directing Sha!Capella, an a capella group for high schoolers. A concert series has featured renowned musicians such as the Men and Boys Choir of St. Thomas Church in Manhattan.

A yearlong Centennial celebration was planned to highlight Christ Church's past achievements and its future vision. The official kickoff of the centennial took place October 15, 2000, the Sunday closest to the date of the first service parishioners held in Bronxville in 1900. The Right Rev. Richard Grein, Bishop of the Diocese of New York, presided at the festival service that featured two pieces of music commissioned for the occasion: an anthem by English composer, Richard Shephard, and an organ postlude by Philip Moore, organist of York Cathedral in England. A number of guests connected with the history of the church were present. A special exhibit of photographs assembled from the archives by Patti Owen reminded the congregation of the remarkable growth of the parish over its 100 years' existence.

Other events during the year included special musical performances and the reissue in CD form of organist emeritus Robert Owen's recordings from the 1960's and 1980's. The centerpiece of the year was Outreach 100, intended to include every member of the parish in eight different community projects including Habitat for Humanity in Yonkers, Project Family in Mt. Vernon, and the Marc Project (an after-school program in math, art, reading and cultural awareness) in the Bronx. A Bronxville house tour, held on May 5, 2001, raised over \$25,000 for local charities. A beautiful, full-color brochure of the church was published.

The Centennial celebration culminated with a visit on Sunday, April 22, 2001, by the Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. George L. Carey, 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury, and

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his wife, Eileen. The Archbishop presided at confirmation on Sunday morning, and was the honored guest for a gala candlelit dinner held in the nave of the church on Sunday evening.

Carleton Proctor, in his 1959 memoir outlining Christ Church’s building program at mid-century, mentioned one item that could not be financed at the time. “The elevator, planned for the new connecting structure between the Sagamore and the Kensington buildings, must await a special angel and until that hoped for miracle, little children and old men must walk up four long flights of stairs.” The need for an elevator did not go away. Finally, as the Centennial approached, that angel appeared and it had a very familiar face.

Dorothy Osborne Steere, who served as Christ Church’s first female senior warden among many other posts, had been an important member of the parish and its community for nearly half a century. Her family, spearheaded by Dorothy’s son, William C. Steere, Jr., donated the bulk of the money needed to finance the Dorothy Osborne Steere lobby and elevator. An imaginative solution to the placement of an elevator was devised that would carry people from the Kensington Road lobby to the auditorium and to the level of the church itself. Another wonderful feature of the new lobby was the moving of the stained glass window of The Last Supper, hidden behind the reredos above the main altar since 1937, to its new location above the lobby’s entrance. The lobby today is also graced by an oil painting of Dorothy Steere, acclaimed by all as a remarkable likeness. Although Dorothy was too ill to attend church in person some of the Centennial year, she was always eager to have news of the lobby-elevator project and, according to the rector, she was particularly looking forward to the Archbishop’s visit.

“I took Dorothy communion on the Thursday before and she really rallied,” said Minifie. “She had had her nails done, her hair was done, and she was looking for-

*The Centennial celebration culminated with
a visit on Sunday, April 22, 2001, by the Most
Rev. and Rt. Hon. George L. Carey,
103rd Archbishop of Canterbury...*

ward to the Archbishop's coming. Then Sunday morning one of her caretakers called to say Dorothy had taken a turn for the worse and she would not be able to attend the service or the dinner. So I said, we'll put Plan B into effect; I'll bring the Archbishop to see her. Before the dinner that evening George Carey and I went over to see her and he had a nice visit and a prayer with her. I joked and said, 'How many people are going to believe that you entertained an archbishop in your bedroom?' She laughed; Dorothy had a wonderful laugh; I'll never forget that laugh as long as I live."

When Minifie received the phone call at 5:45 the next morning that Dorothy had died, her daughter-in-law asked if he wanted to come over to say a prayer: "I said, I think whatever I do will be superfluous; the Archbishop of Canterbury has already blessed her. Anything else would be anticlimactic!" The next Sunday's entire 10 A.M. service was dedicated to Dorothy Steere's memory.

On Easter Day, 2002, the Dorothy Osborne Steere lobby and elevator were dedicated. On the program for the day was a phrase from Proverbs that aptly summed up this great lady: "A merry heart doeth good like medicine."

What was begun in the 1920's under the watchful eye of Charles Robinson, who supervised even the smallest detail of the construction of the church envisioned by Bertram Goodhue, was completed under the diligent command of Chad Minifie. Senior warden, James Clarke, who served on the vestry during much of Minifie's tenure, summarized the impact of Christ Church's eighth rector:

"Chad came at a time when we needed someone with his skills and he has done a great job from my perspective. He has been a very careful steward of a growing church; a huge percentage of the current active members are new within the last ten years. One of his strengths is that he pays attention to all the details but also has respect for the liturgy and tradition of Christ Church. He pays attention to outreach and its importance. He puts enormous energy into taking care of the physical plant. He has paid

attention to fundraising so we have money to do things. The number of new programs is enormous, which is even more important than that the roof doesn't leak. Any way you measure it, the church has grown dramatically since Chad arrived."

Chad Minifie's decision to retire to a less active life in June, 2003, spurred the Parish into immediate action to find a new rector. At the same time Christ Church embarked on an interim year under the care of the Rev. Dr. William Rich, the Rev. S. Elizabeth Searle, and the Rev. Daniel Gunn; as it turned out, a perfect team.

The Rev. William "Bill" Rich was not unfamiliar with Christ Church; his sister Liz Folberth was a longtime parishioner. A graduate of Williams College, Yale Divinity School, and Union Theological Seminary, where he obtained a doctorate in religion and psychology, Father Rich also came with glowing references and high recommendations. In a very short time he became a thoughtful leader and a wise counselor. A letter to the parish from the wardens and vestry dated June 10, 2004, spoke of his pastoral presence throughout the year, the grace and dignity with which he presided over worship, his skillful mentoring of the complexities of the search process, and most of all, his love for the congregation.

In May, the parish bid farewell to Mother "Liz" Searle. Her departure after almost four years of ministering to the parish, left many feeling bereft. Soon after, the congregation once again said their goodbyes, this time to Father Rich. In many ways, the year seemed so short but the accomplishments were great. Father Rich's ministry set the parish on course for the future, as Christ Church moves forward, into its second century, to do Christ's work.

+

THANKS BE TO GOD

+

RECTORS OF CHRIST CHURCH

Richard Hayward	1901-1904
Albert D. Willson	1905-1920
Charles W. Robinson	1920-1932
Harold F. Hohly	1933-1954
George W. Barrett	1955-1963
Raymond T. Ferris	1964-1971
Christopher L. Webber	1972-1994
Charles J. Minifie	1995-2003
Michael A. Bird	2004-

ASSOCIATE CLERGY OF CHRIST CHURCH

William Epiphanius Wilson	1898-1916
William Walter Smith	1900-1901 (Priest in charge)
Charles Wellington Robinson	1916-1920
William Oscar Jarvis	1923-1930
Arthur Styron	1930-Sept. 1931
Carl Bothe	Jan.-Oct. 1932
John A. McDonald	Sept. 1932-1934
Albert W. Hind	Jan.-March 1933
Aubrey Percy Nelson	1934-1938
Morton Charnleigh Stone	1934-1956
	Priest in charge 1954-1955
Owen C. Thomas	1950-1951 (Ministry to college students)
Harvey A. Guthrie	1954-1955
Robert W. Crome, Jr.	1956-1958
Lloyd G. Patterson, Jr.	1956-1958
Charles Wheeler Scott	1958-1966
	Priest in charge 1963-1964
David A. Edman	1959-1962
Alan Laird Chisholm	1962-1965
J. Donald Bane	1966-1969

Edwin (Mike) J. Rooney	1966-1969
Mark S. Sisk	1970-1972
	Priest in charge Jan.-Nov. 1972
John G.W. Zacker	1973-1974
Neal H. Brown	1975-1981
Priscilla P. Wood	1982-1985
Lynne Dawson Kochtitsky	1986-1991
Karen E.J. Henry	1992-1994
George H. Easter	Sept.-Dec. 1994
Jacques P. Bossiere	1996-2000
S. Elizabeth Searle	2000-2004
William W. Rich	Interim 2003-2004
Daniel C. Gunn	2002-

WARDENS OF CHRIST CHURCH

Robert Webb Morgan	1901-1911 (died in office)
John G. Quimby	1901-1907
William H. Thacher	1907-1926
Frederick Geller	1911-1926 (died in office)
J. August Mitchell	1926-1933
Albert E. Stratton	1926-1932
Harvey C. McClintock	1934-1941
Charles Sperry Andrews	1933-1954 (named Warden Emeritus)
George Burpee	1942-1951, 1954-1957
Edwin K. Bertine	1952
Herbert P. Brown	1953-1957
A. Elliott Bates	1954-1959
Edwin Russell	1960-1965
William A. McRitchie	1958-1965
Ernest C. Beebe	1966-1970
Robert R. Chase	1966-1969
Richard O. Walker	1970-1973
Gordon I. Newcombe	1971-1976
Dorothy O. Steere	1974-1979, 1982

Richard H. Gregory, Jr.	1977-1981
William B. Elmore	1980-1982
Richard Wheeler	1983-1984
Thomas E. Harrison	1983-1986
Gordon I. Newcombe	1988-1989
Robert O'Connor	1985-1991
Thomas Ruhm	1991-1996
Sharon Boles	1994-1995
Paul Sullivan	1996-1997
Andrew Garvey	1997-1999
James Clarke	1998-2004
Colleen McMahon Sica	2000-
Arthur Nagle	2004-

ORGANISTS

Jean L.V. Wilson	1902-1904
W.R. Middleton	1905-1912
Eleanor M. Cumings	1912-1915
Mrs. Walden Laskey	1916
W.R. Middleton	1917-1918
C. Stewart Dunscombe	1918-1920
W.R. Middleton	1920-1921
Frank Howard Warner	1921-1929
Alfred Dressler	1930-April 1931
W.R. Strickland	May-Oct. 1931
W. Douglas Francis	Nov. 1931-1937

CHOIRMASTERS

Cecil Wilson	1902-1909
George Matthew, Jr.	1910-1938

ORGANIST /CHOIRMASTERS

Ray Francis Brown	1938-1943
Robert G. Owen	1943-1988
Geoffrey Clark-Smith	1988-1996
Anne Timpane	1996-2002
Christopher Wells	2002-

Acknowledgments

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Heartfelt thanks to a group of dedicated women of the parish who researched and documented much of the art work in Christ Church in preparation for its 75th anniversary in the mid-1970's, especially Barbara Johnson, Olga Chase, Marian Neall and Anna Adams. Their work is preserved in the church archives. Author David Andrews spent many hours researching early newspapers at the Local History Room in the Bronxville Public Library and found them an invaluable source of information. Thanks are due to Wayne Kempton, archivist of the Diocese of New York, whose expertise eased the way through Diocesan materials concerning Christ Church; to the Rev. Christopher Webber, who read the manuscript with an eye for both accuracy and consistency; and to Hondi Brasco, whose expertise illuminated the section on the Revelation Windows.

Many thanks to all the photographers, known and unknown, whose work gives the people, places and events recorded in this history a visual context. Also, special thanks to Eugene Elliott, long-time parishoner and artist, for his contribution of the lovely pen and ink drawings and the illuminated initials for the chapter openers.

Former parishioner Charles Jackson and his company, the R.R. Donnelley Company, enabled us to do our printing beautifully and at a very affordable cost.

This book might never have seen the light of day, and certainly would not have emerged as such a visual delight, without the significant time and talents donated by Hershell George, publisher and graphic designer par excellence, and the resources of his company, George/Gerard Design, Inc. in Manhattan.

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