



Through the Years

**St. John's Episcopal Church,
Fayetteville, NC**



Preface

In August of 1976, The Rev. Robert L. Ladehoff, 16th rector of St. John's, now retired bishop of Oregon, wrote the Foreword for "A History of the Parish of St. John's Episcopal Church." The history was written by The Rev. Joseph Caldwell Huske, D.D., 8th rector of St. John's. In his Foreword, Mr. Ladehoff said that during the church's centennial celebration in 1917, Col. C.W. Broadfoot is said to have delivered an impressive address* tracing the history of St. John's parish. He quoted at length from "an unfinished sketch of St. John's Parish" written by The Rev. Dr. Huske. Col. Broadfoot quoted just enough from this sketch to suggest that it might contain a wealth of information about the first 14 years of St. John's, according to Mr. Ladehoff's Foreword.

By the 1970s, Dr. Huske's historic sketch had disappeared. No one seemed to know what had become of it until his great granddaughter, Rosalie Huske Kelly, traced it to the Huske Family Papers in the Southern Historical Collection in Chapel Hill.

"The Vestry of St. John's was delighted to learn of this important discovery," Mr. Ladehoff wrote, "and they asked the parish Bicentennial Committee to have Dr. Huske's manuscript published as a part of the celebration of the two hundredth birthday of our nation."

Thus began the laborious task of transcribing Dr. Huske's handwritten notes into a chronology of St. John's first 14 years. Mr. Ladehoff wrote, "It is particularly appropriate that the work and ministry of Dr. Huske should be recognized during this Bicentennial year. No man served longer as rector of St. John's; no rector made more of an impression on St. John's Church and on the Fayetteville community.

"Dr. Huske led St. John's through the agony of the Civil War and its aftermath," he wrote, "and into a period of growth and vitality. During his rectorship, St. John's first Sunday School building was erected, a building that was used during the week to provide free education for the children of the community. It was a time of growth in size and in spirit for St. John's."

Dr. Huske's memory is honored in the southeast corner of St. John's Church: The Altar Guild, in the early 1900s, gave both the stained glass window showing the Charge to the Apostles and the memorial door leading to the parish hall in his memory.

In 1965, Joseph Caldwell Huske, Captain, United States Navy (Retired), updated and expanded on his great grandfather's chronicle with "A Brief History of St. John's Episcopal Church, Fayetteville, North Carolina." The piece that follows excerpts from both of these works and incorporates additions to bring the chronology into the 21st century.

***A copy of Col. Broadfoot's address is in the glass display case in the corridor leading to Hauser Hall.**

Through the Years

A Continuing Chronicle of St. John's Episcopal Church, Fayetteville, NC

The history of a church is essentially the story of the devotion and fidelity of the men and women who, through vision, determination, and consecration to God have brought it into being. This principle is true of St. John's Church and Parish.

In 1816, more than 20 families in Fayetteville were of the Episcopal tradition. However, Fayetteville, chartered in 1762, was predominantly Scottish, so the Episcopal community worshipped with the Presbyterians. But they longed for the ancient liturgy of their own church. Late in that year, John Winslow, a prominent local citizen, with the blessing of his friends, made the arduous trip of 140 miles to Wilmington, N.C., to consult The Rev. Bethell Judd, D.D., an Episcopal clergyman from Connecticut. As a result of the visit, Dr. Judd came to Fayetteville in January 1817 to establish a church. The church was formally organized on Monday, April 7, 1817; the name St. John's was chosen; the first vestry was elected; and The Rev. Dr. Judd was named rector at a salary of \$1,500.00. The vestry immediately set about the task of acquiring land and building a church. Before completion of the church, regular services were held next door in a building called the "Old Academy." The first Holy Communion service was celebrated there for 14 communicants.



Dr. Judd

In June 1817, the local chapter of the Masonic Order laid the foundation stone for the church, and the building was completed in about one year at a cost of approximately \$16,000. The foundations of the church were rectangular and conformed to the present main foundations. The arch in the south side of the nave was closed by a door that led into a small room, the sacristy, which extended out from the side of the church and could be entered by outside steps. The apse (chancel) contained no choir stalls and was small indeed. There was no center aisle, the organ and organ console were in the balcony, and the choir sat in the balcony near the organ. The choir was not vested.

The completed church building had a single tall spire that housed the town clock, which had previously been mounted in the Academy building next door. Early lighting in the church was by kerosene lamps. Illumination was later provided by gas made from rosin. The first communion in the church was held on Christmas Day 1818 with the Rev. Gregory Townsend Bedell, second rector of St. John's, officiating.

The following spring, The Rt. Rev. Richard Channing Moore, Bishop of Virginia, acting for the Bishop of North Carolina, made the first Official Visitation to the Parish. On that day, April 17, 1819, Bishop Moore consecrated the church building and confirmed 48 persons. As a matter of interest, St. John's Church and Parish continued under the Diocese of North Carolina until the Diocese of East Carolina was organized in 1883.

As another matter of interest, in 1824, the ladies of the congregation, according to their ability, contributed one or more of their "coin" silver spoons to the church. These spoons were sent north to a silversmith, who made them into the two chalices and paten we now use for communion services.

Just 14 years after the young church was built, the Great Fire in Fayetteville started shortly after noon on May 29, 1831, and swept the town. The flames spread quickly along the four principal streets and destroyed St. John's along with the "Old Academy" building and about 600 other structures. In addition, quantities of books, papers, money, household effects, wares, and merchandise were destroyed. The total loss was estimated at \$1.5 million, a vast sum in those days. It is recorded that immediately after the fire, The Rev. Jarvis B. Buxton,



Communion Silver

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then rector of St. John's, went North to raise money. No financial record of what he accomplished exists, but he apparently was well received in Boston and returned to Fayetteville with the gift of a bell for St. John's and a fire engine for the town!.

The church was rebuilt within about one year on the old foundations and to the same plans. The one notable exception is that the tall and stately clock spire was replaced by the present multiple spires.

All the parish records, except the early Parish Register, were destroyed by the fire. In the passage of time, other records have been lost. Therefore, there are gaps in the continuous recorded history. However, it is known that The Rt. Rev. Levi Silliman Ives, second bishop of North Carolina, visited St. John's and on January 13, 1833, consecrated the new church building. The life and influence of the church now returned to normal.

On July 21, 1851, the Vestry called the Rev. Joseph Caldwell Huske, (later D.D.) to be rector. When called, he was rector of the church in Morganton, N.C. Dr. Huske, son of John Huske of the first Vestry, had spent his youth in Fayetteville; from this parish he had become a candidate for Holy Orders and had entered upon a long and useful ministry. He served as rector from 1851 to 1888 and rector-emeritus from 1888 until his death in 1897.

It will be of interest to many in this parish to learn that during the Civil War, Dr. Huske became custodian of the Silver Communion service presented to Christ Church, New Bern, N.C., by King George II. The Vestry of Christ Church believed Dr. Huske could effectively hide it from the northern invaders during those unsettled times.

Also during the Civil War, the Vestry authorized the donation of the church bell to the Confederacy, and in 1887, the pews of the church were declared to be free, ending the rental system of colonial days.

A center aisle was added in 1901, and in 1903, the chancel was temporarily extended into the nave to provide space for the first vested choir to sing during Christmas services. The choir was made permanent in 1904 and sang from the balcony. It was during the rectorship of The Rev. Archie Boogher, 12th rector of St. John's, that the chancel changes finally were made. The subject had come up as early as 1888, but no action was taken. In June of 1913, a bequest of \$500 from the estate of Herbert Lutterloh,



Before the chancel was enlarged



The Rev. Mr. Huske

together with special pledges from the congregation, made it possible to provide the present chancel by extending the existing chancel 10 feet to the east and building an organ room on the north side of it. The choir then moved back to the chancel where it stayed until 1979 when the present Holtkamp organ was installed in the balcony. Over the years, the church has had six organs. Early ones were pumped by hand, and a water-powered motor activated another one.

In 1985 or 1986, the north passageway from the chancel to the nave was constructed, and the newest of the church's stained glass windows, an image of the young Saint Mary, was installed there.

The nave of the church now contains approximately 3,600 square feet and, with the balcony, has a seating capacity of over 400 people.



Sanctuary windows

The cornerstone of the first parish hall was laid July 9, 1896. This building was razed in 1965 to make way for the current parish hall and the Chapel of the Beloved Disciple. The parish hall was named for The Rev. Roscoe Hauser, 15th rector of St. John's, upon his retirement in 1974.

All the church windows were of plain glass until 1890 when the three stained glass memorial windows of the sanctuary were installed.* The center one depicts the Patron Saint of the Parish, St. John, Apostle and Evangelist. The two side windows depict St. Paul and St. Timothy. The windows in the nave, depicting Biblical events, were designed and manufactured in Munich, Germany.

Installation of these windows began in 1899 and was completed in 1902. In 1908, the vestibule doors and stained glass windows over them were installed as a memorial to Margaret Anderson Mallett.

In 1990, St. John's purchased the 139-year-old Kyle House on the south side of the church. It has been used for receptions, classrooms, and various ministries.

In the mid 1990s, a group of past senior wardens formed a long-range planning committee to address the growing need of additional classrooms, a more central church office, and a means to attract and keep more young people. The result was a \$3.6 million dollar building addition and renovation project that began in 1998. The facility now includes a brand new entrance from the parking lot, covered passageway connecting Hauser Hall to the Kyle House, enlarged fellowship area with modernized kitchen facilities, a first-class preschool facility, and a large hall that serves as a multipurpose area and gymnasium. The new complex was consecrated in May 2002.



The Kyle House



New multipurpose room and entrance to Hauser Hall

The offices also were moved from a separate building into the main complex. That separate building, once used as a rectory, was razed to create additional parking spaces and an expansion of the Garden of St. John's, which was established originally in April 1991 on the banks of Cross Creek.

As another interesting sidelight, in the late 1990s, a parishioner found six stained glass windows from the 1896 parish house in a friend's garage where they had been stored for over 30 years. After purchasing the windows, he donated them for use in the new addition to the church.

The four larger windows have been incorporated into the multipurpose wing stairwells while the two smaller windows are in the connecting corridor between Hauser Hall and the Kyle House.

* See separate publication about Stained Glass Windows

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St. John's has had 18 rectors since its founding in 1817. Two of them later became bishops, and another bishop was a member of St. John's before entering the priesthood:

1817 – 1818	1st	The Rev. Bethell Judd, D.D.
1818 – 1822	2nd	The Rev. Gregory T. Bedell
1822 – 1824	3rd	The Rev. William Hooper (Deposed in 1824)
1825 – 1827	4 th	The Rev. Henry M. Mason
1828 – 1830	5 th	The Rev. Phillip B. Wiley
1830 – 1831	6 th	The Rev. Wm. G. H. Jones
1831 – 1851	7 th	The Rev. Jarvis B. Buxton
1851 – 1888	8 th	The Rev. Joseph Caldwell Huske
1888 – 1893	9 th	The Rev. Thomas Atkinson, Jr.
1894 – 1909	10 th	The Rev. Isaac Wayne Hughes
1910 – 1912	11 th	The Rev. Charles Tyndall
1912 – 1938	12 th	The Rev. Archie Boogher
1938 – 1942	13 th	The Rev. Tate Young
1943 – 1954	14 th	The Rev. J.F. Ferneyhough
1954 – 1974	15 th	The Rev. Roscoe C. Hauser, Jr.
1974 – 1985	16 th	The Rev. Robert L. Ladehoff
1987 – 2002	17 th	The Rev. David M. Chamberlain
2003 -	18 th	The Rev. Louanne Loch



St. John's Episcopal Church
302 Green Street
Fayetteville, NC 28301
Phone: 910 483 7405
Fax: 910 483 8980
E-mail: stjohnsoffice@earthlink.net
Web site: www.fayettevilleonline.com/stjohns