

Register of Old Buildings
Macon County Historical Coordinating Council

Address: 130 W. Eldorado St.

Date of original construction: Cornerstone - 1890.
First service - 1892.

Name of original owner: St. John's Episcopal Church.

History:

- 1890 - Cornerstone laid - Architect Henry F. Starbuck.
1892 - Easter Week - first service in the new 13th century style Gothic structure constructed of variegated red sandstone.
Cost - \$25,000
Cost with lot and furnishings included, - \$43,500
1912 - Mortgage paid off.
1919 - Major redecorating project - \$1000.
1945 - The present altar and dossal given by her children in memory of Sophia Shade.
1955 - In its centennial year of the organization and establishment of St. John's, an addition to the north providing church school classrooms, a large meeting hall and kitchen was completed.
1961 - Renovation of St. Mary's Hall (Church offices and apartment for the curate) plus art glass repair protection glass installation, etc., \$15,677.
1970 - September 12, 1970 - demolition of the brown frame 1st Episcopal Church in Decatur.
1970 - December 12, 1970 - Rededication of renovated and remodeled St. John's. (See booklet of plans, plus clipping)

THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH by Rev. W. H. Moore.

"St. John's Church in Decatur, situated on North Water St. near Eldorado, was organized September 10, 1855.....The Rev. Wm. L. Bostwick succeeded to the rectorship in 1857. During his administration the parish, which had occupied a rented hall, took steps for building a church edifice. The church was completed and occupied in 1858; it was consecrated in 1860.....The same building, much enlarged and improved, is yet used by the parish as its place of worship."
(1880)

(See reverse side)

Present owner's name: St. John's Episcopal Church.

"One of the city's historic structures fell before a wrecking crew Friday.

"It was the original St. John's Episcopal Church building, located in the 100 block West Eldorado where old timbers quickly gave way to a crane and clamshell.....razed as part of a \$287,000 church remodelling and expansion program.

"It was in the original church now being torn down, that a Christmas tree for children was set up and the church decorated with greens. This was the first time that anything of the kind was ever done in Decatur, and reported by a Decatur newspaper in 1905 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the parish. In 1916 Decatur's first Day Nursery was organized at St. John's Church and for three years the children were cared for in this building. The nursery was organized by members of St. John's Church who donated use of the hall, lights and heat."

Decatur Herald, 9/12-70

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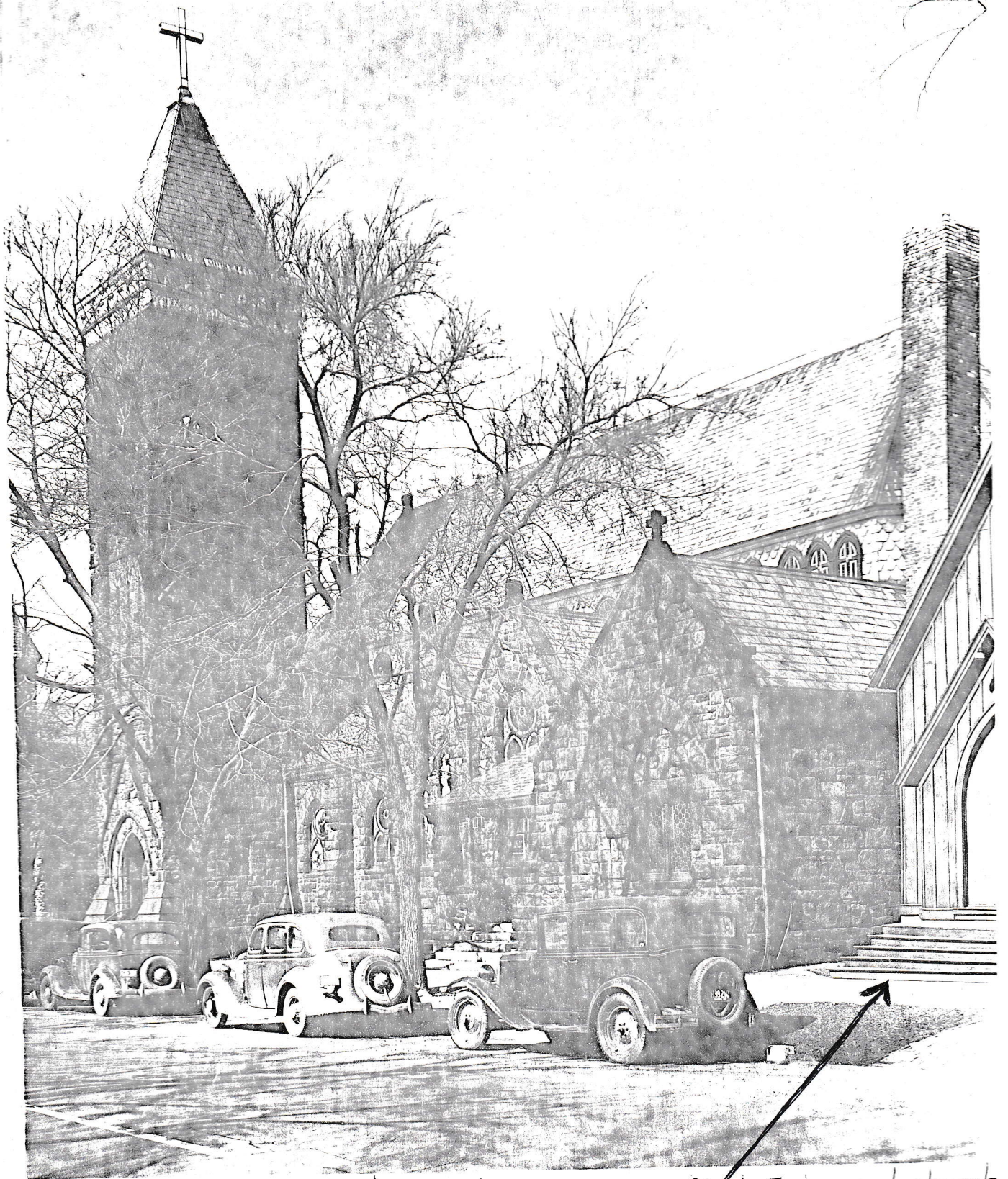
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130 West Eldorado
St. John's Episcopal Church



Photos - Margaret M. Meyer, 1975



St. John's Episcopal Church
in 1938

The first Episcopal church
structure in Decatur - 1858
Razed - Sept. 12, 1970

St. John's Episcopal Church

Interview with Robert Shade December 9, 1974:

by Margaret M. Mejer

Two major remodelings: In 1955, a dwelling north of the church was demolished; in this place, a new parish hall and class rooms were built, connecting to the church. In 1970, a second house was torn down, and the cloister north of the church and west of the hall was built. The twin entries either side of the baptistery were closed with glass; the main door on the south side was no longer used, so that present access to church and hall is through the cloister on the north.

The reredos was eliminated when the new altar was given in 1945. A wooden tester now extends over the altar; from it depends an ornamental silk hanging, behind the altar. The tester contains the logo of St. John.

The great west window ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ remains, but some of the north and south windows have been replaced, given as memorials.

Visit to the church December 16, 1974:

of white marble

The baptismal font/is not as described in the newspaper article when the church was opened; Mr. Shade thought it had been replaced. The small font from the old wood church (dated 1883, if I remember correctly) is still in the church, near the sacristy on the southeast.

The pastor, who did not give me his name, called attention to the plaster filigree enclosing the organ pipes on two sides. He also stated that the north altar is from the original wood church.

The altar rail is unchanged, and the brass pulpit and candlesticks are still there. There is no mention of the pulpit or candlesticks in the 1892 newspaper article, so these may be of later date than the standards of the altar rail.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, DECATUR, ILLINOIS

Compiled from diocesan and parish records and other sources
by the Rev. Robert Harmon, May 1973

Macon County, Illinois, was established in 1829, and at that time Decatur was little more than a village, with a population of about 800. It was a collection of crude homes and a few little stores on dirt streets, bounded by Wood, Prairie, Church, and Water streets. Wood Street was at the edge of the woods; Prairie Street marked the boundary between the town and the prairie to the north. Water Street was the last street between the town and the Sangamon River; Church Street was so named because a couple of small protestant meeting-houses had been built there.

By the middle of the 19th Century, Decatur had hardly grown in size, but the population was more settled. A bank had been established, and the Presbyterian and Roman Catholic churches were among the more substantial structures.

In the early 1850's there were several Episcopal residents of Decatur who met somewhat regularly in each other's homes and who desired to establish a parish. By 1855 their number was sufficient to petition the Bishop of Illinois to that end, and on September 10 of that year fifteen men and women signed the Articles of Organization in accordance with the canons of the Diocese of Illinois:

"We whose names are herewith affixed, deeply sensible of the truth of the Christian religion and earnestly desirous of promoting its holy influence in our own hearts and in those of our families and neighbors, do hereby associate ourselves under the name of St. John's Parish, in communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America and the Diocese of Illinois, the authority of whose Constitution and Canons we do hereby recognize and to whose Liturgy and mode of worship we promise conformity."

The new parish called the Rev. Stephen R. Child to be their first rector, and the first service was held in November. Child, unfortunately, died before the second service could be held. It took two years to find another rector, and in 1857 the Rev. William Bostick was called, by which time the communicants numbered 22.

With this increase of their number, the small congregation began to use a room made available in the Masonic Hall. The room had to be shared with other church groups; Episcopal services were held at 1 pm on Sunday afternoons. The group frequently had to wait in the hall if the previous service was overlong. On one occasion, when a preacher was especially long-winded and paid no heed to the impatient Episcopals who peeked through the door, Fr. Bostick, vested in cassock, surplice and stole, walked in and stood quietly in a corner. The preacher pounded his pulpit and shouted, "All right! The rest of you come on in with your preacher!"

Chants and hymns had to be sung without musical accompaniment, and one of the congregation was appointed to be the "pitcher" to start the singing. Finally, a melodeon was acquired, and the pitcher could retire.

Also in that year, St. John's presented its first confirmands. Bishop Whitehouse made the trip from Chicago to confirm about a half-dozen people. There had never been a bishop in Decatur before, and the congregation was asked if non-churchmen could attend to see the bishop, his vestments, and the ceremony. Aware of a pot-

ententially large attendance, permission was obtained to use the Methodist meeting-house, on the site of the present First National Bank, and contemporary accounts record an overflow crowd. Thereafter, the parish rented a room above a store on North Water Street to use for services.

In 1858 the vestry determined to build a church and authorized a structure to cost "not less than \$1500." This was a most ambitious project, made possible, in part, with aid from friends of the rector in the east. The church was built on North Water Street near Eldorado Street.

The first Episcopal church in Decatur caused a great deal of controversy. It was soon discovered that the plans for the small wooden Gothic Revival church called for two crosses on the gables. It would be the first church in Decatur with a cross on the exterior, and most Decatur citizens agreed that the decorations were "Romish" and didn't hesitate to tell the parish so.

The eucharistic vessels for the new building were presented to St. John's by St. Mark's in New Britain, Conn., and 30 prayer books were given by the Prayer Book and Tract Society of New York. Unlike many Episcopal parishes building at this time, St. John's decided that there would be no pew rent.

The parish had barely moved into the new church when they caused more controversy in the community. Mass was celebrated on Christmas Day in 1858, the first time Christmas had been observed as a Holy Day by any church group in Decatur, another innovation called "popish" by the population. A Children's Christmas Tree was decorated in the nave, the first time a Christmas tree appeared in Decatur.

The economic situation of the town and parish improved after 1860 with the coming of two railroads, the Great Western and the Illinois Central, and the improved finances of the parish allowed for the final payment of the mortgage in 1861. An attempt to raise money by charging pew rental had been tried in 1859, but after two years the attempt was abandoned with the hearty approval of Bishop Whitehouse, a staunch opponent of the practice of renting pews. Provision was made, however, to allow families to "furnish" the pews in which they were accustomed to sit as they desired. In 1862 the bishop made another trip to Decatur to consecrate the church in a driving December snowstorm.

An anonymous historian writes of the life of the young parish,
 "The building thus consecrated stood on North Water Street and in time a rectory was built just north of it. For over 30 years it was the center of Parish life, where were administered baptisms, confirmations, and communions, weddings and funerals, according to the Rites and Ceremonies by which the Prayer Book puts those who use it into touch with the dignity and beauty and strength of the Holy Catholic Church throughout the world."

The rectory mentioned was built in 1863, in the same year as the founding of the "Female Church School," also referred to as the "Decatur Seminary." Little is recorded of this school except that it was in operation for less than a decade.

With the financial burden of a new rectory and school, the controversy over pew rental broke out again, with the vestry finally resolving that "all seats in this church are and shall be free."

In 1867 a chapel was founded by St. John's Parish. The "House of Prayer," as it was called, was located one mile north of the city limits. It was the eastern

part of Decatur, however, that began to grow with the coming of a steel rolling mill, and the chapel was moved to the 1200 block of East Eldorado; it was popularly called the "Rolling Mill Mission."

Delegates from St. John's were active in the Convention of 1877 that organized the Diocese of Springfield. It was a delegate from Decatur who nominated George Seymore, who became the First Bishop of Springfield.

The parish continued its growth, and in 1886 the chapel founded by St. John's became a mission with its own vicar. The steel mill having moved to Kansas City, the chapel had become known as the "House of Prayer" again. The bishop often preached there during his visits to the city, and the rector had held services regularly at the chapel on Sunday afternoons. The mission was received into the diocese as Grace Mission, changing its name in 1896 to St. Michael and All Angels. After the turn of the century the mission became dormant, and the Bishop's Committee sold the property in 1909 for \$10,000, giving the money for the work of the Church on the campus of the University of Illinois.

In 1884 the first pipe organ in Decatur was installed at St. John's at a cost of \$1800.

As Decatur continued to grow, so did the parish. Parish organizations were begun in the last quarter of the 19th Century. The Ladies Aid Society was founded in 1873, to be reorganized at St. John's Episcopal Churchwomen in 1906. St. Martha's Chapter was organized in 1889 and St. John's in 1896. The men organized the Brotherhood of St. Andrew in 1890, and Decatur was scandalized by the Episcopalians once again when the Brotherhood voted to allow women to attend some of their meetings and to allow smoking during meetings.

During this time St. John's became involved in an ambitious diocesan project through the efforts of an outstanding layman, William J. Quinlan. Quinlan had been active in diocesan and parish affairs for several years, having served as parish and rector's warden and delegate to the diocesan synod. He had worked diligently for the support of the New Diocese of Springfield since its organization in 1877 and was one of the strongest supporters of the Episcopal Fund, the purpose of which was the endowment of the Springfield episcopate. He became a personal friend of the new bishop of the difficult days after the beginning of the diocese. In 1884 Bishop Seymore came to Decatur for the first house blessing in the city at what he described as "the most impressive new Quinlan dwelling;" the reception for the bishop following the house blessing was the social event of the season.

The bishop and Quinlan together purchased in 1883 a summer resort at Green Bay, Michigan. The "Anapauna Project" was incorporated and the resort remodeled to provide a summer vacation spot for diocesan clergy and their families. The land was subdivided and plans were made for the sale of the lots for retirement homes for clergy. The bishop made many trips to Decatur to meet with the board of directors of Anapauna, composed chiefly of Quinlan and other laymen of St. John's, but the financial problems of the project caused it to be dissolved in a few years, and the ambitious plans were never realized.

The activities and size of the parish by the last decade of the century almost demanded a new building. After his episcopal visitation on March 30, 1890, Bishop Seymore praised the parish for its growth and noted in his personal record of his visitations,

"We rejoiced to see so many; we would that it were always so in every parish and mission. The need for a new church is demonstrated by the

See copy of
St. John's
letter regarding
this.

fact that the structure will not hold the congregation."

The need for a new church building had been emphasized by the rector for several years, and in 1888 two laymen had purchased several lots at the corner of Church and Eldorado streets for \$5,000, informing the vestry that they would hold the property and offer it at cost when the congregation was ready to build.

The decision to build was made shortly after the bishop's visit, and construction began in late 1890. Henry F. Starbuck of Chicago was chosen as the architect, and the design that he submitted, in a style combining Early English and Decorated Gothic to be built of Wisconsin red sandstone, was approved.

In one of the most elaborate ceremonies Decatur had yet seen, the cornerstone was laid on September 23, 1890. In the cornerstone were placed a Bible, a copy of the new Book of Common Prayer of 1889, a Hymnal, copies of the Canons of the diocese, church and city newspapers, the order of the service of the day, the names of the persons involved in the building program, and a brief parish history.

In 1891 the original wooden church was moved from its site on Water Street to be placed next to the new building, and the lot was sold to help pay for the church. The new structure cost \$25,000; the lot and furnishings brought the total cost to \$43,500.

In Easter Week of 1892 the congregation moved into the new church, described in a news report as "one of the most impressive in central Illinois." In only 37 years since its founding, the parish had grown from the original 15 communicants to 250. The building program was certainly an act of faith, for it would be another 20 years before the building would be free of debt.

In 1899 an area of several lots in Greenwood Cemetery was purchased and given to the parish. A Celtic cross was erected in the center of the area, after the ground was consecrated and named "God's Acre." The ground was given "for the burial of communicants of the parish."

Despite the generosity of some of the families of the parish, St. John's experienced serious financial difficulties as the 20th Century began (in 1901 the vestry had to borrow \$100 from St. John's Chapter to pay current bills, and repaid the money at 5%), and the 50th anniversary of the founding of the parish was observed on September 17, 1905, with the debt for the new church still unpaid. The debt, however, did not daunt the spirit of the "Jubilee Celebration."

The mortgage was finally paid in 1912, and on May 6, the Feast of St. John by the Latin Gate, the church was consecrated by Bishop William Osborn. In 1913 a house on North Street was purchased and became the rectory.

Through these years the parish remained very active as a part of the community, and in 1915 St. John's sponsored a "city-wide" mission for the purpose of "spreading the Gospel in the city." The rector of the Bloomington parish, a well-known preacher, was asked to conduct the series of services. It was discovered that the dates chosen were just before a city election, and just before the mission began a scarlet fever epidemic spread around the city. The mission opened, however, and, despite the hotly-contested election and the quarantine, crowds were overflowing. The newspaper called the closing service of the mission "the most impressive ever held by any church in Decatur."

In 1916 a day nursery was founded by St. John's to care for children of working parents and provide pre-school education, a new concept in education for Decatur. The nursery continued at the parish church for several years and then became the Decatur Day Nursery, which still operates under that name.

A major redecorating project was initiated in 1919, costing \$1,000. It was at this time that the present tiled floor and marble steps of the choir and sanctuary were installed.

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew had become inactive, and in 1921 a new Men's Club was begun. The Club initiated a series of seminars on current subjects of interest, to which the city was invited, again voting formally to allow the attendance of women and smoking. The first series of meetings dealt with "The Relationship of Employer to Employee," "The Panama Canal (stereopticon views exhibited)," and "The Decatur Dam."

Also in the 1920's the former Sanctuary Chapter became the Altar Guild, and a Crucifer's Chapter, forerunner of the Order of St. Vincent for Acolytes, was established. To encourage the attendance and participation of more communicants, the annual parish meetings were held following mass on Sunday. In 1924 both St. Francis' Guild and the Girls Friendly Society were begun.

As communicant strength grew, so did the budget. At the turn of the century the parish numbered 250, with a budget of less than \$3,000. By 1945 the communicant strength was over 400 and the budget over \$11,800. In that year the next major addition to the church, the present altar and dorsal, were given by her children in memory of Sophia Shade.

Both increased parish activities and Church School attendance caused the purchase of a house north of the church in 1946. A men and Boy's Choir, the first in Decatur, was organized; their first public concert was given in Fairview Park. 1946 was also the first year that the parish was served by two priests.

In 1947 the parish women began a "clothing room" in the basement of the church for the sale of used clothing, and a second house was purchased next to the first and remodeled to provide for both Church School use and office space.

With almost 450 communicants, the parish began planning in 1949 for a new Parish Hall. The addition, which provided Church School classrooms, large meeting hall, and a kitchen, was completed in 1955.

St. John's observed its centennial year in 1955 with activities throughout the year highlighting the history of the parish. Since its beginning in 1855, the parish had grown to over 500 communicants; almost a dozen parish organizations were functioning; and the parish had one of the finest church plants in the city.

A special Octave Celebration of the centennial began on May 6, a feast of the parish's patron saint, with three services for a Parish Corporate Communion. During the octave a barbecue and square dance were held, a Choral Eucharist of Solemn Thanksgiving was celebrated by Bishop Asa Clough, a General Requiem was celebrated for the repose of rector of the parish and bishops of the diocese, and the Churchwomen met for Corporate Communion and a breakfast. The octave closed with a Solemn Choral Evensong to which the city was invited in thanksgiving for the life of St. John's in Decatur.

The fifth women's organization, of the parish, St. Mary's Guild, was founded in 1960.

In 1961 additional property was acquired and renovation of the nave completed. A parkinglot on the corner of Cerro Gordo and Eldorado streets was given to the parish by Harvey Firestone, Jr., as a thank offering on the anniversary of his marriage, which had been held at St. John's. He and his wife had previously given the parish a beautiful pair of 16th Century silver Salisbury candlesticks, which are used as the eucharistic lights on the altar. A new rectory on Edgewood Court was purchased. The brick house east of the church, which had been used as the rectory, was named St. Mary's Hall and remodeled to provide for office space on the first floor and a curate's apartment on the second.

The next major addition to the church was in 1970, when a \$320,000 building program resulted in the redecoration of the nave and sanctuary, the addition to the Parish Hall of the present lounge and new classrooms on the north, and the addition of the cloister at the entrance of the church. During this renovation, the original church building of 1858, which had been immediately adjacent to the east of the sanctuary, was demolished; in the years following 1892 it had been used at various times as a chapel, gymnasium, guild hall, and all-purpose room.

In 1973 St. John's Parish is in its 118th year. In that time the parish has been served by 34 priests, including associate rectors and curates, some of whom also served parishes and missions in Lincoln, Clinton, and Springfield. Her present communicant strength is 822; the 1973 budget is over \$71,000. The 15 signators of the 1855 Articles of Organization would scarcely recognize Decatur and would probably be overwhelmed by the magnitude of the parish with which their efforts resulted. More than twice their number were confirmed at St. John's in 1972; the few hundred dollars of their annual budget is raised by one rummage sale today.

In 1972 a total of 466 services were held by the parish, with a total attendance of almost 20,000. Over 12,500 communions were made.

Statistics cannot tell the whole story. There is no way to number those whose lives have been nurished in the 118 years of the parish's life and ministry. In marriages and burials, in baptisms and confirmations, in visitations and sick communions, in seasonal observances and daily masses, in youth classes and activities, in guild meetings and social activities, in stewardship of time, talent, and resources, and in its witness to the larger community, St. John's continues to be

"deeply sensible of the truth of the Christian religion and earnestly desirous of promoting its holy influence in our own hearts and in those of our families and neighbors."

7-16-75 I Telephoned Mr. Ripper (he has been out of town) to thank him for his letter.

I suggest we put a copy of it in the St. John's file and original in First United Methodist file.



May 26, 1975

Miss Margaret Meyer
Decatur Public Library
247 East North Street
Decatur, Illinois 62523

Dear Miss Meyer:

I very much appreciate the recent publication People and Places in Old Decatur, of which you are a co-author.

In reading through the book, I noted on page 32 that Saint John's Episcopal Church is credited with having the first pipe organ in the city.

In the interest of historical accuracy, I want to call to your attention that the second building of this congregation (then First Methodist Episcopal Church) had a pipe organ in 1852. The organ and choir were in a balcony at the back of the church building which was on the corner of Prairie and Water Streets. Church minutes note that the organ was placed in the building over the vigorous protests of the Reverend Mr. Peter Cartwright, the outstanding Methodist circuit-riding preacher of the nineteenth century. Church dedication was in 1854, so there may be a two-year discrepancy in the date for the organ. Apparently there were changes and additions made as the building was being built, raising the cost from \$2,430.00 to an estimate of \$10,000.00 at the last.

People and Places in Old Decatur has meant much to me as I attempt to know more about my city. (Mrs. Ripper and I came to Decatur in August 1965.)

Again - thank you for your hard work on the volume.

Sincerely,



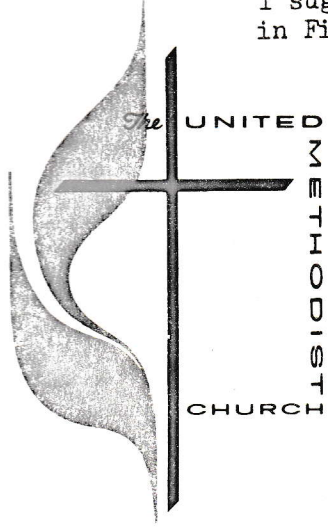
Theodore W. Ripper
Minister of Music

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

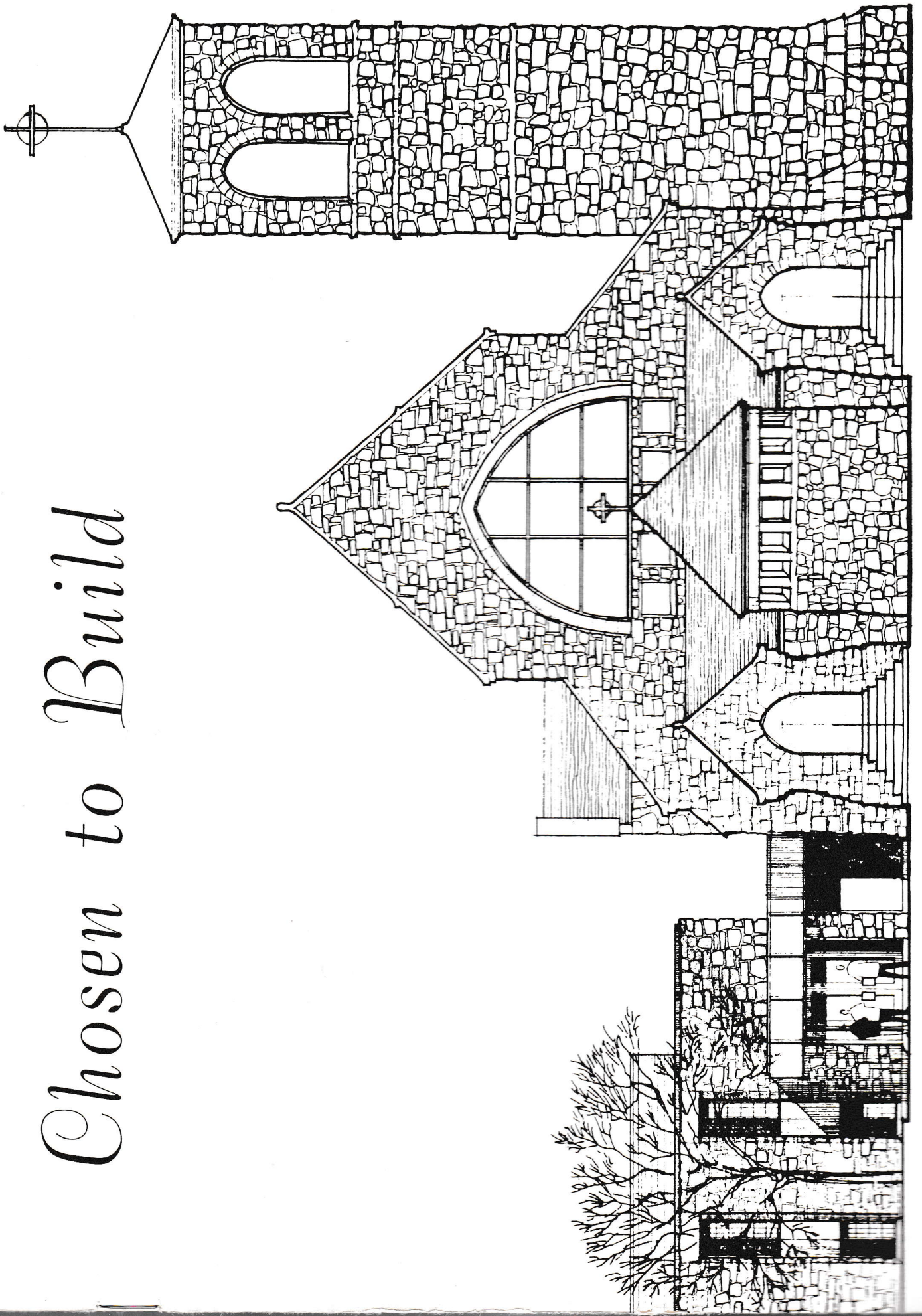
DECATUR, ILLINOIS 62522

201 WEST NORTH STREET

... a church that cares ...



Chosen to Build



Dear Family:

In my annual report to you at the beginning of 1962 I was happy to recount the remodeling of St. Mary's Hall and the restoration of the church itself. I was also moved to remark that: "Despite the real need for proper office space and an adequate Curate's apartment, the space we are providing in St. Mary's for these two essential purposes has been obtained at the cost of the children of the Church School. The youngsters who formerly had their classes in St. Mary's are now crammed into three buildings, only one of which can in any sense be termed desirable. The remedy for this is an addition to our present parish hall; and the key to building it is your continued giving . . . and the careful, strategic and courageous administration of the real estate and other assets already listed among our parochial resources."

Now, seven years later, after months of careful study, we are ready to move to correct our most serious problems. I commend to your prayerful consideration the plans presented in this brochure.

Please God, in this special appeal, every member of St. John's will be inspired to shoulder his full share of the parochial burden, while those of ability may be moved to make gifts large enough to challenge and encourage us all. As we enter upon this act of faith in our common future, I urge upon you the Pauline admonition to continue "fervent in spirit; serving the Lord"—to have "boldness with fervent zeal" in the days of opportunity which lie immediately ahead.

Taking the risk for Christ has ever been the hallmark of the Saint and Martyr, and we are admonished to "fight and not to count the cost."

Please keep this in mind in the decision-making that lies ahead.

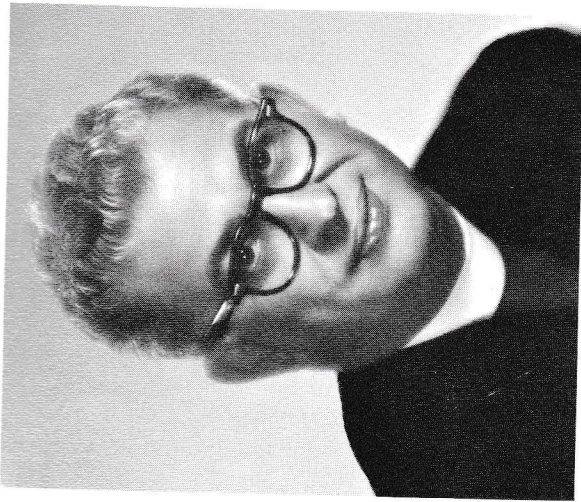
God love you,



Father Bowers†

HISTORICAL PROGRESS...

- 1855 - Articles of Organization signed, establishing St. John's Episcopal Church
- 1862 - Consecration of the first Church on Water Street
- 1888 - Purchase of the present Church site to accommodate a growing parish
- 1892 - Consecration of the present Church
- 1955 - Construction of the present Parish Hall
- 1962 - Renovation of St. Mary's for Parish Office
- 1969 - Campaign to expand the Parish Hall and renovate other facilities



OUR PRESSING NEEDS....

After more than one hundred years of faithful service, with consistent efforts by concerned individuals to keep the facilities of St. John's current with the demands of growth, we find ourselves faced with a real need to expand and improve our buildings. These needs are so real and pressing that it is the considered opinion of nearly everyone deeply interested in the Church that they must be met without further delay.

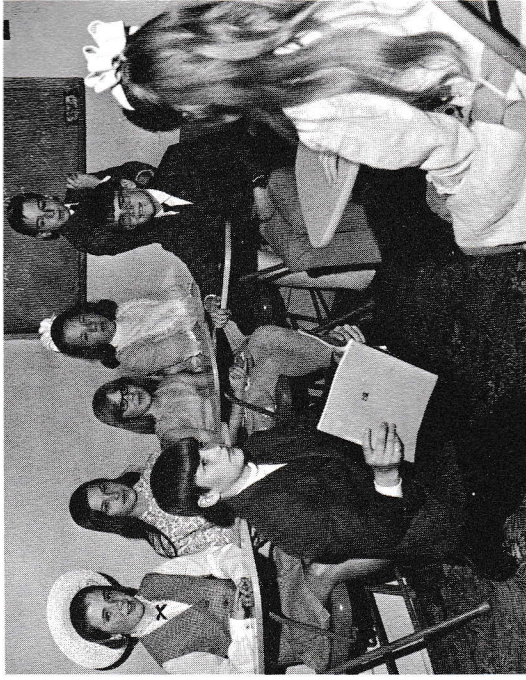
Our Church School facilities are critically over-crowded. The present Parish House has long been outgrown. This means that we have been pressed into providing classroom space in Canterbury House and the Old Parish Hall which are inadequate and badly worn. Certainly neither of these buildings is fit for educational use.

Our main church building, so beautiful architecturally, is sorely in need of renovation to restore it to a condition of which we can be proud. We have had to apologize for cracked plaster, peeling paint, and the poor condition of the woodwork, inside and out, for too long.

Many of our people feel a definite need to have the nave air-conditioned for year around comfort.

To unite the buildings of our Church architecturally, and provide more convenient and safer access both to the nave and to the Parish Hall from the parking lot, we need a new entrance area.

The City Fire Code requires that some disposition be made of the Old Parish Hall. Canterbury House has reached the point when it is necessary for it to be removed.



*Typical Church School class
in Canterbury House.*



These houses are to be removed.

OUR PLANS.....

The Planning and Building Committees have carefully considered our pressing needs and have, after many months study, developed a plan. These committee members believe that this plan will solve most of our problems and give us facilities in which we can teach the faith and heritage of our Church effectively and with dignity.

We will add a two story addition to the north end of the Parish Hall containing six classrooms and storage space for church school materials. Another two story addition will be constructed on the west side of the Parish Hall, for which three walls already exist, containing a reception-lounge room on the main floor and a choir room on the ground floor.

Remodeling on the ground floor of the Parish Hall will provide a music library and make our classroom space there more functional.

A covered cloister will be added to the north side of the church. This will give us more convenient and safer access to all areas of our church, cloak rooms near the main door of the nave, and will effectively tie our buildings together architecturally.

The grey house—Canterbury House—and the sexton's house will be removed to make room for an enlarged parking lot.

A new facing on the east wall of the church will be installed after the Old Parish Hall is removed.

Repairs and renovations in the nave will restore it's beauty and the air-conditioning will assure year around comfort for worshippers.

The cost of this work has been estimated to be, \$287,500 including all fees.

MEMORIAL OPPORTUNITIES....

A memorial bearing a name—your family name or that of a loved one—becomes a symbol of our values. It is an earnest for posterity of our faith in these values and an enduring testament of our affection for those we love and cherish.

Memorials and tributes are available in the plans to expand our Parish House and renovate the nave of our Church. These preliminary floor plans show what we hope to accomplish. Key numbers identify areas which may be memorialized in hon-

or of loved ones. *Values are based upon location rather than on construction costs.*

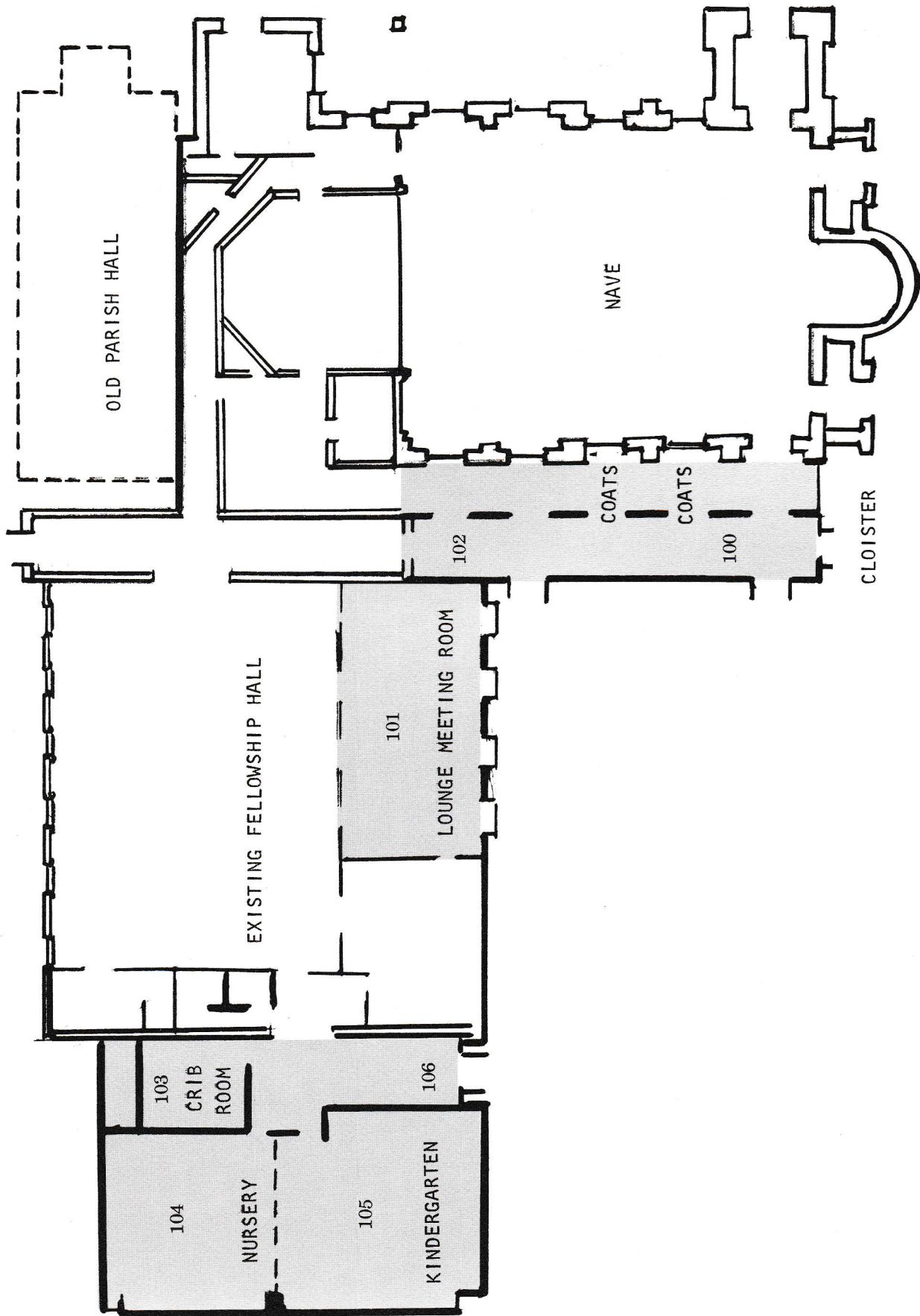
Suggestions from members of the Parish during our recent information meetings and further consideration of our Building and Planning Committees may make minor changes from what is shown. Should such a change affect a memorial, arrangements will be made with the donor of such area for a substitution.

Your pledge to the Building Fund, in the amount specified, will reserve your choice of the available areas.

Main Floor

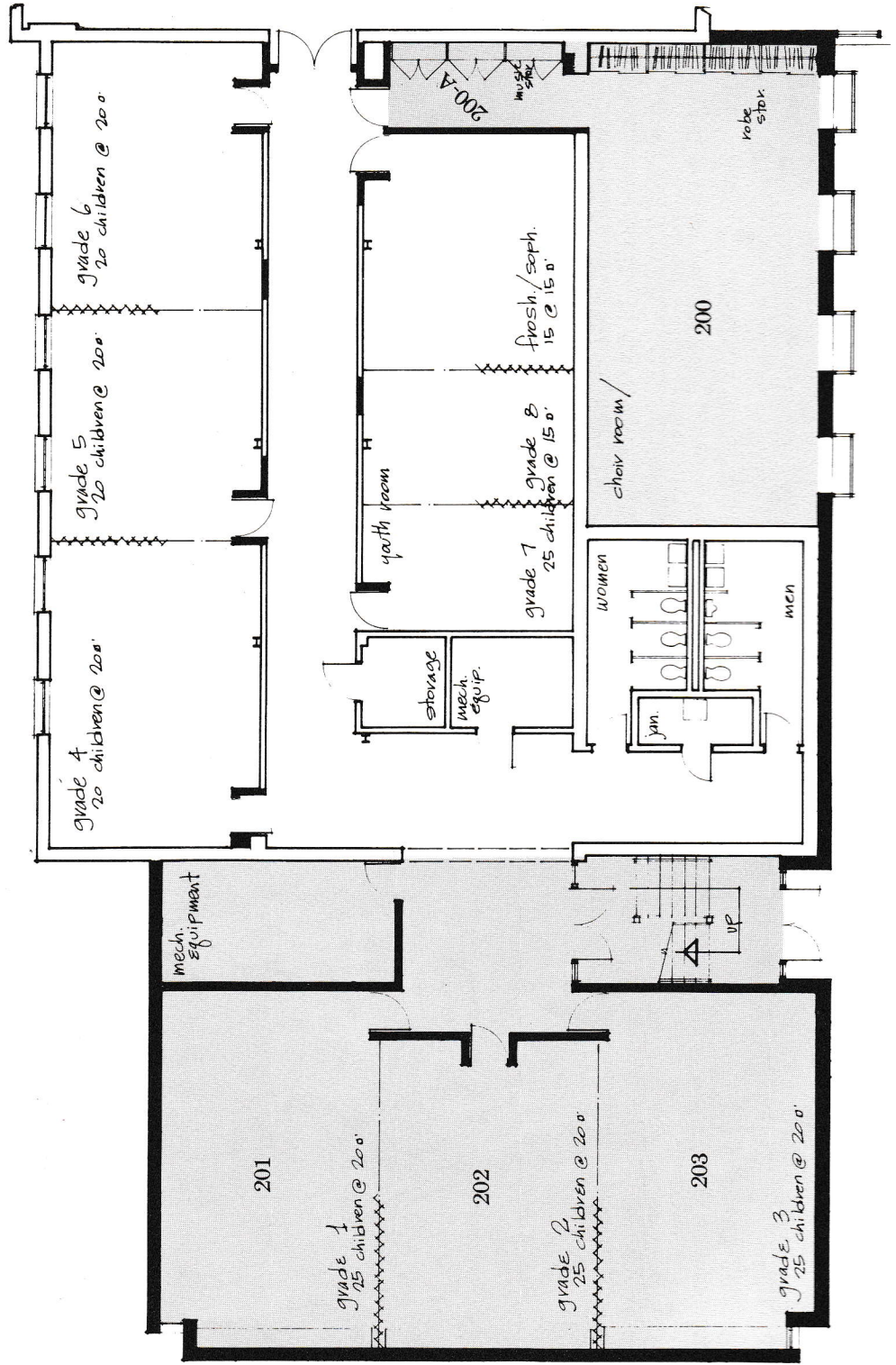
Number	Description	Value	Number	Description	Value
100	Entrance Cloister	\$50,000	104	Nursery	\$15,000
101	Lounge Meeting Room 5 gifts of \$5,000	\$25,000	105	Kindergarten 10 gifts of \$1,500	\$15,000
102	Entrance Foyer	\$10,000	106	Entrance Foyer	\$ 5,000
103	Crib Room	\$10,000			
300	Nave Renovation 30 gifts of \$500	\$15,000	301	Nave Air Conditioning	\$10,000

Nave



Lower Floor

Number	Description	Value	Number	Description	Value
200	Choir Room 10 gifts of \$2,000	\$20,000	202	Class Room	\$ 5,000
200-A	Music Library	\$ 5,000	203	Class Room 5 gifts of \$1,000	\$ 5,000
201	Class Room 10 gifts of \$500	\$ 5,000	204	Parking Lot 50 gifts of \$300	\$15,000



CHOSEN TO BUILD.....

"... the Lord has chosen you to build . . . be strong and do it."

Nehemiah 2:18

Faced with needs that are unquestionable, and in possession of a plan that is efficient and wise, we are called upon to rise up and build. To do so will require providing a relatively large sum of money which will have to come from those most concerned.

The estimated cost of our plan is \$287,500. We have approximately \$40,000 which can be applied. This enables us to set a realistic goal for a capital funds campaign of \$200-\$250,000. Should we raise just \$200,000 now, part of the program will have to be delayed or we will have to assume mortgage to finance the balance. Our campaign will be a face-to-face solicitation of every family of the Parish for pledges to be paid over the next thirty-six months.

To be successful with this venture will require prayerful and serious thought by each family. When the time comes to make the commitment, each family must be prepared to accept its responsibility, up to and including sacrifice, to assure success. We fully expect that everyone who calls St. John's his Parish, who uses the church for worship, or who brings his children here to be nurtured will want to give as much as possible. It will take this kind of giving from us all to raise the sum needed. There are, after all, not very many of us.

Stocks, bonds, and real estate are acceptable in lieu of cash payments. Often donors find extra tax advantages in giving such property to their Church. Others find that they can give substantially from capital, without giving up more income than they can afford to lose.

In the past a large part of the funds necessary to provide for the capital needs of the parish have come from the thoughtful generosity of people of special means who have been able and willing to provide sizeable Trust Funds, Endowments and major gifts of stock or real estate. But a no less important share of these funds has been provided by the regular giving of many of the parish families. Now, we are asked to continue this earnest demonstration of our faith and loyalty by pledging generously to St. John's Building Fund.

Our goal is high; but when we consider our objective—to give our parish the facilities to create informed and dedicated churchmen and church women—the cost does not seem excessive.



Isn't this dangerous? New building will give us adequate stairways.

Saint John's Episcopal Church

Eldorado and Church Streets
Decatur, Illinois

BUILDING FUND CAMPAIGN

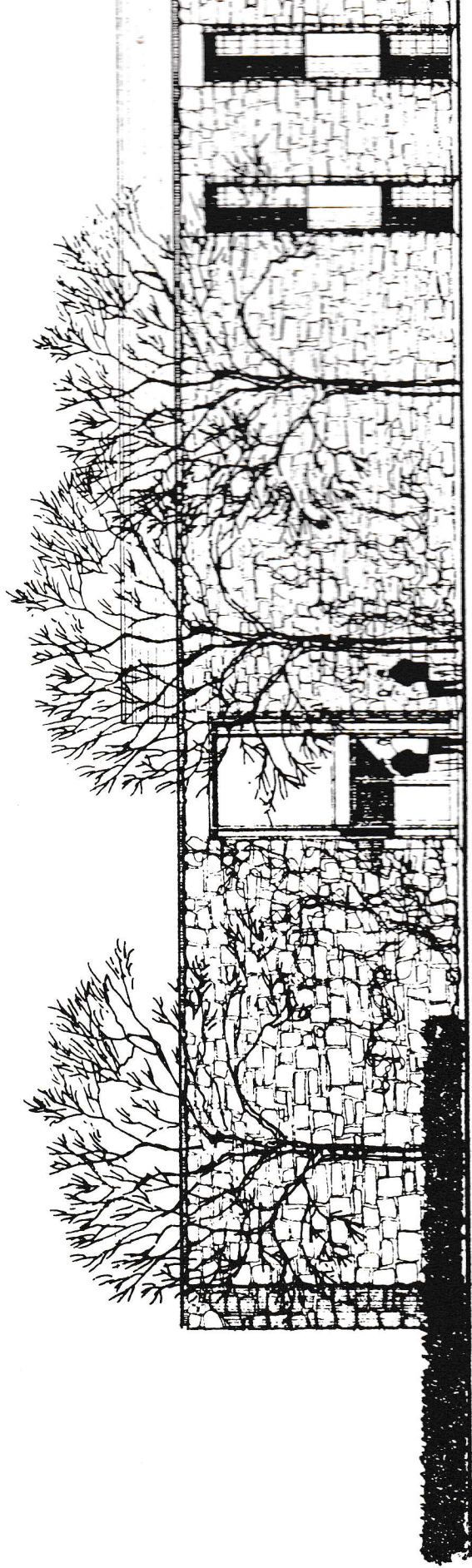
The Reverend Darwin B. Bowers, *Rector*

William P. Shade
General Chairman

Robert J. Wood
Vice-chairman

Frederick Becker
Vice-chairman

Campaign Telephone: 428-1311



St. John's Episcopal Church this week is celebrating its 100th anniversary in Decatur.

Although its official birthday will not be until Sept. 10, the church has chosen the second week in May to mark the event since it includes the Feast of St. John, disciple after whom the church was named.

St. John's Day was Friday and was observed by the parish with three corporate communion services.

Parish observance of the occasion also included a barbecue and dance last night at Camp Seymour.

Beginning today, the Decatur community is especially invited to join in the celebration.

The Rt. Rev. Charles A. Clough, Bishop of Springfield, will celebrate the choral Eucharist at 9 a. m. today.

The observance will present an almost medieval church ceremony more spectacular and colorful than those usually held in Decatur.

Another feature of the centennial octave—as the eight days of celebration is called—will be a 10 a. m. requiem mass Monday for the deceased bishops and rectors who have served the parish.

Included in the week's festivities will be the annual meeting of the women's auxiliary at Camp Seymour Wednesday morning. The meeting will include corporate communion followed by party breakfast and annual reports.

Especially offered as a contribution to the spiritual life of the Decatur community as well as St. John's Parish will be the choral evensong at 8 p.m. Friday.

The finest settings for this service, from ancient plainchant through Haydn, Mendelssohn, Rachmaninoff and the contemporary Healy Willan, will be presented as a climax to the centennial week.

Featured in this service and in services throughout the octave will be a festival hymn in honor of St. John written by Mrs. Virginia Mickel, member of the parish.

Although the emphasis is being placed on this week, the observance of its 100th birthday has been carried on by the parish since last September and will be continued through this fall.



St. John's Episcopal Church Has Centennial

This brown frame chapel was the first Episcopal Church built in Decatur. It stands today attached to the east side of the present building on West Eldorado Street. Attempts have

been made to get rid of the little chapel, built nearly 100 years ago, but so far the parish members have clung fiercely to it as a fond reminder of bygone days.

5/8/55



This 13th century Gothic style building of variegated red sandstone was erected by the St. John's congregation in 1890. St. John's Church was the first

building in Decatur to bear the Christian cross in public view and the first celebration of Christmas as a holy day was by the Anglican community.

Dec. 12, 1970



Staff photo by Bob Strongman

The new cloister of St. John's Episcopal Church will be blessed at a service Sunday.

St. John's Renovated Rededication, Blessing Scheduled

A \$300,000 construction and renovation project has been completed at St. John's Episcopal Church.

The remodeled church will be rededicated and the new parish hall and sanctuary will be blessed at the 9:30 a.m. service Sunday.

The Rt. Rev. Albert A. Chambers, Episcopal bishop of Springfield, will preside at the service.

The nave and sanctuary of the

church have been replastered and painted. There is new lighting in the church and a new drapery behind the altar.

Decorating was done by Schanbacher & Son of Springfield, a firm which specializes in decorating churches.

Three buildings were razed for the construction of a 7,000-square-foot parish hall and cloister.

They were two houses on North Church Street and the old church building.

The church now has a new east wall, and the entire area has been air conditioned.

The new parish hall has a lounge, guild and choir rooms, nursery and classrooms. The new cloister changes the entrance to the church.

Landscaping is now being done.

The project was begun in November, 1969. George A. Albers, formerly with Spangler, Beall, Salogga, Bradley and Albers, was the architect. General contractor was A. F. Krall Construction Co., Inc.

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THE BEAUTIFUL ST. JOHN'S CHURCH CONSECRATED TO THE LORD.

Sermon by Rev. W. H. Moore, of Chicago—Description of the Edifice.

Sunday the first service was held in the new St. John's Episcopal church at the northeast corner of Eldorado and Church streets, and to-day marked another important epoch in the history of the society which includes among its members many representative families and wealthy citizens of the community. This is the day of the formal dedication of the edifice which has been constructed with the greatest regard for artistic and ecclesiastical form. The beauty and finish of the church command the admiration of all beholders. It is a model Episcopal church.

THE DEDICATION.

The church was crowded at 10:30 a. m. to-day when the dedication exercises were held. The Right Reverend Bishop Seymour announced in the beginning of the services that the services this morning were preparatory to the dedicatory services to-night, when this house would be dedicated to Him whose blessings we invoke upon it. To this service you have come and we ask that you join and aid us in the preparatory services. In the ritualistic services preceding the sermon Rev. D. N. Cunningham of Springfield, Rev. Mr. Smith, of Lincoln, and Rev. Mr. Oram, of Paris, participated.

Rev. W. H. Moore delivered the sermon from Joshua 4th chapter and 21st verse: "What mean these stones?" Mr. Moore was a former rector of St. John's church. He had seen it when it was weak and struggling, and he saw it now strong and confident. This fact especially fitted Mr. Moore for the duty he performed. During the sermon he made some very beautiful references to the early workers in the church who had passed from earth to eternity. This probably gave rise to the declaration with which he opened his discourse: "This is an occasion of the deepest interest—the consummation of many hopes—the answer of many prayers." The speaker reasoned that the church

J. F. Beach; General and Mrs. R. J. Oglesby of Elkhart, Rev. D. Hall of Devonport, and Mrs. Slaughter of Springfield, by L. Barrows and family; Rev. Berrele of Arcola, by Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Chilson.

THE NEW CHURCH.

Description of the Beautiful Edifice—The Memorial Windows.

Those who have seen the beautiful church know in a general way what it is. Those who have not visited it, as well as those who have done so, will be interested in perusing the following full description of the edifice which was dictated by Rector Goodwin:

The general character of the building is closely allied to the early English period of Gothic architecture of about the thirteenth century, and in its conception and in the material used the general feeling of that date has been noticeably reproduced. The situation of the lot and the requirements of the parish made it possible to follow the traditional lines in the plan, and the result is the eastern chancel, the ambulatory, the south porch, the baptistery at the church entrance and the high clear story with its arched supports.

The church measures over all 120 feet in length and 50 feet in width, not including the tower, in which is the main entrance. In front two small porches flank the baptistery, which forms a circular projection directly under the great west window.

The exterior is of variegated o'd red sandstone, some of which came from Wisconsin and some from Iowa.

The roof is of Virginia black slate. The handsomely arched windows are filled with beautiful stained glass. The chimney stack is covered with stone similar to the rest of the church. On the south nestles a stone porch, with heavy stone balustrade. All the porch entrances have pressed brick floors.

The tower is 65 feet high in stone, with parapet of copper 8 feet high and a slate roof, making the total height about 100 feet, surmounted by a copper cross 8 feet high.

The nave is 43 feet high, with richly paneled black ash ceiling, supported by ornamental trusses, of old red oak.

The nave proper is 45x60 feet, and is seated with pews handsomely carved in a symbolical design by the architect. There is one broad center aisle and two side aisles. There are three entrances in front, the main entrance being from the tower, and two porch entrances on the north and south sides of the baptistery. The floor of the church is of hard wood, oiled and polished. Two rows of columns support the handsomely arched truss roof.

Significant of entrance to the church, the baptistery is near the main entrance to the building. The font is in yellow marble, upon a base of a fine old English

1885-1886
in honor of William H. Sept.
Vestryman of this Parish.

To the Glory of God
in Loving Memory of
Peter Mary Goodwin,
1825-1885.

The intention is to have the series of memorial windows completed as friends from time to time wish to place in the church windows in memory of their friends. In the meantime the glass used is without any figures, but of a color that harmonizes well with the other windows.

The large rose window in the west end of the nave is the gift of the ladies' society. It is beautiful in harmonious coloring. Prominent in it are the Alpha and Omega and other ecclesiastical symbols. Just beneath that window are four square windows representing the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The clear-story windows of the nave, 20 in number, are the gift of the ladies of the Saturday Market of the church.

The windows of the baptistery were given to the church by St. Martha's Chapter. The entire window is an illuminated cross, while the three to the right and the three to the left are cherub heads in different poses turned towards the illuminated cross.

Another memorial of the late William M. Boyd is a Credence table which is placed in the sanctuary at the right of the altar. It consists of a polished oak shelf, with polished brass ornamentation in flowers extending up the wall about three feet, surmounted by a small brass cross. The same ornamentation is also seen about two feet beneath. The edge of the Credence bears the inscription, "In Memoriam—William M. Boyd."

The building is lighted by incandescent lights including gas, chandeliers of which spring from the columns on either side of the center. Other lights are placed in suitable places. The building is heated by steam. The whole cost of the building is about \$25,000. The parish of St. John's has been fortunate in its selection of builders of the new church. First among these are the rector, Rev. M. M. Goodwin, whose cultivated and scholarly taste has been used with most satisfactory effect. H. F. Starbuck, the architect, brought to the work not only a wide experience, but a wealth of technical information that has been invaluable. To him is due the credit for the purity and exactness of the architectural forms, the beauty of the design. The contractors were R. G. Young & Sons. Their work has been that of skilful and careful workmen, who have had much experience in this and the old country.



was not built to gratify social pride, nor that aesthetic tastes might be satisfied. When the children of the people came up to Gilgal and inquired what the stones meant they were reminded that God had been with the fathers, and when we inquire concerning this church what mean these stones the answer will be that it is dedicated to christian unity. We believe in christian unity, in the conversion of the world to the truth as it is in Jesus. Speaking of the officer of the church

example. The bowl is surrounded by a series of interlacing Gothic arches, to harmonize with the Gothic architecture of the church.

The font ewer, which holds the baptismal water and the rail are gifts of St. John's Sunday school; they are Easter offerings of 1891. Marble steps lead from the church to the baptistery floor. The floor plan shows a treatment of simple mosaic in the main body of the floor, and forming a Greek cross design underneath the font itself.

The chancel is large and commodious, the sanctuary being apsidal in shape. It is lighted by 21 windows, amber and gold

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neath the font itself.

The chancel is large and commodious, the sanctuary being apsidal in shape. It is lighted by 21 windows, amber and gold in tone, the cross being traced in jewels in each window. The treatment of the chancel conforms with the treatment of the stained glass. The color scheme, the arched columns, and the face of the chancel itself has been so arranged in color as to form a frame work for the chancel. Bands of ornaments are so placed on the side walls as to lead the eye step by step to the angle ended sanctuary. Here the entire central panel is taken up by an elaborately carved reredos, retable and altar, the latter resting on a raised pace of three steps. The treatment of the wood work is in antique oak, rich in color, and elaborately carved. The altar rail is composed of six brass standards, the brackets of which are sprays of lillies, supporting the polished oak rail.

The choir room on the north side of the church has a special porch for the boys' entrance. It is lighted by eight stained glass windows. Lockers for the vestments of the choir boys are provided, and each boy has a key to his own belongings.

The ambulatory leads from the choir room back of the chancel to the south side of the church. Through the ambulatory the choir boys move in procession into the south aisle of the chancel. Folding doors lead from the choir room directly into the old church, which is now the chapel. The entire Sunday school can move in a procession, upon the greater festivals, from the chapel into the church. That will add much to the effectiveness of these celebrations.

The rector's study is in the southeast corner of the building. It is lighted by south windows of stained glass. Both gas and electric light have been put in the study. A grate affords cheerful heat, while the tiled hearth and mantel adds to the beauty of the finishing.

There are no finer windows in any country than the memorial windows. They are furnished by Lamb & Co, of New York, a house founded more than 100 years ago, which furnishes glass exclusively for churches.

Blue and gold, the colors of the incarnation, are the prevailing colors of the windows, which also illustrate in perfect continuity the incarnation of Christ. Beginning with the first window in the north transept, where the thought illustrated is the announcement of the birth of Christ, the story goes on both sides of the church to the last window in the south transept, which pictures in almost living colors the ascension of Christ. The windows picture the life of Christ in this order: "The Announcement of the Angels to the Shepherds of the Birth of Christ," "The Nativity," "Christ in the Temple," "The First Miracle," "Christ and the Woman at the Well," "Christ Blessing the Little Children," "The Transfiguration," "The Angel of the Resurrection," and "The Ascension." Two of the windows, "Christ in the Temple," and "Christ Blessing the Little Children," are from celebrated paintings by Hoffmann. The paintings seem to have been reproduced exactly in the glass, so faithfully have the color effects been copied. The pictures are so true as to be almost startling. There is a richness and fineness about them that one would hardly expect to see accomplished in anything besides oil. The first of these two windows is in memoriam of Rev. M. M. Goodwin's mother. The other one is in memoriam of William M. Boyd.

The third memorial window is to the memory of Flora Race Bashford, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Race. The title is "The Angel of the Resurrection." Like the others, the work on the window is a rare artistic triumph.

The inscriptions on the three memorial windows is as follows:

In Loving Memory of My Mother.

Mrs. M. M. Goodwin.

Decatur, Ga., 1892.