

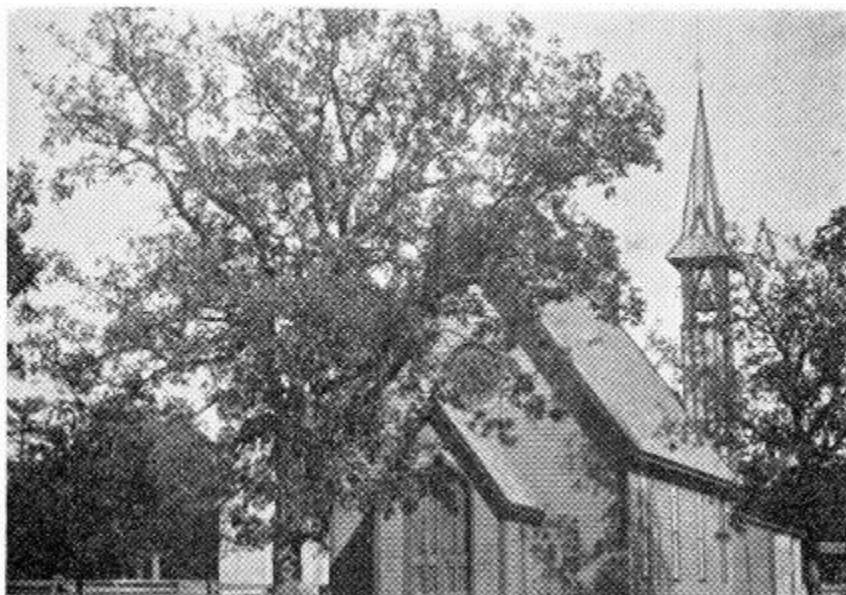
History of Saint John's Episcopal Church  
Saint Cloud, Minnesota  
from the  
1956 Centennial booklet



On April 12th, 1856, ten persons met in St. Cloud and, with the help of the Rev. J. S. Chamberlain - a pioneer Minnesota Missionary - drew up and signed the necessary articles of conformity and agreement to "the order, liturgy, constitution and canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church." These ten citizens were: - L. B. Johnson, John H. Taylor, W. B. Crane, E. C. Johnson, A. F. Judd, William S. Judd, James C. Shepley, Mary F. B. Shepley, B. R. Palmer and James Mowatt. The name of John H. Taylor means a great deal to St. John's congregation. He was twenty-five years old when he offered his home for the first Episcopal Service on February 17th, 1856; and this was even before the incorporation of the town itself. Services were held in Mr. Taylor's home for the next two years.

At that first meeting on April 12th, L. B. Johnson, and John H. Taylor were elected Wardens; J. C. Shepley, William S. Judd and H. B. Crane were chosen as Vestrymen. After Mr. Chamberlain had prepared the constitution, the vestry was immediately organized by electing John H. Taylor as clerk and treasurer.

At a civic election held on April 2nd, 1856, the population of St. Cloud was so small that only thirty-five votes were cast, and ten of these by the founders of St. John's Church, nearly all of whom were destined to play important roles in civic life as well.



#### CONSECRATION OF FIRST CHURCH EDIFICE

The cornerstone of the first church, a frame structure on Fourth Avenue between Sixth and Seventh Streets, was laid on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1856, by the Rev. D. B. Knickerbacker, later Bishop of Indiana. The cost of the building was seventeen hundred dollars, of which the sum of one

thousand dollars was contributed by H. T. Wells of Minneapolis, two hundred dollars subscribed by the parishioners, and the remaining five hundred dollars promised by the Mission Board.

These donations together with the untiring efforts of John H. Taylor enabled the congregation to make the building ready for worship, and the Service of Consecration was conducted on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 1858 by the Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper, Bishop of the Diocese of Wisconsin and Missionary Bishop of the Northwest. (Grace Church, Sank Rapids, was consecrated on the same day and by the same Bishop). The sermon at the consecration of St. John's was preached by the Rev. Dudley Chase, who on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1858 has been called to the joint Rectorship of both churches. Mr. Chase resigned on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1859 and for the next two years the congregation was without a resident clergyman, although services were conducted by various Missionaries, and some by the Rt. Rev. Henry Benjamin Whipple, who had been consecrated the first Bishop of Minnesota in 1859.

Among the historical records we find the following tribute to John H. Taylor, written apparently by the Rev. Dudley Chase on an ordinary sheet of notepaper –

"The encouraging prospect as presented to me at first, consisted in what Mr. Taylor was, and would do for the church; and when I became acquainted with him, I believed all the good that had been said of him. How cordially he received me! How sanguine he was that the little church would grow; how ready he was to assure me that he himself would supplement the inadequate salary from the Missionary Society; and by word and deed he proved more than he had promised through his influence and aid. How assiduous were his attentions to make my family comfortable and to attend to all things concerning the church services and its welfare, spiritual and temporal. But alas! how soon was that noble Christian Churchman taken away! The community mourned the loss of Mr. Taylor as one of its best citizens and the church one of her most loyal sons."



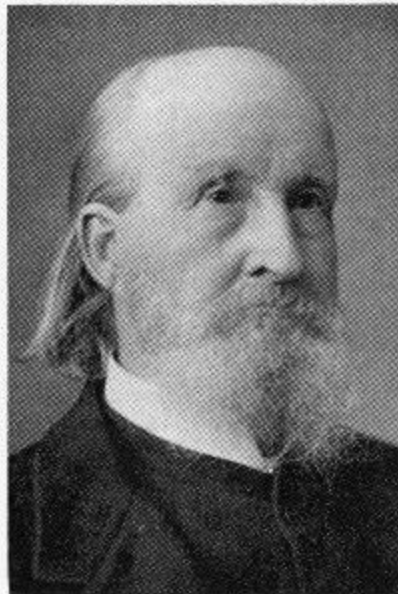
**JOHN H. TAYLOR**  
1831 - 1858



**REV. J. S. CHAMBERLAIN**  
1856 - 1858



**REV. DUDLEY CHASE**  
Rector  
1858 - 1859



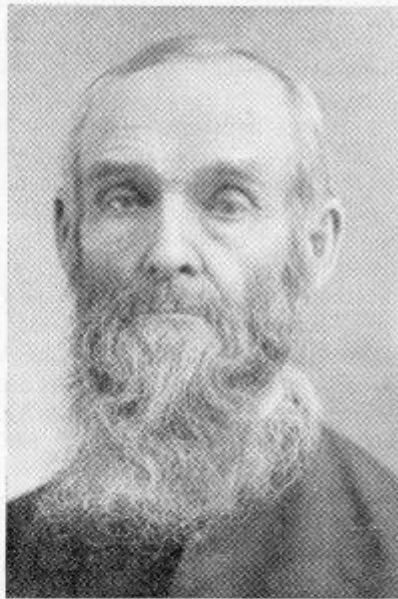
**REV. GEORGE STEWART**  
Rector  
1861 - 1865

In the Autumn of 1861, the Rev. George Stewart came as Rector of the parish. The following spring he was instrumental in having the church moved to the present site, the seating capacity increased, and the building "heated from below instead of by stoves in the nave of the church." The spire was built in 1864 and a stained glass window placed in the chancel in

1865, at which time also the entire debt on the building was wiped out. During his Rectorship of four years he baptized sixty souls and resigned on October 1st, 1865.



**REV. GEORGE L. CHASE**  
Rector  
1865 - 1867



**REV. JOHN SCOTT**  
Rector  
1867 - 1868



**REV. SAMUEL K. STEWART**  
Rector  
1868 - 1870



**REV. J. T. CHAMBERLAIN**  
Rector  
1872 - 1876

The next Rector was the Rev. George L. Chase of New York. He accepted the charge immediately following the departure of Mr. Stewart, but resigned in September, 1866 because

of the fatal illness of his wife with whom he returned to New York. After her death, he returned again to the parish in November. The following month a cabinet organ was procured and on January 1st, 1867, the parish became self-supporting. Mr. Chase resigned as Rector on September 14th, 1867.

It was during the ministry of the Rev. John Scott who came in September, 1867 and resigned in September 1868, that a stained glass window was placed in the church by E. B. Strong, Senior Warden of the parish, in memory of his eldest daughter, Mary B. Strong, wife of Dr. M. U. Rose. Apparently this window together with the two placed in the Church in 1865 and 1870, became broken, as there is no information in later records as to what happened to them, and they are not in the present church.

On December 7th, 1868, the Rev. Samuel K. Stewart of Maryland accepted a call to become Rector of the parish. In the same year, a cut stone baptismal font was presented to the church by Mrs. C. B. Robinson of Westmoreland, a former communicant of the parish. Early in the year 1869 it was ascertained that the organization of the parish was imperfect, the records of the organization not having been recorded as required by law. Accordingly, action was taken on October 4th, and the following document filed in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Stearns County, Minnesota, on October 9th, 1869 A.D. at 1:00 o'clock p.m. and duly recorded in Book A of Church Organizations, page 11—

*We the undersigned Do Hereby Certify, that on the fourth day of October, in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine, the male persons of full age, worshipping in the building known as "Saint John's Church", in the City of Saint Cloud, in the County of Stearns and State of Minnesota, in which Congregation divine worship is celebrated according to the rites of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Minnesota, and which is not already incorporated, said persons having belonged to said Congregation for the last three months, preceding the said meeting and have been baptized in the Episcopal Church and received therein the rite of Confirmation, met at their place of worship aforesaid for the purpose of incorporating themselves as a religious Society under Title IV of Chapter XXXIV of the General Statutes of Minnesota, and in pursuance of notice of such election and meeting duly given to the said Congregation by the Rector in the time of morning service, on two Sundays previous to*

*such meeting, in accordance with the provisions of said Title Four of said Chapter thirty four.*

*And we do further Certify that the Rev. Samuel K. Stewart, being the Rector of said Church presided at the said meeting, and that at the said meeting Edward O. Hamlin and Edward B. Strong were duly elected Church Wardens and Peter L. Gregory, Albert E. Senkler, Robert L. Scott, Moody C. Tolman, James R. Bennett, Henry C. Waite and George L. Hays were duly elected Vestrymen: that Monday in Easter Week was by the said meeting fixed on as the day on which the said Offices of Church Wardens and Vestrymen should annually thereafter cease and their successors in Office be chosen, and that the said meeting determined and declared that the said Church and Congregation should by known in law by the name of "Saint John's Church," Saint Cloud. In Testimony Whereof, We the said Samuel K. Stewart, Rector, and Edward O. Hamlin and Peter L. Gregory, who were present and witnesseth the proceedings aforesaid have hereunto subscribed our names and affixed our seals this 8th day of October A.D. 1869.*

*In presence of us) Samuel K. Stewart (Seal)*

*J. P. Wilson ) Edward O. Hamlin (Seal)*

*Geo. W. Sweet ) Peter L. Gregory (Seal)*

*(U. S. Rev. Stamp*

*five cents 5c*

*affixed and cancelled)*

*State of Minnesota )*

*County of Stearns )*

*Be it Known, that on this 8th day of October A.D. 1869 personally appeared before the Undersigned, the above named Samuel K. Stewart, Edward O. Hamlin and Peter L. Gregory to me known to be the same persons described in and who signed the above Certificate and they each in due form of law acknowledged the same to be their free act and deed to the end that the same might be recorded as such.*

*(Notarial Seal) J. P. Wilson*

*(Stearns County) Notary Public*

*(Minnesota.) Minnesota*

In 1870, a window was placed in the church by E. O. Hamlin in memory of his wife, Mary A. Hamlin. In December of the same year, Mr. Stewart resigned as Rector of the parish.

Next to appear on the scene was the Rev. J. Taylor Chamberlain who assumed charge of the parish June 1st, 1872. The records indicate the following gifts made to the church during his ministry: - in 1873, a Bible for the lectern and a chandelier for the chancel; in 1874, an Altar Service Book; and in 1875, a priest's surplice. On March 12th, 1876, the Rector announced his resignation to take effect on June 1st of that same year.

The next Rector was the Rev. George H. Davis of Faribault who came to St. Cloud on July 2nd, 1876. During that summer, the church edifice was improved at the cost of five hundred dollars, a chandelier was procured and also a prayer desk. As an offering of Christian love, Mrs. E. I. Tuttle, a communicant of the parish, donated two large sanctuary chairs which were dedicated on Christmas Day. In 1877, a new altar cloth was procured by the Sunday School; in 1878, a new cabinet organ was purchased; and in 1879, the rectory was enlarged and improved at the cost of three hundred dollars. Mr. Davis tendered his resignation in the Spring of 1881.

October 15th, 1881 was the date upon which the Rev. Philip McKim took charge of the parish. During his Rectorship the records state that, "in 1883, St. John's Church, St. Cloud had a beautiful white altar cloth, and pendant for the lectern presented to it by Mrs. James Marks, a faithful daughter of the church, all the work being done by her own hands, as her Lenten self-denial, but still a work of love. In 1884 the purple altar cloth which had been in use for some time was nicely ornamented with a pretty fringe; Mrs. Manney and Miss S. Rees of Minneapolis furnishing the material, with Miss Clara Strong doing the work."

The exact date of Mr. McKim's resignation is not recorded but we do know that he was succeeded by the Rev. Charles A. Cummings on December 24th, 1884.

Unfortunately, the only information we have concerning the church and its history during the Rectorship of Mr. Cummings is that he conducted fifty-four baptism services, presented forty-one persons for confirmation, performed sixteen marriages and conducted twenty-five burial services. However, it is worthy of note that he served longer than any other previous Rector, and therefore one might assume that the church was progressing very favorably under his leadership. He resigned on September 1st, 1890.



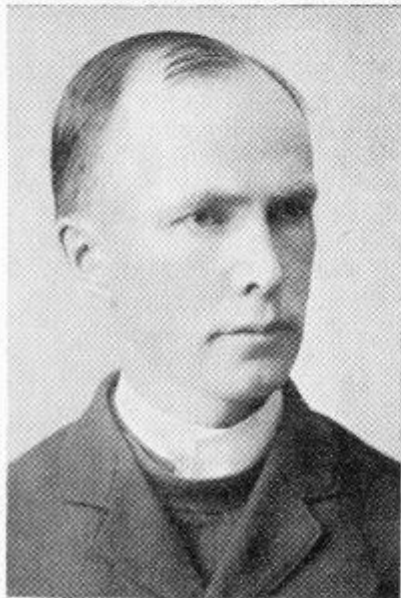
During the interim between the departure of Mr. Cummings and the beginning of the ministry of Rev. C. H. Plummer on November 11th, 1891, some of the services were conducted by the Rev. T. C. Hudson and the others by Mr. Barton, a divinity student.



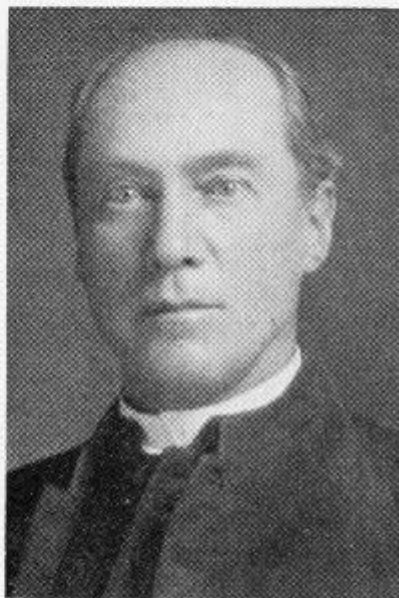
**REV. GEORGE H. DAVIS**  
Rector  
1876 - 1881



**REV. PHILIP McKIM**  
Rector  
1881 - 1884



**REV. CHARLES A. CUMMINGS**  
Rector  
1885 - 1890



**REV. CHARLES H. PLUMMER**  
Rector  
1891 - 1894

The year 1892 was a very noteworthy one in the life of the parish. During that year the church was moved to the back of the lot, and fitted up for a Guild Hall and Sunday School. A new granite block veneer church was erected. This building, the present edifice, was consecrated on November 17th, 1892, by the Rt. Rev. Mahlon N. Gilbert, Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Minnesota from 1886 to 1900. The new church cost approximately six thousand two hundred dollars. Included in that cost was some chancel furniture amounting to two hundred dollars, and presented by the Coterie, and also some new carpet given by the Ladies' Aid Society, costing approximately one hundred seventy-five dollars. The indebtedness on the parish at that time was eight hundred and fifty dollars. A second mark of progress in 1892 was the building of a new rectory on the property north of the church itself at a cost of two thousand six hundred fifty dollars - all borrowed funds. On December 3rd, 1893, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Powell presented the church with a beautiful carved altar in memory of their daughters (See under list of Memorials). At about the same time as the present church was built; a Sunday School was started for the children "below the hill." (Further history concerning the School is recorded in another section of this booklet.) During the Easter season of 1894, Mr. Plummer resigned as Rector of the parish.

After the resignation of the Rev. Charles H. Plummer, a call was extended to the Rev. Herman F. Parshall of Gunnison, Colorado. Mr. Parshall had been educated in Faribault, was graduated from Seabury Divinity School, made Deacon in 1893, and ordained Priest in 1894. His institution as Rector of St. John's Church took place on January 6th, 1895, and for the next twelve years he guided the Episcopal flock in St. Cloud. He also conducted regular services in Grace Church, Sauk Rapids, and down at Cable. It was during his Rectorship that the afternoon Sunday School in "Lower Town" was discontinued and the children had regular classes with the others on Fourth Ave., and Fourth St. Transportation methods for parish visiting included a bicycle and horse and buggy, and one sometimes wonders how so much parish work could be accomplished, and yet it was done. The rectory was heated by means of stoves in the individual rooms which was always somewhat of a hazardous arrangement. On two occasions during Mr. Parshall's ministry, fires broke out in the rectory, and there was barely time to rescue the Church Registers from the study on one occasion, before they were burned. In the later years of his ministry however, in St. Cloud, central heating was installed which proved to be much less hazardous and a great deal more satisfactory.

One method of raising funds for the church was the establishment of a Kindergarten School under the direction of Mrs. Eleanor Mitchell with the proceeds going towards Church Funds. Evening services were also held in those days with a good average attendance with many of the parishioners worshipping both morning and evening. The Wardens during one period of the Rector's ministry included both the father and grandfather of Mrs. W. L. Gary - and such an unusual situation does not often exist at the same time in the same parish. Nevertheless it shows evidence of considerable\* loyalty and devotion to the church on the part of the particular family to be given such high honors.

Another part of Mr. Parshall's work included the Chaplaincy at the State Reformatory and much spiritual help was given to the inmates through his ministry. Three organizations were formed between 1895 and 1906 namely the Improvement in 1895, the Woman's Auxiliary in 1896 with Mrs. Parshall as the President, and the St. Agnes Guild in 1900. In December of 1906, the Rector tendered his resignation to become Archdeacon of Indian Work with headquarters at Cass Lake. On May 18th, 1916, after serving in the Indian Field for ten years, the Rev. Heman F. Parshall died at the rectory in Cass Lake from septic poisoning, after an illness of three weeks. His widow resides in St. Cloud and will celebrate her 91st birthday (God willing) in March of 1957. The Rector's two daughters have been very active in the church throughout the years, both in Faribault, Iowa, and Cass Lake as well as in St. Cloud. At the present time, Mrs. Schumacher is the Deanery United Thank Offering Chairman and a member of the Memorial Committee. Her sister, Mrs. Margaret Grant is one of the Sunday School Teachers and a very efficient and capable one indeed.

The Cass Lake Times dated Thursday May 18th, 1916, devoted one entire page of the paper to articles and tributes to the Rev. Heman F. Parshall. From it we quote the following:

"His followers, members of the church in whose services he has devoted his life have tenderly spoken of his virtues and his ability, but of his love and tenderness towards all mankind from the lowest forms of humanity to the higher positions of life there can never be too much said. The 'untutored Indians' for whose welfare he has spent more than ten years of the best period of his life, not only in religious instruction but in the common affairs of civilization his work and devotion to them, bear the unmistakable impress of unselfishness. With a broad and catholic conception of the duties of manhood he labored, not alone as a clergyman but as a helper to all who were in

need. In his missionary work he knew no sects or creeds; his sole aim was to minister to the needy and to allay suffering. We loved him for his breadth of mind and uprightness of character, his truthfulness and integrity; he was our ideal of superlative manhood; we deeply mourn his loss, with his thousands of earnest followers."

— Frank Ives, Cass Lake.

"Archdeacon Parshall was one of the foremost men of our ministry in the whole Northwest. He was devoted and tireless and utterly unselfish in the pursuit of his duty. His career was marked by absolute devotion to duty and he commanded the respect and love of all the people to whom he ministered. In the Diocese of Duluth he held a commanding position. He was President of the Standing Committee, one of the Examining Chaplains to the Bishop and a delegate to the General Convention."

—Rt. Rev. J. D. Morrison, Bishop of Duluth.

"The death of Archdeacon Parshall has caused the deepest grief among all creeds and classes in Northern Minnesota, where he was well known and deeply loved. His home at Cass Lake was a centre from which radiated goodness and energy."

—Pauline Colby, Onigum.

"I learned with sorrow that Archdeacon Parshall died this morning. He was a power of good among his people. Others of all denominations who knew him will also greatly regret his loss to our community. I offer my sincere condolence to his bereaved family and people."

—Rev. Fr. John J. T. Philippe of St. Philip's Roman Catholic Church.

"As the representative of local Congregationalism, I desire to make mention of the brotherly regard and large hearted interest so frequently and fully manifested by the late Archdeacon Parshall. His never failing courtesy and cheerfulness will long be remembered by all who came into close contact with him. He was tolerant of other systems of belief and other forms of church government, and appreciative of their peculiar value. All worthy enterprises found in him enthusiastic and intelligent support, and it may be truly said that he died at his post as a high-placed servant of our common Master."

—Rev. G. M. Peacock, Pastor Congregational Church.

The Rev. J. R. Atwill assumed Rectorship of the parish in 1907 and remained until 1910. It was during his ministry that the first church was torn down and the lumber netted the parish the sum of forty dollars. This took place in 1908 during which year the basement under the present church was built and equipped for Guild meetings, Sunday School classes and a gymnasium. A tennis court was built on the site of the original church and thus the new facilities provided a very live social center not only for the youth of the parish but for the entire neighborhood. The project called for the expenditure of much energy and funds on the part of all concerned, and the Improvement League together with the St. Agnes Guild were untiring in their efforts to help. During his Rectorship, Mr. Atwill asked the St. Agnes Guild to take care of the Altar, and this was the first indication of an Altar Guild in the parish. In 1910, the Birthday Plan was adopted to raise funds for the United Thank Offering. (Rt. Rev. Douglas H. Atwill, retired Bishop of North Dakota is a brother of John R. Atwill.)

In the Autumn of 1910, Rev. Arthur W. Farnum, grandson of Bishop Whipple, was called to the Rectorship of the Church. He is the only one of the twenty Rectors, who have served the congregation, whose picture we were unable to secure. In a letter received from him in February 1956, Mr. Farnum says, "thank you for the opportunity to greet the people of St. John's. I regret that I cannot furnish a 'mat' as I gave the last picture of myself that I possessed, to another parish of which I had been Rector. It was indeed a privilege to have been Rector of a parish that had its inception before Minnesota had a Bishop of its own. May God's blessing descend richly upon St. John's as it enters its second century.

I should like to send warm greetings especially to two groups of people and their descendents, who gladdened my heart while at St. Cloud. One was a Guild of young women who made possible the only material accomplishment while I was Rector - the installation of a pipe organ. The other, were the inhabitants of what was known as 'Lower Town'. Seeing that intensive pastoral work was needed there, I did what I could and was rewarded with warm friendships. May God bless your anniversary and your own work in the parish."

Mr. Farnum died on Oct. 15th, 1956 in Ashville, North Carolina at the age of seventy-seven.

In July in 1913 the Nov. Lewis R. Levering came to St. Cloud as the next Rector of St. John's. The earliest minutes of vestry meetings which have been preserved, are dated June 7th, 1915, just a few months before Mr. Levering's resignation. The vestry at that time included, John

Bensen, J. C. Munro, G. H. Miner, D. S. Rathbun, Dr. C. F. Brigham, A. W. Corwin, Paul Delay, C. S. Bunnell and H. R. Neide.



**REV. H. F. PARSHALL**  
Rector  
1895 - 1906



**REV. J. R. ATWILL**  
Rector  
1907 - 1910

**REV. A. W. FARNUM** – Rector – 1910 - 1912



**REV. LEWIS R. LEVERING**  
Rector  
1913 - 1915



**REV. GEORGE E. RENISON**  
Rector  
1915 - 1920

During the Rectorship of Mr. Levering a fence was erected around the church property to prevent trespassing which was quite a common practice in those days, for people had little

regard for church grounds. The records show that during Mr. Levering's ministry here there were twenty-two baptisms, eleven marriages, thirty confirmations and sixteen burials. He resigned on September 1st, 1915 to become the Headmaster of the Cathedral School for boys in Washington, D.C.

The next call was extended to the Rev. George E. Renison of Juneau, Alaska, to assume charge of the parish beginning Oct. 1st, 1915 at a salary of one thousand dollars per year with rectory provided. He was also to be the assistant Chaplain at the Minnesota State Reformatory. It was during his Rectorship that the Christian Endeavour Society was particularly active and the St. Agnes Guild had a membership of thirty seven. This was during the war years and many of the men were away at the Front. It is recorded that a "Mission" was held in the church in 1916, which did much to revitalize the life of the parish. Lockers were built in the parish house for choir vestments and the church appeared to be in good shape both financially and spiritually. On May 10th, 1920 Mr. Renison tendered his resignation as Rector of the parish.

The Rev. John M. Nelson succeeded Mr. Renison and remained until March 1st, 1924. The use of a Sunday Bulletin came about in 1921 for the first time. In 1923, Fourth Ave., and Fourth Street were paved, at a cost to the Church of eighteen hundred dollars. A new furnace was installed in the rectory during Mr. Nelson's ministry at a cost of two hundred sixty five dollars. Minutes of a vestry meeting dated December 1921, indicate that the budget for the following year was set at three thousand two hundred dollars. Mr. Nelson tendered his resignation effective as of March 1st, 1924.

On the first day of June, 1924, Rev. E. C. and Mrs. Biller took up residence in the rectory, having arrived from the State of New Jersey. For the next twenty-one years Mr. Biller guided the spiritual life of St. John's congregation. Many and varied were the changes in the membership of the church and in the different organizations, during his Rectorship. In 1925, the church was remodeled and redecorated at which time a number of gifts and memorials were made, as listed elsewhere in this booklet. In addition to St. John's Church, Mr. Biller also held services in Trinity Church, Becker, and was part time Chaplain at the State Reformatory.



**REV. JOHN M. NELSON**  
Rector  
1920 - 1924



**REV. E. C. BILLER (Sr.)**  
Rector  
1924 - 1946



**REV. W. R. F. THOMAS**  
Rector  
1946 - 1951



**REV. FRANK BUTLER**  
Rector  
1951 - 1956

A noteworthy event occurred in 1931 when the new, and present rectory was built on the site of the old one. Most of the funds for the building came from a bequest in the 'will\*' of Mrs. II. R. Neide, a faithful and active member of the parish who departed tin's life on January 13th, 1931, and left the sum of \$5,000 to St. John's Church.



In his annual report dated January 6th, 1935 the Rector said, "when I look back over the twelve years it has been my privilege to serve you as Rector, I am mindful of the change of personnel in the parish. We are not doing all that we could do or should do, but a working church is a growing church. Together we face the year 1936. Let us face it in the spirit of optimism, with a firm determination to make it a banner year in loyalty and love for God and his church. It is well at times to look back to the great cloud of witnesses with which both the universal church and our own parish are surrounded. Traditions and memories are helpful, but the church and its membership has a definite commission given by Christ himself to make his gospel known among men. That is your task and mind we are bidden to press forward in carrying it out/'

The property was improved in 1940 when a retaining wall was built along both 4th Avenue and 4th Street at a cost of some \$425.00; and again in 1942 when a new roof costing the sum of \$700.00 was put on the church.

Mr. Biller experienced two very difficult periods during his Rectorship. He served here during the depression years which seriously handicapped the work of the church from a financial aspect, the income in 1934 amounting to \$3,036.76 as against \$4,052.16 ten years earlier. However, in 1944 the income had again risen to \$4,156.52. World War II reduced the membership of the church as the records indicate to the extent that in 1943, thirty one parishioners were on active service of whom the following made the supreme sacrifice: John L. Gary, William Gorman, Charles D. Nelson, Dennis Booker and Robert Halverson. Many of the parishioners also were engaged in war work at home: Mrs. William Rumpf was city chairman of a victory books' campaign for service men; Judge Wendell Henning was chairman of home service; the Rector's wife, Mrs. E. C. Biller, served on the ration board; Mrs. George Lehrke was chairman of the Victory Aides; Mrs. Charles H. Richter was city chairman for War Bonds; Mrs. V. E. Larsen taught classes on Nursing Aides; Grace McConnell was in charge of First Aid Classes. In 1942, the women of the church sewed for the American Red Cross in place of their own traditional bazaar; Mrs. John Gale served as Famine Emergency Committee Woman and Mrs. Paul Delay was in charge of Home Conservation.

In addition to his parish duties, the Rector served as a member of the Executive Council of the Diocese, Chairman of the Board of Missions and Church Extension, a member of the Standing Committee of the Diocese, and a delegate to the General Convention of the Church in Denver

in 1931. His many accomplishments in church and civic life can best be summed up in the following statement which appeared in the Church Sunday bulletin dated January, 1946, "as a member of this community, Ernest Cecil Biller exerted a powerful influence for good, marked by a militant promotion of the highest principles and ideals of his church. His attitude was always frank and forthright and never left doubt as to his stand on any question. He was a constant patron of cultural and educational endeavors in his home city and aided actively their promotion. He has reaped in full measure the reward of a social leader who gives himself unstintingly to the service of his fellows, and acknowledged as an honored and respected citizen of his community.

He was a kind husband and father whose family life exemplified his deep interest in the youth of his church. His kindly humor, his active participation in their enterprises and his wholesome tactful guidance made him a favorite among young people.

As a churchman and Hector of St. John's his record of more than twenty-one years of faithful ministry speak more eloquently than any memorial that could be composed or designed. He was a leader in his parish and in the Diocese, one in whom his parishioners and the higher officers of the church reposed the highest trust and confidence. He was an eloquent speaker and his well rounded, soundly composed sermons were thought provoking and inspiring. Perhaps because of his deep interest in the problems of youth, he served for more than ten years in a particularly difficult field - that of Chaplain at the State Reformatory, and many letters and communications from the men among whom he worked, received after his death, are an eloquent tribute to his ministry and his kindly interest in their welfare. His long years of service in St. John's with its baptisms, confirmations, marriages and burials, his comforting presence in times of trouble, and his enthusiastic participation in our happier times, his careful and painstaking administration of the affairs of his church, combined to make him an outstanding Hector whose record may be emulated with profit.

We, of this parish, take comfort in the sure and certain belief that his heavenly reward will be infinitely ample. His good works have richly entitled him to a high place among the souls of those, both of the living and the dead, whose lives of devotion have given perpetual existence to our church and its finest traditions. We share with his wife and children the benediction of a life of higher service in the way of the Master. Of Ernest Cecil Biller, it might well be said: 'I have applied my heart to fulfil thy statutes always; even unto the end/ Psalm 119:112.'

Mr. Biller died on Christmas Eve, 1945, after a brief illness. His wife is still among the parishioners of St. John's Church.

In recent months an anonymous donation of \$1,000.00 was given to the Church to be used for a Memorial to Mr. Biller. This money has been used to purchase two sets of double doors - something which the church has needed for many years. An appropriate bronze plaque on the wall of the church presented by the same donor, honors the memory of this devoted servant of God.

After the death of the Rev. E. C. Biller, the parish was without a Rector until the following May when the Rev. W. R. F. Thomas arrived from Springfield, Illinois. In the meantime regular services were conducted by various clergymen and lay readers.

The rectory was redecorated in 1946, when new steps were added and an oil burner installed. Three years later, the Church was redecorated and repainted both inside and out, as was also the basement, which was somewhat enlarged by moving the furnace from the main body of the building to its present location. The building was strengthened by installing new supports in the basement. The chancel rail was readjusted and rebuilt, the font moved near the sacristy door, and the pulpit and lectern exchanged places. New kitchen equipment was purchased including a hot water heater. To promote religious education, a movie machine, projector and screen were bought, and these prove valuable not only to the children and young people but to the entire congregation who find them very useful for the presentation of various programs. Other property improvements included a cap on the retaining wall, new steps on the South side of the church and area ways for the basement windows.

In 1950 the garage was built, the work being done by the parishioners themselves.

In the Autumn of 1951, the Rector tendered his resignation in order to do Missionary Work in the Ilawaiin Islands under the Rt. Rev. Harry S. Kennedy. At the present time he is the Rector of St. John's Church, Larchmont, New York.

For the next few months the services continued under the direction of different clergymen and lay readers, including Douglass Colbert, a member of the parish and a candidate for the ministry.

In April of 1952, a call was extended to the Rev. Frank Butler, Associate Rector of St. Luke's Church, Minneapolis, to become Rector of St. John's. Mr. Butler had come from Vancouver,

British Columbia to St. Luke's Church, Mpls., in August of 1951. He accepted the call and together with his wife, and daughter, Rosalie, took up residence in the rectory on May 1st, 1952, even before the job of redecorating was completed. His Induction Service took place on October 7th when Rt. Rev. Hamilton Kellogg formally instituted him as Rector of the parish. During the year the furnace in the rectory was remodeled and the following items purchased for church use: a typewriter, mimeograph machine, thirty Prayer Books and thirty Hymn Books. At the annual meeting a suggestion was made which had far reaching effects, the suggestion being that the parish should embark on some major venture which would be significant for the observance of the Church's Centennial in 1956. The Sunday School was growing, many new families were moving into the parish and there was a real need for larger and adequate facilities especially necessary to take care of the children and young people of the parish. By the beginning of 1953, the Rector was getting well established in the parish, having become acquainted with most of the parishioners during the first eight months of his ministry. All organizations were functioning very effectively and the condition of the church both financially and spiritually (we hope) was very fine indeed. One major improvement took place in 1953 namely that of a new sidewalk from the front steps of the church leading down to Fourth Ave., and also to Fourth St., the total cost amounting to \$1,475.00; five basement windows were also remodeled in the parish house, two steel cabinets were purchased for choir vestments and one for church records, a new vacuum cleaner was also bought and the Fortnighters donated eight banquet tables.

In November of 1953 a special meeting was called to discuss the possibility of making some major improvements to the parish house as was suggested at the annual meeting the year previous. This proved to be a very lengthy meeting and by the time arrived to take a vote, many of the parishioners had gone home. However, a motion was passed "that we do make an addition to the parish house leaving it to the discretion of the vestry as to the method of raising funds and planning the details." The vote was twenty-five in favor and eight against, plus a few who did not vote at all.

In September, of 1953, Dr. W. S. Stoncy (son of Bishop Stoncy of the Missionary District of Mexico and Southwest Texas), was appointed a faculty member of the State Teachers' College in the Music Department. He offered his services as Choir Director and did a magnificent job in building up the membership of the choir.

In January of 1954, after considering many ways and means of securing funds for the parish house addition, the vestry decided to engage the Wells Fund Raising Organization to direct the campaign. A series of meetings followed and the campaign was conducted in late January. The sum of \$31,008.00 was pledged over a three year period. The cost of the campaign was \$2,272.75 of which \$1,800.00 was the director's fee. The remaining amount included literature, secretarial help and dinners.

An additional improvement was made during the year when a new roof was put on the rectory. It had been badly damaged by a hail storm but the insurance was sufficient to take care of the cost. Paul Delay did some remodeling in the parish house in the way of building cupboards and shelves for the Library and Sunday School supplies. An Altar Guild was also organized. Eighteen new families moved into the parish, and our organist, Miss Ruth Lofstrom moved to Minneapolis.

In the Spring of 1955, Dr. M. E. Van Nostrand, of the State Teachers' College offered his services as Choir Director, replacing Dr. W. S. Stoney who had moved to Italy. Miss Jeanette Mesenburg was appointed church organist, and both of these people are at the present time carrying on in their respective capacities. The Rectory received a coat of paint on the outside and some redecorating was done on the inside. The garage was also painted and all windows repaired in both buildings. Hail Insurance money covered the cost of the job. Charles W. Rathe and Dr. M. E. Van Nostrand received lay readers licenses from Bishop Keeler and we are proud indeed to have such well qualified men who are capable of taking services when the Rector is on vacation or during any emergency.

On the 15th of June, Meyer Construction Company was engaged to begin work on the new addition to the parish house. The architect was Frank W. Jackson and his associates, the electrical work was done by Neil Electric Company and the plumbing by Weidner Company. The job took six months to complete, during which time the activities of the Sunday School were seriously handicapped, as was the general operations of the parish. We were obliged to cancel the Annual Turkey Dinner which set the budget back some \$600.00 as it was included in the budget at the beginning of the year as anticipated income. Bethlehem Lutheran Church kindly allowed the women of our parish to hold the annual bazaar in their parish house for which we were very grateful. While the new addition was in the process of construction a special meeting was called to decide whether the old parish house should be remodeled or

not. It was voted by an overwhelming majority to include that additional work at a cost of some \$1,500.00.

Due to the fact that people were pledging both to the church and to the building fund, it was felt by some that the income for 1955 would drop somewhat compared with that of 1954, since the building fund drive was conducted after the pledges for 1954 had been made. This was not the case however, since the income for 1954 was \$6,636.00 from Pledges and in 1955 it was \$7,123.00.

The first annual meeting in the new parish house was held in January, 1956, and all were delighted and thankful that the work had been completed, and things were back to normal once again. On June 17th, Rt. Rev. Hamilton H. Kellogg, dedicated the new building in the presence of a large congregation.

Many gifts and memorials have been given to the church and parish house in the last four years, all of which are listed elsewhere in this booklet with the respective dates.

On October 3rd, the Rector announced his resignation to the vestry, to accept a call to work in the Missionary District of Spokane under the Rt. Rev. Russell H. Hubbard, his resignation to become effective as of Dec. 1st, 1956.

During his Rectorship in St. Cloud, Mr. Butler was a member of the Bishop and Council for three years, Youth adviser for the St. Cloud Deanery and treasurer of the St. Cloud Ministerial Association. He also conducted services at the Veterans' Hospital, took Morning Radio Devotions, and conducted Communion Services at the State Reformatory where he also baptized one inmate and prepared two for Confirmation.