



St. Wilfrid's Church:

Fragments of the Soul of an Urban Church

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Rubenstein Library

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Abstract

This is a personal chronicle about a small stone church in Camden, New Jersey. St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church has survived de-industrialization, corruption, racist policies, and apathy over its one hundred-thirty-three years. The vulnerability and resiliency of the church enticed me into its sphere and motivated me to join the effort to preserve it. The pure beauty of the sanctuary touched me, and I was saddened to think it might be lost. I wanted to honor the spirit within the sanctuary by describing it before it was destroyed. I discovered old church records with delicate pages and elegant handwriting. I was able to talk to people who loved the church and worked to keep it alive. I worked beside volunteers who supported the church's open door clinic and attended Sunday services with them. The spirit of the church captured my heart.

This experimental documentary knits fragments of the past together with visual images, and personal accounts from the present to illuminate the story of the church and its people. Thousands of small churches have experienced the same travails, hundreds of cities have abandoned their neighborhoods and lost their places of worship. Only a few congregations, like St. Wilfrid's, have survived. They have been able to reinvent themselves and find a mission that is meaningful. This is a hybrid visual narrative documenting the faith, resiliency, and resurrection I witnessed at St. Wilfrid's Church.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the many people who made this project fun and inspiring.

First, to the people of St. Wilfrid's. All the volunteers who give life to the clinic and specifically Norman, Valrie, Alex, and Sarah. To the neighbors who visit the clinic, trusting they will be cared for and respected. To all the church members who came before, thank you for leaving us this treasure and thank you for instilling this place with love and hope. It has been an honor to collect and transcribe this story.

Secondly, to those friends who read various parts of the paper and offered encouragement and suggestions. Jane, Marshall, Courtney, Bass, and Tracy, you have been patient and supportive. A special thank you to my mother, for her abiding faith.

And to Lisa McCarty who opened my mind to another kind of project, who offered visual images as tools to communicate, who introduced me to the Rubenstein collection, and helped me bring this story into the light.

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Introduction

Saturday morning, October 15, 2011, a small group of volunteers, removed the chain and padlock from the side gate, unbolted the doors, and invited people into St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church. This marked the beginning of another new life for the small stone church on Dudley and Westfield Avenue in Camden, New Jersey. It was not the first time this place rose up from the ashes, and it will not be the last. I can't calculate the number of lives this congregation has lived over its one hundred thirty-three-year history. In this paper, I have documented a few and I wholeheartedly celebrate them.

The resiliency and vulnerability of the church were what initially drew me to it. When I started this project, I was doubtful that the church would survive much longer. I admired the stubborn people holding on to the structure and the function of St. Wilfrid's, but I couldn't see how they would prevail. The pure beauty of the sanctuary touched me, and I was saddened to think it might be lost. I felt I could honor the spirit within the sanctuary by describing it before it was destroyed. What I did not fully comprehend or foresee was the power of the soul and the depth of the faith rooted in the church. I was surprised by the beauty I encountered in the old church records and touched by the emotion contained in the writings. I didn't understand the long struggle the church and its members had been engaged in until I read hundreds of pages documenting the church's history. The voices from the past reminded me of my religious upbringing and challenged me to reexamine my personal understanding of faith. The research revealed a multitude of perspectives and ended with delightful surprises.

The discovery of a treasure trove of church records in 2015 gave me the opportunity to explore the history of St. Wilfrid's from the member's viewpoint. The fifteen books that contain the church's history had been forgotten, left on a shelf in a back room in the

parish house ¹ for decades. Elegant handwritten entries were made in the first Parish Register starting in 1886. The registers include lists of families, and priests, with dates of marriages, baptisms, and deaths. Church members also kept minutes of all the vestry ² meetings that document the governance of the church. The oldest book of minutes starts in 1888 and the newest book I had access to ends in 1980. The minutes of the vestry reveal many of the challenges that plagued St. Wilfrid's Church for over one hundred years. I was able to use these slivers of the past to uncover the story of St. Wilfrid's.

The precious old books instantly sparked my curiosity and touched my heart. Their delicate pages, musty smell, and elegant language captivated me. These tomes had a story to tell me about what it meant to be part of this small stone church. Listening to their voices and holding their treasures brought me great joy and new awareness. Page after page the story pulled me closer to the soul of the old church and motivated me to help protect it. Combined with pieces of ephemera found on site, interviews with people close to the church, and the history of Camden and the Dudley neighborhood I have woven a visual narrative about faith, urbanization, resiliency, neglect, and resurrection.

This project is an experimental documentary knitting fragments of the past and present together with visual images to communicate the story of the church and its people. Photographs of the written documents express the beauty and uniqueness of the timeworn books. There were no words that would describe the experience of turning the fragile, mildewed pages and finding a yellowed newspaper clipping folded into the book. Language failed me when I held one book, and its spine splayed open to reveal the strings that kept it together. Postcards of the original church, photos of church leaders, maps from 1906, programs from church services,

¹ A parish house is a community hall or fellowship hall attached to the church.

² The vestry is the elected leadership council of an Episcopal church.

prayers from the 1945 prayer book, newspaper clippings, and my own photographs of the church enrich the narrative immeasurably.

This is not a unique story, but it is unusual for it to be documented from the perspective of the church members. Thousands of small churches have experienced the same travails, hundreds of cities have abandoned their neighborhoods and lost their places of worship. Churches have been bulldozed for so-called urban renewal or lost so many members that they could not afford their building. Some have been closed by their sponsoring agencies because they were thought to no longer be relevant. Only a few congregations, like St. Wilfrid's, have survived. They have been able to reinvent themselves, embrace their new neighbors, and find a mission that is meaningful. They have convinced funders and sponsors that they have something unique to offer. Survival requires many friends and allies, it demands that we confront past wrongs and think differently about the future. The voices of the people who built and sustained St. Wilfrid's are the best ones to tell the story of an urban church with all its trials and tribulations. They shared their losses, their disappointments, and their fears with me. They also exposed their stubborn persistence, their faith, and ultimately, they surprised me with their ability to resurrect their beloved church. It is a profoundly personal chronicle – for the church supporters and for me.

Notes to Readers

The spelling of St. Wilfrid changes throughout the history of the church. I have chosen to use the contemporary spelling, Wilfrid, in my text.

The text that was directly transcribed from the church records has not been changed to correct any spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors. Neither were any corrections made for any of the language extracted from the 1945 Book of Common Prayer, or Hymnal.

A glossary is included as an appendix to clarify any specific religious terms used in the Episcopal Church.

The interviews included in the paper were conducted in person and on the phone with some clarifications by email. In some cases, I edited comments to address continuity and clarity which means that they are not direct quotes. I made every effort to communicate the intent and tone of the speaker.

The photographs in this document are all listed in the Works Cited pages with the exception of photographs I took. All of my photos were taken between 2015-2018.



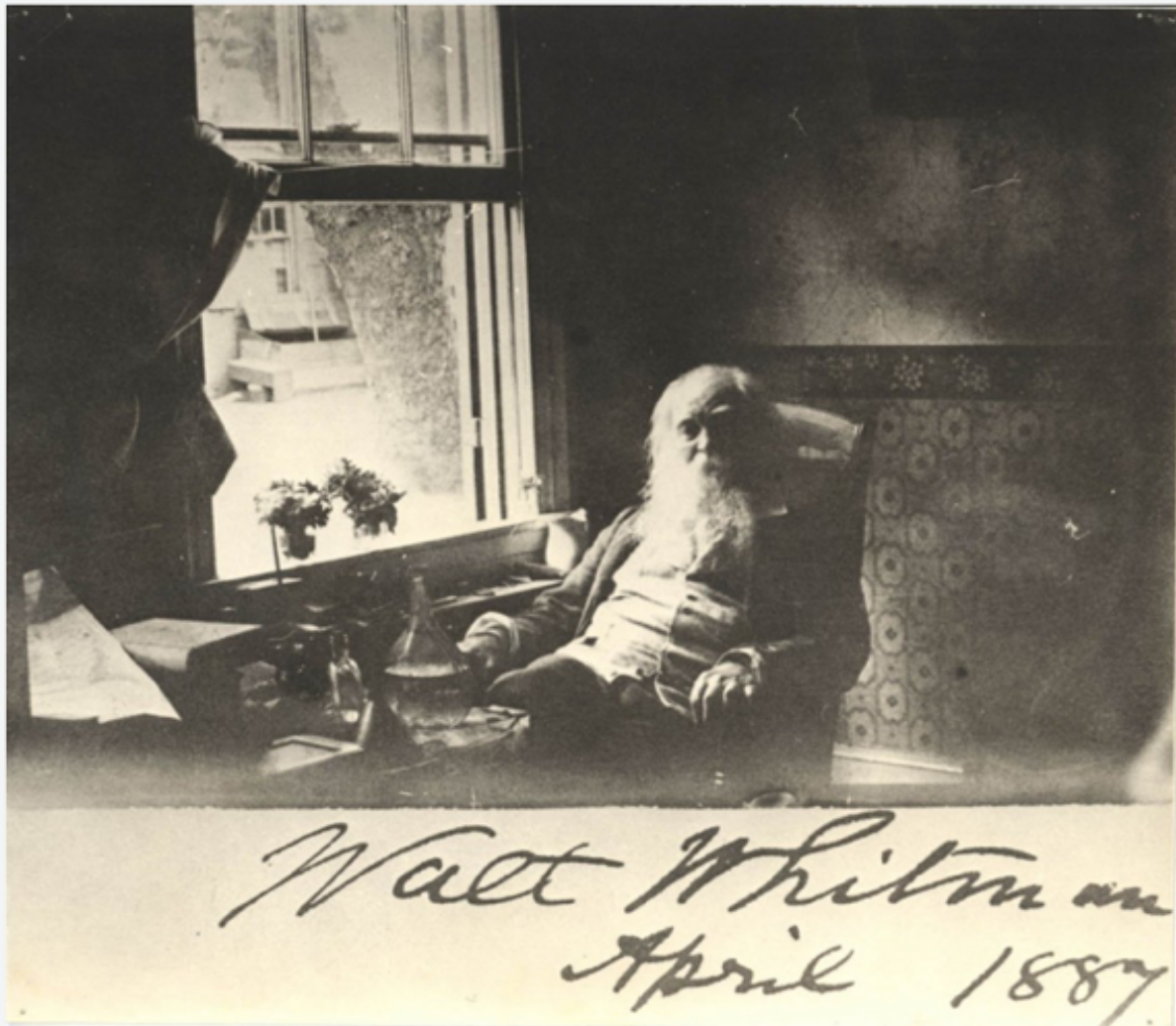
St. Wilfred's Church in Cramer Hill, undated, found at Camden County Historical Society

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

*To think of time— of all that retrospection,
To think of to-day, and the ages continued henceforward.
Have you guess'd you yourself would not continue?
Have you dreaded these earth-beetles?
Have you fear'd the future would be nothing to you?
Is to-day nothing? is the beginningless past nothing?
If the future is nothing they are just as surely nothing (lines 1-7)?*

Chapter One: The Genesis 1886-1900



Thomas Eakins, "128", Walt Whitman Archive

In the late nineteenth century, Walt Whitman was writing poetry on Mickle Street in Camden, New Jersey. The great American poet moved from Brooklyn in 1873 and purchased a home where, in 1891, he wrote his final version of *Leaves of Grass*. The only house Whitman ever owned was on a tree-lined street in downtown Camden. During the years he lived there the city transformed into an industrial center and Whitman wrote about how the change impacted the residents. This urbanization was the spark that started the story of St. Wilfrid's Protestant

Episcopal Church. The themes of Whitman's poetry are parallel to the experiences of the small stone church. In his poem, "To Think of Time" he reveals a tale of life, death, and immortality, closely resembling the lifecycle of the parish. I have used Whitman's words to help guide this narrative.

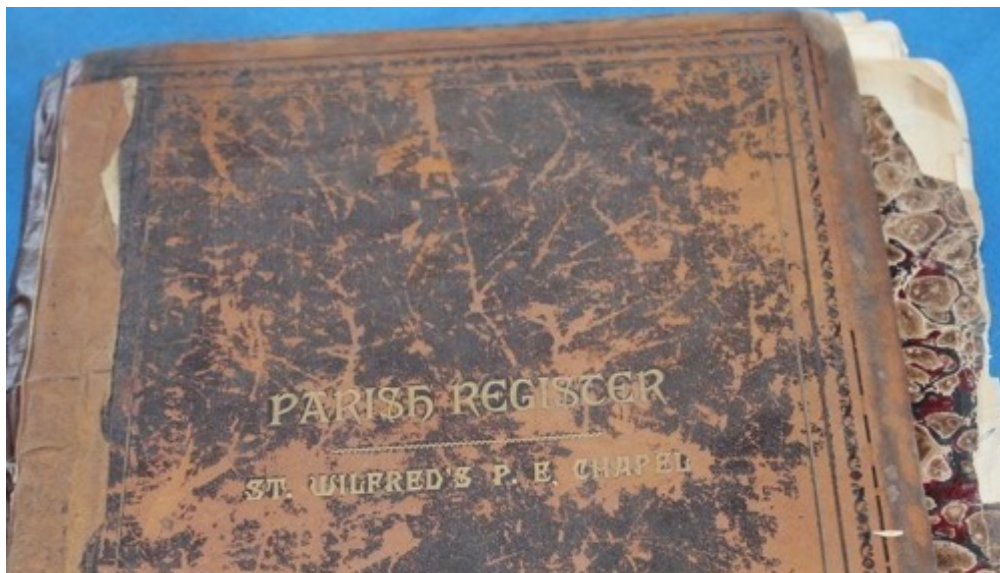
The city of Camden, New Jersey occupies ten square miles on the east side of the Delaware River, directly across the river from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Over the years, this small patch of land has supported almost "every ethnic and cultural group in American history: European, African, Latino, Caribbean, Asian, and Native American: Protestant, Catholic, and Jew. All took part in shaping the county's history" (Dorwart 4). Europeans settled there in 1626, displacing several the Lenape tribal groups (Dorwart 11). The Dutch, the Swedes, and the British enjoyed the productive land, creating settlements and farming communities along the river valley. Quakers obtained large sections of land in the area, hoping America was a place they could escape religious persecution. The religious beliefs of the Quakers had a major impact on the emerging city. Their abolitionist stance was a powerful cultural force in Camden starting in the late seventeen-hundreds.

Camden experienced significant growth and prosperity during the years Whitman lived there. The city was incorporated in 1828 when leaders worried about drunken visitors and unsavory establishments. They were convinced that Camden needed policing power and land development controls (Dorwart 52). Once it became a city, Camden's growth accelerated as ferries, and railroad lines moved people and goods into town. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the city became an industrial and transportation center. Factories produced tin, sheet iron, textiles, and shoes. There were sawmills, lumberyards, coal yards, and shipyards. There were jobs and new housing for the people moving into Camden as the city annexed

neighborhoods and local entrepreneurs expanded the housing stock. Residents were coming to Camden to enjoy “cheaper housing and country air” (Cammarota 88).

By 1880, the population was over 41,000 with an opera house, telephone service, churches, and schools (Cammarota 85). Camden was evolving into an industrial city and adding neighborhoods. Cramer Hill was one of several newly created neighborhoods in East Camden. Considered a rural area until it was annexed in 1899, the new housing development was only three miles from Whitman’s home. It was here that the first St. Wilfrid’s Protestant Episcopal Church was founded. The first pastor of the St. Wilfrid’s Chapel, Henry B. Bryan wrote an account of the history of the church in the Parish Register in 1886. “St. Wilfred’s Chapel, Cramer Hill, Diocese of New Jersey owes its existence to the love and zeal of two devoted children of the church—Mr. Frederick Jones and Mr. Arthur Matthews (Parish Register 1886-1914)”.³ According to Mr. Bryan, Mr. Jones and Mr. Matthews decided they needed to organize a new church because there were no churches within walking distance of Cramer Hill. “The nearest church, St. Paul’s, Camden NJ being two miles away, but that possibly a church mission might be started with success since the place was growing rapidly” (Parish Register 1886-1914). Frederick Jones emerged as the leader of the fledgling group. In 1886, he gave the congregation a leather-bound journal to serve as the Parish Register for St. Wilfrid’s.

³ The spelling of St. Wilfrid’s changes throughout the history of the church. The text of the church records has not been changed to correct any spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors.

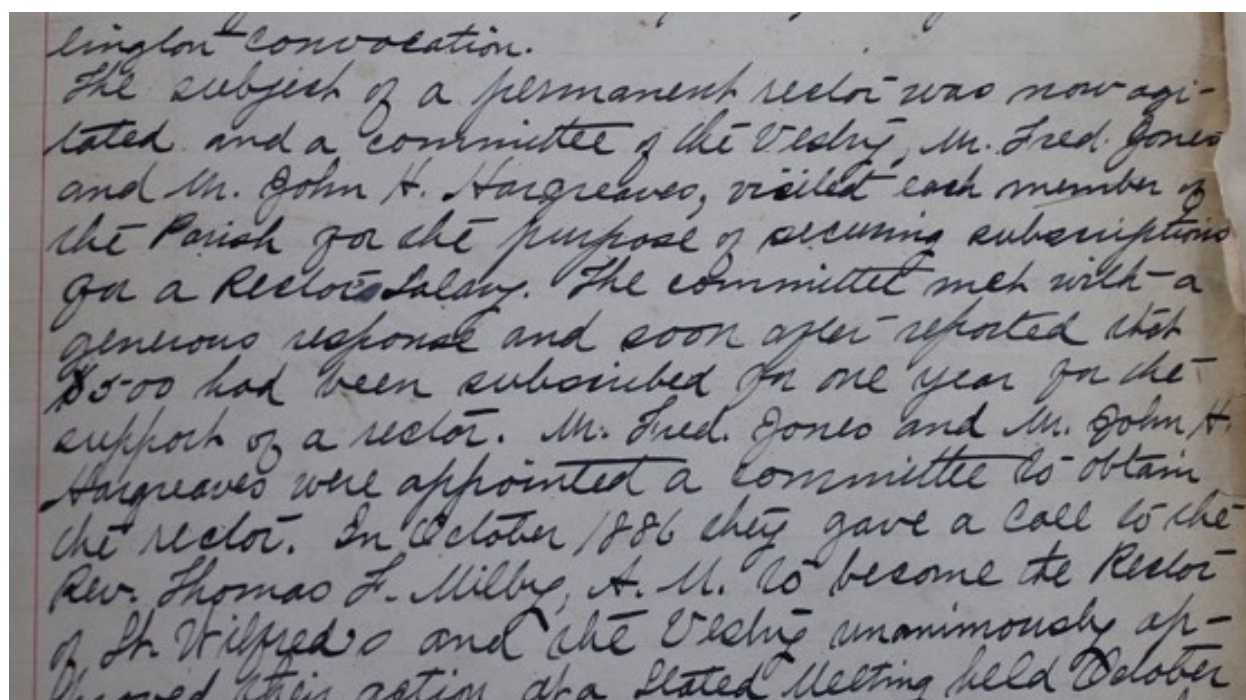


Parish Register 1886-1914

*Presented to
St. Wilfred's Chapel,
Cramer Hill, Diocese of New Jersey
by
Mr. Frederick Jones,
Parish Warden.
Easter, 1886.*

Parish Register 1886-1914

The books that contain the church's history were loved over many years but had been forgotten. A stack of books was left on a shelf in a back room in the parish house ⁴ of the church for decades. Rediscovered in 2017, they contain the history of the church and its people. Elegant handwritten entries were made in the first Parish Register from 1886 until July 17, 1914. The spine of this book is bound with brown electric tape to secure the cover. The Parish Register includes lists of families, priests, marriages, baptisms, and deaths.



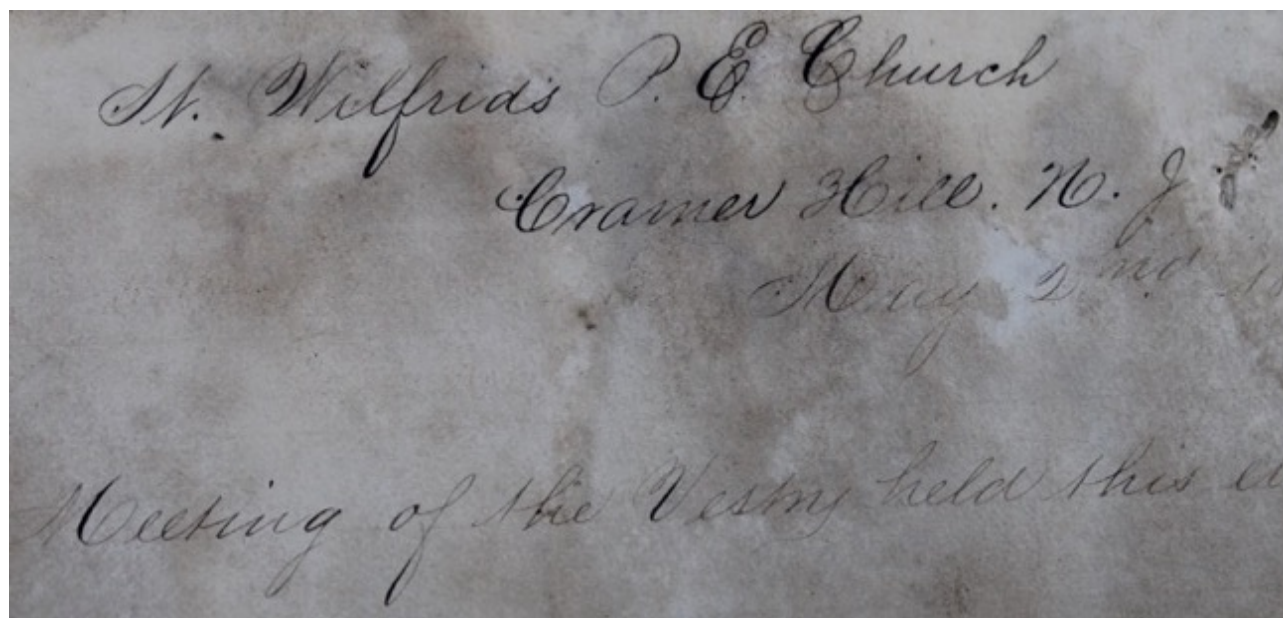
Parish Register 1886-1914

In addition to the Parish Register, church members kept minutes of all the vestry ⁵ meetings that document the governance of the church. The oldest book starts in 1888 and contains minutes through 1897. It is a fragile journal without a front cover and with mildew on the pages. Pasted inside both the Register and the Vestry Minutes are newspaper clippings about

⁴ A parish house is a community hall or fellowship hall attached to the church.

⁵ The vestry is the elected leadership council of an Episcopal church.

the church as well as obituaries of church members. These fragments of the past document the evolution of St. Wilfrid's.



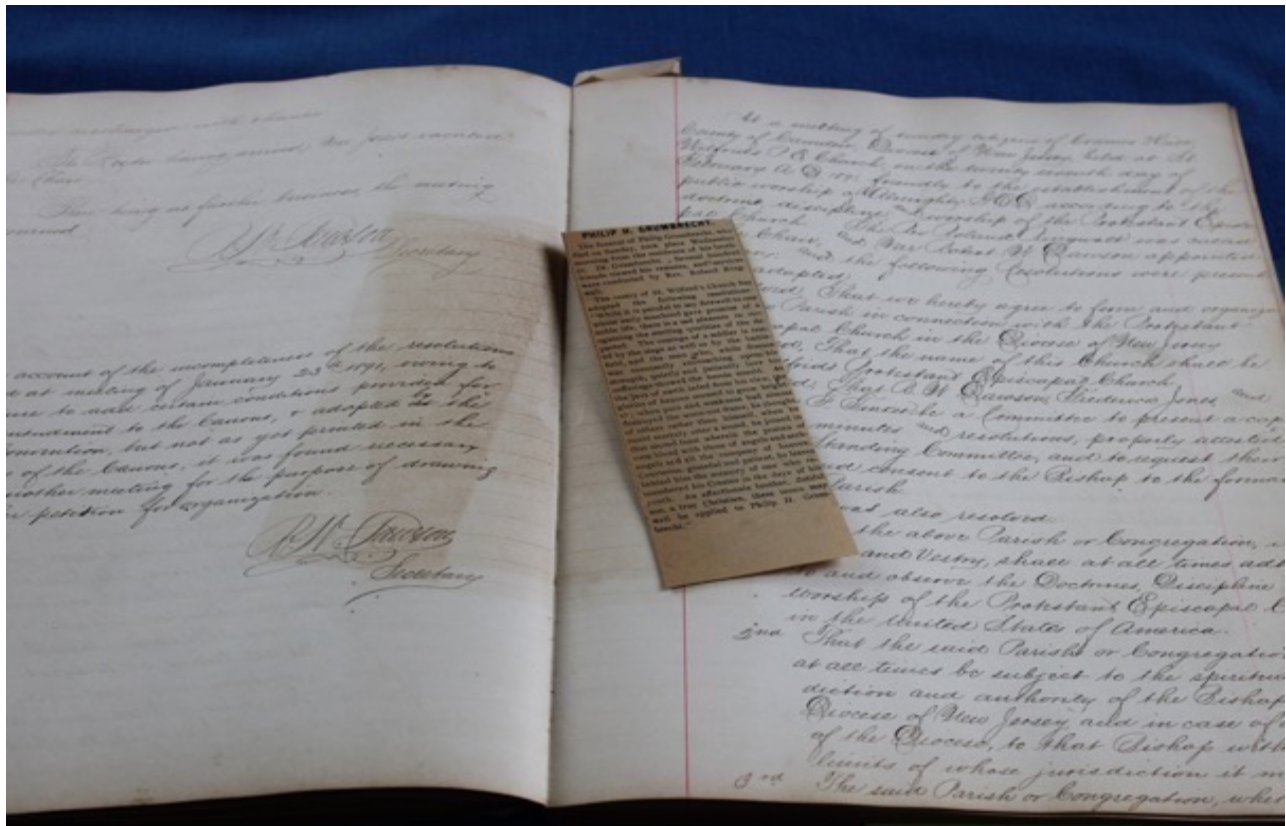
Vestry Minutes 1888-1897

**From George Reeser Prowell's 1886
History of Camden County, New Jersey**

ST. WILFRED PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHAPEL.
—A number of the citizens of Cramer Hill, who were desirous of establishing a church of this denomination in the town, met at the house of Arthur Matthews, in 1884, and determined to contribute weekly sums as subscriptions toward the erection of a suitable place of worship. Among the contributors were Frederick Jones and wife, Arthur Mathews and wife, George Gilbert and wife, Edward Hankin and others. In 1885 sufficient funds were raised, and by September of that year Jeffreys & Jenkins, contractors, had completed a neat, one-story frame chapel, twenty by thirty-three feet and twenty-four feet high, with cupola and bell. It was dedicated September 27, 1885, by Bishop Scarborough. Ministers were supplied until October, 1885, when the Rev. H. B. Bryan became the rector. A Sunday-school was also early in progress. At the present time (1886) there are forty-three members of the church, and fifty-one teachers and scholars in the Sunday-school, with Frederick Jones as superintendent.

Delaware Valley Rhythm and Blues (DVRBS.COM) Website

Vestry Minutes 1888-1897



Vestry Minutes 1888-1897

The minutes of the vestry reveal some of the challenges during the early years of the church at Cramer Hill. Many of these struggles—keeping a permanent priest, maintaining a building, and raising money—would continue to haunt St. Wilfrid's for over one hundred years. In the early years of the church, Mr. Jones would step in to address the problems. His first challenge was raising money to pay for construction of a facility. His second was to gather funds to pay for a permanent priest, he accomplished both.

The Parish Register verifies the hiring of Reverend Thomas F. Milby, as the first permanent priest ⁶. He would only serve as parish priest for two years. This was the beginning of a long list of short-term priests at St. Wilfrid's. Over the years there would be extended periods

⁶ A priest is one of the spiritual leaders of the Episcopal church.

where there was no permanent priest. If the church wanted to have services, they would have to share priests with other congregations.



Parish Register 1886-1914

The Cramer Hill church building cost \$300 to construct, and it was bare-bones. The vestry was responsible for the operations and maintenance of the church. At the vestry meeting May 2, 1888, “Mr. Gilbert moved that a committee be appointed to obtain estimates for a heating arrangement for the church” (Vestry Minutes 1888-1897). It isn’t clear how they intended to pay for heating as there was a balance of \$12.57 in the church treasury that day.

In 1915, the Camden Courier newspaper published an article about the early years of the church, elaborating on some of the problems with the facility ranging from poor ventilation to roaming swine (Camden Courier September 25, 1915).

ST. WILFRID'S FOUNDED UNDER LAYMAN'S ROOF

Services First Held in Fall
of 1884 at Home of
Frederick Jones

EARLY HISTORY WAS THAT OF SACRIFICE AND LABOR

Camden Courier 9-15-1915

St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church has not

Mr. Bryan in 1887 accepted the rectorship of St. Stephen's, Florence, and the next incumbent was Rev. Thomas F. Milby, who within a year's time was succeeded by Rev. Roland Ringwalt.

One can hardly define the status of St. Wilfrid's in its early days. It clearly was not a parish, it was not a chapel connected with any parish, it was not a mission of the Diocese, but services were held and the foundations of a settled organization were laid. At the Diocesan Convention of 1891 it was formally recognized as a parish, and as such could hold property, whereas its lots had formerly been in the keeping of the ecclesiastical authorities.

It was not then the custom to use the phrase "unsanitary" at a rate of sixteen utterances to an hour, but St. Wilfrid's vestry did at times face health problems. When the stove got out of order and gas choked one as if in anticipation of the war horror, when the Winter rains flooded the cellar and put out the fire, when the pigs were close under the windows instead of in the clover, really there were days trying to the flesh. In 1896,

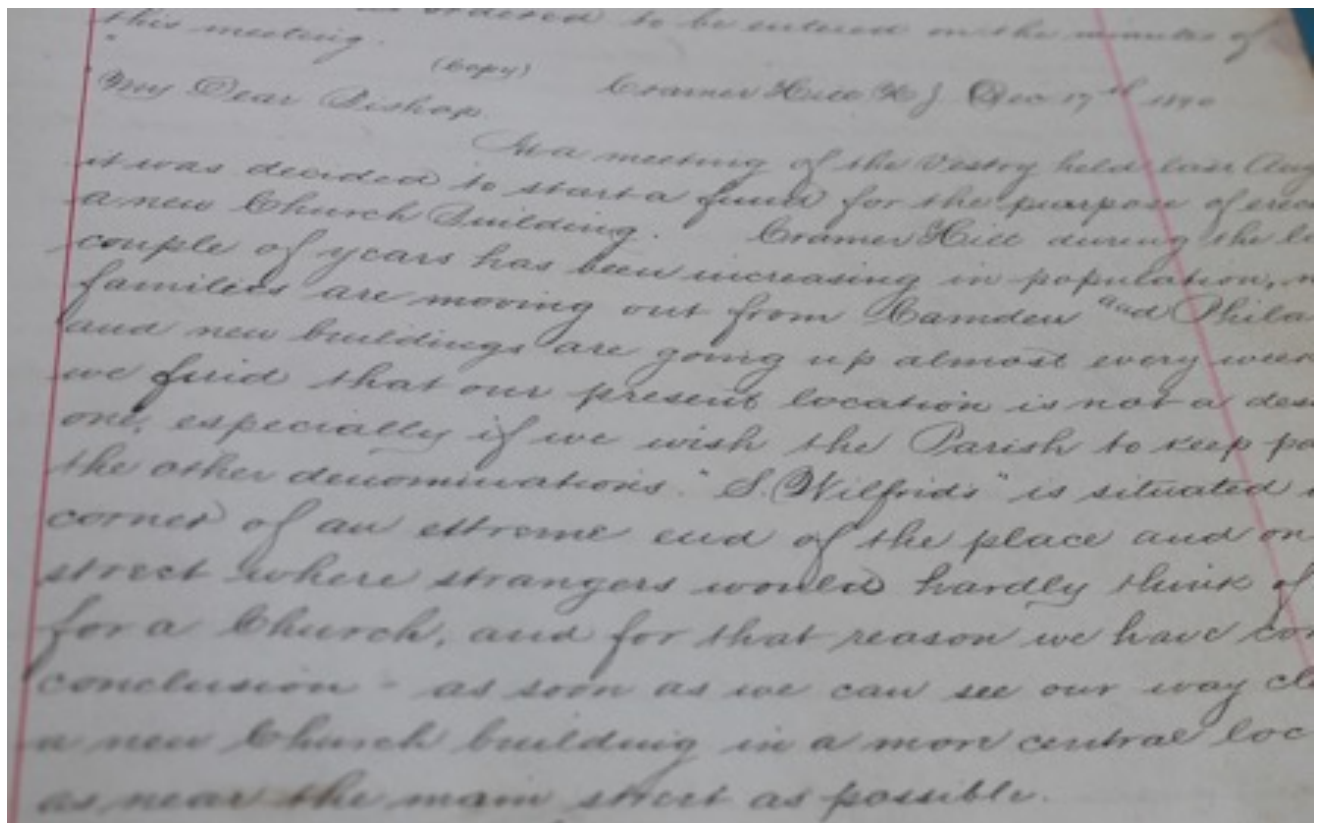
Camden Courier September 25, 1915

In spite of these serious challenges, the congregation grew and had a positive impact on its hometown. St. Wilfrid's persistence is evident from this clipping that was pasted inside the front cover of the Parish Register 1886-1914. "The largest and most enjoyable picnic ever given from this place went to Horning Grove on Thursday under the auspices of St Wilfred's Protestant Episcopal Sunday School" (Stockton Advocate August 16, 1890).

The largest and most enjoyable picnic ever given from this place went to Horning Grove on Thursday under the auspices of St. Wilfred's Protestant Episcopal Sunday school. There were nearly five hundred people present from the town, representing all denominations, and there was a social intermingling among them all throughout the day. There was music and dancing provided in the large pavilion, and there was an interesting program of sports for members of the Sunday school and others. In the morning a base ball match took place between a nine from the Pavonia Athletic Association and a picked nine. Scott and Horner were the battery for Pavonia, and the other side had Jeffries and Welsh and Lake and Cunningham. The Pavonia nine took a big lead in the first inning, but outside of that the game was interesting. At the close the score was Pavonia, 23; picked nine, 8. In the afternoon there were sports of various kinds, the contests, with the winners, being as follows: Wheelbarrow race, Frank Cathcart; Girls' Hopping race, Rebecca Portlock; Sack race, Harry Saunders; Three-legged race, Harry Sabin and Samuel English; Boys' Running race, Harry Sabin; Girls' Running race, Ray Allen; Egg and Spoon races—For boys, Arthur Matthews; for girls, Ray Allen; boys under ten years, Charley Jones; Barrel race, Arthur Matthews; Potato race, Joseph Glandon; Men's Running race, Joseph Glandon. Robert Dawson, Charles Tinker, Frederick Jones and others of the committee deserve great credit for their efforts in making the picnic such a successful affair.

Stockton Advocate
August 16, 1890.

The success of their congregation made the vestry proud and gave them confidence in the church. Soon Frederick Jones was thinking about building a larger church. In August of 1890, the vestry voted to create a fund for a new church. They wrote to the Bishop⁷ on December 17, 1890, to let him know their intentions. “New buildings are going up almost every week, we find that our present location is not a desirable one, especially if we wish the Parish to keep pace with the other denominations. St. Wilfrid’s is situated in a corner of an extreme end of the place and on a back street where strangers would hardly think of looking for a church, and for that reason we have come to the conclusion—as soon as we can see our way clear—to erect a new Church Building in a more central location, and as near the main street as possible” (Vestry Minutes 1888-1897).



This meeting. (copy) Cramer Hill N.J. Dec 17th 1890
My Dear Bishop,
At a meeting of the Vestry held last Aug
it was decided to start a fund for the purpose of erecting
a new Church Building. Cramer Hill during the last
couple of years has been increasing in population, and
families are moving out from Camden and Phila.
and new buildings are going up almost every week
we find that our present location is not a desirable
one, especially if we wish the Parish to keep pace
with the other denominations. "St. Wilfrid's" is situated
in a corner of an extreme end of the place and on a
back street where strangers would hardly think of
looking for a church, and for that reason we have come
to the conclusion - as soon as we can see our way clear
to erect a new Church building in a more central location
and as near the main street as possible.

Vestry Minutes 1888-1897

⁷ The Bishop is a higher level spiritual leader, who has jurisdiction of multiple churches within a geographic area.

The church leaders understood it was appropriate for them to inform the Bishop, but they were not aware of the limitations placed on them by the diocese⁸. This request was just the beginning of a protracted process that Mr. Jones and his congregation had to endure to build their next place of worship.

For several months, the diocese and the vestry would go back and forth about the legal issues. Each letter the Bishop sent presented obstacles to the vestry of St. Wilfrid's. The vestry had mistakenly assumed the Cramer Hill church building and the land it occupied were assets of the parish. They intended to use these as a down payment on the new church. They did not realize that they had constructed a building on land without a deed to the property. The church was not incorporated, nor did it have any official status as a part of the diocese. All of these issues had to be untangled before they could proceed. It was a very frustrating time for the vestrymen. In response, they failed to attend meetings to resolve the legal issues. For five straight months, from August 1892 until December 1892 vestry meetings were canceled because of lack of a quorum. Ignoring or avoiding difficult issues became a consistent pattern of behavior for the church leaders, creating multiple crises over the years.

⁸ The Diocese is the organizational office of the church in the state. The Bishop leads the diocese that has authority over churches within its jurisdiction.



Sanborn Maps 1906-1925

It wasn't until June 5, 1895, that a path forward appeared in the form of support from a local developer, Edward Dudley. Mr. Dudley and his father both owned large tracts of land in East Camden, and they were busy creating homesites and community structures. By 1901 they had established a train station on a corner of their property. They would later give the city land for a large city park, aptly named Dudley Grange Park. It made sense that they would want a church to anchor their new neighborhood.

It was not unusual for churches to receive donations of property from Camden landowners. St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church was following the precedent of their sister church in Camden. In 1834, St. Paul's Episcopal Church had been given land in downtown Camden by Richard Fetters. He was quoted as saying he sold it for "good will and fifty cents" (Cammarto

67, 103). Fetters, considered the most successful urban housing developer in Camden in the mid-nineteenth century, was notable because he was one of the only developers who sold property to people of color. The first black neighborhood in Camden was developed by Fetters and named Fettersville (Dorwart 60).

St. Wilfrid's patron developer, Edward Dudley, was also interested in good will when he offered a plot of land to Mr. Jones and his vestrymen. He gave them a piece of land that fronted Westfield Avenue. It would be several years before an extension of Dudley Street would be built to create the corner lot where the church now stands. In May 1895, Mr. Dudley's offer was copied into the minutes, including the stipulations "your church will be of stone, and you will begin to build at once"(Vestry Minutes 1888-1897).

erlington and
erected thereon. The terms under which this
ground is offered are as follows read letter of
Mr. Dudley.
Camden N.J. May 15-1895
Frederick Jones Esq.
My dear Sir:
I will sell you sixty feet front by
one hundred and fifty feet deep as suggested by
you for \$1,500 and if your church will be of stone
+ you will begin to build at once I will accept a
mortgage for all the purchase money @ 5%. This
is to enable you to use the money you have and
is considerably less than I would sell to others
Yours Truly
Edward Dudley.
We would further recommend that the Vestry

Vestry Minutes 1888-1897

Members of the vestry were anxious to move ahead it had been five years since they first mentioned the need for a new structure and things were getting dire at the Cramer Hill

church. "The condition of the present structure is such as to leave no doubt in our minds of the necessity of extensive repairs requiring a considerable outlay of money. We would, therefore, recommend that we proceed at once, that is as soon as plans have been prepared, to erect a new building, the said to be of stone" (Vestry Minutes 1888-1897). Understanding the urgency, Frederick Jones made a motion to accept Mr. Dudley's offer, and it passed.

It was not going to be an easy journey, nor was it going to happen quickly. The vestrymen were plagued by various dilemmas, most of them due to their lack of financial acumen but others because of requirements from the diocese. A Building Committee was appointed to manage the process, the chairman was Mr. Frederick Jones. At first, things moved quickly. In July 1896 the committee had building plans, but at the same meeting there was an attempt by the vestry to limit the Building Committee's ability to finance the construction. The motion failed, but this marked the beginning of a significant power struggle between the vestry and the Building Committee. There were members of the vestry who believed that the Building Committee had no authority to make financial commitments on behalf of the church. But, more challenging, they did not want to borrow any money for the new facility, they were firmly committed to a pay-as-you-go approach. The Building Committee forged ahead and in September informed the vestry that they had hired an architect, Thomas Waite, also a member of the vestry. In their report that announced that the basement had been excavated, all bills were paid, and there was a deed to the property (Vestry Minutes 1888-1897).

Town of Stockton 9/4/95
To the Rector, Warden, and Vestryman
Gentleman of St. Wilfrid P.C. Church.
Your Building Com. beg leave to state
that since last report, that the cellar has been
excavated, and foundation walls erected for that
section of the Church intended to be erected, the
contractor paid, and release of liens are now in
hands of the Committee. The deed for the ground
has been registered and will be placed in the
hands of the Rector. Financial Statement as follows

Vestry Minutes 1888-1897

There was still no plan for raising funds to pay for the new structure. Multiple approaches to financing were presented, but they were defeated by the vestry. The few attempts to obtain loans that the leadership did approve were subsequently rejected by the lender. In April of 1896, the minutes disclosed that they shared the plans with Mr. Dudley. “[He] was very much pleased with the plans and gave the committee some hope of placing the loan. But made this suggestion that the Vestry clear off the debt of the old church property and that along with the Westfield Ave property he thought would be ample security...” (Vestry Minutes 1888-1897). It would take another four years before the members could raise the necessary funds to complete the building.

A review of the church’s financial records might explain why lenders were rejecting their requests. The weekly collections were not impressive, and the expenses regularly exceeded them. The church often operated with a small balance or a negative one. Some church members made pledges of five cents a week to help with the construction, but that did not materialize into a substantive amount. Individual donations were solicited, sometimes from the tradesmen working on the construction project. Other contractors loaned the church money by

paying for materials up front. Things were very tight. The vestry sent the pastor to other parishes looking for used vestments, old street lights, second-hand prayer books, and pews from churches that were closing.

In keeping with Mr. Dudley's requirements, the church ordered the stone in August of 1896 and had it delivered to the building site. It stayed there for months because they did not have the resources to hire a stonemason. Because the vestry required that the Building Committee operated on a pay-as-you-go basis, construction of the walls could not begin until the full fee was in the treasury.

Eighteen months later, in December of 1897, the Building Committee had completed the walls but had to beg the vestry to allow them to put a roof on the structure. Construction was excruciatingly slow which increased the tension within the vestry. The minutes of the October 1898 vestry meeting reflect the level of acrimony among the leaders of St. Wilfrid's. "Mr. Portlock offered a resolution asking for censure of Vestry on Sexton Green for pernicious activity in trying to hasten the occupancy of new church building" (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906).

and transactions with Assets and Liabilities to date was made and carried unanimously.
Mr. Portlock offered a resolution asking for censure of Vestry on Sexton Green for pernicious activity in trying to hasten the occupancy of new Church building which upon being read was withdrawn to be presented at a following meeting. Mr. Allen moved to read file which was lost.
It was

Vestry Minutes 1897-1906

In spite of the controversies within the leadership, the bureaucracy of the diocese, and the pressure from the landowner, the construction of the church progressed. The Courier-Post complimented the vestry for their approach to funding in this story from October 17, 1896. The newspaper's praise was premature. It would not "only be a matter of a few weeks when Westfield avenue will be adorned with the prettiest church edifice in town" (Courier-Post October 17, 1896). It would take another three and a half years before the construction was completed and the church opened its doors.



Courier-Post October 17, 1896



Courier-Post September 27, 1912

Frederick Jones, one of the founders of St. Wilfrid's, served as the chair of the Building Committee. He was a respected citizen in East Camden and later served on the Board of Education and as president of a local building and loan association (Courier-Post July 2, 1913 and Courier-Post February 22, 1892). Jones worked tirelessly to complete the stone church and took considerable abuse in the process. It appears that he worked every angle to get enough money to finish the church. There are records of the committee selling the dirt from the excavation and even selling off some of the stone before the front of the church was completed. Early in the process, he advocated for taking out a loan, but as things dragged on, he had concerns. On two different occasions, first in December 1898 and then in September 1899 he

lectured the other church leaders about fiscal responsibility (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906). In December 1898, the church was informed that they were approved for a loan. At the same meeting, the treasurer reported a balance of sixty-six cents in the church coffers for November and a balance of ten cents for October (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906).

St. Willems L.E. Church
 Town of Stratton N. J. Dec 7-98

A stated meeting was held on the above date
 in the church with Rev R. Ringwalt in chair
 Members present Messrs. Jones
 Miteley
 Hlean
 Sparks
 Kille
 Maltuary and
 Hambrocks

Minutes for October were read and approved
 No given in November - No minutes.

Treasurer's Report for October

On hand	.10
Receipts	<u>144.98</u>
	145.08
Expenditure	<u>144.42</u>
Balance	66

Treasurer's Report for November

On hand	.66
Receipts	<u>107.59</u>
	108.25
Expenditure	<u>108.25</u>
Balance	..

Reports of Committees: Mission; Progress

Vestry Minutes 1897-1906

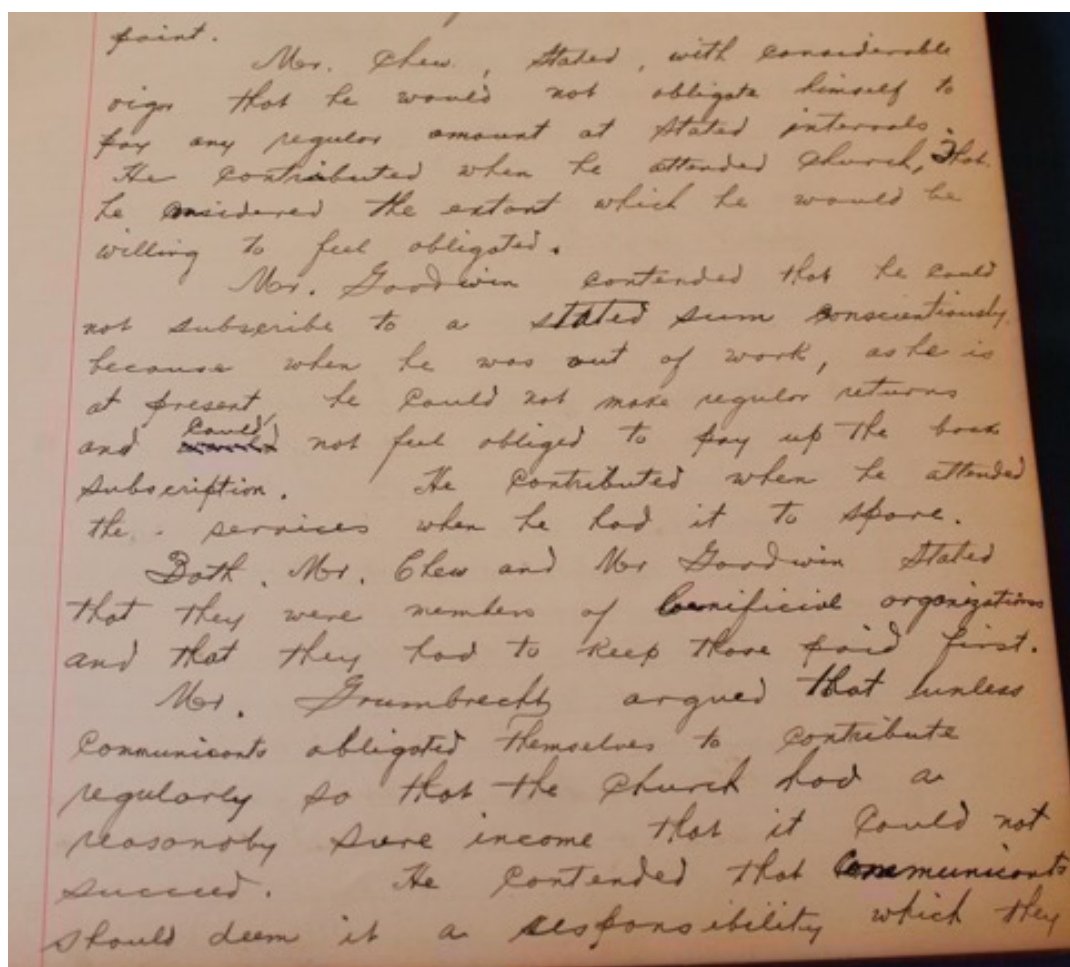
...from Church Building fund
 Commission had been granted and asked for
 instructions. Chairman Jones stated that
 in order that the Vestry should fully understand the
 obligation they were assuming he wished to
 explain some of the details. The interest,
 he said, was 6% and would amount, the first
 year, to \$210.00 this added to the first payment 1/5 or
 20% of principal would make \$910.00. With
 each succeeding year the interest decreased but
 the 20% of principal would be the same viz:
 \$700.00. This created considerable discussion
 and notwithstanding Chairman Jones' expression of doubt
 as to Church's ability to meet payments and his un-
 willingness to enter into such an agreement the
 vestry authorized the Building Committee to accept
 loan and proceed to finish Church immediately.
 This resolution was passed without dissent.

Vestry Minutes 1897-1906

Mr. Jones was appalled that the vestry was considering accepting a loan without means to make the payments. "Chairman Jones states that in order that the vestry should fully understand the obligation they were assuming he wished to explain some of the details. The interest he said was 6% and would amount, the first year to \$210.00 this added to the first payment 1/5 or 20% of principal would make \$910.00... This created considerable discussion and notwithstanding Chairman Jones' expression of doubt as to the church's ability to meet payments and his unwillingness to enter into such an agreement the vestry authorized the Building Committee to accept the loan and proceed to finish Church immediately. This resolution was passed without dissent" (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906).

Mr. Jones was equally direct in September 1899, when he tried to get the vestrymen to address the financial future of St. Wilfrid's. They had accepted the loan, but they had misunderstood the terms. The lender would not release the funds until the building was completed. The church was not completed, and there were outstanding debts. Mr. Jones

attempted to convince the vestry to borrow money from another bank on a short-term basis. Finishing the building would allow them to access the larger loan. Still, he implored them, additional funds have to be raised. He compared the balances from the past seven years. In 1892, \$36.88 was in the treasury at the end of August, and in 1899 the balance was \$35.61. When a motion was made to visit all communicants and secure a regular contribution by envelope system, there were multiple objections. "Mr. Goodwin contended that he could not subscribe to a stated sum conscientiously because he was out of work... Both Mr. Chess and Mr. Goodwin stated that they were members of beneficial organizations and that they had to keep those paid first" (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906).



faint. Mr. Chess, stated, with considerable vigor that he would not obligate himself to pay any regular amount at stated intervals. He contributed when he attended church, that he considered the extent which he would be willing to feel obligated.

Mr. Goodwin contended that he could not subscribe to a stated sum conscientiously, because when he was out of work, as he is at present, he could not make regular returns and ~~would~~ could not feel obliged to pay up the back subscription. He contributed when he attended the services when he had it to spare.

Both Mr. Chess and Mr. Goodwin stated that they were members of beneficial organizations and that they had to keep those paid first.

Mr. Grumbrecht argued that unless communicants obligated themselves to contribute regularly so that the church had a reasonably sure income that it could not succeed. He contended that communicants should deem it a responsibility which they

The Evening Courier reported one strategy the church was using to raise funds.

The ladies of the church were planning events “in which the talent will be of a high order and something out of the ordinary” (Evening Courier February 20,1900).

night.

The ladies of St. Wilfred's P. E. Church are working like beavers now to pay off the debt incurred in the building of the new edifice, dedicated on Sunday last. Just as soon as the building in its present shape is fully cleared, plans have been made to build

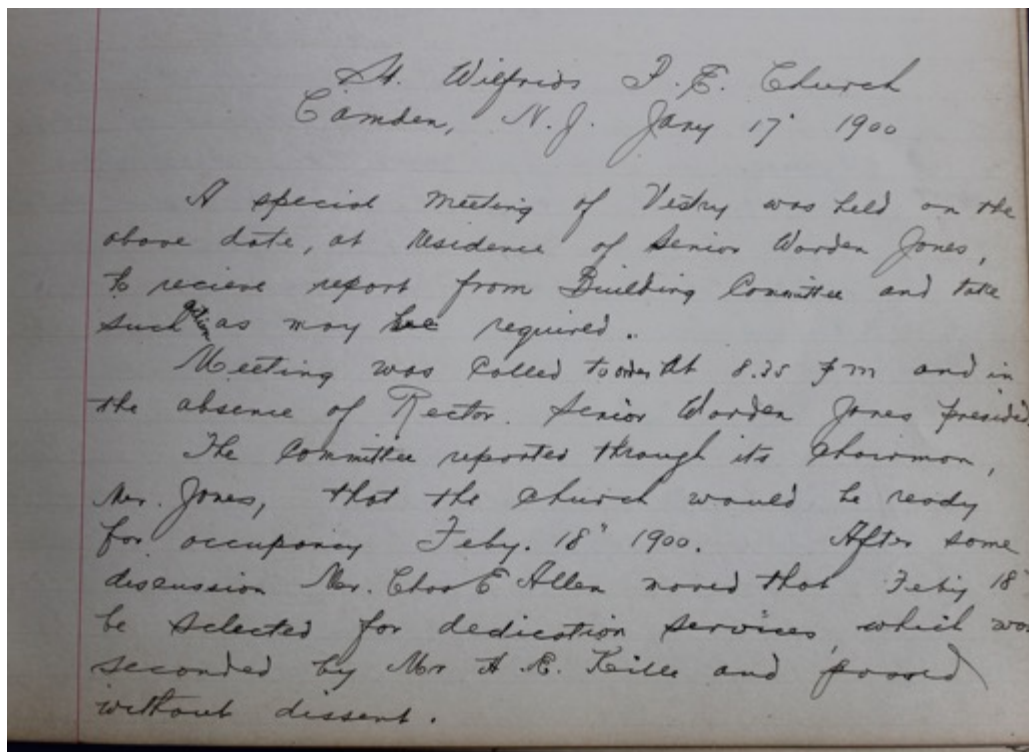
What Shall We Have for Dessert?

This question arises in the family every day. Let us answer it to-day. Try Jell-O, a delicious and healthful dessert. Prepared in two minutes. No boiling! no baking! simply add boiling water and set to cool. Flavors:—Lemon, Orange, Raspberry and Strawberry. Get a package at your grocers to-day. 10 cents.

the front addition and erect the tower, as judging from the growth of the parish in its old quarters it will not be a great while before the new building will need the enlargement. Besides the rector, Rev. Roland Ringwalt, and an energetic vestry, there is a band of ladies interested in furthering the church, and, with this end in view, they have planned a number of festivities calculated to swell the building fund and liquidate the debt. One of the series will be the big entertainment to be given by the King's Daughters on Friday at the Sigle building, in which the talent will be of a high order and something out of the ordinary. Still another parlor entertainment will be given at the home of Mrs. Shivers, on Westfield avenue, above the church, on Twenty-fourth street. The vestry desires to make public acknowledgement of the services rendered by the architect and builder, Thomas Walte, and it is largely due to his efforts that the people were enabled to worship in the new building as soon as they did.

Evening Courier February 20, 1900

The Vestry Minutes do not disclose how Mr. Jones managed to complete the church, pay the bills, and keep the vestry happy. It does report that on January 17, 1900, he announced: "that the church would be ready for occupancy February 18, 1900" (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906).



Vestry Minutes 1897-1906

On a cold Sunday in February 1900, a stone church on Westfield Avenue was dedicated by the head of the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey. He read this prayer as part of the ceremony to consecrate St. Wilfrid's Church.

Blessed be by thy Name, O Lord, that it hath pleased thee to put it into the hearts of thy servants to appropriate and devote this house to thy honour and worship; and grant that all who shall enjoy the benefit of this pious work, may show forth their thankfulness, by making a right use of it, to the glory of thy blessed Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen (Book of Common Prayer 566).

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

The sky continues beautiful,

The pleasure of men with women

Shall never be sated,

nor the pleasure of women with men,

nor the pleasure from poems (lines 60-61),

Chapter Two: The Holy Trinity 1900-2000



St. Wilfrid's Sanctuary 1915, DVRBS.COM Website

O Eternal God, mighty in power, and of majesty incomprehensible, who the heaven of heavens cannot contain, much less the walls of temples made with hands; and who yet hast been graciously pleased to promise thy especial presence, wherever two or three of thy faithful servants shall assemble in thy Name, to offer up their praises and supplications unto thee; Vouchsafe, O Lord, to be present with us, who are here gathered together with all humility and readiness of heart, to consecrate this place to the honour of thy great Name; separating it henceforth from all unhallowed, ordinary, and common uses; and dedicating it to thy service, for reading thy holy Word, for celebrating thy holy Sacraments, for offering to thy glorious Majesty the sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving, for blessing thy people in thy Name, and for all other holy offices; accept, O Lord, this service at our hands, and bless it with such success as may tend most to thy glory, and the furtherance of our happiness both temporal and spiritual; through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Savior. Amen (Book of Common Prayer 564-565).

On February 18, 1900 when St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church was officially opened by Bishop Scarborough of the Diocese of New Jersey, the ceremony included several special prayers. The congregation wanted to show their gratitude and they asked God to bless the place with a specialness that other places don't have. I think this prayer has been answered.

One hundred and fifteen years after the church had been formally blessed, I followed my sister and brother-in-law into the sanctuary. We were on a mission to pick up several black plastic bags full of clothing that had been collected for the neighborhood homeless. I didn't notice much, the room was dark, the carpet was thick and soft, the pews were smooth and worn. A little bit of light was coming in through a high window in the front of the church. We found the bags in the back of the church, picked them up, and walked out into the parish

house. I would come back into that room several times over the next few years, each time I would notice something different. The church revealed itself to me in stages. Maybe it was the sunlight coming through the windows, or the feeling of air moving above my head, or the sound of rain that made me pay more attention to the space. Or maybe I just was finally open to feel the church. Working in and with the church for the past five years, I have come to expect a certain feeling every time I enter. It was this feeling that made me want to learn about the history of the church and explore its spirit.

There is something about the place that speaks to me. I feel connected to some greater force when I am there. I have been to many churches, but this is different. It feels as if I am being embraced tenderly. That sensation also happens when I dream about St. Wilfrid's. I have been dreaming about St. Wilfrid's for a couple of years. In my dreams, there is always some kind of work going on. Obviously, I feel like there are many things to do at St. Wilfrid's. The dreams are full of chaotic purposefulness regardless of what activity is underway. Usually, I am repairing something, cooking food, handing out clothes, or clearing up the yard with other people. Some folks are familiar, others are strangers to me, and all of them are happy. In spite of the busyness, peacefulness pervades the dreams. The people and the place feel deeply woven together. The first time I dreamt about St. Wilfrid's was after a discouraging conversation about its future. After the dream, I woke wrapped in hope, believing there was a chance it could be a thriving church again. I think the spirits of the generations of people who worshiped there are speaking to me. The voices belong to the congregants who baptized their babies, married their sweethearts, grieved their loved ones, and found their God under the wooden arches of St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church.

“What makes a place spiritual? Is there really something in the air? ... Or is it the cumulative intentionality that lends a place specialness? Does a place become holy because holy

people choose to live there, or do holy people choose to live there because the place is holy? I'm not sure, and suspect these are unanswerable questions" (Weiner 289). These are questions I ponder whenever I am on the grounds or in the church. The space around the church holds secrets of past congregations, communiques from the builders, messages from old gardeners, and reminders from the city that surrounds the church. The inside holds its Christian icons with respect, expecting visitors to visit and reflect. The extraordinary windows connect the inside and the outside of the church, adding beauty to both sides.





Fanjul Photo

The Creator

St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church has been sitting on the corner of Dudley and Westfield for over one hundred years. The outside is a mess now, it is easy to miss the goodness that has been deposited there over the decades. Most of the time, when I look at the outside, I am overwhelmed with work that needs to be done. I see the chains on the fences and the graffiti on the wall of the parish house. Entering the neighborhood makes me a bit anxious, Camden has been a dangerous place for years. I can hear my parents warning me to stay away from the city, that has for years, been described as the murder capital of the country. There are other moments when I notice the spirit of the church outside, contained by its structure or the gardens.



Fanjul Photo

Every piece of stone, every planting, and even the chain link fence is a gift from earlier parishioners. The man who sold the land for the church required that it be constructed of stone and the vestry agreed to that stipulation. Members of the congregation made it happen, with money and labor. The front façade is white vinyl siding with red trim; it looks flat and one dimensional. Former and present church members believe that the church ran out of money before they finished the front. The parish was forced to construct the front with wood, and later vinyl. Notes about this compromise are not included in the church records. The wooden front must have been embarrassing for some of the members. In 1937, the pastor announced in the newspaper that he was going to raise money to complete the front of the church. It appears he was unsuccessful because the front is not stone today.



Sanborn Maps 1906-1925

The church fronts Westfield Avenue, presenting itself as a modest, simple building. Double doors stand at the top of a concrete stoop and open into the church. Ivy is creeping onto the steps and under the doors. The concrete walk is cracked, and the steps are chipped. From the sidewalk, you can only see the white face with its steeply pitched roof. Two stained-glass windows are on either side of the small vestibule. Yellowing opaque plastic protects the windows from city smog. Ivy is covering the windows, obscuring the stained-glass. A small boxy bell tower sits on the roof of the porch, you can see the old brass bell nestled inside and a painted wooden cross at the peak of the roof. The vestry minutes document the origin of the bell. On November 1, 1899, “Messrs. Grumbecht and Metcalf moved and seconded respectfully that Building Committee be and hereby one empowered to move bell from old

church bldg. and place same on new church bldg. ...” (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906). Decisions like this one and thousands of discussions, and actions combined to make this place what it is today.



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo

If you walk around to the Dudley Street side of the church, you encounter another kind of church. The building is not white vinyl siding. It is thick Morton gray stone with a heavy slate roof and gracefully curved windows and doors. It has been described both as Romanesque in style (Courier-Post February 19, 1900), and as modified Byzantine architecture (Protestant Episcopal Archives). The Courier-Post declared that “when completed [the church] will be one of the finest in the town” (Courier-Post September 21, 1896). The architect, Thomas F. Waite, also a member of the vestry, was proud of his church. The building was designed with great care and attention to detail. Two double stained-glass windows elegantly sit in stone archways on both sides of the church. The original stone buttresses and the intricate pattern of the slate roof shingles give the building a sense of permanence and grace.



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo

Generations of church members deliberated about the outside spaces around the church. In 1901, there were complaints about the upkeep of the yard. “Committee on property had no report to make although the condition of plaza in front of the church showed evidence of sad neglect, in the rear was even worse. So much so that it was positively dangerous for children...” (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906). There were similar discussions over the years about muddy walkways, poor drainage, and manure in the front yard.

Members carefully planted garden beds in the front and on the side of the church. The vestiges of a plan are still visible. There are evergreens, clusters of rhododendron, and a variety of bulbs emerging every spring. Near the side door is a small oval bed of lilies of the valley. Clumps of irises are jammed into corners next to the stone wall. This effort took place throughout the years of St. Wilfrid’s life. In the pastor’s letter to the congregation in 1964, he rejoices that, “Much lawn work has been done. Purchased about \$100 worth of tools, equipment, fertilizer, seed, bulbs, plants, etc. Gifts of rose bushes, chrysanthemums, bulbs, trees etc.” (Vicar’s Report 1963-1964). The front and side yards must have been full of color and sweetness during the spring seasons.

There is a boxwood hedge surrounding the yard, with a sprawling yew bush in the center of the front lawn. Church members planted sweet gum, maple, spruce, and oak trees that stand tall today. Thirty-foot poplars line Dudley Street on the side of the church. Tree limbs from the poplar trees make the churchyard shady and cool. The grass is like an old carpet, thin and soft, covering the front and side sections. A hand laid rock wall frames the church lawn, setting it apart from the noisy street and littered sidewalk. The vestry discussed a stone wall in 1901, but they worried it would be too expensive. The pastor was tasked to find someone who would give him a fair price (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906). He must have found an affordable stonemason because his work forms the perimeter of the St. Wilfrid’s grounds today. For decades, volunteers

mowed this lawn, planted these trees, pruned the hedges, and raked the leaves. Their efforts enriched their place of worship and beautified the neighborhood.



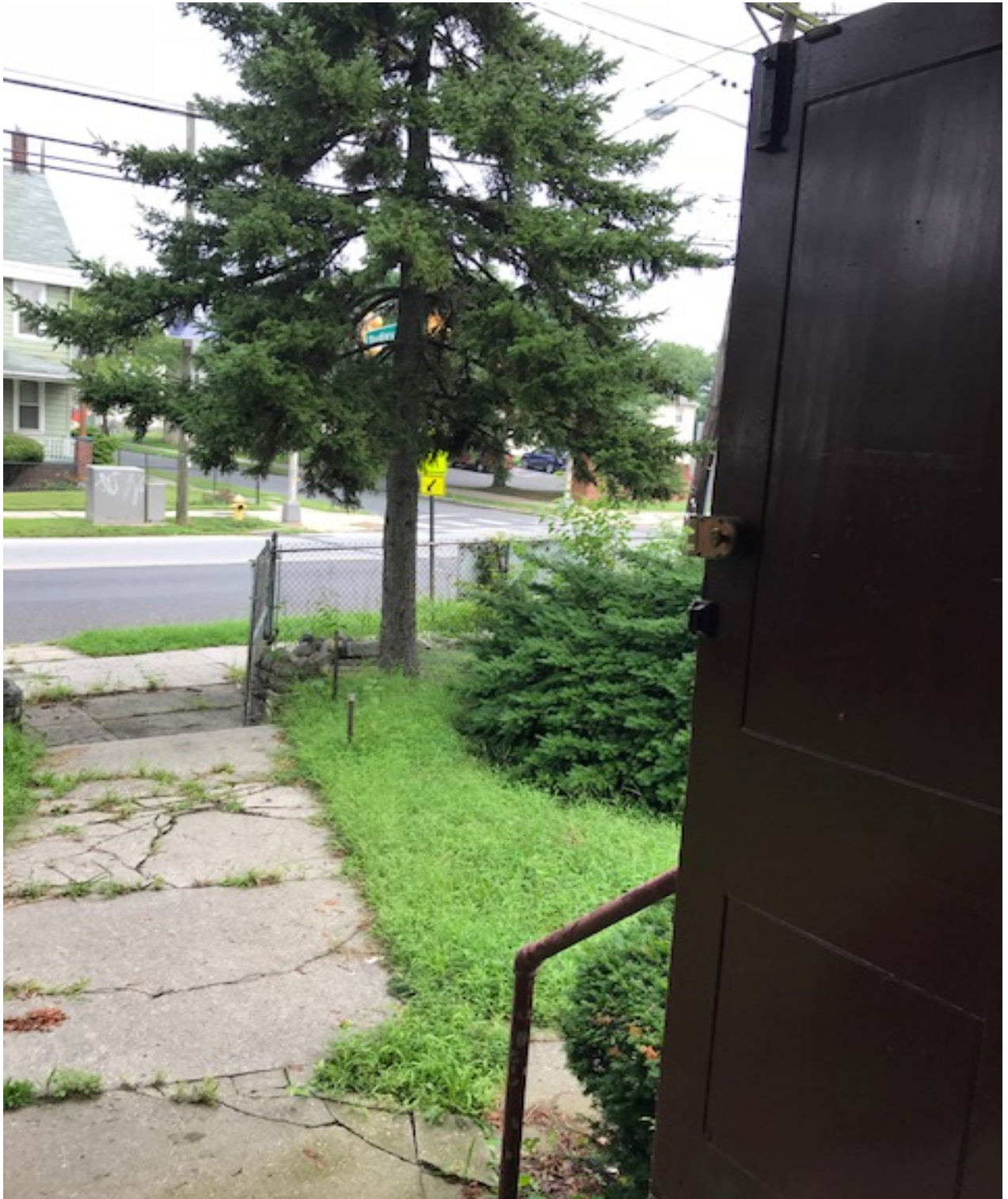
Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo

Today a rusting chain link fence is crammed between the sidewalk and the rock wall, surrounding the church and the parish house. Vines have engulfed the front of the church, going all the way to the tip of the roof, covering the wooden siding, and encroaching on the stained-glass windows. A length of heavy chain and a sturdy padlock secures the gate. Most days the gate is closed, keeping people out. If you look through the fence you can tell something important resides on the other side. The wires and the weeds surround a sanctuary created by thousands of people who invested in their St. Wilfrid's Church.

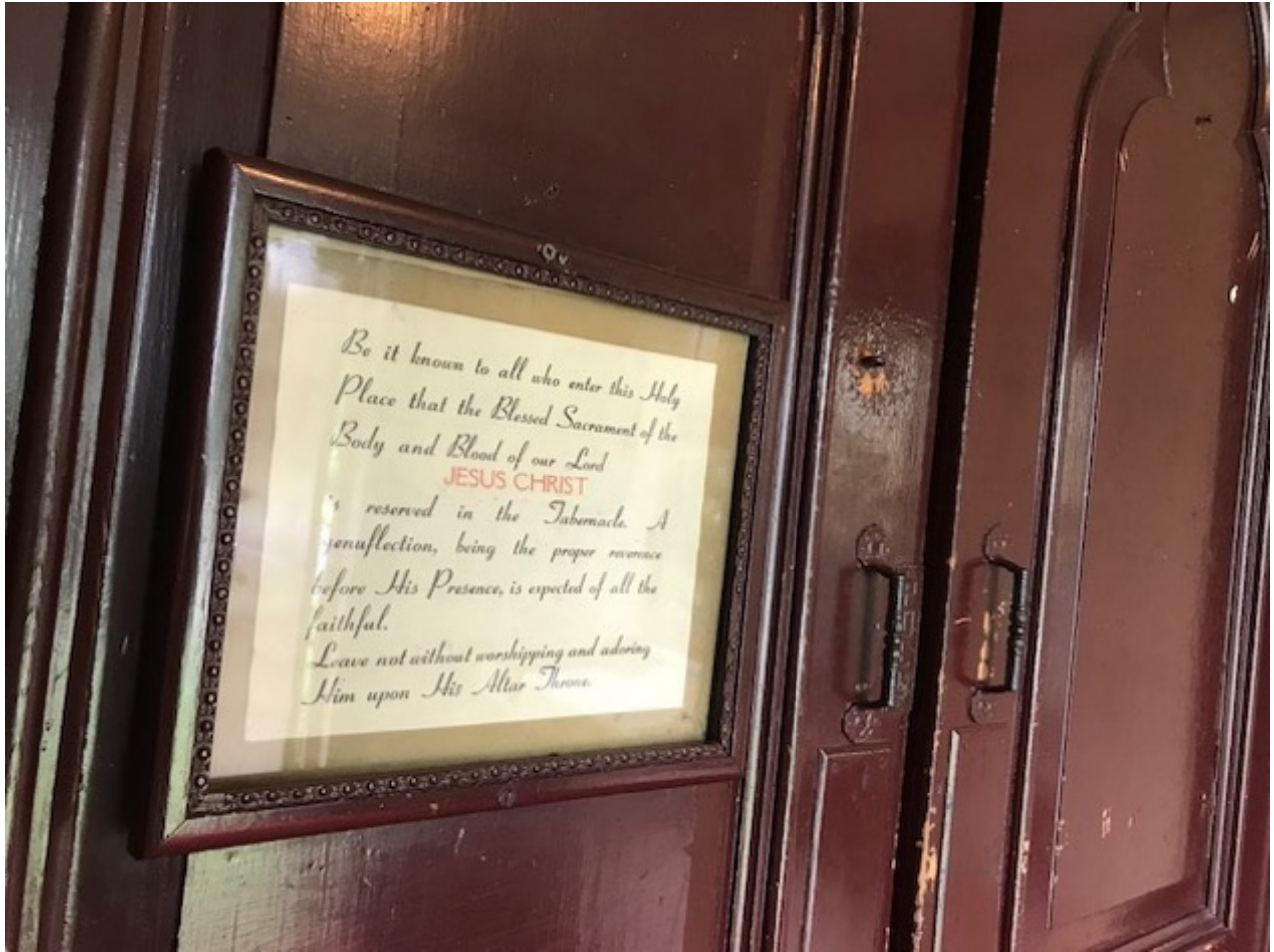
The Son



Fanjul Photo



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Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo

The Holy Spirit

St. Wilfrid's windows are especially powerful, they change the way the air feels inside the church. The twenty-one windows in the room are positioned on all four walls, one at the peak of the roof above the east face, and two in the entryway. Most are exquisite stained-glass. Several windows were commissioned by past congregants to honor their family members before the church on Dudley Street was built.

because of his youth. In the case of acting pastor W. N. Green, who is filling the position until his successor is appointed, no definite action was taken and the matter remains as it has for the past three months.

Question arose as to number of memorial windows pledged it was learned that the following had, ~~some~~ verbally, and others by payment of cash secured, ^{agreed to}:

Mr. Jas. Crawford	one small window
Miss Hills	One small "
Mrs. F. Jones	One small "
St. Lydia's Guild	One small "
Sunday School	One small "
Mr. & Mrs. Waite	One Large "
Mrs. Fingwall Sr.	One Large "
Mr. Tiedeman	One Large "
Mr. Metkalf	One Large "

His leaves 3 small and 2 large windows not pledged.

Committee on music. no report

Vestry Minutes 1897-1906

The minutes include plans for fourteen stained-glass windows, eight smaller windows, and six large windows. In 1898, the vestry could not raise the money to clear their

construction debts, but they had no trouble getting financial commitments for the windows. The remaining windows were added after the church opened in 1900. The eight small windows that surround the altar have changed over time. In a photo from 1933, those windows are intricate works of art. Now, those windows are simple squares of colored glass with one medallion in the center of each frame. I do not know when the original windows were replaced, nor do I know if they were saved and stored somewhere. The Vestry Minutes from 1964 refer to a major renovation of the sanctuary and include two estimates for stained-glass repairs. The bids specify the windows in the front as needing repair. One contractor proposes to replace all the nave windows and describes the existing windows in detail. The cost listed in the estimate is significant, but there is also at least one mention of a donor who was interested in repairing the windows. St. Wilfrid's perpetual budget problems make me worry that the church may have replaced the windows because they didn't have money to repair the antique stained-glass properly.



Camden-Courier, St Wilfrid's Sanctuary 1933



Fanjul, St. Wilfrid's Sanctuary 2017

The large windows are still in place, and they are glorious—the colors are still vibrant, the design is detailed, and the painted faces are expressive. These were commissioned and created when Louis Tiffany’s glassmaking was popular. The images, style, and properties of the glass resemble Tiffany’s costly and prestigious works. There is a belief within the church and by area priests, that three of the windows at St. Wilfrid’s are original Tiffany windows. No one has identified which three.

The window behind the altar, tells the story of the resurrection. The dawn breaks in lavender waves behind Jesus, the tomb is open, and his robes are opalescent. This is the Bible verse that describes the scene in the window.

“Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that that had also seen a vision of angels which said that he was alive” (Luke xxiv.13. Book of Common Prayer p.167) .



Fanjul Photo

The window above the altar is in memory of Alice Reed Allen, November 14, 1874 - January 9, 1895. Miss Allen suffered over many years, but during that time she was the organist for the church. Her death is recorded in the Parish Register, she apparently died at her parent's home, was buried on January 11, 1895, Reverend Roland Ringwalt presided. The cause of death is listed as "shock after operation" (Parish Register 1886-1904).

In the early days of the church, the vestry would draft an obituary during their meeting, transcribe it into the minutes, and then send it to the newspaper to publish. In some cases, the newspaper clipping of the obituary can be found in the minutes of their meetings. Alice Reed Allen and Mrs. Metcalf were both important enough to the church that their obituaries are noted in the minutes.

11. S. Wilfred's	December 7, 1892	Howard G. Taylor	"	Cramer Hill, New Jersey
12. S. Wilfred's	October 12, 1893	Edith Jones 3 years	"	Cramer Hill, New Jersey
13. S. Wilfred's	March 20, 1894	Mrs. Frances Quid, 50 years	"	Cramer Hill, New Jersey
14. Providence	January 11, 1895	Mrs. Alice Reed Allen 21 yrs	"	Stockton, New Jersey
15. Residence	September 6, 1895	Mrs. Emma Edmundson, 37 yrs	"	Stockton, New Jersey
16. S. Wilfred's	December 18, 1895	Mrs. Rachel V. Jackson 61 yrs	"	Stockton, New Jersey
17. Residence	December 18, 1895	Philip H. ...	"	Stockton, New Jersey

Parish Register 1886-1906

December 4, 1892	Consumption	Harleigh	Roland Ringwall.
October 9, 1893	Purpura	Colostan	Roland Ringwall.
March 20, 1894	Peritonitis	Harleigh	Roland Ringwall.
January 9, 1895	Shock of fracture	Harleigh	Roland Ringwall.
September 3, 1895	Consumption	Old Fellows	Roland Ringwall.
December 14, 1895	Paralysis	Bethel Cemetery	Roland Ringwall.
December 29, 1895	Consumption	Greenwood, K. P. Phillips	Roland Ringwall.

Parish Register 1886-1904

IN MEMORIAM.

After months of spasmodic suffering, borne so bravely that many of her friends never suspected its existence, Miss Alice R. Allen died on Wednesday. The writer seeks to briefly refer to the womanly and Christian excellence of one whom he has known for upwards of five years.

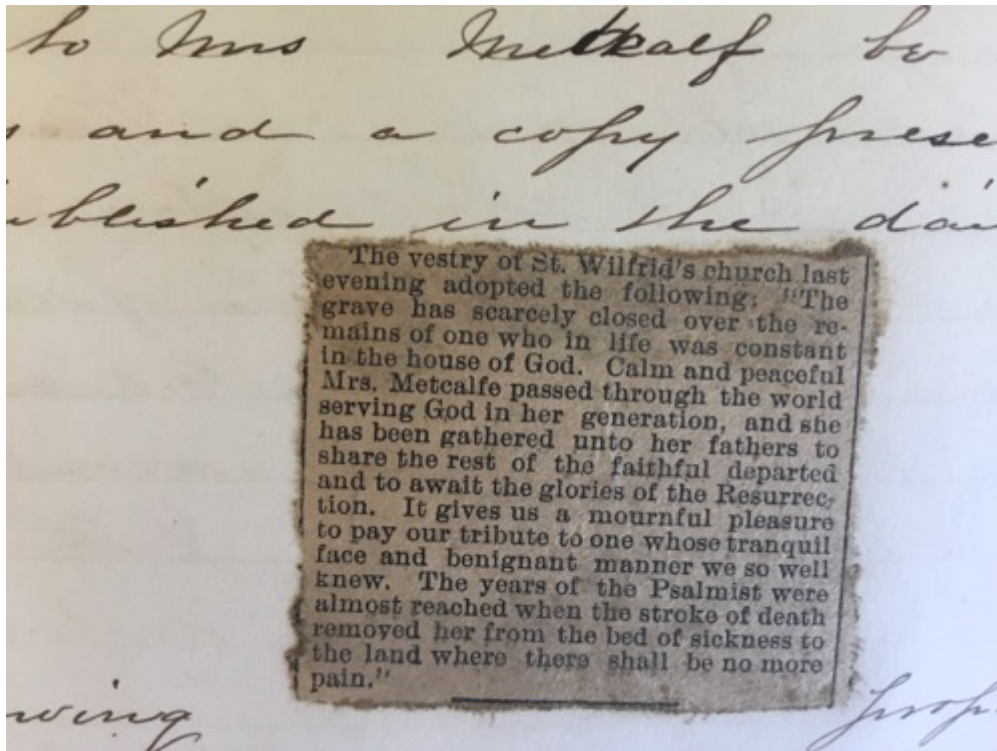
From a child she was emphatically useful and sensible. A desire to render whatever aid she could to her parents, a straightforwardness in speech and action marked her earliest years. She had her full share of mirthfulness, but a keen perception of the absurd kept her from the trifling follies so often noticed and so charitably judged in youth. When quite young her native talent and persevering industry made her an excellent musician.

For upwards of five years, in fact, until the day of her death, she filled the position of organist of St. Wilfrid's church. Of her faithful services it is needless to speak. Conscientious in every detail of her work, she could be relied upon, and the vestry of the parish, by repeated election, showed their appreciation of her merits. Several years ago Miss Allen was confirmed by the Right Rev. John Scarborough, D. D., Bishop of this Diocese, and became a frequent and devout communicant. Kindness and efficiency marked her career as a Sunday School teacher.

It was not unusual for Miss Allen to frankly declare herself lacking in patience. Those who knew how she went about her duties, how sympathetic she was in the sick room, how scrupulously her obligations to the church and Sunday school were fulfilled, how rarely she even mentioned her physical infirmities, saw that she was endowed with the grace to bear suffering for the sake of Him who bore the cross for the sins of mankind. On the last Sunday of her life she came to the altar of her Lord to join in the memorial of His blessed passion and precious death, His mighty resurrection and glorious ascension. Brave and cheerful she knelt at the Holy Table, and no stranger who saw her countenance would have known that she was uttering the prayer "If this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done."

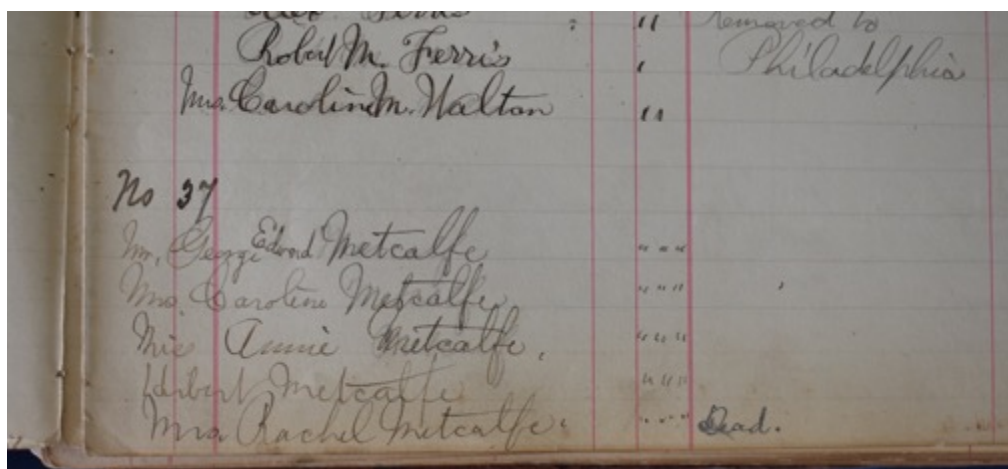
The death of one whose early years promised so noble a womanhood is keenly lamented by many. Yes, there is comfort in the thought that one so faithful and so brave is among those who rest from their labors and whose works do follow them.

H. R.



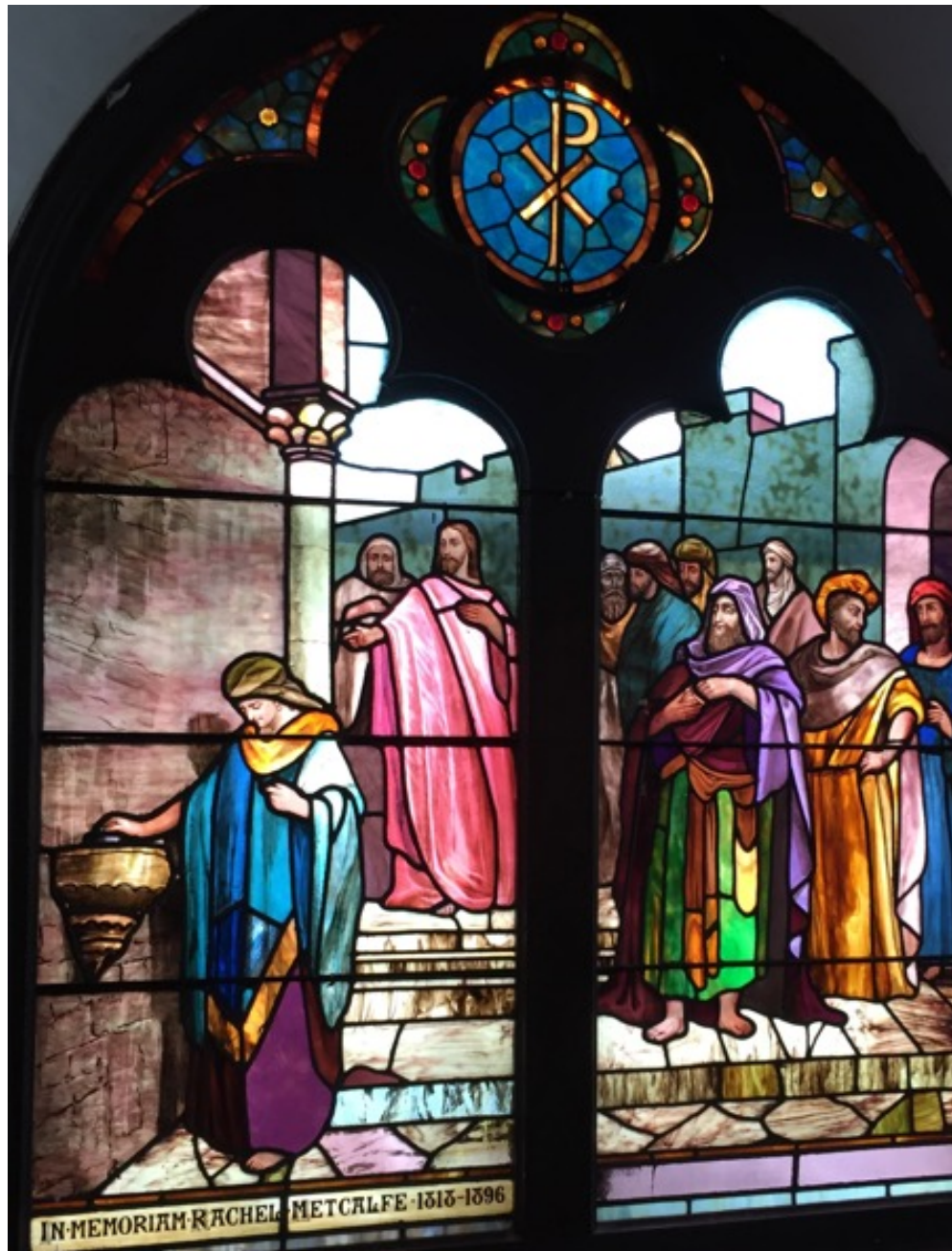
Vestry Minutes 1897-1906

It is not clear if this Mrs. Metcalfe is the same woman honored in the large stained-glass window. Her death is not documented as thoroughly as Miss Allen's, but there is a note in the Parish Register confirming her death. Based on the way the family is listed, it appears that Rachel is the widowed grandmother of the family.



Parish Register 1886-1904

The window dedicated to Rachel Metcalfe 1818-1896 is another Tiffany style window. It depicts the Bible story of a poor woman who donates all she has to the temple. A fitting “tribute to one whose tranquil face and benignant manner we so well knew” (Vestry Minutes 1897-1906).



Fanjul Photo

This Bible verse tells the story that is depicted in Mrs. Metcalfe's window. Her family must have believed she had a generous personality and a humble manner.

"The Widow's Offering. And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mark 12:41-44, King James Version).

In the front corner of the church where children were baptized, there is another spectacular window. It is dedicated to Clifford Wilfrid Jones, the youngest son of Frederick Jones, St. Wilfrid's founder. Clifford died when he was only ten years old. His family chose a Bible story about Jesus welcoming children into the kingdom of God.



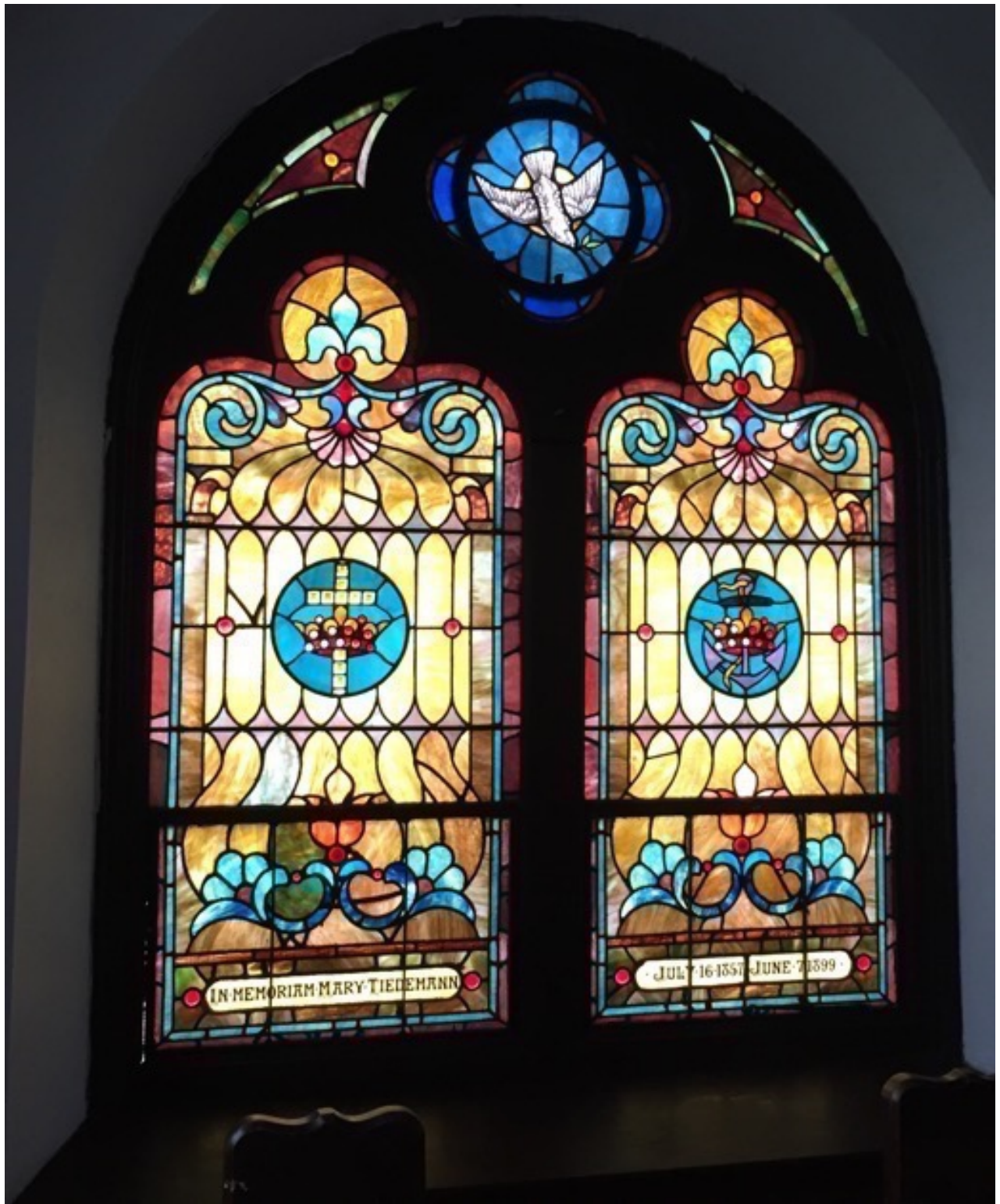
Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo

“And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them; and His disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased and said unto them, “Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them” (Mark 10:13-16, 21st Century King James Version).

The Jones and Metcalf allegorical windows hang opposite two decorative windows. All four have distinctive Tiffany characteristics. The window closest to the front door is dedicated to Mary Tiedemann. There is no obituary for Mrs. Tiedemann in the Vestry Minutes nor is there mention of her in the list of families in the Parish Register. There is not a Bible story embedded within the Tiedemann window to give us ideas about who she was, but it is radiant and graceful. The dove at the top of the window is swooping down with an olive branch, its wings delicately painted on the glass. The colors are warm and soft, with a texture that gives the window depth. The design is symmetrical and flowing. When the sun is right, the rounded glass jewels in the window refract beams of light across the sanctuary.



Fanjul Photo

The window closer to the altar has been damaged. The lower section of one side was broken years ago. The repair was done poorly, and much of the old glass was lost. The rounded jewels in that part of the window are all gone, replaced with flat colored glass. The section of the window that contained the name of the honoree broke and was replaced with plain tinted glass. We only have the dates to give us any hint of the person the window celebrates; born July 23, 1806 and died April 5, 1885. In 1898, the minutes report that four people commissioned large windows. Mr. Metcalf and Mr. Tiedemann were named with Mr. Ringwalt and Mr. Waite. It is possible that the window with no name had been paid for by either Ringwalt or Waite. Both men were leaders in the church, Ringwalt was the pastor. Waite was on the vestry and was the architect who designed the building. The Parish Register does not begin until 1886 which means there is no record of the death of any parishioner in 1885.

The window's design is similar to the Tiedemann window, full of curves and swirls. The colors are rich and creamy. The floral pattern includes daffodils and rounded jewels as the centers of flowers. The texture and depth of the old material is noticeable when compared to the newer section.



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo

There are several other stained or colored glass windows in the sanctuary. All of them are newer and have a contemporary design. These Tiffany windows are valuable antiques that enfold this place of worship with elegant warmth. There is a rumor that the windows are all that would be salvaged if the church is closed. Apparently, there is a robust market for old stained-glass windows, and these would demand a hefty price. There are no family members

named Tiedemann, Metcalfe, Allen, or Jones, remaining in St. Wilfrid's parish to object to the removal of their memorials.



Fanjul Photo

Sitting still in a dark walnut pew, I notice the wooden arches in the ceiling and the ferns in the sun at the altar. The morning light flows through each window differently as it enters the sanctuary. Next to the front door, the light is muted by the vines growing over the windows on the front of the church. The overhead lamps are antique etched glass, hung from the vaulted ceiling with long metal chains. A stone baptismal stands near the front door, a brass cross on the top. The space is filled with memories, created by generations of earnest worshipers. Each item in the room was carefully selected, placed, and paid for by the congregants of years past. They

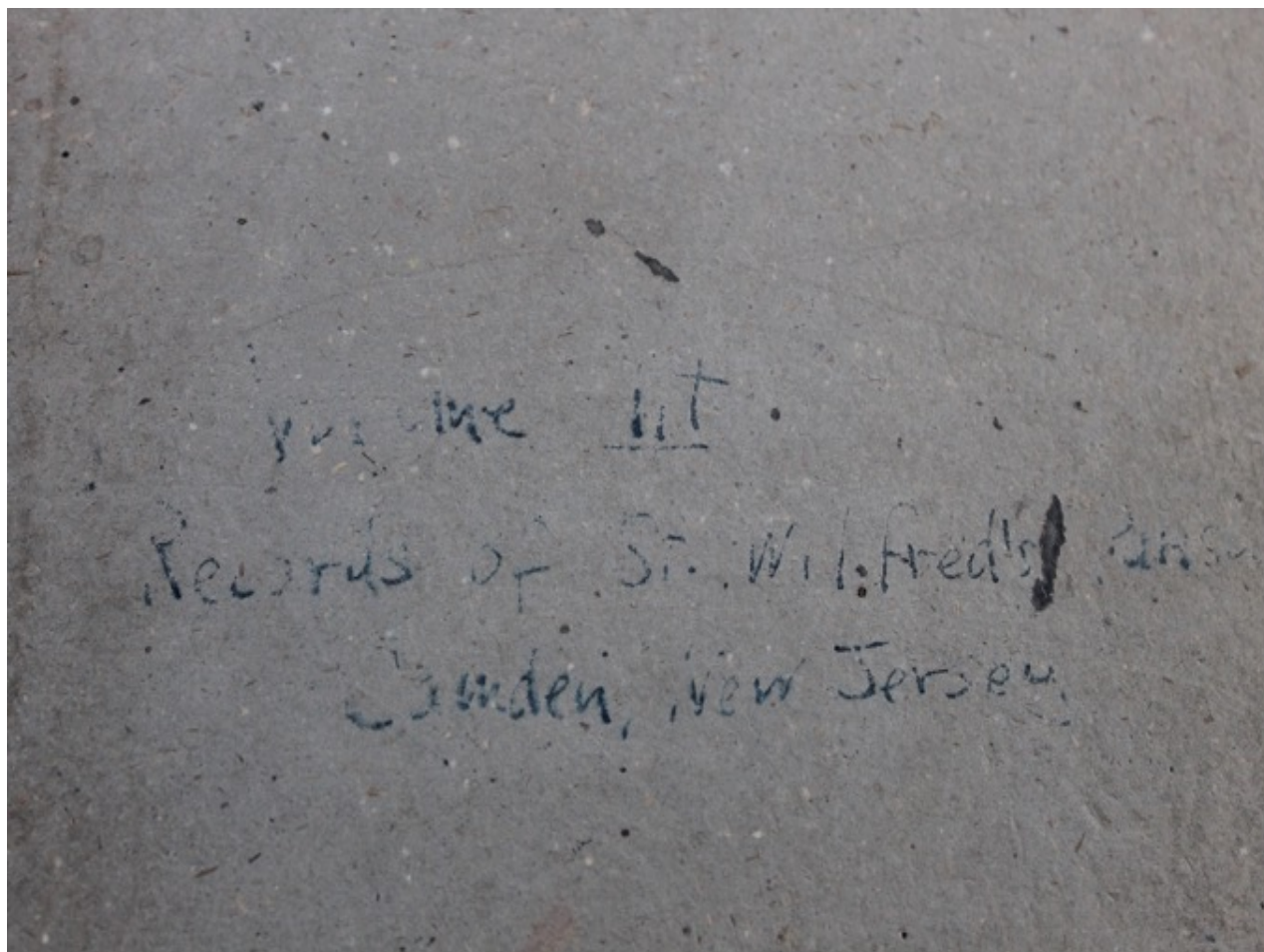
sustained this place of worship and community for over one hundred years. Is it their energy and hope I feel in the space? I wonder if this place is what some people call a thin place. "Thin places are those rare locales where the distance between Heaven and earth is compressed, and you can sense the divine... more strongly" (Weiner 66). Does the feeling of holiness come from an accumulation of the actions taken in this space? Is it like the way limestone is created, one sandy layer deposited on top of another millions of times over millions of years? I doubt it matters how it accumulated its peacefulness and sense of sanctuary, it only matters that we feel the power of the place.



Fanjul Photo

Chapter Three: 1922-1949

St. Wilfrid's Parish Register



Fanjul, Front Cover Parish Register 1922-1949



Fanjul, Cover Parish Register 1922-1949



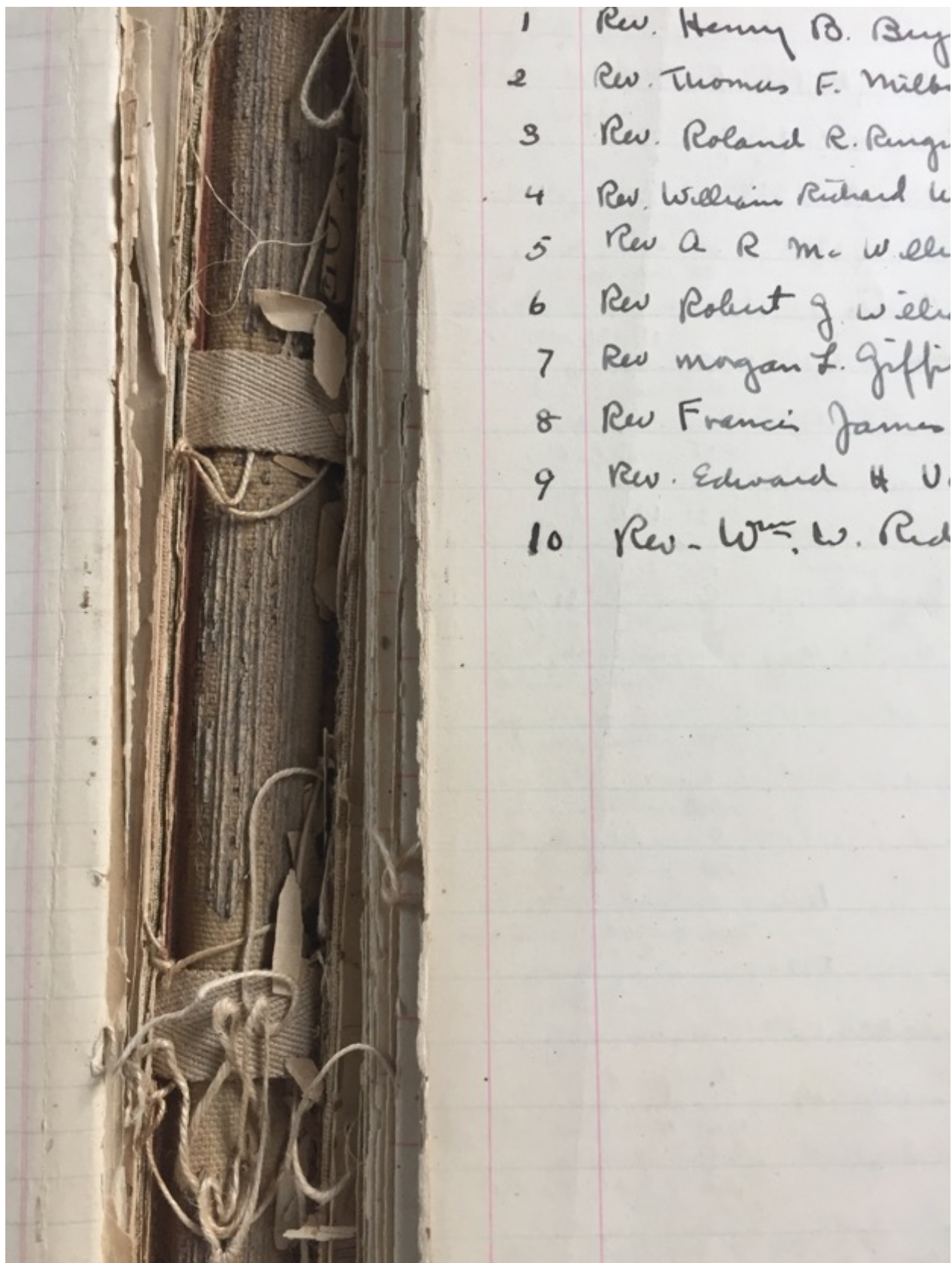
Fanjul, Back Cover Parish Register 1922-1949



Fanjul, Pages Parish Register 1922-1949

Miss Ruth Carrie Shadling	Feb. 21, 1931	Received by Letter of Transfer from
Mr. Elwood M. (Ella Mae) Powell	March 17, 1931	Received by Letter of Transfer from
Mr. Herbert C. Dammann (Margaret Shaw)	May 15, 1931	Received by Letter of Transfer from
Harry Walker Monroe	May 15, 1931	<p>Confirmed in St. Will. pred. May 3, 1931.</p>
+ R George Wilmer Taylor	May 15, 1931	
+ George Phillip Gideon	May 15, 1931	
R George Edmund Doble	May 15, 1931	
Raymond Taylor Wendell, Jr.	May 15, 1931	
Walter Block	May 15, 1931	
R Ellsworth Macoe	May 15, 1931	
R Marie Elsie (Neumann) Taylor	May 15, 1931	
Dorothy Leake Shaw	May 15, 1931	
Thelma Elizabeth Lays	May 15, 1931	
R Ruth Elizabeth Kingle	May 15, 1931	
Hazel Fern Weitzel	May 15, 1931	
Elizabeth Chatham	May 15, 1931	
Ima Louise Christina Paulsen	May 15, 1931	
Anne Marguerite Murray	May 15, 1931	
Marie Anna Richardson	May 15, 1931	
R Elvior Ridgeway Lovel	May 15, 1931	<p>Received by Letter of Transfer from St. ... Church, ...</p>
Virginia Margaret Gideon	May 15, 1931	
R Elizabeth Rebecca Martin	May 15, 1931	
R Mrs. Elizabeth Maule (MacLaffie) Eden	October 24, 1931	

Fanjul, Confirmations Parish Register 1922-1949



1	Rev. Henry B. Bury
2	Rev. Thomas F. Milbr
3	Rev. Roland R. Ringe
4	Rev. William Richard W
5	Rev A R Mc W. El
6	Rev Robert J. Wille
7	Rev Morgan L. Giffi
8	Rev Francis James
9	Rev. Edward H. U.
10	Rev. Wm. W. Red

Fanjul, Rectors Parish Register 1922-1949

HISTORICAL RECTORS			
No.	NAMES	BEGAN	TERMINATED
A.	Rev. Joseph P. Taylor (negotiated land for the original site for the chapel on 30th High St.)	Autumn 1884	1885
1	Rev. Henry B. Bryan	October 21, 1885	October 31, 1886
2	Rev. Thomas F. Milby, A.M.	November 1, 1886	
3	Rev. Roland R. Ringwalt, A.B., B.D.	accepted call Dec. 1888	
4	Rev. William Richard Wood, A.B., M.A., S.T.B.	Leav. 1914	June 6, 1915
5	Rev. A. R. McWilliams B.A., B.D.	1915	1910
6	Rev. Robert J. Williams	June 3, 1917	Fall 1918
7	Rev. Morgan L. Griffith	October 1, 1919	April 10, 1922
8	Rev. Francis James Chipp	1923	1925
9	Rev. Edward H. Vogt	September 1, 1925	October 31, 1930
10	Rev. W. W. Ridgeway, Ph.D.	November 1, 1930	

Fanjul, Rectors Parish Register 1922-1949

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

Of and in all these things.

I have dream'd that we are not to be changed so much, nor the law of us changed,

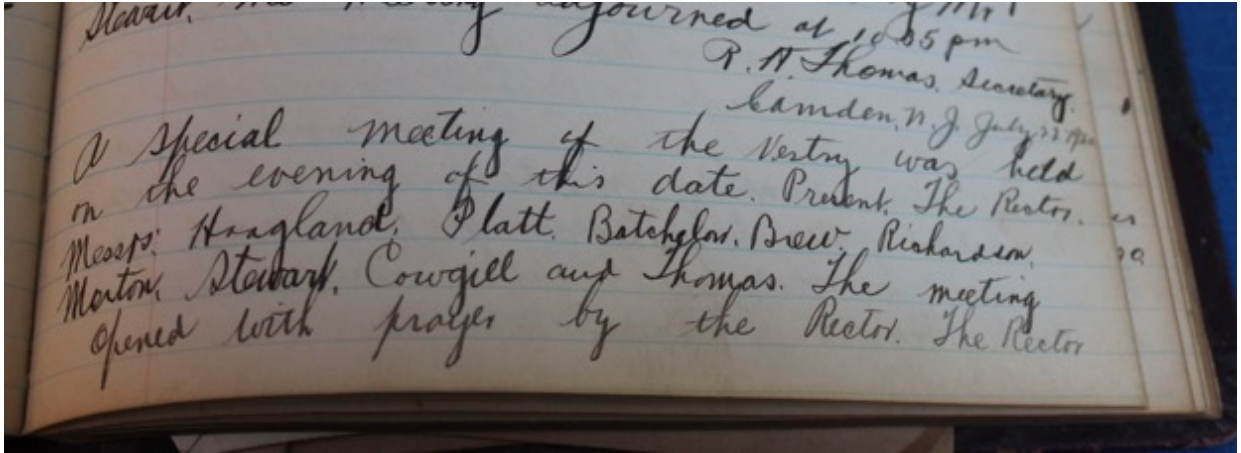
I have dream'd that heroes and good-doers shall be under the present and past law,

And that murderers, drunkards, liars, shall be under the present and past law,

For I have dream'd that the law they are under now is enough (lines 94-98).

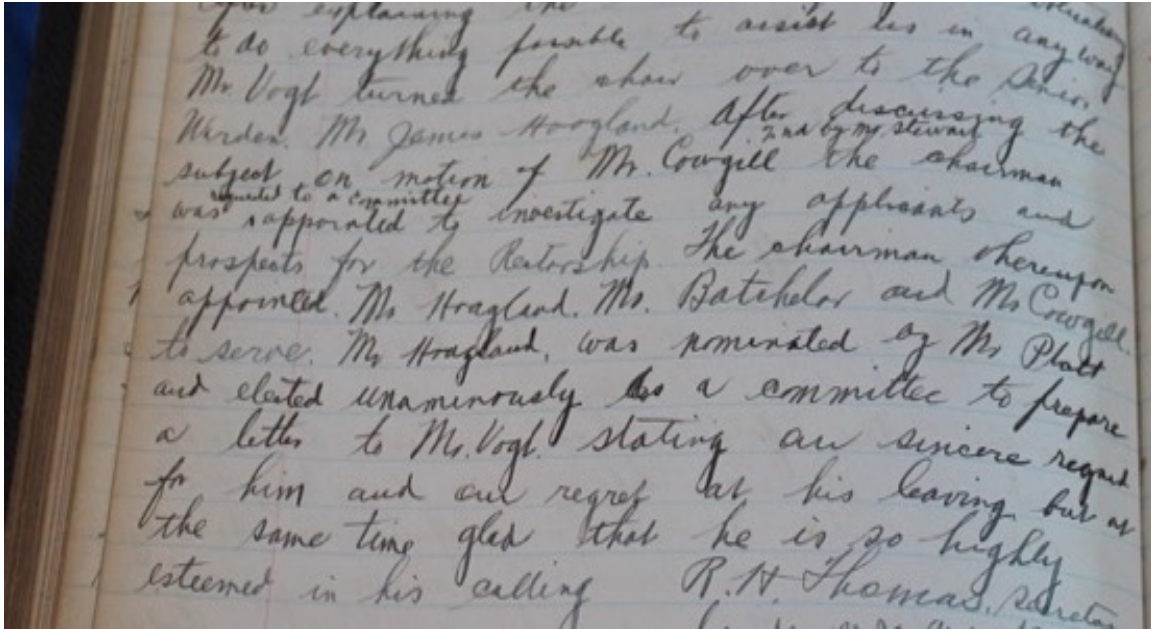
Chapter Four: The Betrayal 1930-1970

The Beginning 1930-1933



Vestry Minutes 1925-1933

In the summer of 1930, the pastor of St. Wilfrid's Protestant Episcopal Church, Reverend Edward H. Vogt, called a special meeting to announce his departure. He had been hired as the pastor of St. Peter's Church in Germantown, Pennsylvania. His resignation would be effective October 31, 1930. The minutes of that special meeting indicate that the vestry had good feelings for Father Vogt and was unhappy that he was leaving as their pastor. "A committee to prepare a letter to Mr. Vogt, stating a sincere regret for him and our regret at his leaving but at the same time glad that he is so highly esteemed in his calling" (Vestry Minutes 1925-1933).



Vestry Minutes 1925-1933

A committee of vestry members was formed to start the search for a new priest at that meeting. Father Vogt suggested some names as a starting point. It took the committee less than one month to return with a recommendation. The minutes of the September 25, 1930 vestry meeting contain copies of both an offer letter and an acceptance letter from Reverend Dr. William Ridgeway dated August 22, 1930.

“My Dear Dr. Ridgeway,⁹ By a unanimous vote of the vestry it was decided to extend you a call to become Rector of St Wilfred’s P. E. Church, Camden, N.J. Such call to be held in abeyance pending the resignation of the Reverend Mr. Vogt which will go into effect November 1, 1930 and likewise pending the approval of the Bishop of this Diocese.

Camden N.J., August 18, 1930

Yours Very Sincerely

Reginald H. Thomas

Secretary of the Vestry”

⁹ The spelling of Ridgeway’s name is copied directly from the minutes.

“Copy of the letter received from Dr. Ridgway in answer.

August 22, 1930

The Wardens and Vestrymen, St. Wilfrid’s Church, Camden, N.J.

Gentlemen: I accept your call and invitation to become Rector of St. Wilfrid’s Episcopal Church,
Camden N.J. the call to go into effect November 1, 1930.

Yours Sincerely

Wm. W. Ridgeway” (Vestry Minutes 1925-1933).

Dr. William W. Ridgway R. H. Thomas Secretary
 Letter to Dr. Ridgway sent out on August 7th 1930

Letter of acknowledgment and acceptance received from
 Dr. Ridgway on August 22nd 1930, and delivered to Mr.
 R. H. Thomas Copy of the letter sent to
 Dr. Ridgway follows Rec. Wm. W. Ridgway.
 222 St. Marks Square Phila Pa.

My dear Dr. Ridgway:- By a unanimous vote of
 our Vestry it was decided to extend your
 call to become Rector of St. Wilfrid's P.E. Church
 Camden, N.J. Such call to be held
 in allegiance pending the resignation of Mr.
 the Reverend Mr. Vogt with which will go into
 effect November 1, 1930 and likewise pending the
 approval of the Bishop of this Diocese.
 Camden, N.J. August 18, 1930

Yours very sincerely
 Reginald H. Thomas
 Secretary of the Vestry

Copy of letter received from Dr. Ridgway in answer.
 August 22nd 1930

The Wardens and Vestrymen, St. Wilfrid's Church,
 Camden, N.J. Gentlemen:- I accept your call
 and invitation to become Rector of St. Wilfrid's
 Episcopal Church, Camden N.J. The call
 to go into effect November 1, 1930

Yours sincerely
 Wm W. Ridgway

There is no mention of a discussion of Reverend Ridgeway's experience or skills. There are no written explanations of why the committee put forward his name. Reverend Vogt asked the vestry to go to hear another priest who had been suggested by the Bishop, but it was after the offer had been made to Ridgeway. It doesn't appear that his name was put forward by Reverend Vogt or the Bishop. There is no record of a face to face interview or any report that vestry members went to hear him preach at his present church. Other documents reveal that he was forty-one years old, had been born in Boston, and was well educated. He had attended Andover Theological Seminary, Harvard University and the Chicago Law School (Courier-Post May 13, 1935). Perhaps the vestry was impressed by his Ph.D., or maybe they were just in a rush to fill the position. Whatever motivated them to make the offer is not written in the church records. Once the Bishop telegraphed his agreement on October 15th, the vestry moved ahead to close the deal.

on my take up. Very Sincerely, R.H. Thomas Secretary
 Copy of letter sent to Rev W.W. Ridgeway
 Camden N.J. Oct 15, 1930
 Rev W.W. Ridgeway, My Dear Dr. Ridgeway We have just
 received a telegram from the Bishop agreeing to your
 election as Rector of St. Wilfrid's P.E. Church, Camden N.J.
 effective November 1st 1930. This letter is to confirm
 my of August 18th 1930 calling you as our rector on
 that date faithfully yours R.H. Thomas Secretary
 Camden N.J. Oct 15, 1930

Vestry Minutes 1925-1933

The terms of Dr. Ridgeway's employment were discussed at a meeting on October 19, 1930 and memorialized in a letter that was copied into the minutes.

"Dear Dr. Ridgeway,

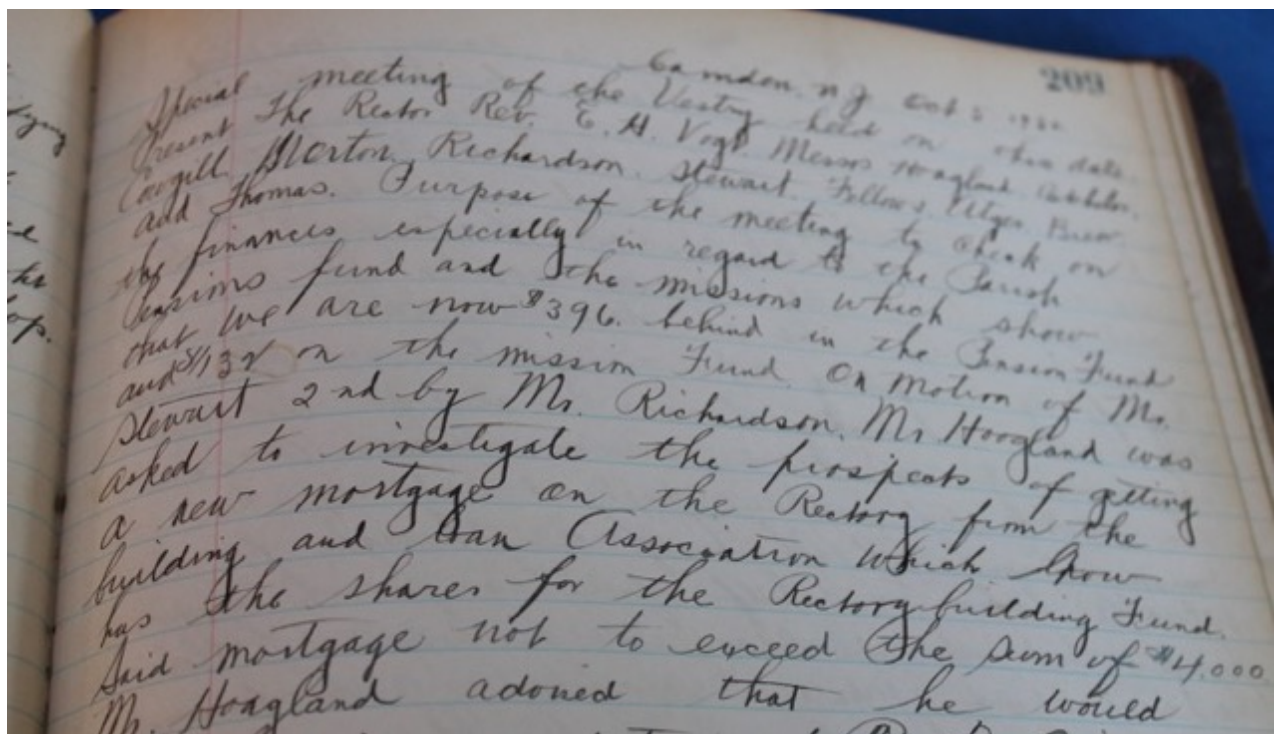
At a special called meeting of the St. Wilfrid's church vestry October 19, 1930, you were unanimously elected Rector of our church to take effect Nov. 1, 1930. This action was taken after Bishop Matthews gave his consent to have us do so. This call to the rectorship is offered with a stipend of two thousand dollars per year and a rectory¹⁰. Your Pension Fund premium will be paid for you, and you will be entitled to one month's vacation each summer. One condition to which you agreed in the meeting with us in July and on which we base this call is that you will not accept a position outside of our parish. We shall expect you to spend your entire energy in the work of St. Wilfrid's Church. Trusting you will accept this call and that you will see your way to be with us for services on the first Sunday in November and remain. Yours very truly, RH Thomas Secy." (Vestry Minutes 1925-1933).

The Reverend Dr. Ridgeway accepted the offer and started his service to St. Wilfrid's church on November 1, 1930. He would serve until his death on September 26, 1962, making him the longest-serving priest in St. Wilfrid's one hundred thirty-three-year history. The terms of his employment would not ever be renegotiated. They would remain in place for the next thirty-two years. The condition that he only serve St. Wilfrid's, would become a deeply held expectation for the church until the present day. Congregations for years to come would base their understanding of a parish priest on this contract. The terms that were agreed upon that day would come back to haunt the church and the diocese.

¹⁰ A rectory, in the Episcopal church, is the residence of the parish priest. It is owned by the church, and the priest is allowed to occupy it during his or her employment.

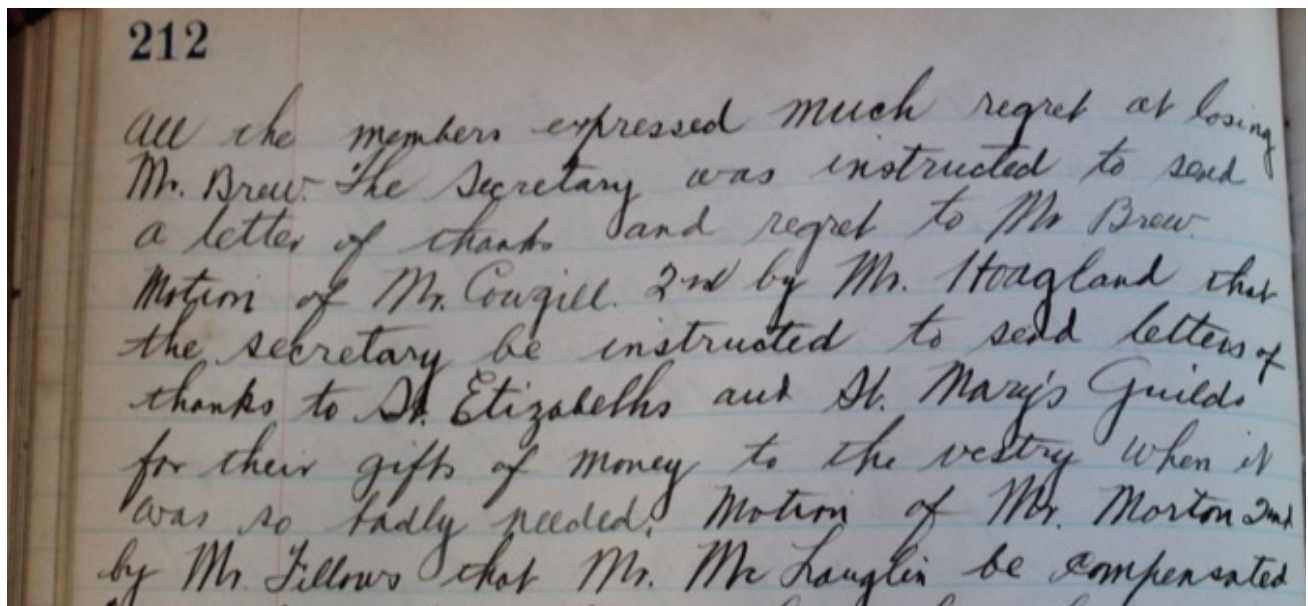
214 copy of letter sent to Rev. Mr. Ridgway 22-1933
The Rev. Mr. Ridgway
100 St. Marks Square
Philadelphia Pa.
Dear Mr. Ridgway
At a specially called meeting
of St. Wilfrid's Church Vestry
Oct. 1933, you were unanimously
elected Rector of our church to
take effect Nov. 1, 1933. This action
was taken after Bishop Doane
had given his consent to have
us do so. This call to the rectory
ship is offered with a stipend of two
thousand dollars per year and deducting
your Pension Fund premium will be
paid for you and you will be
entitled to one month's vacation each
summer. One condition to which you
agreed in the meeting with us in
July and on which we base this call is
that you will not accept a position
outside of our parish. We shall expect
you to spend your entire energy in the
work of St. Wilfrid's Church. Trusting you
will accept this call and that you
will see your way to be with us for
services on the first Sunday in
November and remain.
Yours very truly,
R. H. Thomas, Secy.

Most of the meetings from July through October of 1930 were dedicated to the process of replacing the priest. The selection committee moved quickly and decisively to ensure the church had spiritual leadership. There were more mundane issues discussed during that interim that are recurring problems for St. Wilfrid's. Before Reverend Vogt resigned in July, the vestry discussed the challenges they were having with members of the church. "Mr. Cowgill submitted a proposal asking the opinion of the Rector and Vestry in the question a mission in the autumn as some means of approaching the people and combatting the apparent lethargy of some residents of our Parish" (Vestry Minutes 1925-1933). On October 5th, the treasurer reported that the congregation was behind on payments to both the mission fund and the pension fund. There was also a discussion about needing a new mortgage for the Rectory.



Vestry Minutes 1925-1933

At a meeting the next week, October 14th, the treasurer mentioned that he thought the church could catch up on late payments by early 1931. There was also a motion to thank the ladies' auxiliary for their generous contributions when the church was in dire need of funds. On several occasions, the vestry asked the women's organizations to help cover operational expenses for the church. The minutes show that the ladies paid for sewage fees, storm windows, and termite treatment. The ladies of the church conducted multiple fundraising events and, unlike the vestry, maintained a comfortable balance in their accounts throughout the history of the church (Vestry Minutes 1925-1933 and Vestry Minutes 1933-1962).



Vestry Minutes 1925-1933

There is no mention of the first service convened by Reverend Ridgeway, but we imagine that he conducted services at St. Wilfrid's on Sunday, November 2, 1930. The congregation was modest at that time, but still growing. Three years earlier, the congregation had purchased a house and land to be used as a rectory. The two-story masonry house sits behind the church at 83 Dudley Street. It was here that Reverend Ridgeway and his wife, Sybil

settled with their three young daughters (US Census 1940). Three years later they welcomed their final child, a boy, William W. Jr. Throughout his tenure, several of his family members would become deeply involved in the St. Wilfrid's parish, taking on an oversized role in the governance of the church. The family had an attitude of superiority that we can see in their son's birth announcement. "Mrs. Ridgeway is a distant relative of the late President McKinley" (Camden-Courier March 20, 1933).

are covered.

**SON BORN IN HOSPITAL
TO WIFE OF P. E. RECTOR**

A boy arrived yesterday at Cooper Hospital for Mrs. W. W. Ridgeway, wife of Rev. W. W. Ridgeway. Dr. Ridgeway is rector of St. Wilfrid's P. E. Church, Dudley street and Westfield avenue.

Mrs. Ridgeway is a distant relative of the late President McKinley. She is progressing favorably.

5 HURT AS AUTO SKIDS

Pitman, March 19.—Five Camden residents were injured tonight when their automobile skidded in the rain

Camden-Courier March 2, 1933

The Middle 1934-1956



St. Wilfrid's choir 1930 est. DVRBS.COM Website

Reverend Ridgeway had a significant impact on the parish. There are a variety of hints scattered through the written records of the church that raise questions about Ridgeway's character and effectiveness. Thirty-two years is a long time for one person to be in charge, a lot of harm can be done to a parish.

Evidence of the damage is found in the records of the annual meetings held during Ridgeway's term. It is the practice of St. Wilfrid's to have an annual meeting to report the status of the church to the congregation. Over time the meeting dates have changed, but for many years it directly followed the Easter service. Typically, the treasurer of the vestry makes a financial report to the members, including total dollars on hand at the end of the fiscal year. The church operated on a cash basis, so the lack of funds at the end of a financial cycle is an indication that

there are no reserves available to start the next year. A review of the minutes from the annual meetings exposes discouraging trends. Unfortunately, these monetary patterns are consistent with St. Wilfred's history. Over twenty-seven years the range of available cash is from \$210.90 to \$2.56. There are eleven years during Ridgeway's term when there is no report given to the congregation. The average annual balance on hand, when it was reported, is only \$48.22. The church was paying some of its expenses with dollars collected from the parishioners and some help from the ladies of the church, but it was falling short in areas that were going to create serious problems. Equally troubling is the lack of consistent financial transparency. Church members were not being informed.




Courier-Post June 28, 1937

The pastor was not deterred, he announced a new project for the church. It is surprising that given the long-standing financial problems, Reverend Ridgeway would undertake additional expenses. It is a mystery how he was able to raise the funds necessary but, there is a bell tower on the front porch of the church today. The church and Reverend Ridgeway were frequently mentioned in the local newspapers. Picnics, performances, fundraisers, and other community events indicate that the church and its members were well thought of in the Camden community. Headlines like, “300 At Guild Hall See ‘Review of 1938’, Parishioners of St Wilfrid’s Church Present Varied Features in the Show” (Courier-Post February 25, 1938) or “St. Wilfrid’s Church has Annual Outing-More than 350 persons yesterday attended the annual church school picnic” (Courier-Post June 29, 1933).

GOOD GOVERNMENT LEAGUE

REV. W. W. RIDGEWAY



Rev. William W. Ridgeway, rector of St. Wilfred's church, was born and educated at Boston, later attending Columbia and Harvard universities, and receiving his Ph. D. at Chicago Law School.

Ordained in 1918, Dr. Ridgeway served in Detroit, Erie and Philadelphia before coming to Camden in 1930. He was chairman of the commission on immigration and emigration of the Department of Social Service, and was also a scoutmaster in the Boy Scouts of America when that organization was founded.

Fond of outdoor sports and activities, he is acquainted with many of the characters used by Joseph C. Lincoln in his popular Cape Cod stories. He is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Evening Courier May 13, 1935

Ridgeway stepped into politics and filed to run for Commissioner on a “Good Government” platform in 1935. His resume in the paper revealed more about his experience than the minutes of the meeting when he was hired (Evening Courier May 13, 1935). He was not successful in his bid, which was probably good for the church. One remarkable story from 1938 might indicate his political views. Reverend Ridgeway organized a speaking engagement for another priest who was a supporter of Hitler, Reverend Michael. Ridgeway allowed Reverend Michael to conduct services at St. Wilfrid’s occasionally and Ridgeway presided at Reverend Michael’s funeral (The Morning Post May 12, 1942).

Hitler and Sudetens Lauded By Retired Clergyman Here

Germans Living Within Czechoslovakia Called Downtrodden People

VISITOR TO CAMDEN RECTOR A B R O A D

By GORDON MACKAY

Hitler's regime in Germany and the cause of the Germans in Sudetenland found a champion here yesterday in the person of Rev. O. Stewart Michael, 80, retired Protestant Episcopal clergyman, of New York.

Mr. Michael, who entered the ministry in 1888 and retired 11 years ago, only to voyage to Europe to conduct several parishes of his denomination in Germany and Czechoslovakia, is the guest of Rev. W. W. Ridgeway, rector of St. Wilfrid's Protestant Episcopal Church, Dudley street and Westfield avenue.

As yesterday was St. Michael's Day, and as Michael is the patron saint of the venerable clergyman, Mr. Michael celebrated mass in the church. The octogenarian is clear-eyed, keen-brained, his brown hair scarcely touched by gray. He voices his views with clarity, and he offers no apology for his championship of the Sudeten Germans and his espousal of the Hitler administration.

Mr. Michael was rector of a church in Prague, connected with the Czech National Church. This denomination was



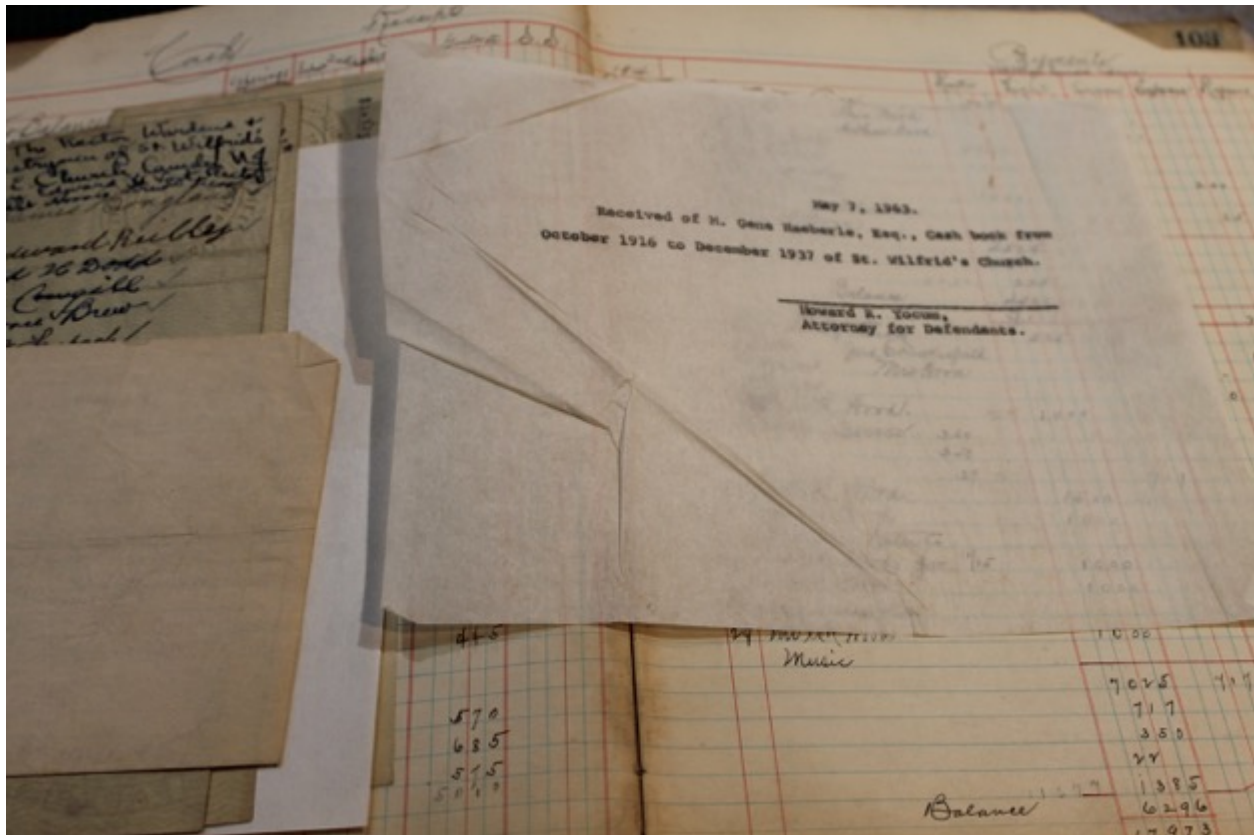
REV. O. STEWART MICHAEL.

Thomas Mann. Germany did nothing to Mann, the government merely punished one of his friends for offenses which the Hitler government felt justified the punishment. I pleaded with Mann to see things in a rational light and not to put his 'poetic curse' on Germany as he did.

Courier-Post September 30, 1938

Ridgeway appeared to be adept at public relations, creating a positive image for himself. During World War II, a member of St. Wilfrid's was killed in active duty. Reverend Ridgeway wrote President Truman requesting an artifact from the war to be used as a shrine to the fallen sailor. The newspaper features a photo of Ridgeway and compliments him for honoring his parishioner (Evening Courier September 3, 1945).

Information about the church and the pastor are available in public documents, but they are not as easily located in the church's records. The treasurer's reports were missing during several of the annual meetings, and there was limited information in the financial ledgers. In one of the ledgers, there is evidence that pages were cut out of the book. In another there are long gaps in reporting, one page is dated March 1919, and the next page is January 1933. One interesting document found inside the messy financial ledger from 1914-1937 is a piece of onion-skin typing paper dated May 7, 1963. "Received of M. Gene Haeberle, Esq. Cash book from October 1916 to December 1937 of St. Wilfrid's Church" (Financial Ledger 1914-1937). Later, we discover that Mr. Haeberle was a lawyer who sued the church and the diocese. These notes document his requests for the records as evidence in the lawsuit filed against the church by the Ridgeway family.



Financial Ledger 1914-1937

The minutes of the vestry meetings are also incomplete and abbreviated. In the early years of the church, minutes from a meeting could take four or five full pages of handwritten notes. The minutes were notably shorter starting in the mid-thirties. The first volume of Vestry Minutes covered nine years from 1886-1897. The journal beginning in 1933 covered twenty-nine years of meetings. The minutes during Ridgeway's term are full of surprises.

At the 1955 annual meeting, Reverend Ridgeway mentions that he has not been paid his salary. "Mr. Ridgeway informed the meeting that, once again, the Parish had failed to pay his salary in full, that the amount now due him was over \$7000.00. He also noted that again, due to the finances of the Parish, he was unable to take his vacation and that he now had 24

months' vacation due him. He asked that the Parish make a special effort during the coming year to pay his salary, past and present" (Vestry Minutes 1933-1962).

A notarized letter dated April 1956 precedes several sealed pages in the Vestry Minutes 1933-1962. Reverend Ridgeway was not happy with the previous secretary of the vestry. The letter states that the minutes were not valid, and the past secretary had acted illegally. It is also worth noting that the letter is signed by Reverend Ridgeway and his son, who, by 1956, has assumed the role of Parish Clerk (Vestry Minutes 1933-1962).

The entire Ridgeway family was participating in the governance of the church. Vestry members were nominated and elected at the annual meetings. For several years, the majority of the nominations were made by Mrs. Ridgeway and her daughter. Not surprisingly, those individuals who were nominated by the family were elected to serve.

St. Wilfred's Church

WESTFIELD AVENUE AND DUDLEY STREET
CAMDEN, N. NEW JERSEY

Rev. William W. Ridgeway, Ph. D.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the material sealed within these covers is not official but the personal remarks of Mr. Robert Burgy. No meetings of the Vestry took place on these dates as there was no quorum present. On the August date Mr. Burgy has noted that Mr. John Simpson and Mr. Howard Clayton were present. This is not true as these men were not present. The inclosed material is the personal work of Mr. Burgy.

The Secretary's book was illegally retained by Mr. Burgy for almost eighteen months after his resignation was accepted by the Vestry. It required legal action to secure the return of the book.

The action of sealing and of excluding these notions of Mr. Burgy taken at a meeting of St. Wilfred's Vestry held on April 8, 1956.

Signed and sealed this twelfth day of April, Anno Domini 1956.

(Signed) Rev. *William W. Ridgeway* Ph.D.
Rector of Saint Wilfred's Parish.

(Signed) *William W. Ridgeway*
Clerk of Saint Wilfred's Parish.

101 - according to previous

The Two Witnesses

Part 1



Fanjul Photo Dudley Street

Bill Sweeney and his sister Carolyn Immendorf grew up in Camden and attended St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church. In August 2018 I was able to interview them together. Our conversation follows with minor adjustments for clarity and consistency.

Carolyn: We came from Trenton. How did we end up in Camden? [She asks her brother.]

Bill: Uncle Albert had a house there. They bought it for retirement.

Carolyn: She was Pennsylvania Dutch so, she got it for a song.

Bill: Do you mean she bought it? Aunt Bertha?

Carolyn: No, just that she used his money to buy it.

Bill: For about \$4000 or \$5000 at the most, you could buy one of the row houses down the street. Number 11 Dudley Street.



**An 18-Acre
PARK**

For Your

**"FRONT
YARD"**

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Bill: Our family moved to Trenton during World War II. After the war, in 1949 our father lost his job, so we ended up moving to Camden and living in Uncle Albert's house. We rented it for \$50 a month. At that time our grandmother, my mother's mother, lived with us. Her husband was a priest, but he died. He was supposed to come with us. At that time families were multigenerational, so she moved with us.

Carolyn: Our grandma used to take me out of the house when Bill was a baby.

We'd walk over to the Cathedral in Trenton, which was a bit of a hike. So, when we moved to Camden, every Sunday, we went to church, whether we wanted to or not. And since St. Wilfrid's was at the end of our street... They were religious people, remember our grandfather was a priest.

Bill: Our father made money playing the organ in church. He didn't play the organ at St. Wilfrid's because they didn't pay enough to their organists to make it worth his while.

Stephanie: You started to attend St. Wilfrid's in 1949, was it during Father Ridgeway's time?

Bill: Yes.

Carolyn: My husband went to high school with the boy, Ridgeway's son. They were not normal you know. Have you heard he was a little unbalanced?

Stephanie: There is a story in the records about Mrs. Ridgeway suing the congregation. Notes from a lawyer are scattered through several books, it looks like they were requesting the records for a lawsuit.

Carolyn: What was she suing them for?

Stephanie: Back pay, failure to pay his pension.

Carolyn: (stifled giggle)

Bill: That's very possible that they did not pay into his pension.

Carolyn: This is what they would do, every Sunday Mrs. Ridgeway would get the plate with all the offerings and take it directly to the rectory. Nobody knew

anything about anything. I am telling you he was a brilliant man, he taught me a lot, but he was (whispers) CRAZY.

Bill: I don't remember there being a vestry at all, but I was a kid then.

Carolyn: People would be only be named [to the vestry] if Ridgeway knew they would go along. Ridgeway controlled everything.

Carolyn: I went there as a kid and got to lead a little Sunday school class, and a girl came in whose father was a big deal – the publisher of the Courier- Post, and Ridgeway gave her my class. I left, I wasn't going to put up with that. I started to go over to St. Paul's in Philly with my dad. But my mother stayed since it was her church.

Bill: And grandmother and I stayed too. I think this happened in the mid-fifties.

Carolyn: I would say 1954 when I left [St. Wilfrid's] to go to church with my dad. I decided I would not be married at St. Wilfrid's. I had been to a wedding there once, and Ridgeway would stop and say in a really loud voice, "does anyone see just cause for these people not to marry." It was awful, it was like he wanted someone to speak up, it would shock everyone. So, I decided I was not going to do that. There was always cantankerousness at St. Wilfrid's.

Bill: People wouldn't come to church, not many people. Ridgeway... during holy week... had multiple services every day and for three hours. It was such a high church he chased people away.

Carolyn: All the people who had money were moving to Grace Church in Merchantville because Ridgeway was at St. Wilfrid's.

Bill: Ridgeway was driving people away. He stood at the pulpit and excommunicated¹¹people.

Carolyn: He would never tell us peasants why he had excommunicated anyone, he had his own grounds. I was there and remember thinking – I have to get out of here!

Bill: I was never there when he did that. He was toxic.

Carolyn: But on the good side, he was a good teacher. He taught me a lot about the church. St. Wilfrid's was always a hard luck story.

Bill: It was a hard time. Father Ridgeway was a nut, he disowned one of his daughters, who married someone her father did not like. His wife was a nut case too.

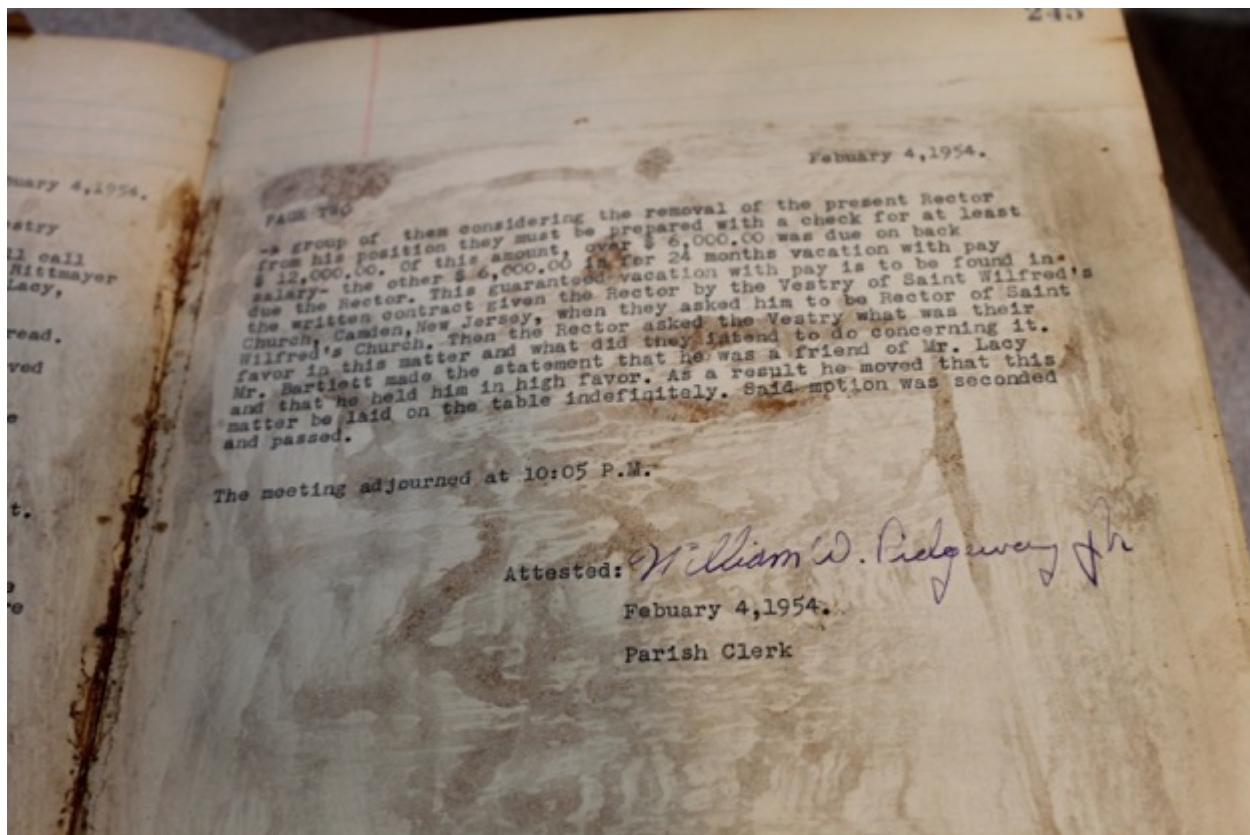
Carolyn: I know there is a parish in England that is called St. Wilfrid's, and I am sure they are in trouble. I think they picked the wrong name, it's a very Anglo-Saxon name. The original Saint Wilfrid would go into towns, and he would tell people what they were doing wrong and what they needed to do, and then the people would ship him out on a boat. I always thought it was dangerous to name a church after him.

¹¹ Excommunication is the process of banning congregants from the sacraments of the church. It is very rare in the Episcopal Church.

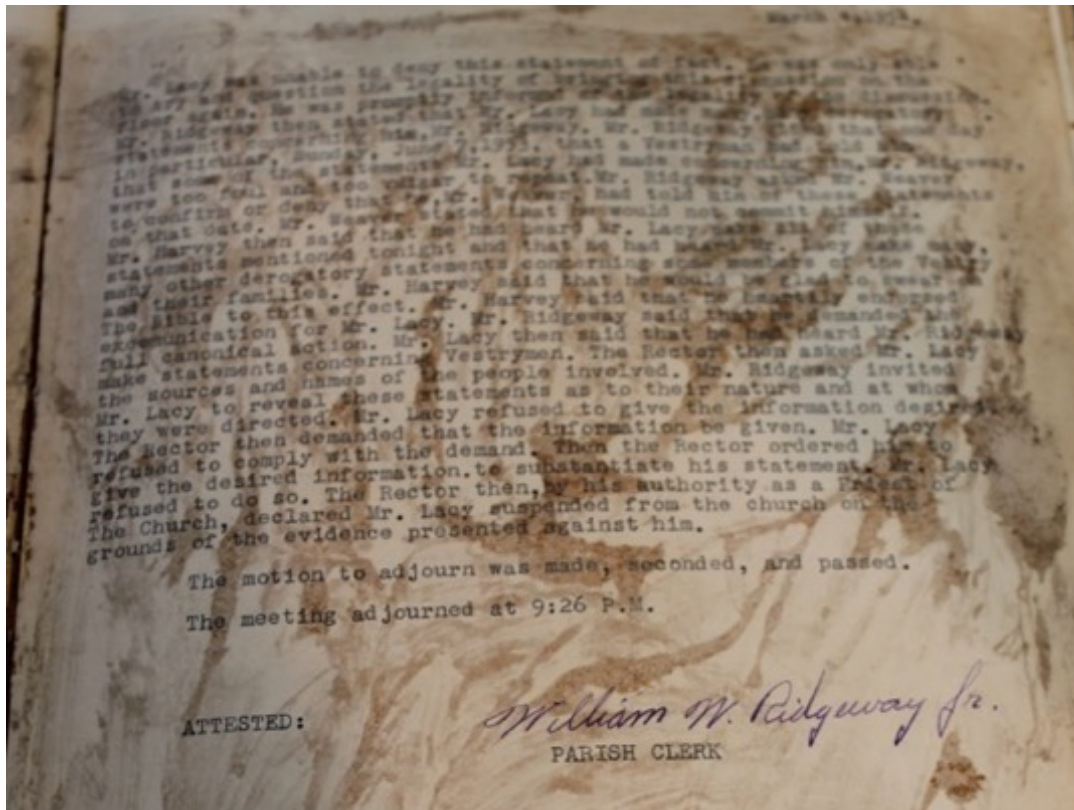
The End 1954-1962

In the fifties, the Sweeney family noticed the bizarre behavior of their parish priest. This is documented in the records of the church. Most minutes of the vestry were short, but in the winter of 1954, the Reverend and his son felt the need to take detailed notes about a dispute within the vestry. This incident gives us a sense of how vindictive and entrenched Reverend Ridgeway had become after twenty-two years as St. Wilfrid's pastor. The discussion began at the January meeting of the vestry when the Reverend mentioned that someone had overheard Mr. Lacy speak poorly of another man's sister while standing in the back of the church on Christmas Eve. The language is vague, and there aren't details about the insult. But because no action is taken in January, the Reverend was agitated in February. It is during this meeting that we get the full story, Mr. Lacy was being accused of saying Reverend Ridgeway needed to be replaced. Mr. Lacy was required to testify and swear on the Bible, and multiple vestrymen gave speeches. Reverend Ridgeway closed the meeting with a direct threat to the vestry. "The rector also stated that if there is a group of them considering the removal of the present Rector from his position they must be prepared with a check for at least \$12,000.00. Of this amount, over \$6000.00 was due on back salary—the other \$6,000.00 is for 24 months' vacation with pay due the Rector.... Then the Rector asked the Vestry what was their favor in this matter and what did they intend to do concerning it" (Vestry Minutes 1933-1962).

There was no action taken in February which prompted William Ridgeway Jr. to raise the issue again at the March vestry meeting. There was a long tirade about the Bible and truthfulness. Accusations were exchanged, demands were made, and finally, Reverend Ridgeway issued his judgment. "The Rector then, by his authority as a Priest of The Church, declared Mr. Lacy suspended from the church." The reverend said he wanted to impose the "full canonical action" of excommunication (Vestry Minutes 1933-1962).



Vestry Minutes 1933-1962



Vestry Minutes 1933-1962

The minutes from this period are all typed and then glued into the church's journal, the dried paste leaves a whorled pattern across the pages. It is dramatically different from the elegantly scripted pages documenting all the other vestry meetings. This approach might have been used to guarantee that the typed minutes are the only written record. It raises the question about what might be written under the pasted minutes. Reverend Ridgeway has become a vindictive and mean spirited leader. He has put his twenty-one-year-old son into a powerful church position as a way to control the written records of the parish. His daughter, his son-in-law and his wife are also embedded in the operations of the parish. They control the vestry, the funding, and the membership of the congregation.

This does not end well.

New Rector Named for St. Wilfred

The Venerable Canon Samuel Steinmetz Jr., Archdeacon of the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey, is serving as temporary rector of St. Wilfred's Church, Westfield ave. and Dudley st., Camden.

The rector, the Rev. William W. Ridgeway, Ph.D., died Sept. 26 after an illness of six years.

A solemn requiem Mass was celebrated Oct. 1 by the Rt. Rev. Alfred L. Banyard, D.D., S.T.D., Bishop of the Diocese of New Jersey, in St. Wilfred's Church. Burial was in Eastport, Maine.

Dr. Ridgeway, who was 71, was born in Boston, Mass. He was graduated from the Latin High School in Boston; St. Stephen's College, Annandale, N.Y.; Episcopal Theological Seminary, Cambridge, Mass.; Andover Theological Seminary; Harvard University; and the Chicago Law School where he received his Ph.D.

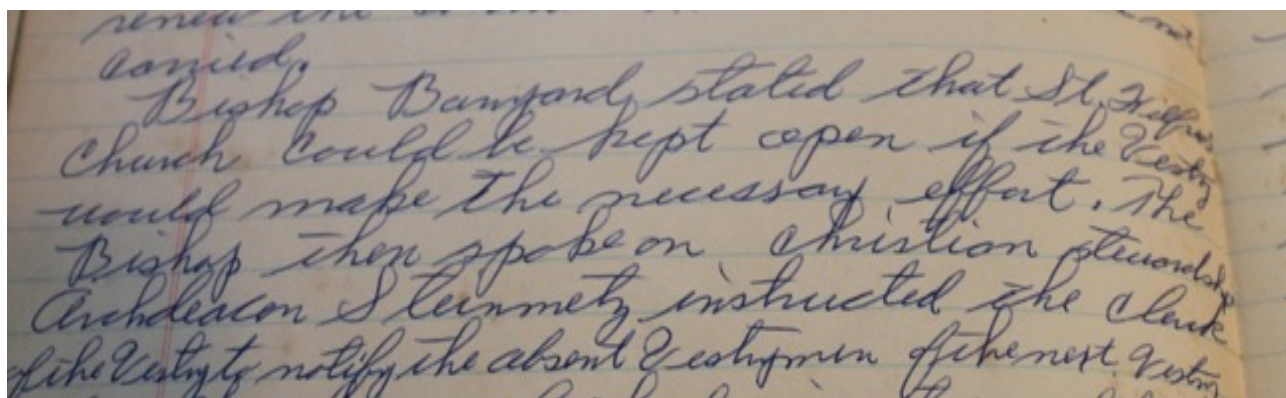
He was married to the former Sybil Isabelle Jewers of Eastport, Maine.

Dr. Ridgeway founded St. Paul's Church, Lubec, Maine; St. John's Church, and Christ Church, both of Erie, Pa.; and All Saints Church, Girard, Ohio. He was the author of the book "A Solution of International Problems." In Camden, he was an active supporter of the police and fire departments.

Sunday services at St. Wilfred's will continue at 8 and 11 a.m. with Holy Eucharist and church school at 9:30 a.m.

Redemption 1962-1970

In November, after Reverend Ridgeway's death, the Bishop arrived for a meeting with the vestry. He brought the Archdeacon and the Treasurer of the Diocese to address the seven vestrymen present, including William Ridgeway Jr. and Reverend Ridgeway's son-in-law. His comments indicate that he knew what had been going on at the church. "The Bishop spoke at length on the financial condition of the Parish. He spoke of the necessity in calling a new Rector for the Parish. He spoke of Mrs. Ridgeway's future and also spoke about the Rectory. He spoke about the attendance of services. ...The Bishop informed the Vestry that the decision to keep St. Wilfrid's open or closed was theirs to make.... Bishop Banyard then discussed the outstanding debts item by item. ...He asked the Vestry how they intended to pay these bills. ... The Bishop stated emphatically that under no circumstances could any gambling be permitted [as a fundraising strategy]."



Vestry Minutes 1933-1962

The journal that contains the minutes for the past twenty-nine years comes to an abrupt close on November 23, 1962. Blank pages remain in the book, but there are no entries after a special meeting held on November 23rd. The next church journal contains minutes of meetings, newspaper clippings, bids for work on the church, and financial ledgers. The first

meeting recorded in this edition is December 16, 1962, and the final meeting recorded in this edition is August 5, 1964. It is starkly different from the previous books. The Bishop is attempting to set the church up for a new phase, a kind of resurrection of their parish. Interestingly, the diocese would again use the word resurrection describing St. Wilfrid's in 2016.

The meeting on December 16th outlines steps the church intends to take to revitalize their congregation. Reports, audits, inspections, member canvassing, procedures for paying bills, and plans for replacing vestry members are mentioned at this meeting. The diocese leadership asks William Ridgeway Jr. to turn over all the church records as soon as possible. Ridgeway had retained possession of the church records after his father died. It is feasible that the records were altered during that period, perhaps the pages that were glued into the journals had been prepared after the death of Reverend Ridgeway. At that same meeting, the vestry also receives a letter from a lawyer about the church's indebtedness to the Ridgeway family. They refer this issue to the diocese legal department (Vestry Minutes 1962-1964). It turns out that this issue is not going to go away quickly.

The Ridgeway family refuses to leave the rectory and insists that the church owes them money. The results of Reverend Ridgeway's irresponsible and arrogant leadership hang over the congregation for seventeen months and produce unflattering publicity for the church. When a tentative settlement was reached in May 1964, the church's lawyer, Senator Cowgill, delivers a scathing rebuke of the vestry which is documented in the minutes. "Senator Cowgill explained that he was a former member of this church and an acolyte, and his father was a very active member who had been given a very bad deal by former Rev. Ridgeway. He explained that he was a former schoolmate of the Bishop Banyard, and for this and the above reasons was very glad to take the case. However, he stated, a review of the minutes for the past 34 years, lead him to the conclusion that the vestries had not done their jobs or handled their obligations in the

proper manner. ... He further stated that when the vestry allowed Rev. Ridgeway to take over the operation of the business of the church, they were shirking their duties, and were responsible for what happened” (Vestry Minutes 1962-1964). Multiple legal appeals continue to embarrass the parish, until the Spring of 1964 when the Bishop uses diocese funds to pay the family and relocates Mrs. Ridgeway to Maine.

Widow, Family Called 'Squatters' in Rectory, Are Ordered to Move

*Phila
Inquirer
Saturday
February
22ND
1964*

By HARRY M. POTTICK Of The Inquirer Staff

Superior Court Judge John B. Wick on Friday ordered the widow and family of an Episcopal minister to move from a Camden church rectory on the grounds that they are squatters. The order was directed against Mrs. Sybil Ridgeway, 68, her son William W., Jr., and her daughter, Sybil J. Ridgeway.

Judge Wick, in rendering the decision in favor of the officials of St. Wilfred's Church, in East Camden, said "there is no doubt that they have been squatting in the church rectory since January, 1963, and I direct that they move within the next 60 days."

Mrs. Ridgeway is the widow of the Rev. William W. Ridgeway, who died September 28, 1962. He had been rector of the church since November, 1956.

SUIT FOR SALARY

According to former State Sen. Joseph W. Cowgill, representing the church, the family has resided in the rectory at Dudley and Westfield ave. since the minister's death—despite the fact they had agreed to move by Jan. 1, 1963.

Mrs. Ridgeway has filed a suit in behalf of her husband's estate against the church and the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey in a move to recover \$16,428 in back salary which she alleges was due her husband, together with \$3380 which she claims was paid into the diocesan pension fund for her husband.

The church has denied the allegations.

PENSION PAYMENTS

The widow and her children contended in the civil suit brought against the church and Diocese that the family had been forced to make payments into the pension fund since the church failed to do so.

The church, in turn, filed for eviction action.

Cowgill told the court that because of the Ridgeways' refusal to move, the church's new candidate had been forced to become a boarder in Haddonfield.

The church had nowhere else to send him, Cowgill said.

PLEA TO REMAIN

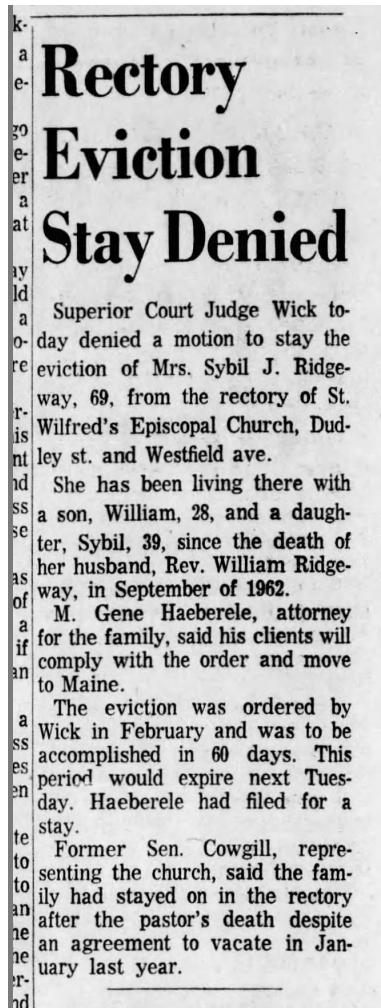
M. Gene Haeblerle, the Ridgeways' defense attorney, agreed that the family may have had no right to continue to occupy the house, but he asked in "good faith and good conscience" that the church permit the family to remain there until the suit for recovery of the money had been concluded.

Making his decision, Judge Wick said he had no choice but to order the family to move.

The Ridgeways gave no indication of when they intend to vacate the rectory, or when they intend to go.



Rectory on Dudley st. in Camden is focal point of court fight between minister's widow and Episcopal diocese of New Jersey. The church is at right.



Courier-Post April 17, 1964

Thirty-two years of Reverend Ridgeway's reign cost St. Wilfrid's Church a great deal. There were financial catastrophes, lawsuits, lost members, degradation of facilities, and damage to the church's reputation. The Bishop recognizes the vulnerability of the parish and assigns a young priest, Father Robert Leather, to serve the church and keep a close watch on the finances. He arranges for the diocese to "continue the aid for rent and wages to the Vicar Leather and would review the amount owed for the past 30 years, of \$7,000, for assessment that were never paid [to the diocese]" (Vestry Minutes 1962-1964). His staff assists the new vestry with operations and fundraising. The church records are clear and complete. The sanctuary is renovated, and several of the stained-glass windows are restored. Vestry members are actively

engaged in church maintenance and make personal donations when asked. A loan was obtained to complete the repairs to the rectory. Still, Father Leather has to pressure the new vestry to be responsible. He sent this letter to the vestry after they had failed to attend a meeting. “This is the sort of apathy that prompted much of the difficulty during the past thirty years. In the past, this parish has had a reputation for not paying its bills.” Father Leather was going to make a difference at St. Wilfrid’s.

Saint Wilfrid's Church
Westfield Avenue at Dudley Street
Camden, New Jersey
28 July 1964

Dear Sir:

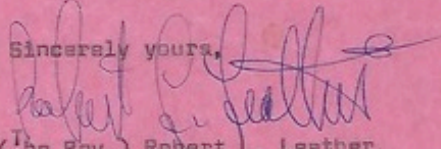
Last Saturday, 25 July 1964, I asked Mr Lacy to call each member of the vestry and notify him that a special Vestry Meeting would be held this evening for the payment of current bills and for a preliminary discussion of letting contracts for the restoration of the rectory. Besides your vicar, only the following men were present: Messrs Lacy, Lindeborn, Pauro, and Weaver. According to the By-Laws established by this Parish in November 1963, a quorum was not present. In addition to the notification by telephone, I also announced the Meeting in Church at the 10:30 Eucharist on Sunday.

Gentlemen, I should like to remind you:

1. This is the sort of apathy that prompted much of the difficulty during the past thirty years.
2. In the past, this parish has had a reputation for not paying its bills. Since the diocese has taken over the administration of our affairs, we have not been delinquent until the present.
3. You are the elected representatives of the members of this congregation, and it is your duty and privilege to administer the affairs of this parish in a business-like manner.
4. The rectory is badly in need of repair, and the various contracts should be let soon, so that work can go forward quickly.
5. Finally, this is your parish, and it stands or falls on your devotion to God and His Church. A portion of your devotion is to be present at called vestry meetings, unless you are unable to do so because of commitments or illness.

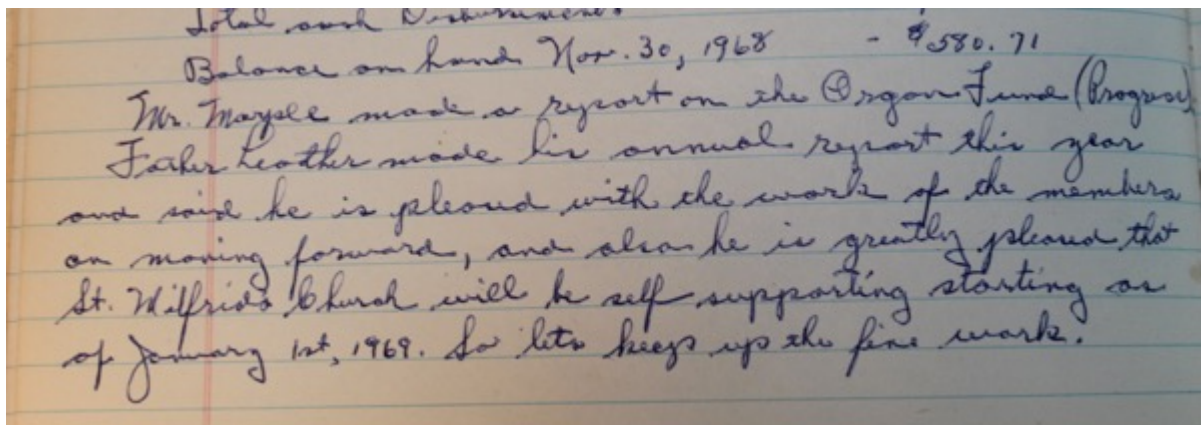
A special vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, 4 August 1964, in the Parish House at 8PM. The purpose of this meeting is to pay current bills, and for a preliminary discussion of letting contracts for the restoration of the rectory.

Sincerely yours,


(The Rev.) Robert L. Leather,
Vicar.

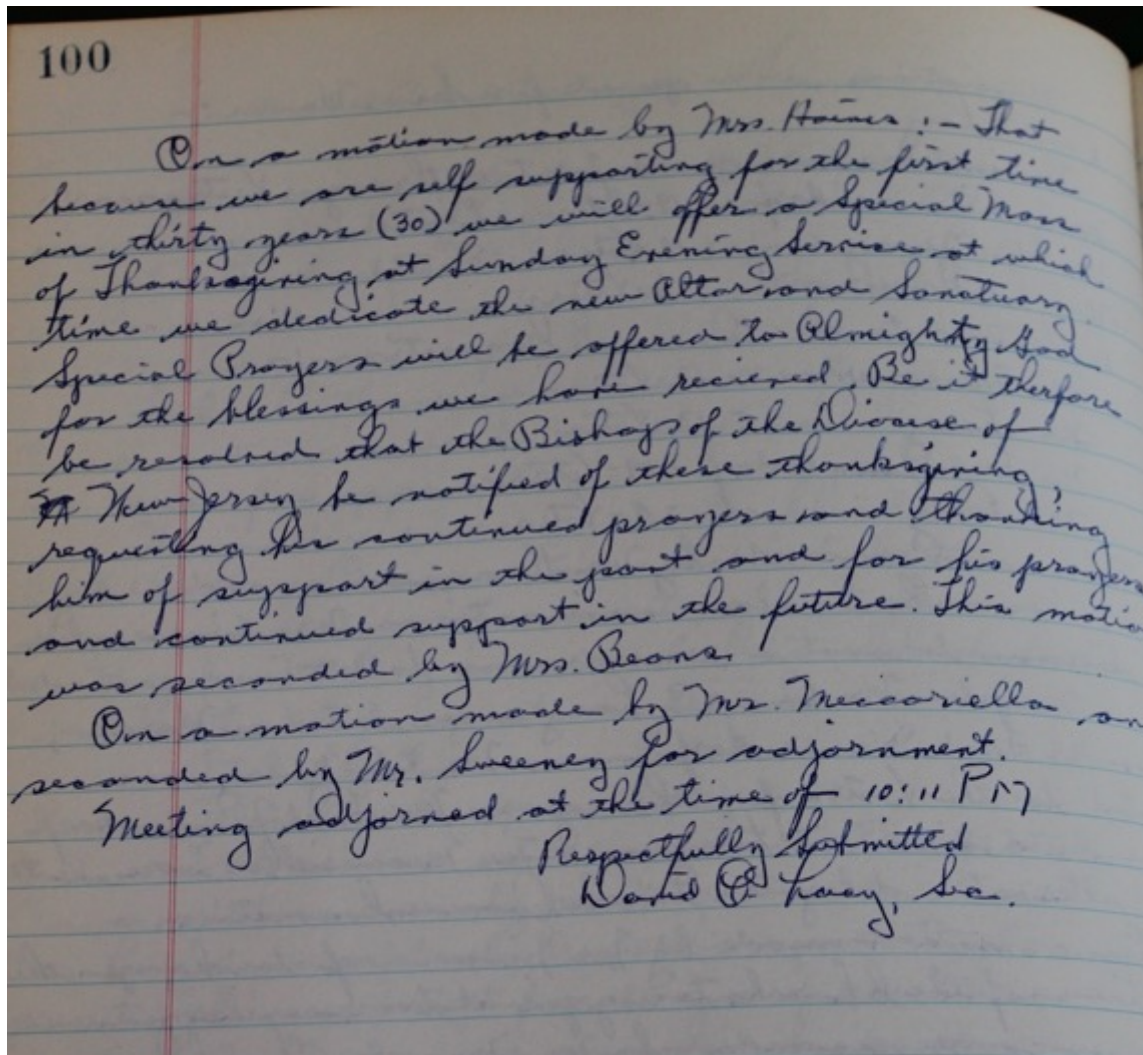
Cc: The Vestry
The Warden
The Bishop
The Archdeacon

The new vestry met the challenge and created a different kind of church in a short timeframe. At the annual meeting of the parish, November 30, 1964, there was \$1162.77 cash on hand. This is a dramatic increase over Reverend Ridgeway's average cash on hand of \$48.22. The ladies' auxiliary had \$2,017.87 in cash receipts, continuing to raise more money than the vestry. Father Leather reported that the "Average attendance has increased by about 100%" (Pastor Letter 1963-1964). The annual attendance at all services was 6,311. This trend would continue.

A photograph of a handwritten page from a notebook, likely a vestry minutes book. The handwriting is in cursive and on lined paper. The text reads: "Total cash on hand Nov. 30, 1968 - \$580.71. Mr. Mayall made a report on the Organ Fund (Proposed). Father Leather made his annual report this year and said he is pleased with the work of the members on moving forward, and also he is greatly pleased that St. Wilfrid's Church will be self-supporting starting as of January 1st, 1969. So let's keep up the fine work." The page is slightly aged and the ink is dark.

Vestry Minutes 1964-1980

At the annual meeting in November 1968, there was good news. "Father Leather made his annual report this year and said he is pleased with the work of the members on moving forward, and also he is greatly pleased that St. Wilfrid's Church will be self-supporting starting as of January 1, 1969. So let's keep up the fine work" (Vestry Minutes 1964-1980). At that same meeting, the congregation passed a motion of gratitude. "On a motion made by Mrs. Haines: That because we are self-supporting for the first time in thirty years (30) we will offer a Special Mass of Thanksgiving at Sunday Evening Service at which time we dedicate the new Altar and Sanctuary. Special Prayers will be offered to Almighty God for the blessings we have received" (Vestry Minutes 1964-1980).



Vestry Minutes 1944-1980

When Father Leather left St. Wilfrid's in December of 1970 the church would have considerable balances in all their accounts. The congregation was growing, and the leadership was taking responsibility for their church. In spite of thirty years of corrupt leadership, negative energy, vindictiveness, and neglect, the small stone church had been revived. There was still a lot of work to be done, but the Bishop's efforts had paid off. St. Wilfrid's Church had once again pushed past adversity and reinvented itself.

The Two Witnesses

Part 2



Dudley Street Google Maps

Carolyn: All this hardship ... it is because they named it St. Wilfrid's. Father Leather did okay. My mother adored him, she used to do his wash for him. He would drop off his laundry, I can still see her boiling his hankies on the stove. But then he faded away. Father Willis was a straight arrow. He came to me and wanted me to cantor for him because I had a voice that was pitched like a boy. So, I did—for years.

Stephanie: Was the church growing during Father Leather and Father Willis' time—1963-1988?

Bill: Things started to change. East Camden, Cramer Hill was white. If you look at my high school yearbook, we had very few blacks. It was Woodrow Wilson High School, right down the street. [He gets his yearbook out so we can look through it.] You can see how few blacks there were then. Here's an officer of the class, an

athlete. Here's another. Teachers are white, cooks are white. There were some but not a lot. It was just starting to be integrated.

Carolyn: There was a section of East Camden, off High Street, called Catto and it was all black. It was segregated. There were Blacks living there, but they were well educated.

Stephanie: Housing was still segregated in the 1960s?

Carolyn: Maybe I am thinking about this wrongly but ... If you were black, you would not want to buy a house on Dudley Street because you would not have been tolerated probably.

Bill: North Camden was mostly white. Black areas were in East Camden. You just accepted it [segregation]. The shipyard is mostly a white area. Even South Camden was immigrants.

Carolyn: South Camden was white and Polish, East Camden had black neighborhoods. At least one big black church back then and an elementary school. The Catto School went back to the eighteen-hundreds.

Carolyn: We didn't mix. Lord help us, God knows what happens if we mixed. Camden is shot to hell. I think it was the mayor we had after the depression, he was a crooked bastard.

Carolyn: We [Carolyn and her husband] bought a house in Camden, Mickle St. 3080, It was a beautiful house, duplex, hardwood floors, we loved that house. But we shouldn't have bought it, because it was on its way down. I started to get cockroaches from my neighbors. Then we moved to Pennsauken [a suburb near

Camden], but we should have moved to Marlton [a suburb further away from Camden] we paid \$47,000 for our house there.

Bill: After our family moved out of 11 Dudley Street, Uncle Albert and Aunt Bertha moved back into the house. They had been living in Darien, Connecticut. My Aunt Bertha insisted that they come back to Dudley Street since they had bought it for retirement. She was very Pennsylvania Dutch. After they moved back, they had a home invasion. The neighborhood was getting pretty rough.

Carolyn: And do you know how I found out? I heard in the teachers' lounge. A black girl asked me how my uncle was. I said as far as I know he was fine. She told me about the home invasion. I called my cousin, and she came down right away.

Bill: Our cousin came and made Uncle Albert and Aunt Bertha go back to Connecticut.

Stephanie: Were the folks living in those row houses white or black or Hispanic?

Carolyn and Bill: [Discussing the question together they are unclear about the race of folks living in the row houses now.] No, they were not mostly black, there were some whites.

Stephanie: How did it feel when you lived there?

Carolyn: It [Dudley] was a nice neighborhood, and we had the Dudley Grange Park and it was lovely, and it was safe. Our mother worked at the library in the park.

Bill: After a while, we couldn't play in the park because it was not safe.

Carolyn: Years later, when I was married and my husband was treasurer at St. Wilfrid's, there used to be homeless people living in the neighborhood who came to the rectory and took showers. That is good, people who are Christians should be doing things like that. They used to have rummage sales, and I remember one time when my husband went down there. He took off his jacket, laid it down, and they sold it.

Bill: Sounds the same as it is today. Now there's a homeless guy living on the porch of the burned-out rectory.

Stephanie: Father Pat [from Grace Church in Haddonfield] has been helping St. Wilfrid's with bills and other kinds of support. He helped the present congregation set up the Open Door Clinic.

Bill: I know folks from Grace Church think that St. Wilfrid's is not being responsible. Sometimes they don't pay the electricity bill, and they have gotten shut off notices. Father Pat was getting frustrated with the diocese too, and how they are handling this whole thing. Who is the controller for the church? Who is their priest?

Stephanie: There is no controller at St. Wilfrid's now. There is only a priest who fills in, his title is Canon Missioner for Black Ministries.

Bill: It is not a black church. Father Pat believes that too. It is not a black church, it is not a black neighborhood. The diocese does not understand.

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

The law of the past cannot be eluded,

The law of the present and future cannot be eluded,

The law of the living cannot be eluded—it is eternal,

The law of promotion and transformation cannot be eluded,

The law of heroes and good-doers cannot be eluded,

The law of drunkard, informer, mean persons— not one iota thereof can be eluded

(lines 77-82).

Chapter Five: The Plagues Upon the People 1626-2019



Fanjul Photo

At Dudley Street and Westfield Avenue

No formal record identifies the race of the congregation at St. Wilfrid's Church. It is reasonable to assume that from the opening of the church at Cramer Hill in 1885 until the end of Father Leather's term in 1970, all of the members of the parish were white. For information on the remaining forty-nine years, we have to rely on the memories of the people who attended the church during that time. The demographics of the city and this particular neighborhood offer some insight, but other factors influenced church attendance over time. In the early years, all of St. Wilfrid's parishioners walked to church. The original founders commented that they needed a new church because two miles was too far to walk to church (Parish Register 1886-1914). This practice makes it possible to determine the race of the congregation based upon the racial make-up of the neighborhood. That trend did not continue, as automobiles became available, people would leave their home neighborhood and commute to their sites of worship.

As individuals gained additional mobility, it became harder to use the neighborhood data to determine the race of the congregation (Numrich, Wedam).

The Sweeney family remembers their Dudley Street neighborhood and their church as all white. This is consistent with what the US Census reports about Camden. The 1950 US Census indicates that eighty-six percent of the people in Camden were white, and fourteen percent were black, there were no Asians or Hispanics reported. The Sweeney family moved out of Dudley Street in the late seventies, in part because of the changes in the neighborhood which brought an increase in violence to the area. The minutes reflect the beginning of that change in July 1968 at the regular vestry meeting. "Father Leather mentioned about the Breaking and Entering in the Church and the Rectory so Purkins made a report on the Alarm System Progress. Also, a discussion on the putting of spot lights to work off of a timeclock, the spot lights to be put on the outside of the Church and Parish House, and also of putting Iron Bars on the Windows inside of the Parish House and cellar windows of the Rectory" (Vestry Minutes 1964-1980). East Camden was not a safe neighborhood, and people were moving out of Camden into the suburbs.

Reverend Willis served as pastor to St. Wilfrid's from 1971 until 1983. It was not an easy time for the parish. Less than three years after Father Leather proclaimed St. Wilfrid's financially sound, the church had a deficit again. The shortfall continued to accumulate in spite of efforts by the vestry and Reverend Willis. In 1972 the Bishop suggested to the vestry that they share Reverend Willis with another church in order to reduce expenses for both churches (Vestry Minutes 1964-1980). The building was aging, and repairs to the sanctuary, rectory, and the parish house were unremitting. The ceiling of the sanctuary needed new paint, the plumbing in the rectory did not function, the windows in the parish house needed to be replaced, and no

progress had been made on the purchase of a burglar alarm. The diocese continued to assess the church for outreach and missionaries¹².

The Vestry Minutes are labored and filled with challenging issues. Recruiting new church members was difficult when jobs were scarce, housing was unavailable, and new neighbors were unfamiliar with the Episcopal Church. Social changes were entering into the politics of the church. While the congregation had elected women to the vestry since 1967, they were not ready to go any further when it came to the role women played in the church. In 1976, national church leaders proposed that women be ordained as priests in the Episcopal Church. St. Wilfrid's vestry and pastor were firmly opposed to this change and wrote to the Bishop with their objections. They felt this issue was so important that they folded a copy of the letter into the church's formal record. "Therefore, as the vestry of St. Wilfrid's Church we will do everything in our power to see that no woman perform any priestly functions at St. Wilfrid's. Nor will we support any functions in which they participate" (Vestry Minutes 1964-1980).

¹² The Episcopal Church requires that individual churches contribute to a fund for missionary work and pay a fee to support the operations of the diocese.

She stated that the meeting was called to order at 8:15 PM after the service had commenced. The meeting was called to order by the Rev. Mr. D. Williams.

THE RIGHT REV'D ALBERT W. VANDUZER
BISHOP OF N.J.
PO BOX WEST STATE ST
TRENTON N.J.

DEAR BISHOP VANDUZER 08618

AT OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED VESTRY MEETING HELD
OCT 11, 1976, THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION WAS OFFERED BY
OUR SENIOR WARDEN, MICHAEL GUGLIEMI:

THE VESTRY IS IN FULL SUPPORT OF OUR RECTOR,
FATHER ARTHUR D. WILLIS, IN REGARD TO THE ORDINATION OF
WOMEN TO THE PRIESTHOOD OF OUR CHURCH.

THEREFORE AS THE VESTRY OF ST WILFRID'S CHURCH,
WE WILL DO EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO SEE THAT NO
WOMEN PERFORM ANY PRIESTLY FUNCTIONS AT ST. WILFRID'S
NOR WILL WE SUPPORT ANY FUNCTIONS IN WHICH THEY
PARTICIPATE

THIS RESOLUTION WAS PASSED BY AN UNANIMOUS VOTE
WITH 2 WARDENS AND 5 VESTRYMEN PRESENT.

YOURS TRULY
J. BLOURNE
SECT.

Respectfully submitted
J. Bloune, Clerk

It is likely that during Reverend Willis's tenure a few blacks started to attend St. Wilfrid's. There is no documentation, but in 1983 when Father Martin Gutwein first came to the parish, there were some active black parishioners. Father Gutwein served the congregation from 1983 until 1992. During this time, he was part of a team ministry for St. Paul's, Church of Our Savior, and St. Wilfrid's. His memory is that the church leadership changed during those nine years. When he arrived, St. Wilfrid's vestry was headed by a white man, when he left the vestry leader was a black woman.

RECTORS		
NAME	BEGAN	TERMINATED
William Wesley Ridgeway, Ph.D.	November 1, 1930	September 26, 1962 Death 26 September 1962
Robert Lee Leather, Vicar appointed by the Bishop of New Jersey.	1 July 1963	
R. L. Leather, Rector 12 October 1969		1 December 1970.
Dr. Thos. D. Willis, C.S.S.S.	1 March 1971	
Martin Gutwein + Vicar	June 1983	Dec. 31 1992.
Assisted by:		
John Troncale	June 1983	Oct 1987
Paul Van Sant	June 1988	June 1990
Carver Israel	Feb 1991	Dec. 1992
Rev Canon Dr. Noel J.D. Amadi Vicar	May 1, 1993	August 31, 2003

Parish Register 1941-present

Interview with Father Martin Gutwein November 28, 2018

Stephanie: Can you share some basic background with me about your role in Camden churches, and in particular with St. Wilfrid's? The documents that I have indicate that you served from June 1983-December 31, 1992, with assistance from John Troncale, Paul VanSant, and Carver Israel. Then Father

Amadi took over from May 1, 1993- August 31, 2003. I do not believe any priest has served there regularly since 2003.

Father Gutwein: I had been serving as the full-time priest of St. Paul's, where the average age was 70 when I arrived there. The Bishop gave us an ultimatum: you have 5 years to grow the church. We knew we were on borrowed time and we tried lots of different strategies. Which is why we were interested when St. Wilfrid's vestry came to the vestry at St. Paul's and asked if they could share my time. St. Wilfrid's knew they couldn't afford a full-time rector and it was also questionable if St Paul's would survive for very long. So, they made a deal to share expenses and time. I was good with that.

Shortly after that arrangement had been finalized, the Bishop came to ask me to take care of Church of Our Savior. He did not know that my time was already split with St. Wilfrid's. The Bishop got the idea to find money for another priest, and together we could handle all three churches. It was a team ministry, and we worked well together. All of the assistant priests, Troncale, VanSant, and Israel, lived at the St. Wilfrid's rectory. We worked with all the churches to build community and a sense of mission. We had events together and sponsored gatherings for all the members. But St. Wilfrid's was the least cooperative. They complained that the diocese should give them their own full-time priest, they were never comfortable working as a team. At that time the head of the vestry was white, Bill Granahan and he had a favorite line, "If we just had our own priest for St. Wilfrid's we would work him hard and make the parish

grow.” He wanted the diocese to pay for them to have one dedicated priest and he used the lack of a priest as an excuse for St. Wilfrid’s shrinking parish. From my perspective, it takes more than one priest to grow a parish. Building a congregation is the responsibility of all the members.

It was the early eighties then, the congregation at St. Wilfrid’s was mostly white with some newer black members.

The Episcopal Churches in Camden were all changing as a response to the transformation in the city. One church decided to do services in Spanish since the people in their neighborhood were Spanish speakers. Another was slated for demolition because it was in the path of a major highway. More than one congregation was a combination of older white parishioners and very poor blacks. One church had a middle-class black congregation, many of whom came from the West Indies and had been raised Anglican. Individuals were moving from one church to another, looking for a place that felt comfortable to them. Race and class played a role in where people felt welcome. Both Island Blacks and the American Blacks were moving to St. Wilfrid’s. There was a gentle shift happening, it was a lovely close-knit congregation, and they got along. Granahan was a nice guy, and he was welcoming to the newer folks but, the parish was not financially self-sufficient, and members didn’t seem to think it was their job to fix that.

At some point, Granahan got tired of being the leader at St. Wilfrid’s and the congregation elected Enid Massias, a Black Jamaican, as the

chair of the vestry. I was hopeful that now that we had a new leader at St. Wilfrid's they would move away from their sense of entitlement. But it didn't happen that way. Enid said exactly the same things Bill said but she said it with a Jamaican accent. St. Wilfrid's never paid St. Paul's for my time or for help from the other priests. They believed that the diocese owed them. When the leadership at the diocese changed, and we lost funding for the team ministry, I stepped away from St. Wilfrid's. I think it was 1992 when this all happened. I still helped Church of Our Savior until they closed in 2003. There was a lot of good stuff going on at St. Paul's. We were doing a pancake breakfast for neighbors, and we started an evening service that was easy for non-Episcopalians to follow. We included a dinner after the service too. It was open to anyone, even if you didn't attend the service. To this day it is the most popular service at St. Paul's.



DVRBS.COM Website

Demographics [\[edit \]](#)

Demographic profile [hide] ⚡	1950 ^[101] ⚡	1970 ^[101] ⚡	1990 ^[101] ⚡	2010 ^[10] ⚡
White	85.9%	59.8%	19.0%	17.6%
— Non-Hispanic	N/A	52.9%	14.4%	4.9%
Black or African American	14.0%	39.1%	56.4%	48.1%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	N/A	7.6%	31.2%	47.0%
Asian	—	0.2%	1.3%	2.1%

Camden Census Reports, Wikipedia

The History

What happened in Camden has everything to do with the relentlessness of institutional racism. The history of the area reveals opportunities for positive outcomes—from the settlement of Quaker abolitionists to the massive injection of federal funds into the city. These factors, and others, should have contributed to a thriving economically and racially diverse city. Instead, the inescapable bias against people of color drove the city into abject poverty, violence, corruption, and despair. It shouldn't have been so horrible.

African slaves first came to Camden County on ships owned by the Dutch West India Company in 1626. They were sold to tidewater planters as field laborers and household help. The Dutch laws allowed slaves to own property, get an education, marry and had provisions for their manumission (Crew 3). However, when the British seized control of the Delaware Valley in 1664, all of those rights were lost. The settlers from Britain included a large contingency of Quakers, who were immigrating to escape religious persecution. The English Quakers started to arrive in the Camden area in 1677, where they built mills and acquired large tracts of land for farming (Dorwart 30). Initially, these ventures relied on slave labor, and some Quakers owned slaves as house servants. Slaves were bought and sold in Camden County during the mid-eighteenth century at slave markets operated by two Quaker brothers. During that period, 150 African slaves were living in Camden County constituting around four percent of the total population (Dorwart 29). Historical records reported the names of slaves and conditions of their ownership.

“Daniel Cooper’s freedom-minded “*Negro Man Quaco had an iron Collar with two Hooks to it, round his Neck, a pair of Hand-cuffs with a Chain to them, six Feet long*” (Dorwart 30).

The Quakers had experienced brutal discrimination in their homeland, which made them sympathetic to the slaves. Across the Delaware River, in Philadelphia, their political pressure prompted a ban on slave trade. The West Jersey Quakers were also opposed to the growth of slavery and exerted pressure on their brethren to take a stand in spite of the economic advantages of owning slaves (Crew 5). "In 1777 James Cooper called upon members of the Haddonfield and Woodbury Friends meetings¹³ to free their slaves or face disownment. Marmaduke Cooper was read out of the Quaker's congregation for keeping his slaves. Such activism contributed to the state's decision to stop the further importation of African slaves. By 1792 the Quaker tidewater planters of Haddonfield Friends Meeting held no slaves and announced that they would employ free black labor instead" (Dorwart 47).

The Camden County Quakers persisted and made some progress. There were legislative actions taken, and there were also noteworthy developments in communities. New Jersey passed the "Gradual Abolition Act of 1804" which ended slavery, but not immediately. The law allowed emancipation over an extended time. The Quakers were not able to get the full emancipation of slaves in New Jersey until 1866. Repeated attempts failed to get the required support in the legislature. New Jersey was the last state in the north to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, freeing all slaves (CCHS Spring 15).

Quaker communities continued to resist slavery. They became active in the underground railroad for runaway slaves and refused to assist slave catchers. Freed slaves settled in distinct parts of Camden and provided support and resources to each other. Unlike other New Jersey cities in 1800, more free blacks were living in Camden than slaves. This trend continued until 1830 when no slaves were living in Camden County, only free blacks (Crew 12). With no slaves in the area, the local culture was more open to free blacks from 1830-1890. This provided

¹³ Quaker congregations are referred to as Friends Meetings, the members are called Friends or brethren.

opportunities for middle-class blacks to purchase homes, start businesses, form churches, schools, and other social service agencies. Several black entrepreneurs founded an all-black settlement, known as Centerville. It was referred to as "the largest and most successful African American urban neighborhood in Camden County history" (Dorwart 104). Over the next three decades, blacks migrated into Camden in record numbers. The established black areas provided newcomers with a network for support and a base of operations. This pattern of settlement helped mitigate some of the racial strife that plagued other cities when large groups of blacks arrived after the Civil War (Crew 62). This social network was helpful, but it wasn't enough to overcome the bias within the job market.

The total city population almost doubled from 1890 until 1920, driven by the availability of jobs in Camden's emerging industries. Campbell's Soup, New York Shipbuilding Corporation, and RCA Victor were major employers of white residents only. Immigrants from Europe were also arriving—Irish, Germans, Poles, Italians and Jews. They lived in ethnically segregated neighborhoods each with a web of solid support for newcomers ensuring that they got jobs in the factories and on the docks. Blacks were restricted to part-time or seasonal work and menial labor, guaranteeing that they would not be able to achieve financial stability (Crew 96). The employment practices of the early twentieth century "forced [blacks] to become solidly entrenched on the lower rungs of the occupational ladder" (Crew 118).

The city of Camden survived the depression, built warships during World War II, and experienced close to fifty years of economic prosperity. It was considered by some to be an ethnic and culturally diverse city (Dorwart 4). But black citizens were denied access to jobs, housing, and schools. "Old Camden, as it is often referred to, was never wealthy despite its considerable productivity. Its residents were overwhelmingly working people with limited access to wealth, but with considerable social capital on which to draw, enough to sustain them through

difficult times. Camden was a divided city, between different ethnic and racial groups, but its social and political institutions were sufficiently resilient to accommodate change and to assure stability. It was all the more remarkable, then, that these well-established patterns and practices could unravel in the course of only a few decades” (Gillette 38).

Veterans arrived in Camden after World War II looking for jobs and housing. The white veterans were paid higher wages which allowed them to pay more in rent. East Camden, home to St. Wilfrid’s Church, had only a handful of black families in 1950 (Gillette 53). The returning white vets displaced blacks, forcing lesser paid workers into substandard housing (Crew 71). With few choices for housing and limited funds, new black residents settled in established black neighborhoods, which were becoming increasingly overcrowded and rundown.

Substandard housing was a huge problem in Camden. The 1950 Census documented that five thousand Camden homes lacked indoor toilets, over thirteen percent of all households (Gillette 70). Public housing was first developed in Camden in 1938 as a way to provide low-income citizens safe residences. Federal law mandated that all public housing be segregated. East Camden was whites, and South Camden was reserved for blacks. Integration was very slow and carefully controlled. Westfield Acres, a white housing project, was opened a few blocks from St. Wilfrid’s in 1938. In 1966, there were only three blacks who had been allowed to move into Westfield Acres (Gillette 71-72).

Housing shortages continued to escalate and created a rallying point of neighborhood activists and civil rights leaders. Community needs were not being met by the public sector or the private sector. Churches started to create mechanisms and funding that supported new and refurbished housing for their parish neighborhoods. They also joined with other groups to protest and take legal action against the city (Gillette 72).

The process of suburbanization began in earnest in the 1950s. There was significant financial motivation for developers who had lots of land outside of the city limits. The returning soldiers had access to home mortgages through the GI Bill. Plus, car ownership expanded the possibility of homeownership away from the congestion of the urban environment. There were not the same incentives for improving housing stock inside the city. The 1950 Census reported an increase in population across Camden, but that would be the last increase until 1990. The cumulative population loss from 1950 until 2016 was forty percent. Several of the largest employers closed, creating the loss of twenty thousand jobs between 1950 to 1970. It wasn't just the lack of employment that sent people fleeing. It was institutional racism that was driving housing segregation coupled with the systemic disinvestment in the city and its citizens. Whites were moving to the suburbs, blacks and Hispanics were left in a decaying city.

Federal, state, and local laws built a sturdy legal box that compressed blacks into urban centers and restricted their capacity to accumulate wealth. “So an account of *de jure* residential segregation has to include not only how public policy geographically separated African Americans from whites but also how federal and state labor market policies, with undisguised racial intent, depressed African American wages. In addition, some and perhaps many local governments taxed African Americans more heavily than whites. The effects of these government actions were compounded because neighborhood segregation itself imposed higher expenses on African American than on white families, even if their wages and tax rates had been identical. The result: smaller disposable incomes and few savings for black families, denying them the opportunity to accumulate wealth and contributing to make housing in middle-class communities unaffordable” (Rothstein 154).

The policy of redlining divided America into distinct, racially separate communities. Vicious racist allegations spread through white neighborhoods, leaving terrified

homeowners running to the suburbs. Banks and zoning restrictions made it impossible for blacks to buy homes in the suburbs. Abandonment and absentee landlords beleaguered the housing stock in Camden. In 1973 the newly elected mayor, Angelo Errichetti described his city. “It looked like the Vietcong bombed us to get even. The pride of Camden... was now a rat-infested skeleton of yesterday, a visible obscenity of urban decay. ... The years of neglect, slumlord exploitation, tenant abuse, government bungling, indecision, and short-sighted policy had transformed the city’s housing business and industrial stock into a ravaged, rat-infested cancer on a sick, old industrial city” (Gillette 89). Camden became the poster child for urban decay. Photos of its wreckage were publicized internationally, along with the myth that the people left in Camden were personally responsible for the failure of their city.



Christopher Sadowisk, Splash News Photo, Camden, NJ, 2012



Camilo Jose Vergara, Fern St. Camden NJ, 1979-2014



Camilo Jose Vergara Photo, Former Camden Free Public Library, 1997

The Humans

Camden native, Darnell Moore, has written a memoir of growing up in the city from 1980 to the present, *No Ashes in the Fire*. His voice brings life to the story of Camden, and the story of Camden is the story of St. Wilfrid's. We can imagine Moore's life unfolding outside of St. Wilfrid's doors. As a black man, growing up in a majority black urban center, he can articulate the experience of living in a city that, by the 1980s had been abandoned by the rest of the country. He speaks lovingly of his hometown. But acknowledges the damage done to it by government policies, corrupt leaders, and racist propaganda. "Long before I was born and Camden was made out to be a city full of dilapidated homes, violent drug dealers, crack, and nihilism, bureaucrats and greedy businesspeople enacted racist public policies and brokered shady deals, transforming our home into a city tapped of its resources and hope" (Moore 6).

From the year of Moore's birth, 1976, until 2016, Camden went through significant transformations. The changes are reflected in the history of St. Wilfrid's. Father Leather served St. Wilfrid's from July 1963 until December 1970. While the governance of the church improved during his term, living conditions in Camden were getting worse. The city was struggling with deindustrialization and had experienced a steep drop in population. The Camden civil rights movement was focused on housing, fighting massive redevelopment plans by the mayor. One proposal would bulldoze eleven thousand residential structures, most of which, were homes to poor citizens. Reverend Donald Greismann, an Episcopal priest at St. John's parish in South Camden, was one of the leaders (Gillette 74). I cannot find any record of the same level of activism at St. Wilfrid's.

Many poor Camden citizens, mostly Latino and black, experienced horrific living conditions. Tensions were rising as demands for more housing increased and resistance against the city government grew. In 1969, after city officials indicted two leaders of the civil rights movement, violence erupted in Camden (Gillette 83). One Camden County historian, Phil Cohen, speaks about this riot in unequivocal terms. "The Riot of 1969 destroyed the downtown business district and chased a lot of people out of the city. A policeman and a little girl were killed by a sniper... who was never caught or prosecuted. While not a death blow to the city... that would come two years later... the Riot of 1969 was for all intents the beginning of the final act of "The Death of an American City"" (Cohen, DVRBS.COM).

In 1971 the city exploded again after the shooting death of an unarmed Hispanic man. The riot continued for three days, with looting and fires that stopped the city in its tracks (Gillette 86). This is how Darnell Moore characterizes it. "Camden burned in 1971. But the Camden uprising in 1971 is not widely discussed in history books. ...Dispossession is not a secret we have to hold close because the city's slow death is not the fault of its black and Latino

residents. And, really, there is no secret to hide when the insidious consequences of state neglect and greed continue to materialize and destroy the well-being of the people who call Camden home today” (Moore 34-35). Cohen also believed that this second violent event was catastrophic to the city. “The two riots destroyed business, homes, and lives... and the political class’s response was shameful. The two riots were the worst events to hit the city of Camden until crack cocaine hit the streets in 1985-86. The Riot of 1969 fatally weakened Camden. The riot of 1971 mortally wounded Camden. Crack cocaine was the coup de grace” (Cohen, DVRBS.COM).

The propaganda that surrounds Camden and the people who live there is deeply racist. Politicians, both within Camden and the surrounding suburbs, strategized ways to keep the blacks and Hispanics inside Camden city limits. They actively worked to perpetuate the myth that “Camden had always been a ghetto, or that white people ran away because their once-industrious city had been destroyed by careless “niggers” and “spics” ”(Moore 32). Party politics required a consolidated black vote from Camden to keep control of the county. People who maintained party loyalty and supported the containment strategy were rewarded with patronage. Camden's leaders knew what the suburbs wanted, and they used white guilt as a way to do it. “[Mayor] Errichetti was willing to play the poverty hustle and to subtly blackmail the conscience of white suburbia, meanwhile assuring it that he was keeping the poor—particularly the blacks—home on the city reservation” (Gillette 94).

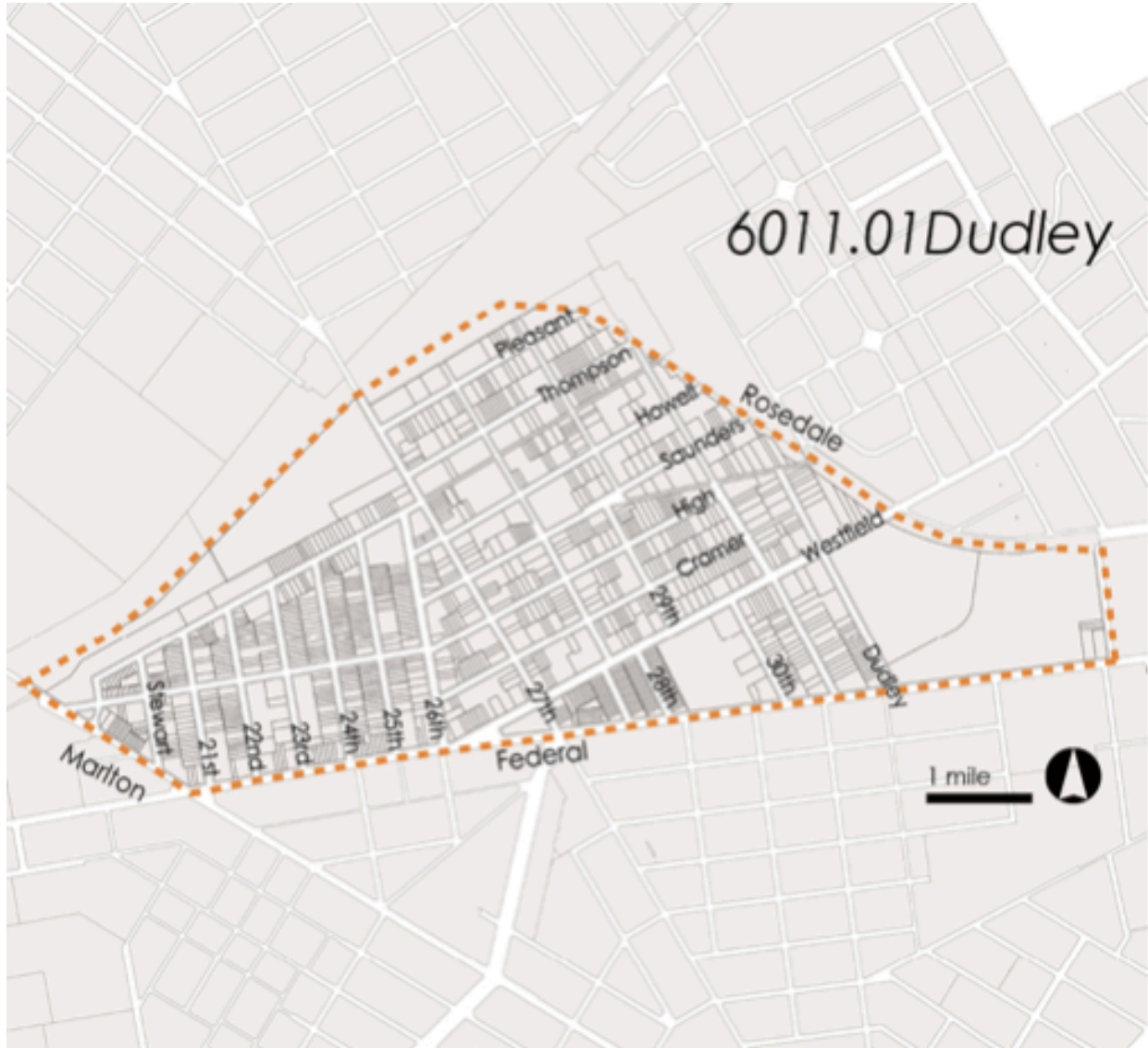
The toxicity of racism and poverty saturated Camden. Decades of corruption and cronyism left the city bankrupt. Schools in Camden were so poorly funded that the Supreme Court of New Jersey required the state to redirect funding to overhaul the city's schools. The landmark Abbott decision declared the school funding formula unconstitutional and required the legislature to assure the financing of urban school districts. Advocates would return to the court several times to get Camden children a decent education. "The failure of the state to make good

on its constitutional commitment to provide a quality education to every child was the problem, but I didn't fully realize then how the mechanics of purposeful disenfranchisement work" (Moore 75).

Without decent schools, housing, or jobs Camden residents were easy targets for drugs. Starting in the mid-eighties, the crack epidemic swamped the city. "It had been built up by the underground work of an intricate network of traffickers, street-level trap boys and girls, and money-laundering state employees and officials" (Moore 120). Again, the fate of Camden was orchestrated by people who cared more for themselves than for the citizens of the city. In 2000 the mayor and law enforcement officers were convicted of taking drug money while crack crushed the city (Moore 121). They joined the multitudes of black citizens who had already been incarcerated as a result of the drug sentencing laws that were racially biased.

In a desperate attempt to generate income, the city leaders allowed the environment to be fouled by agreeing to provide wastewater and trash treatment for the surrounding suburbs. "While suburban politicians reaped financial and political rewards...Camden's decline only accelerated" (Gillette 96). They constructed a massive incinerator and then a maximum-security prison, displacing poor Camden residents. The environmental impact was devastating to the city. "If Camden smelled, it wasn't the fault of city residents. The trash incinerator was built in Camden because it was a predominately black and Latino city. It not only polluted the air with a nauseous smell but also contributed to asthma and other illnesses" (Moore 17). Blacks in Camden were quite familiar with the vagaries of the white power brokers who controlled their destiny. All of the considerable social capital Camden once had was gone. Its ability to survive difficult times and maintain some stability was vanishing. Its social and political institutions had failed the citizens. The data from 2010 illustrate the damage done to the city by decades of discrimination.

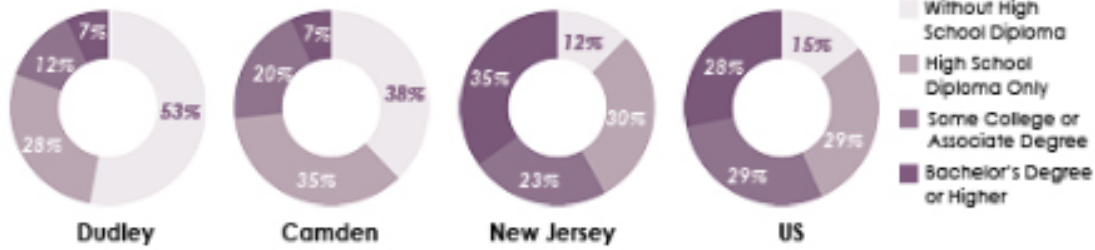
Dudley Neighborhood 2010 Census Tract Data



CamConnect Website

Education Attainment

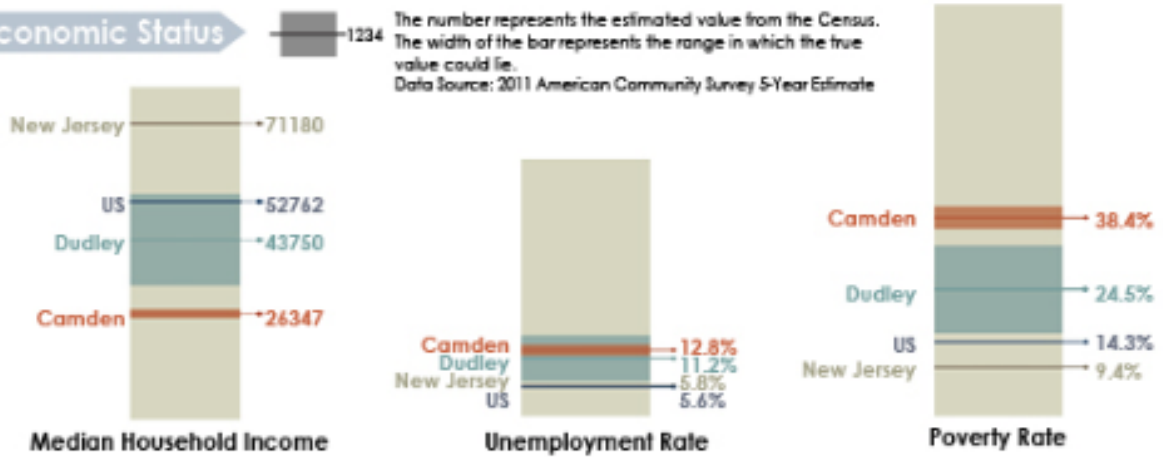
Data Source: 2010 Census



Economic Status

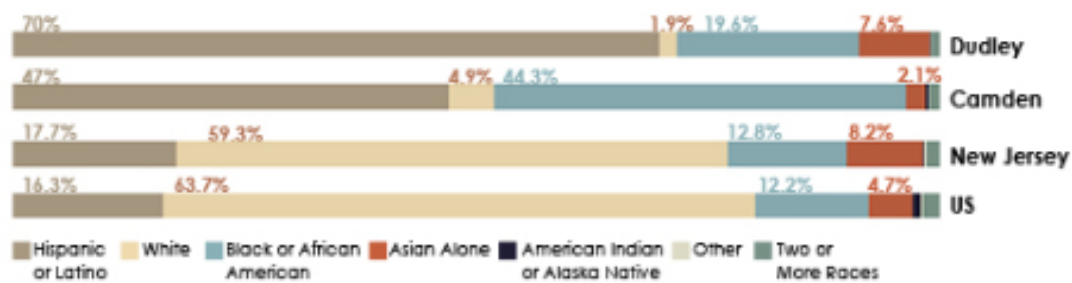
1234

The number represents the estimated value from the Census. The width of the bar represents the range in which the true value could lie.
Data Source: 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate



Race & Ethnicity

Data Source: 2010 Census



The Church

The website for the Episcopal Church of America has a one-page statement entitled, “Emancipation, African American, and The Episcopal Church” which explains the early involvement of the Episcopal Church with blacks. It begins with Anglican slave owners sharing their religion with slaves and creating “an active, paternalistic ministry” in the nineteenth century. On some rare occasions, slaveholders allowed separate black churches, but they required that white priests presided. After emancipation, blacks left the Episcopal Church in significant numbers, especially in the South. The white churches restricted membership of blacks and refused to recognize membership in the church. This exodus dramatically reduced “the institutional strength of the Episcopal Church in the South.” Efforts were made to recruit ex-slaves and bring them into the church, but they were not successful. “The 1877 General Convention noted that there were only thirty-seven congregations and fifteen African American Episcopal clergy among the four million African Americans in the southern states.” It is curious that there is no mention of black members of Episcopal churches outside of the South.

From an interview with Deacon Clive on November 7, 2018

Stephanie: How does an Episcopal Church become a black church?

Deacon Clive: Traditionally, Black Episcopal Churches in America were organized by blacks who immigrated here from British Colonies where they were raised in the Anglican Church. The American denomination that is closest to their home religion is Episcopalian, but a hundred years ago, they were not welcome in the all-white Episcopal Churches. The white congregations encouraged them to form their own churches. Over time, many of these churches have merged with other

congregations, some which were white. Today it is up to the congregation if they choose to self-identify as a black church.

From an interview with Norman Valentine on August 12, 2018

Stephanie: When did the church change?

Norman: We started having problems with the diocese, we were a mission church¹⁴ and had to rely on Trenton for a lot. We didn't have any money.

Stephanie: I found a document from the diocese, *A Bicentennial Historical Book*.

"The community which surrounds St. Wilfrid's is now approximately 20% Hispanic, 70% Black, and 10% Caucasian. In July 1983, a team ministry was begun...The Rev. Martin Gutwein is rector of St. Paul's and St. Wilfrid's" (King). The language implies that there is a connection between you having to share a priest and the fact that the neighborhood is majority black.

Norman: Yes. It feels that the diocese is backing away because the neighborhood is black.

¹⁴ A mission church is financially supported by the collective diocese.

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

*The threads that were spun are gather'd, the weft crosses the warp,
the pattern is systematic (line 72).*

Chapter Six: The Twelfth Sunday of Pentecost 2018



Fanjul Photo

I have been going to St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church on Saturdays for almost six years, but I had never gone to Sunday services. One Saturday a month, I join a group of volunteers who operate a free clinic in the church, handing out food, clothing, and toys. Visitors can get their blood pressure checked, and chat with a doctor or a nurse about their health. On August 12, 2018, while other volunteers organized the parish house for next week's Open Door Clinic, I sat with Norman Valentine on a pew in the sanctuary as he shared his personal history with this church. We talked for almost two hours in the cool dark space with the fans humming above our heads. Norman has been the leader of St. Wilfrid's for close to twenty years. He has been the janitor, the vestry, the lay reader, the treasurer, and now, the director of the Open Door Clinic. He says he is just doing whatever is needed to keep the church open. They do not have regular Sunday services, because St. Wilfrid's can't afford a full-time pastor. Sometimes, Norman can locate an available priest who will conduct Sunday services for them. He is pleased that he was able to secure a priest this week, and there is going to be a service. He told me I was welcome to join them tomorrow. Deacon Clive was going to preside.

Early the next morning, I went with my mother to her church, Grace Episcopal, in Haddonfield, N.J. She attends the 8 AM service every week, and I treasure being able to go with her. Sitting with her in her pew, witnessing her faith is deeply intimate for me. I loved doing it with my father when he was alive, listening to both of them recite the prayers from memory with a soft, measured rhythm. The readings would be repeated at St. Wilfrid's, since it is standardized, which gave me a chance to contemplate how the Bible verses connect with each one of the churches. There would be no hymns at the 8 AM service at Grace, the early morning worshipers did not sing.

I rode over to St. Wilfrid's Church with my brother-in-law, Alex, and we parked on Dudley Street where we met Deacon Clive taking his vestments out of his car. Occasionally

he came to Camden to provide communion, his regular job was the Deacon Canon Missioner for Black Ministry for the Diocese of New Jersey. In the late eighties St. Wilfrid's was classified as a black Episcopal Church because the neighborhood and the parishioners were all black. It did not have a special classification for the first hundred years of its existence.

Alex and I followed Deacon Clive and entered through the back door of the church. We didn't even think about going around to enter through the front door, because it is always locked. When we come on Saturdays the sanctuary is closed off, everyone enters the parish house for the clinic. We walked down the hall into the little office that leads to the sanctuary. The church had been prepared for services, the sanctuary was cool, fans quiet overhead. Norman and his wife, Valrie, had turned on all the lights that still worked. The chunks of plaster that had fallen earlier that week had been cleared off the altar. The thick red carpet had been vacuumed, and the wooden pews were smooth and dark. The smoke detector was beeping because it needed a new battery. The sun shone through the stained-glass windows casting a warm yellow light on the carpet and pews. As we went to sit down in the sanctuary, we noticed that the front door was wide open, and the front gate was unlocked welcoming people into the church. I had never seen the front gate or the front door open before, it was welcoming and warm.



**St.
Wilfrid's
Episcopal
Church**

Pentecost 12

August 12th, 2018

10:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist Rite II

Visiting Clergy:

**The Reverend Canon Clive Oscar Sang, Deacon
Canon Missioner for Black Ministry,
Diocese of New Jersey**

The Collect:

Grant to us, Lord, we pray, the spirit to think and do
always those things that are right, that we, who cannot
exist without you, may by you be enabled to live
according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Fanjul Photo

The first hymn is full of the comfort believers find in taking time to pray.

Sweet hour of prayer!

*Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
that calls me from a world of care,
and bids me at my Father's throne
make all my wants and wishes known.
In seasons of distress and grief,
my soul has often found relief,
and oft escaped the tempter's snare
by thy return, sweet hour of prayer! (Walford)*

I am thinking about what Norman told me yesterday and how his story reflects his faith.

From an interview with Norman Valentine, August 11, 2018

Norman: I think we started here 1993, we had already had our kids. I was a member of a Methodist Church in Cherry Hill. We were living in East Camden at the time. The reason we came was that my cousin Millicent kept talking about St. Wilfrid's. She told me there were some other Jamaicans with families attending. We had kids, so when she invited us to church, we went. There were lots of things going on at the church then, Christmas pageants, activities for kids, and we went places. I felt more comfortable here.

There were a lot of Jamaicans, it could have been 20 Jamaicans here with their kids. Mostly local people – Camden, Pennsauken, all thru the mid-nineties. There is an album with pictures from that time. The congregation was about 80% black, the white folks were older and mostly came from East Camden. A couple of them came from other towns, one commuted from Marlton. Everyone else walked from the neighborhood.



Photographer Unknown

The service continues with a reading from the Old Testament, 1 Kings 19:4-8. It speaks to Elijah's journey into the wilderness and how exhausted he was. He wonders if it would be better just to die. But twice an angel comes and feeds him and tells him he has to get moving. With the sustenance and encouragement of the angel, he persists for forty days and forty nights. The day before I had asked Norman why he stayed involved in St Wilfrid's, it seemed to me that he was physically and emotionally exhausted. He responds to me with great feeling.

From an interview with Norman Valentine, August 11, 2018

Norman: You are not the only one to ask me that, I have friends and family that ask me why I keep doing this. Why should I give up here? I made a vow, I will never leave.

If you want to know the story—it is about my grandmother. She was a member of a church in Jamaica, and she split off from them after a dispute. This lady gave her a plot of land, and they started a church in a tent. She and the

other folks would meet on Sunday in a tent. They had picnics with the kids in the tent. They grew the congregation until they could build a church. Which she watched over ... she never gave up on it, she felt it was her duty to care for it. If St. Wilfrid's closes it will not be because I gave up, it will be because someone else stopped it.

The Psalm is next in the service, it is written in the program. One line resonates with Norman's words.

"Taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are they who trust in him" (Psalm 34 Church Program)!

From an interview with Norman Valentine, August 11, 2018

Norman: This whole area was the Dudley Grange Park, all the way down to Woodrow Wilson High School. There was a community building that we could use, we used to take the kids there in the summer. This neighborhood felt safe though, the park was big and safe.

The church had lots of young folks with their kids. We had a summer camp for six weeks with maybe 50 plus kids. We would go over to the park. One time the 76ers basketball team came over. We took trips to Longwood Gardens, Franklin Institute, museums. There are pictures of this somewhere. Some of the younger folks got paid to help out with the summer camp. The population of the church was growing. It was vibrant.

Millicent, who was on the vestry then, used to send us around the neighborhood to pick folks up to bring them to church, she was always recruiting people. Some of them were relatives, some were new people. Father Amadi lived in Lawrenceville, N.J., he would come early on Sundays and bring the kids to church too. At some point, white folks stopped coming. Some people who were still living in East Camden were looking for a new church and transferred out of St. Wilfrid's. Millicent worked hard to recruit new folks to replace the people who were leaving. She called it a revival-survival effort.



Saint Wilfrid's Church
Westfield Avenue at Dudley Street
Camden, New Jersey

609/365-4924

October 21, 1997

MAILING ADDRESS:
63 N. Dudley Street
Camden, NJ 08105

My Brethren and Sisters in Christ:

The members of St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church are embarking on a revival-survival of St. Wilfrid. Its been over a decade ~~trying~~ trying to keep our doors open for God's people to worship. It has now come to the point where the few faithful here are doing double time and a half to keep barely afloat.

We feel the Lord wants us to go out and reach His people. We are attempting to continue a flea market. We will need articles from time to time. Your generosity will be a blessing by God Himself. Please call the church and leave a message. The Senior Warden will pick-up the goods.

A reunion service is being held on November 2, 1997 which will be followed by a dinner. The tickets are enclosed.

SERVICE_ 10:00 a.m.

DINNER 12 noon- 6:00p.m.

Tel. 609-365-4924

We are looking forward to hear from you.

IN CHRIST JESUS,

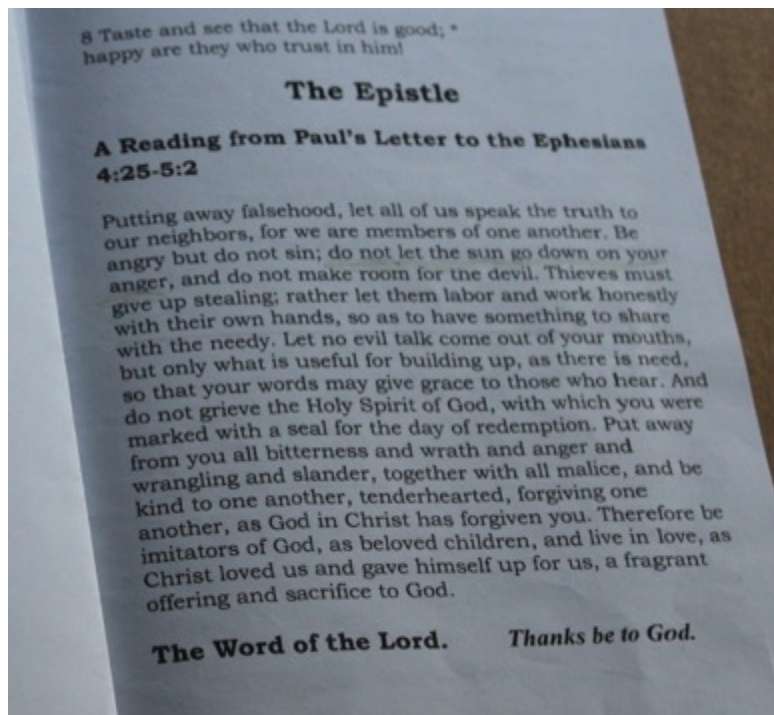
Millicent Clanke, Senior Warden

Millicent Clanke

Dr., Father Noel C. Amadi

Letter found in St. Wilfrid's parish house

In the sanctuary, Norman read the Epistle for that Sunday. It focuses on speaking the truth to our neighbors because we are all part of a community.



Fanjul Photo

From an interview with Norman Valentine, August 11, 2018

Norman: The diocese didn't want to support the church the way that the vestry wanted them to. We wanted a permanent priest, and we couldn't afford it. Must have been early 2000 when this happened. I had moved [out of Camden] by then. We had to move anyway, I had experienced some problems where I was living. Some break-ins, things started happening. My wife and I were young, and we didn't want to stay living there.

At some point the diocese stopped paying Father Amadi's salary, they were withdrawing support. He was a permanent supply priest¹⁵. It was good for us, at least we had a priest every Sunday and someone to do visitation. People felt connected to the church. The diocese put the church on "probation" we had ten years to improve. It really is all about getting more money, to be more or less self-sufficient. But we did not achieve the goals set by the church. Father Amadi was there during that time. He would come sometimes, and we would just pay his gas 'cause it was all we could afford. The older people were leaving, dying or moving to Florida. St. Wilfrid's was getting smaller and older

At one point it started to pick up, young people started to come in. But another thing that kept people from coming—the younger people didn't like the way Episcopal services were. They wanted clapping, and more gospel music. Father Amadi did his best. It is all about the diocese.

¹⁵ Supply priests are priests or deacons who travel from church to church to conduct services. They can be retired priests or priests who are between churches.



Fanjul Photo

This Sunday, August 12, 2018, there are five hymns on the program and no organist or choir, we stumble through terribly out of tune. There are only four of us and Deacon Clive. The service progresses, and thankfully three more people join us, and at least one of them can carry a tune. As I pretend to sing, Norman's memories of the church weave into the verses.

Sweet, Sweet Spirit
*There's a sweet, sweet spirit in this place,
And I know that it's the spirit of the Lord;
Sweet Holy Spirit,
Sweet Heavenly Dove,
Stay right here with us,
Filling us with Your love,
And for these blessings
We lift our hearts in praise,
Without a doubt we'll know
That we have been revived
When we shall leave this place (Akers).*

Deacon Clive moves the service forward and reads the Gospel which echoes the deep faith that Norman has in his church and in this building that he is caring for and protecting.

*"Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,
and whoever, believes in me will never be thirsty" (John 6:35 Church Program).*

This is the time in the service for the sermon. I am curious how Deacon Clive will address the Bible readings or the season of Pentecost. At the 8 AM service, Father Kirk spoke about the members of Grace Church who had been working at St. Wilfrid's. He thanked us and encouraged others to consider joining the effort. He referenced the Epistle which is written in the bulletin.

*"Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and
slander together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted,
forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:25-5:2).*

Deacon Clive also focused on community and hope. He shared some good news from the diocese. New grants for small parishes were going to be available soon, and he hoped that St. Wilfrid's would take advantage of the opportunities. He did not make any promises, but he was encouraging and positive. There were questions and a good bit of skepticism.

From an interview with Norman Valentine, August 11, 2018

Norman: There was a time when we had a problem with the Bishop. Not just St. Wilfrid's but the whole church, the black churches. There was a Bishop Doss who was white, and all the black churches felt he was racist. We had problems with him. There was a big to do about this, ultimately, he had to resign. There is a group called The Union of Black Episcopalians that complained, and they take credit for getting him to retire.

After Father Amadi (he was from Nigeria) left St. Wilfrid we only had supply priests. They'd come on a given Sunday. They came from everywhere, Delaware, down the shore, anywhere there is an available priest. I would get the list, and I would have to get a new one, call them up and then tell the parishioners. There was no continuity. It was discouraging, and that was when folks really started to leave.

There was a black priest from the islands—Trinidad or Haiti—came straight from the islands. I did not like him. He wasn't into it. St. Wilfrid's was just a stepping stone to where he wanted to go. Wasn't here for a long time since he didn't want to work hard. I have a thing with folks who try to make it easy for

themselves, it is never easy. If you are a Christian person and you don't want to do the work, what does that say about you or your faith?



Fanjul Photo

The ritual of the Episcopal service is steady and predictable. The readings, the prayers, the confession, and absolution are all the same. The hymns are different at this service,

more contemporary, sweeter, more soulful. Communion¹⁶ follows. All seven of us can fit at the altar rail at one time. Our shoulders touch when we kneel on the red velvet cushions and take communion together. Saint Augustine of Hippo spoke of what it meant to be a “people” in his masterpiece about Christianity, *The City of God*. He believed that community was “an assemblage of reasonable beings bound together by a common agreement as to the objects of their love” (St. Augustine Book XIX). This is what Norman strives for, this is why the generations before came to the church, to find a place where people were bound together in love.



Fanjul Photo

From an interview with Norman Valentine, August 11, 2018

Norman: Other churches in Camden have some of the same problems we do. St. Augustine's on Broadway was also a black church, they got Father Clemens (black guy) full time, but now he is part-time. They are having the same kind of problems we are. They are running out of money, but they got a priest from

¹⁶ Communion or the eucharist is the sacrament of the Christian Church. Congregants take bread and wine at the altar symbolizing the body and blood of Christ.

somewhere. The diocese wants us to share, but we don't have anything, we cannot afford even to share. When they talk about paying its everything—insurance, retirement, and housing for a priest. St. Augustine's is barely able to pay for Father Clemens.

I don't know if you know this, but there is a Hispanic Episcopal Church. St. Andrews on River Road is now Hispanic, the diocese is helping them provide services in Spanish. I guess the diocese can see growth because of the neighborhood because its Hispanic.

You know, I am supposed to go to a meeting with the Bishop next month, I think he is just calling me in to tell me he is going to close the church.

We blunder through the final hymn. Deacon Clive mercifully allows us to skip several verses.

Great is Thy Faithfulness

*Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
And all I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!*

*Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine with ten thousand beside! (Chisholm & Runyan)*

I think the service is over, but there is more. Everyone gathers into the center aisle of the church to join hands and sing. I don't know the song, but I am acutely aware of the connection that is made among us all.

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

I swear I think now that everything without exception has an eternal Soul!

The trees have, rooted in the ground! The weeds of the sea have!

The animal have (lines 113-114)!

Chapter Seven: Faith 1953-2000



Fanjul, Front Doors of Grace Church, Haddonfield, NJ

My understanding of faith is muddled sometimes. It is one of those things that I will know it if I see it but can't describe to anyone else. My involvement with St. Wilfrid's Church and The Open Door Clinic brings me a different perspective on church and faith.

I grew up less than ten miles from St. Wilfrid's Church, in Haddonfield, New Jersey, a town of about 10,000. With my parents, my five sisters and I attended Grace Episcopal Church. My father had been raised Catholic, but my mother had no official religion. Her father was Jewish, and her mother was Irish Catholic, so they decided to abandon all religions. That arrangement created long-standing tension in my grandparent's marriage, something my mother wanted to avoid. My father wanted us to be raised in a church, so he set out to find one that would accept both a Catholic and someone who had never been baptized. He became friends with an Episcopal priest who managed to make that happen. To this day, my Mother is not sure how he got past all the rigid policies about admitting our family into the Episcopal Church, but she is grateful to him. Our family was faithful. Daddy served on the vestry and Mother still volunteers at the church weekly. My sisters and I were baptized and confirmed as Episcopalians at Grace Church. Two of my sisters were married in that church. My father is buried there, and my mother will be when her time comes.

When we were young, my parents took us to church and Sunday school every week, even when we were on vacation. I did not enjoy the dress requirement, I had to wear a dress, gloves, and a hat. It was the only time of the week my sisters and I could wear our shiny shoes, but we had to wear them with white cotton socks that had to be folded over just so. I honestly do not remember anything religious about these Sundays. I remember itchy petticoats, socks that kept sliding down, bunching around my heels, and hats that never fit my head. I remember the smells of my mother's pocketbook when I would push the metal clip to open it so I could rummage through it for a piece of candy. She always had a hankie scrunched up inside the purse, and she always had a pack of Pall Malls, it smelled like tobacco and perfume. I remember my sisters squirming and climbing under the pew to the next row. I loved the smell of incense and beeswax candles even if it made us cough sometimes.



Fanjul Family Snapshot, 1953

The priest serving Grace Church during that time, Father Kell, was a big, intimidating man, who held on to tradition. The services were considered “high” meaning that they complied with older more traditional rituals. Lots of incense, lots of fire and brimstone, not much forgiveness, and lots of hell and damnation. On Good Friday, the day the Christians believe Jesus was crucified, we had to sit in church for three hours. That time of year, the icons in the church were very dark, suffering Christ on the cross, a crown of thorns, the spear that pierced Jesus, and heavy purple drapes over all the crucifixes. The church was scary and boring.

The repetition of the service rituals made it easy to memorize the prayers and the responses to the priest. Every pew had a red prayer book and a blue hymnal. When I was about ten years old, I participated in confirmation classes. I must have learned something during those classes, but I don’t know what. I think it was the routine that stuck. I did get a new dress with

lace on the front. The girls all wore short white veils held on our heads with bobby pins. As a teenager, I complied with my parent's requirements related to the church. My sisters and I sang in the choir for a bit, but none of us can carry a tune, so we didn't last long.

As we got older, my sisters and I took different paths to express our faith. Each of us adopting a belief system that we found comfortable. Some of us objected to all organized religions and floated around outside of formal churches. A couple of sisters joined traditional churches that met their needs. Some of us, accompanied our husbands to the churches they were raised in. Usually, when we came to our parent's home, we attended services at Grace. It was often a funeral of a family friend that brought us back to our home church.

There is one funeral at my family's church, that I think about when I visit St. Wilfrid's in Camden. It was Seymour Urban's funeral on a bitterly cold January day. His three sons spoke of their father's unrelenting optimism and kindness. I stood next to my father, holding his hand. Daddy's hand was soft, his fingernails flat, broad, and neatly clipped. I was thinking that the next time I stand in this church listening to the *Prayer for the Dead*, I will be saying that prayer for my father. He did not always remember my mother's name or mine. His frontal lobe has been attacked by a vicious form of dementia. Yet, that day, he seemed to understand that we were saying good bye to his friend.

My father and Seymour were good friends, our families attended Grace Church together. Seymour was the only one of my parents' friends who identified himself as liberal. He came to my defense when my father discovered I was protesting the Vietnam War. I remember Seymour gently chiding my father about poverty and race, particularly in neighboring Camden. I was an utterly self-absorbed teenager, living in a lovely, white suburban town while Camden was falling apart. Rioting, shootings, government corruption, and police brutality were an everyday occurrence. The newspapers were quick to blame blacks and Hispanics for the violence. The

message from my parents was not subtle, we were not allowed to drive into Camden under any circumstances. Once I went with a boyfriend to a baseball game in Philadelphia, and my mother was terrified that we would get attacked passing through Camden. My parents had friends who had grown up in Camden and moved to Haddonfield. We heard all the time about what a good place Camden had been before the colored people moved in.

The only person I remember speaking about Camden with compassion and sadness was Seymour. Seymour regularly went to Camden and worked with kids in Camden churches. My father thought he was naïve but admired his commitment. Seymour did not preach about his volunteer work, we knew how emotional he felt about the way people were being treated in Camden. He was a big man, soft-spoken and kind. He would write letters to the editor of the local paper, offering a different vision of Camden and the people who were left there. His hope and faith were evident in his daily life. His sons spoke about that in their eulogy, he prompted Grace Church to contribute money and recruit volunteers for the churches in Camden. Today, fifteen years after Seymour died, Grace Church includes St. Wilfrid's in its annual budget, sending money directly there, without going through the diocese.

The funeral service for Seymour progressed that morning, we moved through the ritual with soft responses to the priest. My father recited every prayer in the entire service from memory. The words spoken about Seymour reminded me that sometimes what matters most is perseverance. Seymour did not give up on the churches or the people of Camden, he celebrated their strengths. He knew there was always a possibility for redemption. As he wrote in a letter to the editor, "The snow made the true beauty of Camden, its younger and next generation, shine through in all its glory" (Courier-Post March 25, 1993).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Youth lead the way

Good things happen in Camden. This is a theme that the *Courier-Post* has rightfully stressed for some time. But sometimes it takes a little adversity to bring the good into sharper focus.

During the "Blizzard of 1993" an example of this was demonstrated by four of Camden's future generation: Monique Hohny, 14; Katrina Mullin, 12; Raymond Mullin, 10, and Jose Cruz, 10. All are regular members of the congregation of St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Market Street in center city.

In addition to church services, each Sunday morning a breakfast is served to the area's less fortunate citizens who find themselves hungry and homeless.

This program is administered, staffed and run by a group of suburban churches on a volunteer basis.

On Sunday morning, as the blizzard began to blow itself out and the weather became bitterly cold, the suburbs lay under a blanket of snow.

The young people set out walking to church, expecting to attend services. They arrived about the same time as the rector, Father Martin Gutwein, accompanied by his three children, Claire, 13; Paul, 10, and Simon, 10.

It was 8 a.m. The regular congregation had not gotten through. Neither was there any sign of the people to serve breakfast to the hungry. While the boys cleared a path, the girls got things moving in the kitchen. Regular breakfast guests began to arrive.

Soon there were nearly 25 men in the hall, then about 35 men and women.

Then, Mark, the regular cleanup man, arrived and recruited several of the men to help the young people.

Pancakes, eggs, rolls and juice were prepared in good order.

By 9:30 Katrina and Monique were seating guests, table by table.

The dining room filled up with 90 men and women. Fourteen-year-old Monique stood in the midst and called them all to silence. "Gentlemen, remove your hats for the grace!" By the end of the morning, over a hundred people were served decently and in order.

Earlier, Claire has remarked that "snow makes even Camden look beautiful." She didn't realize it, but in reality the snow made the true beauty of Camden, its younger and next generation, shine through in all its glory.

SEYMOUR W. URBAN
Haddonfield

Funding education

Cherry Hill has been stripped of almost \$8 million in state funding for education during the last few years.

When coupled with the state-mandated limitations on taxation for school budgets, the foundation was formed for the \$6 million in budget cuts we were forced to make. This, in turn, has driven yet another nail into the coffin of education. Even with more cooperative negotiations with our bargaining units, the fact remains that more than 80 percent of the \$93.4-million proposed school budget is comprised of fixed charges, salaries and benefits.

We are left with only approximately \$19 million to maintain all of our programs and purchase supplies and equipment. None of the proposed cuts are favored by the BOE and the loss of any program or staff is devastating.

The "possible" cost of indemnification for Dr. Esbrandt is not included in this school budget. It is not affected by your school budget vote.

The cost for adding classrooms to address the overcrowding issue cannot be removed from the capital outlay portion of the school budget because the state has mandated that these expenses cannot be tied to a referendum vote and the trailers must be removed from our schools by next year.

To combat budget increases, intensified cost-effective measures have already been in effect in our district, including school-business partnerships, educational grants, energy conservation measures, health cost initiatives, staffing decreases, crossover programs between the high schools and cooperative efforts by everyone.

Cherry Hill has played a leadership role during the last two years in forming coalitions with other school districts to investigate and institute new funding mechanisms for education.



injure a cause, group, nation, etc.," as defined by Random House Dictionary.

In that light, I would like to present to Mr. Oliphant the "Joseph Goebbels Award for political cartoons" for best being able to use the print media to slander the pro-life movement by using one man's actions as representative of the whole.

The "Der Stuermer" caricature equates the *Bible* (note the book in the gunman's hand) with the action of the gunman. Yet anyone familiar with this book is also familiar with the verse, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans 12:19).

Mr. Oliphant would have us believe in an intolerant, pro-life movement that will stop at nothing to get its way.

I would challenge him that our national sin isn't intolerance but that we tolerate the killing of our innocents, 30 million to date.

MARK LACHEWITZ
Somerdale

Broad points miss

To any fair-minded person, not only did you publish a grossly offensive political cartoon by Pat Oliphant (C-P 3/17), the next day you had the impudence to suggest that pro-life believers were not appalled by the tragic death of Dr. Gunn simply because they did not call you.

Let me ask: If pro-life believers had called you to express their concern, would you have run their sentiments in your editorial page?

More importantly, why didn't you get any calls from the pro-choice faction?

As usual, your paper only serves to make broad points with a narrow brush.

LINDA MUMMA
Cherry Hill

Police in jeopardy

I spent 30 years of my life as a law enforcement officer with the federal government and I am presently a supporting member of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C., which is dedicated to the brave police officers of this country who died in the performance of their duties.

I was appalled to read that the N.J. Jersey Assembly could be so calloused as to override Gov. Jim Florio's veto of the bill attempting to repeal the

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

*The preparations have every one been justified,
The orchestra have sufficiently tuned their instruments – the baton has given the signal.
The guest that was coming – he waited long, for reasons – he is now housed,
He is one of those who are beautiful and happy – he is one of those that to look upon
and be with is enough (lines 73-76).*

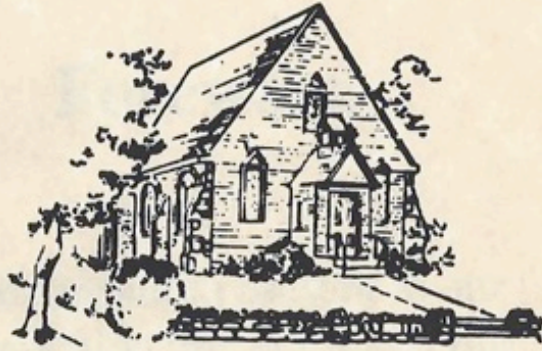
Chapter Eight: The Centennial 1896-1996



Fanjul Photo

Church records discovered in the parish house storage room do not include any journals older than 1982. The last book of Vestry Minutes ends in 1980, and the last Record of Services ends in 1982. There is a Parish Register in the church office that dates from 1985 until the present. There is also a Record of Services journal that is being presently used by the parish. I do not have access to these records which makes it challenging to piece together the story of the years between 1982 and today.

Personal stories from that era can be patched together with a few artifacts to give some sense of the church during those years. One treasured find is the souvenir booklet created for the centennial celebration of St. Wilfrid's Church held on December 1, 1996. The booklet is thirty-six pages long on beige and tan paper, it was stapled together by hand, and full of good wishes for the parish. It appears that parishioners asked friends for donations and pages were dedicated to the members. There is a great deal of appreciation for Norman Valentine, his wife Valrie, and their two sons. Contributions honor Millicent Clarke and Enid Massias and Father Amadi. Family and friends of the church from across the country paid for pages in the program. Sorority sisters from Delta Sigma Theta purchased a page to honor a vestry member. The Bishop was present, and five congregants were confirmed that day. Reverend Amadi wrote a letter full of hope and encouragement. The small booklet offers multiple insights into the church and its journey through time. It sounds like it was a lovely celebration of the church and all of the members who worshiped there over the years. It was a moment to honor the faith and the spirit that permeates the building.



1896-1996

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

December 1, 1996

10:00 a.m.

Confirmation and The Holy Eucharist

Saint Wilfrid's Church

Westfield Avenue at Dudley street

Camden, New Jersey 08105

609/365-4924

Rev. Canon Dr. N.I.O. Amadi

Priest-in-Charge

The Right Reverend Joe, Morris Doss

Bishop, Diocese of New Jersey

Fanjul Photo

The sketch of the front of the church building, presumably drawn in 1996, includes the brick wall, the bell tower, and the walkway to the front door. The shrubs are low and neatly shaped under the windows. The street trees are shorter than the roof of the church. The yard is tidy and open, without the trees in the front or the fence that surrounds the church today. It is a welcoming view of the stone church.

From The Priest's Desk
"Backward Never, Forward Ever"

It has been wonderful and fruitful years at St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church, Camden. Since I was called to serve as the priest-in-charge, three and half years ago, God has used a few faithful and energetic members of the church to keep the Gospel message alive. From May 1993 to the present, I have witnessed the spiritual growth of the members, their excitement and hopes for a greater belief for the church. We have initiated a number of ongoing activities such as (a) membership drive (b) Tuesday evening classes to help young people focus adequately on their homework (c) children's choir and Christian education (d) Summer Camp programs and (e) church trips that include church members and outside families in the Parish.

We have Baptisms, confirmation and marriage celebrations. We have continued to be current in the payment of our assessment (fair share) obligation to the Diocese of New Jersey.

Our goal for the future of St. Wilfrid into the twenty-first century is to see a steady increase in committed membership and a thriving outreach program in this urban and suburban communities as young families join the church. God in Jesus Christ will make it increase as we saw the Gospel messages and worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. Canon Dr. Noel J.O. Amadi,
Priest-in-charge

Father Amadi came to St. Wilfrid's after his retirement from a full-time position as a parish priest. In his letter to the congregation, he offers hopeful words, focusing on the spiritual growth of the members, and new efforts underway to keep the church vital. The first order of business is the recruitment of new members. This theme has been consistently part of St. Wilfrid's for one hundred years. Additional pages of the booklet hint at how small the congregation might have been in 1996. The majority of members of the vestry are familiar, Millicent Clarke, Norman Valentine, and Enid Massias. There are twenty-four pages of congratulations. Norman solicited six, Emma Waring five, Reverend Amadi four, and Millicent three. Others, including Enid Massias, had singular pages donated in their names. One vestry member, Nelesta Wakefield was not mentioned in the contribution pages. The five people confirmed that morning came from two families, including Norman and Valrie's two sons. Only fifteen people were mentioned in the Centennial Celebration booklet as part of the St. Wilfrid's family, including Father Amadi. While there may have been additional members of the church at the centennial, it is likely that the congregation was very small.

Once again, the persistence of a few dedicated people kept the stone church on Westfield and Dudley alive.

Family of Emma Waring

**Best of Luck on your
100th Anniversary.**

**Mr. & Mrs. Eddie Greene
New York City, N.Y.**

Friends of Millicent Clarke

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Campbell

Happy 100th Anniversary

Diocese of New Jersey

**Church Officials for St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church
Camden, N.J.**

Priest-in-Charge
Rev. Canon Dr. N.I.O. Amadi

Organist
Clarence Gill

Senior Warden
Millicent Clarke

Clerk of the Vestry
Emma Waring

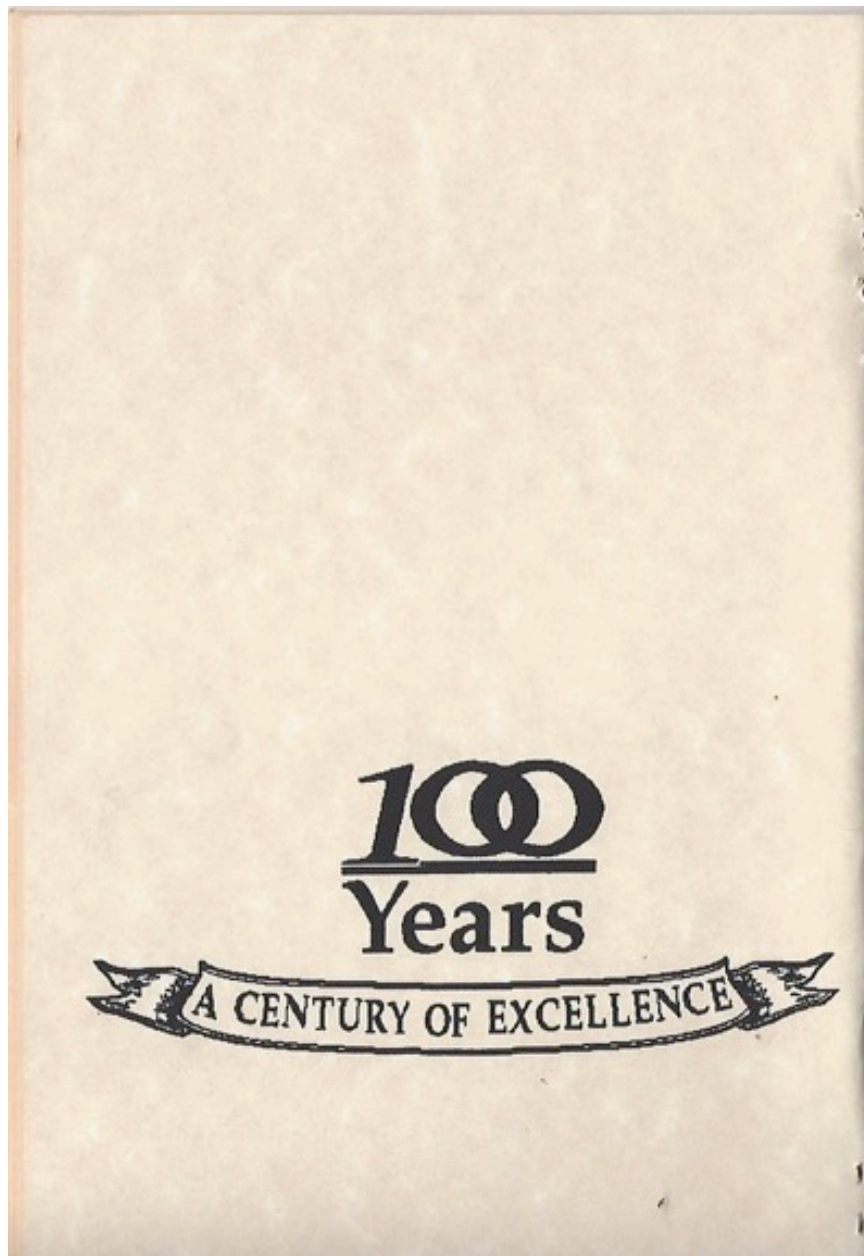
Treasurer of the Vestry
Enid Massias

Asst. Treasurer of the Vestry
Norman A. Valentine

Church School Superintendent
Enid Massias

Vestry Members
Nelesta Wakefield
Deloris Palmer

Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

I swear I think there is nothing but immortality.

That the exquisite scheme is for it, and the nebulous float is for it,

and the cohering is for it;

And all preparation is for it! And identity is for it!

And life and materials are altogether for it (lines 115-117)!

Chapter Nine: Saint Wilfrid 634-710



St. WILFRID

Fanjul Photo

This framed watercolor of Saint Wilfrid was in the parish house with the church records. There are other images of the patron saint still present in the church, and references to statutes and windows that were in the church previously. An unnamed parishioner wrote a four-page biography about St. Wilfrid that was inserted into a Parish Register. The undated and unsigned document is entitled, *A short Biographical sketch of Saint Wilfrid. For use in Saint Wilfrid's Parish Westfield Avenue at Dudley Street, Camden, New Jersey.*

The story of Wilfrid is filled with passion, power, and palace intrigue. He was considered a strong leader of the early Catholic Church. As one of the few British born saints, his most notable accomplishments were the unification of the Celtic Church, the conversion of pagans, and the improvement of chanting for services. Born in 634 into a wealthy English family, he was apparently bright and socially adept. At fourteen years old he declared his independence and “went in fitting style to the royal Court” (Biographical Sketch 1). He charmed the court and was assigned to be a personal attendant to a retiring courtier who was living in a monastery in Lindisfarne. “Here Wilfrid received the mental and spiritual training which his receptive and eager nature could use and enjoy, and he was beloved by the monks, both old and young” (Biographical Sketch 1).

The training and inspiration he gained while in the monastery set him on his spiritual path. He had multiple wealthy patrons who helped him pursue his dream of traveling to Rome to study and meet the Pope. “We may well imagine him expanding in mind and soul, as for a year he fed at the table of truth, knowledge and strength which the Church provided there (Biographical Sketch 1). During his time in Rome, he built important alliances with influential church leaders that would prove essential in later years. He also collected religious relics which he transported back to England. He also collected religious relics which he transported back to England.

After three years of traveling and being imprisoned by enemies of the church in route, he returned to England. His new patron awarded him a monastery where “he built a rarity, a stone Church on the model of those seen in Rome. You may still see its crypt, planned probably for the relics which he had brought back with him” (Biographical Sketch 2).



St. Wilfrid, Wikipedia

Wilfrid was an adamant advocate for the Roman form of Christianity, also called the Benedictine Rule. English Christians practiced both the Benedictine and the Celtic form,

based on the beliefs of their early priests. In 664, a gathering of church leaders, the Synod of Whitby, was organized to address aligning the calendars of these different groups of Christians. Wilfrid convinced the group to change the date of Easter to align it with the Roman Catholic Church. “Britain came into line with the continent, and Wilfrid from that time onwards was marked: he championed the cause of the centrality of the Church, that of Rome” (Bibliographical Sketch 2). He became known as the unifier of the English church.

Wilfrid accumulated properties and titles from his patrons, sometimes angering other English clerics and their patrons. Various kings, queens, and bishops became unhappy with him, and he was exiled more than once. “Egfrid, king of Northumbria, had for a queen the lovely Etheldreda, who had all the inclinations of a nun rather than a wife, and she found in Bishop Wilfrid a friend and guide who understood her spiritual aspirations and when a person of deep and ardent holiness (which itself make for loneliness) meets another of its own kind, the mutual solace and encouragement are precious. When with Wilfrid’s support the Queen left wedlock for a convent, the King’s appreciation of his Bishop lessened” (Bibliographical Sketch 2). This episode resulted in Wilfrid being expelled from his monastery and removed as Bishop.

Wilfrid traveled to Rome and appealed to the Pope, who “pronounced Wilfrid blameless, and ordered the return of his bishopric” (Bibliographical Sketch 3). The English kings were not impressed and put Wilfrid in jail and then sent him to rural Southern England. Wilfrid spent this period of exile converting peasants to Christianity and building monasteries. Eventually, he was called home and forgiven. “Archbishop Theodore was so happily disposed that he even offered Wilfrid the Episcopal throne at Canterbury; Our patron, being basically a humble man did not accept the diocese. He asked instead, that he be given his rights in Northumbria” (Bibliographical Sketch 3). Peace only lasted five years when another skirmish

between Rome and England required Wilfrid to appeal to the Pope. Once again, the Pope pronounced him innocent and directed the king to reinstate him.

The return trip from Rome was difficult for Wilfrid, who was almost seventy and in poor health. He returned to England and spent the remaining years of his life at one of his monasteries. “He was taken seriously ill, mercifully at his own monastery of Saint Andrew at Dundle, and there, surrounded by those who loved and honored him, he died peacefully, seventy-six years old” (Bibliographical Sketch 4).

No written record explains why the church was named after St. Wilfrid. It appears that the name was chosen by Frederick Jones and Arthur Matthews since the earliest history begins using St. Wilfrid or St. Wilfred as the established name of the parish. It seems that Mr. Jones had an affinity for the saint since his son’s middle name is also Wilfrid. What was it about this religious leader that prompted Mr. Jones and Mr. Matthews to honor him by naming their church after him? Was it his dogmatic religious belief, or his stubborn personality, or his success as a builder of monasteries, or his insistence that he had been wronged and would be found innocent? I doubt it was his chanting skill or his collection of relics. The spirit of Wilfrid that still exists in the stone church on Westfield and Dudley is the persistence and dedication he had to his church. In spite of multiple stumbling blocks, he stayed true to his faith.



Fanjul Photo

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

To think that the sun rose in the east!

that men and women were flexible, real, alive! that everything was alive!

To think that you and I did not see, feel, think, nor bear our part!

To think that we are now here, and bear our part (lines 8-10)!

Chapter Ten: A Community of Resurrection. 2011-2019

The Open Door Clinic at St. Wilfrid's

Dudley St., and Westfield Ave, Camden, NJ



Volunteers monthly provide free health screenings, food, clothing, and hope to the needy of East Camden at St. Wilfrid's Church.

We provide 750 health screenings, 850 food bags, and 60 loads of slightly used clothes to the poverty stricken and first generation immigrants.

And or doctor, nurses, and volunteers show that we care,



www.opendoorcliniccamden.org
opendoorclinicnj@aol.com



Where are we going? We depend on donations to heat the church in winter, pay to fix our roof, and we need to replace a door or two, and ease some doors and adjust some hardware. We would like to have wifi, and a permanent sign.

And we dream....of maybe a washer/dryer, teaching English as a 2nd language, tutoring, and we need a social worker who knows the system. We think outside the box.

Any support is welcomed through:
Grace Church Haddonfield-memo: Open Door
Clinic
19 Kings Highway East
Haddonfield, NJ 08033

In 2011 St. Wilfrid's congregation was very small, and none of them lived near the church. With fewer than thirty people the church could not afford a priest and didn't have regular worship services, but they wanted to stay connected to the neighborhood. A sacred building is rooted in the place where it has been sanctified by the worshipers. Holy places may be destroyed and moved, but the place they collected their blessings will always retain that spirit. St. Wilfrid's stayed put while people moved away, but it did not lose its essence. As the parishioners tended the church building and yard, it was apparent that there were unmet needs around their stone church on Westfield Avenue and Dudley Street.

The demographics of the Dudley section of Camden had changed again. The majority of the people living there in 2010 were Hispanic. Forty-seven percent of Camden's residents were Hispanic, but in the Dudley neighborhood seventy percent were Hispanic. Over half of the people there had no high school diploma which limited their employment opportunities and created a poverty rate of 24.5% in the immediate area around the church (CamConnect). The church experienced vandalism when homeless folks broke into the rectory and started a fire to stay warm. The fires got out of control twice, once in 2003 and again in 2011. Damage to the rectory was significant, forcing the church to board it up. Hoping to protect the church and the parish house from vandalism, the vestry installed a padlocked fence. The rectory porch remained accessible to the street and provided a place for homeless people to sleep. One man, Tony, lived on the porch for several years. His pile of blankets on the concrete porch was a symbol of the poverty within the neighborhood. Church members got to know him, bringing him food and warm clothes. They became acutely aware of his struggles.



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo

In an attempt to address some of these needs, the congregation started a clinic. People from the neighborhood are invited to the church where they are received graciously and given assistance. People line up outside two hours in advance. They are predominately Hispanic, many are recent immigrants from the Dominican Republic, and several black homeless men are regulars, including Tony. Health screenings, food, clothing, and social services are available free to anyone who enters. Because many guests do not speak English, volunteers are recruited who speak multiple languages. There are children of all ages who come with their parents, they always get toys or books. On average, seventy-five people come to the clinic each month. In colder weather, the numbers increase. St. Wilfrid's congregation rarely gathers to have services these days, but the clinic is always open on the third Saturday of every month. Before we open the doors to the guests, everyone stands in a circle and holds hands to say a prayer of gratitude. We end the sessions the same way, sometimes one of the guests has lingered, and he or she will say the prayer.



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo



Fanjul Photo

It takes a lot of effort to pull this off once a month, volunteers solicit donations continually. There is food to be picked up, sorted and bagged, clothing to be delivered, organized, and sometimes cleaned. Many hours are spent before the doors of the clinic actually open. Occasionally there is an outside group that wants to do something extra. A Boy Scout troop that does a food drive and fills up multiple cars with canned goods. A neighborhood group that collects Halloween costumes in all sizes to give to the children who come to the clinic. Individuals who tell all their friends that we need coats, socks, and blankets for the homeless men and arrive with bags full of clothing for people who live outside in the winter.

The parish house has a leaking roof, a concrete floor, spotty heat, and no air conditioning. The kitchen has a couple of microwaves to warm soup and hash browns for the guests. One volunteer brought her father's rusty freezer to the church. My sister and her husband gave the clinic all of their kitchen appliances when they remodeled their home, but there are no commercial appliances. The walls of the kitchen have been patched but not painted.



Alex MacMoran, Norman and Scout Food Drive 2018



Alex MacMoran, Scout Food Drive, 2018



Fanjul Photo

Over the years, the group of volunteers has grown significantly. Initially, it was only Norman and Valrie, their sons, a couple of church members, and one or two volunteers from Grace Church in Haddonfield. Now, there is a listserv for all the volunteers to stay connected. I come from North Carolina every month to help. There are doctors, nurse practitioners, veterans, mortgage bankers, students, and retired teachers. One nurse was baptized in St. Wilfrid's during World War II. The group ranges in age from 88 to 8 years old, their professions are as varied as Dean of the Nursing School to a major league baseball coach. A Spanish Advanced Placement class from a local high school came to help translate. Several families bring their school-age children to help

hand out warm drinks or food to the people waiting in line. Most of the volunteers come from the suburbs around Camden. They come from a variety of churches. They hear about St. Wilfrid's Open Door Clinic from colleagues in their offices, or through social media, or through their civic clubs. In 2016, the Bishop of New Jersey came to visit the clinic. He was impressed and a few days later the diocese posted this picture and quote on the clinic's Facebook page.



Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey is at **St Wilfrid's Episcopal Church.**

March 3, 2016 · Camden, NJ · 🌐

👍 Like Page

St Wilfred's is a small but vibrant community of resurrection!



St. Wilfrid's Facebook Page

Conclusion

Stephanie: What do you think is next for St. Wilfrid's?

From an interview with Norman Valentine, August 11, 2018

I think the diocese is going to tell us they are going to shut it down. I made a vow, I will never leave. If St. Wilfrid's closes it will not be because I gave up, it will be because someone else stopped it.

From an interview with Father Pat Close, August 14, 2018

We have always struggled how to address the spiritual needs of people in the Camden community, they need consistency of services. What does that neighborhood need?

From an interview with Father Jeff Kirk, October 22, 2018

Years ago, I joined other suburban churches and went to Camden to have breakfast with the homeless folks there. It was educational for the suburban folks but not transformational for the homeless people. St. Wilfrid's, it is unique, but have they figured out what their mission is? If they could articulate that they could build on it.

From an interview with Father Martin Gutwein, November 28, 2018

I think the thing that actually gave St. Paul's a new life, was their willingness to look outside of themselves and help other people. St. Wilfrid's needed help and the parish of St. Paul's gave it freely. Ironically, reaching out helped St. Paul's congregation a lot, maybe more than it helped St. Wilfrid's. Looking outside of themselves would help St. Wilfrid's figure out their next steps.

From an interview with Alex MacMoran, August 10, 2018

I don't know what is going to happen to St. Wilfrid's. It is in God's hands, he knows, and we will know when he is ready for us to know.

"TO THINK OF TIME"

Walt Whitman

*Pleasantly and well—suited I walk,
Whither I walk I cannot define, but I know it is good,
The whole universe indicates that it is good,
The past and the present indicate that it is good (lines 104-107).*

Epilogue: Blessings

In the fall of 2018, Geoff Miller came to St. Wilfrid's to volunteer at the clinic. He was captivated by the energy of the volunteers, the spirit of the place, and the needs of the guests. He applied for a grant from his employer, the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team, and the clinic was awarded the funding. Norman and the other volunteers have decided to use the money to fix the roof of the parish house and pay for heat.

From: "Riegel, Sophie" <sriegel@phillies.com>
Subject: Phillies Charities, Inc. - Open Door Clinic at St. Wilfred's Church
Date: October 29, 2018 at 3:46:56 PM EDT
To: "Miller, Geoff" <gmler@phillies.com>
Cc: "Shields, Brittani" <bshields@phillies.com>

Geoff,

I am thrilled to let you know that Phillies Charities, Inc. would like to issue a charitable grant in the amount of \$15,000 to Open Door Clinic at St. Wilfred's Church. We will send the check via mail by December 31st. Please feel free to pass this along to your contact if you have one or let me know if you would like me to inform them. In order to issue the check, we will ask them for a recently completed and signed W9 Form. The check will be mailed to the address of the organization listed on the W9 Form.

Email to Geoff Miller

Deacon Clive from the Diocese of New Jersey invited Norman to attend a meeting on December 18th to represent St. Wilfrid's Church. The leaders of three Camden churches came to hear about a decision the Bishop had reached. The Bishop was not going to act to close any of these three small urban churches. He believed that each congregation had designed their own small niche in serving the people of Camden. St. Paul's had a multi-racial parish that fed people, St. Augustine's was offering services in Spanish, and St. Wilfrid's had the open door clinic. Deacon Clive had obtained funds to tear down St. Wilfrid's rectory and build a

retreat center for priests learning about urban ministries. St. Augustine's was going to conduct services in Spanish at St. Wilfrid's and the clinic would continue.

Once again, St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church, at the corner of Westfield Avenue and Dudley Street, rises up and shines. The prayer that was read when St. Wilfrid's was dedicated in February 1900, has been realized, one more time.

O GOD, whom year by year we praise for the dedication of this church; Hear, we beseech thee, the prayers of thy people, and grant that whosoever shall worship before thee in this place, may obtain thy merciful aid and protection; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Book of Common Prayer 1945 p. 259



Alex MacMoran, St. Wilfrid's, 2018

Appendix A: Glossary of Religious Terms

All definitions are derived from *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church*. Some changes have been made to simplify for the lay reader.

Bible: The Holy Book of the Episcopal Church. Including the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament and the New Testament, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, containing all things necessary to salvation.

Baptism: This is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body, the church. God establishes an indissoluble bond with each person in baptism. People are baptized as babies or when an adult chooses to join the church. Baptism is full initiation into the church, and all baptized persons are members of the church.

Bishop: One of three orders of ordained ministers in the church, bishops are charged with the apostolic work of leading, supervising, and uniting the church. The bishop is the leader of the Diocese, a regional or statewide collection of churches.

Choir: A body of singers who provide musical leadership for congregational singing in the worship of the church.

Clergy, Members of the: Persons in holy orders, ordained for the ministry of bishop, priest, or deacon. The Episcopal Church canons concerning ordination for these ministries are equally applicable to men and women. Women were first permitted to be ordained in 1989.

Confirmation: The sacramental rite in which the candidates personally commit to the Church. The ceremony always includes the laying on of hands by a bishop.

Communion: The holy sacrament of the church, also referred to as the eucharist. It is the sharing of bread and wine, symbolizing Christ's body and blood. Typically, worshipers go to the altar to receive the sacrament.

Deacon: Deacons are members of one of three distinct orders of ordained ministry, bishop, priest, and deacon. The Deacon serves under a priest or a bishop.

Diocese: The territorial jurisdiction of a bishop. The term also refers to the congregations and church members of the diocese.

Easter: The feast of Christ's resurrection. A key holiday for all Christians usually celebrated in the spring of each year.

Epistle: Literally, a letter, the name was given to the two New Testament readings at certain church services. It is always part of the program of services for the Episcopal Church.

Excommunication: The process of excluding a person from communion. The 1549 Prayer Book offered multiple reasons for a priest to discipline a church member, but it is rarely used in the modern church.

Gospel: God's word, the good news of God's saving act in Jesus Christ, focused on the cross and the resurrection. The Gospel, like the Epistle, is always part of the program of services for the Episcopal Church.

Lay Reader: A person who is not ordained. A lay reader may lead the Daily Offices of the church. If an ordained minister is not available, a lay reader may lead some worship services.

Minister: One who shares in the ministry of the church. The ministers of the church are lay people, bishops, priests, and deacons.

Narthex: An entry space, foyer, or anteroom of a church between the door and the nave.

Nave: The place in the church building for the congregation. It is between the sanctuary and the narthex or entry of the church building.

Parish: The term is used in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and earlier editions and means a self-supporting congregation under a rector, as opposed to a mission or other congregation under

a vicar. Some state laws provide for the incorporation of Episcopal parishes, and the election of rectors, wardens, and vestry members.

Parish House: A church building or house that may provide space for the parish office, clergy and staff offices, classrooms, choir rehearsal room, and meeting rooms. The parish house is typically a separate building from the church.

Parish Meeting: A meeting of the members of a parish. The by-laws of the parish generally require an annual parish meeting and state the qualifications to be a voting member of the parish. Diocesan canons may state requirements concerning parish meetings. The annual parish meeting typically elects vestry members.

Parish Register: The formal record of the various acts in a parish church. Canon 15 of the Constitution and Canons of 1789 required every minister of the church to keep a register of baptisms, marriages, and funerals within his congregation.

Pentecost (Season of the Church): It begins on the Monday following Pentecost and continues through most of the summer and autumn.

Priest: One of the three orders of ordained ministers in the church. They report to a bishop and can supervise a deacon. They can conduct most of the worship services in a parish.

Vestry: A committee elected by the members of a congregation to serve with the church warden to manage the secular business of the church.

Vestry Minutes: The records of the meetings of the vestry prepared to document the operations of the parish.

Wardens: Officers of a parish. Two wardens are typically selected to serve with the members of the vestry. The wardens are generally ranked "senior" and "junior." The mode of selection and duties of the wardens are determined by state law, diocesan canon, or parish by-laws. The senior warden is usually the primary elected lay leader of the congregation and serves as a principal

liaison between the parish and the rector. The junior warden is often given responsibility for the upkeep of the parish buildings and grounds.

Appendix B: Inventory of Church Records

Earliest Date	Last Date	Type	Size	Description of Covers	Contents
Easter 1886	July 17, 1914	Parish Register	13 x 9	Brown leather, Parish Register in gold on front, taped spine, pages loose. Newspaper clippings inserted in several pages	Index (hand written) History, Families, Holy Baptism, Confirmation, Communicants, Marriages, Burials
May 2, 1888	May 5, 1897	Minutes of the Vestry including finance ledgers	12 x 9.5	No cover, first page paper, back brown cardboard	Notes taken by hand, mold on some pages, newspaper stories inserted
June 2, 1897	April 4, 1906	Minutes of the Vestry including finance ledgers	12 x 9	Brown leather cover, Minutes in gold on front, spine missing, book holding together	Notes taken by hand, misc. notes inserted
April 16, 1906	April 13, 1925	Minutes of the Vestry including finance ledgers	12 x 9	Tan cloth cover, Minutes printed on cover in black ink, tablet format	Tablet format, with entries from both directions, letters, bills, brochure for selecting rector inserted
February 18, 1914	December 11, 1924	Parish Record Vol. II	11 x 8	Dark green leather, corner tips, brown tape on spine, landscape orientation	Sections of book: Index of Names, Rectors, Assistant Ministers, Communicants, Baptisms, Confirmations, Burials, Marriages, Appendix of Families
October 1, 1914	October 31, 1937	Finance ledger	11 x 8.5	Brown cloth with brown leather corners, spine brown ink Cash, St.W.	Misc. notes and papers inserted, mostly referencing expenses
June 18, 1922	January 29, 1949	The Canonical Parish Register	16 x 10.5	Cardboard cover, spine 75% broken, pages loose, crossed out titles of sections, inserted documents,	Sections of book: Index of Names, Rectors, Confirmations, Communicants, Baptisms, Confirmations, Burials, Marriages, Appendix of Families
April 20, 1925	September 12, 1933	Minutes of the Vestry	10.5 x 8.5	Black leather, corner tips, spine in good shape, gold print on spine Record	All handwritten, a few typed pages in back of book, receipts for the pence box, notes on election of officers
April 1, 1928	December 31, 1932	Finance ledger	11 x 8	Black leather, corner tips, spine falling apart, gold trim on corners and front	Records of receipts, expenses, bonds turned in, pages cut out of front, loose pages with paper clip in front
October 10, 1933	November 23, 1962	Minutes of the Vestry including finance ledgers	14 x 8.5	Black leather, corner tips, green tape on spine, gold print on spine Record	Letters and notes inserted, including note 4/54 about secretary's book being illegally retained and entries being false. Also 7/1/1954 notes refusal to pay rector, later rewritten due to inaccuracies
December 16, 1962	August 5, 1964	Minutes of the Vestry including finance ledgers	14 x 10	Plain black leather ringed notebook, in good condition	Unusual combination of documents, some ledgers held together with clips, by laws, newspaper article about Mrs. Ridgeway refusing to move, lawyer's documents about law suit, typed minutes of vestry meetings pasted in book, letter from Fr Leather chastising vestry for not attending meetings
July 1, 1963	March 4, 1968	Record of services, attendees, offerings	10.5 X 8.5	Red w/gold lettering titled Register of Church Services	
December 15, 1964	June 2, 1980	Minutes of the Vestry	14 x 9	Brown leather cover, good condition, spine gold print Record	Letters inserted, 3/12/79 ltr. withdrawing from partnership with St Andrew
March 6, 1968	April 8, 1976	Record of services, attendees, offerings	11 X 9	Red w/gold lettering titled Register of Church Services	
April 11, 1976	December 31, 1982	Record of services, attendees, offerings	11 X 9	Red w/gold lettering titled Register of Church Services	

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Note: Most of the older newspaper articles had no author and were untitled. In lieu of a title, I transcribed the first phrase of the article as a reference point.