

# HISTORY OF ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Denver, Colorado

Our parish was the second Episcopal parish organized in the city of Denver, Colorado. In 1873, the House of Bishops of the national church elected John Franklin Spalding as the second Missionary Bishop of Colorado. One of Bishop Spalding's first acts was to propose the erection of a chapel in memory of his predecessor, Bishop James Maxwell Randall. It was decided to build at 26th and Curtis Streets, where St. John's in the Wilderness (Colorado's first Episcopal parish) was already operating a Sunday school. Ground was broken on March 18, 1874, and the building was ready for occupancy on Trinity Sunday of that year. The new church building was formally opened by the bishop under the name Trinity Memorial Chapel.

The first rector of Trinity Memorial was Rev. Mr. W.H. Moore. One of the most notable early rectors was Charles H. Marshall, who served for fifteen years, 1880-1895. During the time of Rev. Marshall, the church was enlarged to a total seating capacity of 350 people. Soon after this expansion, however, the parish membership began to decline. The demographics of Denver were changing and Curtis Park was no longer a fashionable neighborhood.

In 1880, the cornerstone was laid for the new Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist at 19th and Welton St. On the night of May 15, 1903, an arson fire destroyed the Cathedral. The Cathedral vestry decided that they would not rebuild at the Welton St. location. In 1904, the Trinity Memorial building was so badly deteriorated that the congregation decided to rebuild on a site owned by the Diocese, adjacent to that previously occupied by St. John's Cathedral.

In 1904, St. John's Cathedral conducted a competition to choose a design for the new cathedral building. One of the contestants was the distinguished Boston architect Ralph Adams Cram, whose later works would include the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, in New York City, and the cadet Chapel at West Point. Cram's proposal for the new cathedral was not chosen but Cram subsequently prepared drawings for Trinity Memorial. His design called for a gothic structure executed in locally made brick. The cornerstone of the new Trinity Memorial building was laid on Sunday, August 9, 1908. Some time around 1919, the membership opted for the name St. Andrew's, presumably to avoid confusion with the larger Trinity Methodist Episcopal, just a few blocks away.

In the 1920's, Father Neil Stanley, a renowned preacher and spiritual director, became rector of St. Andrew's. Father Stanley brought both Anglo-Catholic liturgy and a heartfelt concern for the poor of the neighborhood...a tradition that continues to this day. He invited the children of the neighborhood to serve as acolytes at Sunday Mass and then stay for breakfast. Longtime parishioner, Tom Titus, reports that often there were more young acolytes gathered around the altar than parishioners in the pews!! Father Stanley provided not only for his own needs, but also for the upkeep of the church and outreach to the neighborhood by writing short stories for pulp magazines. Also, during his tenure, a rectory, which now serves as St. Andrew's parish house, was built on the lot south of the church.

By the mid 20th century, St. Andrew's was continuing to struggle financially and was designated a mission of the diocese. Then, in the late 1960s, a new priest came to St. Andrew's who was to leave a significant impression on the church structure itself, the format for worship and the direction of the ministry. Father Jon Marr Stark was appointed rector, January 1, 1969. Rev. Stark believed in traditional "high church" liturgy coupled with a strong involvement in the social issues of the day. In the mid-1970's, Jon Stark founded the Order of the Holy Family (OHF), a monastic order of the Episcopal Church. The Order had a strong commitment to Denver's rising homeless population and began using the St. Andrew's undercroft as an overnight shelter for these individuals. Bishop William C. Frey acknowledged the Order by mitering Fr. Stark as its first Abbot. In 1984, the Abbot and the remaining brothers left Denver for a new abbey in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The remaining parish membership entered into a relationship with the Diocese in 1985, agreeing to offer the use of parish facilities to the Episcopal Pastoral Center, the outreach ministry of the Diocese, in return for payment of parish utility bills. Also at this time, Bishop Frey made our vestry aware that a group called the Inner City Congregation needed a place to worship. This group was led by Mother Kay Ryan, who was the first woman priest in the Diocese of Colorado. Both groups shared St. Andrew's facility.

In the summer of 1986, Father Kenneth Near, a Canon of St. John's Cathedral, visited St. Andrew's and fell in love with the beauty and spiritual serenity of the church. Father Near was aware of St. Andrew's history as an Anglo-Catholic parish and was also excited about the unique location between the downtown business district and the poorest ethnic neighborhoods. Father Near approached the Vestry of St. Andrew's with the idea of converting from parish status to a parochial mission and come under the wing of St. John's Cathedral. St. John's would be willing to provide funding for a major renovation of the church if St. Andrew's would become the "headquarters" for St. John's mission work in the inner city. Subsequently, Father Kenneth Near became a part-time vicar for St. Andrew's with the Cathedral paying his full salary.

Major repairs on St. Andrew's structure included a new composite roof, new plaster and paint, and an oak floor that was laid over the asbestos tiles. Tim Hinz, a local woodworking artist, made a freestanding altar. The men of St. John's removed asphalt and planted trees. Betty Luce and Martha Bollenbacher organized a group to create needlepoint kneelers for the altar rails, which are still in use today! The church was rededicated on the Feast of St. Andrew's, 1988, with great pomp and circumstance!

In the fall of 1991, Father Near left to become rector of St. Paul's, Englewood, N.J. Father Ernest Priest was appointed interim, but could not continue due to his back problems. Dean Charles Kiblinger, of St. John's Cathedral, set St. Andrew's on a path towards becoming a self-supporting parish again. Mother Constance K. Delzell agreed to serve as interim and a search committee was formed to seek new leadership.

The Reverend Constance K. Delzell came to St. Andrew's November 30, 1991 (St. Andrew's Day) as interim Vicar. A spirit of mutual appreciation and respect between Mother Connie and the congregation led the search committee to subsequently recommend to the Dean of St. John's Cathedral that she be retained as Vicar. Mother Connie was installed as Canon

Missioner of St. John's and Vicar of St. Andrew's in July, 1992. Mother Connie was the first woman to go through the entire process of discernment, postulancy and ordination in Colorado and the first female rector of St. Andrew's.

Mother Connie's 16-year tenure was characterized by focus on several tenets of effective congregational development:

**Structured Adult Education.** EFM (Education for Ministry) was instituted in the early years. Two classes have graduated, and a group of students is currently enrolled. St. Andrew's members had previously attended Catechumenate sessions at the Cathedral, but in 2000 Mother Connie instituted a nine month Catechumenate program at St. Andrew's. The Catechumenate has been offered biannually and has been instrumental in incorporating the many new members fully into the life of the Church, preparing them for leadership roles and creating the committed and enthusiastic laity that characterizes St. Andrew's today. Mother Connie characterized this essential formational work as "equipping the saints". The Adult Institute for Episcopal Formation (AIEF) was started as a thought provoking and stimulating series of programming for adult education. St. Andrew's is blessed with many retired and adjunct clergy as members, and Mother Connie drew on this group to enhance the spiritual and intellectual life of the church.

**Focus on Outreach.** Mother Connie inherited an after-school tutorial program for neighborhood children that met at St. Andrew's and was staffed by volunteers from the congregation. She expanded the tutorial program, changing the focus to art and music. The Children's Center for Arts & Learning was the result of this effort. Mother Connie served on the Board of Directors of the Cole Neighborhood Association and helped raise funds to renovate a deserted neighborhood school building which became the Wyatt Edison charter school. The Children's Center for Arts and Learning supplied the after school program at Wyatt Edison School. Mother Connie had always championed the idea of an Episcopal Day School which would serve a socially and economically diverse student body. With the help of The Rev. Dr. Richard Valantis and Senior Warden Betty Luce in 2002, the effort began to found St. Elizabeth's School. The school opened in 2007 with its first kindergarten class. It is the second Episcopal school in Colorado, and the model of planned diversity in the student body has been adopted as a prototype by the National Association of Episcopal Schools as a model for the future. Members of the congregation also founded Bethany House, which provided affordable housing for persons with AIDS. Bethany House and Children's Center for Arts & Learning were recognized by the national church as Jubilee Ministries at the 2000 General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Denver. In 1995 Mother Connie invited The Reverend Sally Brown to join her in ministry at St. Andrew's. A Vocational Deacon, Deacon Sally assumed leadership of congregational outreach efforts, and for the past 12 years has nurtured a passion in the hearts of St. Andrew's members for those less fortunate. The Outreach Committee is among the most active and effective groups in the church, and has successfully incorporated the Outreach effort into the year-round life of the church with an intentional focus on local and global ministry relationships.

**Sharing Ministry with an Excellent Staff.** In addition to recruiting Deacon Sally as Mother Connie saw a good music program as a tool for Evangelism. To this end she hired Timothy Krueger in 1994 as Music Director. Tim had recently returned to Denver from studies in

Germany and England, and had founded St. Martin's Chamber Choir. She offered Tim an office and rehearsal space for his choir as well as his first church job. Tim brought his own brand of genius to the music program, along with his heart-felt love of Anglican music. The choir has 24 members at present. Tim recruited excellent organists to St. Andrew's. Early music specialist Frank Nowell has served since 2001, and in 2005 Frank founded the Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado. St. Andrew's is blessed to have one of the finest music programs in the Diocese of Colorado. In 2001, John Taylor was hired as Parish Administrator. John elevated the position from that of a receptionist/secretary to a full fledged partner in ministry. Effective communication and coordination of an ever-growing congregation became the standard, as well as maintaining a compassionate presence to those who stopped by the Parish House. This excellent work is being continued by Sarah Davis who now holds the position of Parish Administrator.

Mentor to New and Aspiring Clergy. During her 16 years at St. Andrew's, Mother Connie inspired and advised a remarkable group of women who are now serving as Priests of the Church. She mentored The Reverend Marilyn Schneider, The Reverend Rebecca Nickel and The Reverend Nancee Martin-Coffee who served as Curates at St. Andrews. Even more remarkable was her inspiration of others to enter a life of service in the priesthood. The Reverend Michele Quinn-Miscall, The Reverend Felicia Smith-Graybeal, The Reverend Andrea Mysen, and The Reverend Salying Wong were ordained Priests of the Church from St. Andrew's. Beth Taylor is in her second year of seminary at Seabury Western. The Reverend Steve Godfrey, a former member of St. Andrew's, was ordained in the Diocese of Massachusetts.

Living the Gospel in a Diverse Community. Mother Connie had experienced discrimination and marginalization first-hand in her journey to become a Priest of the Church. At St. Andrew's she chose her associates and encouraged congregation leaders on the basis of their gift for leadership and passion for ministry. Age, gender, sexual orientation did not figure into her criteria for leadership. Mother Connie inherited a diverse congregation and expanded it accordingly. She made a place for everyone at the table.

Maturity and Growth of Stewardship. When Mother Connie came to St. Andrew's the active membership was approximately 30 and the annual budget was \$25,000. The Dean of the Cathedral charged her to grow the congregation to parish status. To this end, he reduced her stipend from the Cathedral by 20% a year until St. Andrew's was self sufficient. Mother Connie believed that effective leadership for stewardship came from the laity, and she enabled leadership that made these budgetary increases possible. The culmination of this work was apparent in the 2007 Capital Campaign for Sacred Vision/Sacred Space, when the goal was exceeded by nearly 20%. Leadership of the campaign was provided by members who had come up through the Catechumenate. St. Andrew's has established an Endowment Fund through the Colorado Episcopal Foundation and interest income from the Endowment Fund is used primarily to fund outreach programs.

A summary of Mother Connie's years at St. Andrew's would not be complete without mention of two significant events. On All Soul's Day 1999 a fire broke out in the undercroft of the church, causing significant smoke damage to the entire nave and sanctuary. The congregation worshipped for nine months at the nearby Temple Events Center while the

church was undergoing restoration. The congregation actually grew in numbers during this time, and the experience caused the congregation to feel a renewed sense of strength and commitment to St. Andrew's and to each other. The church organ was ruined in the fire, and an organ committee was formed to select an appropriate instrument for the church. A Buzard pipe organ was placed in the church following a successful Capital Campaign.

In 2000, St. Andrew's attained Parish Status, and Mother Connie became Rector. Each year brought increases in membership and at the time of her retirement in June, 2007, the church was averaging 175 in attendance at two services each Sunday, with a record attendance of 300+ at Easter. In her final months as Rector, the congregation undertook a program, Sacred Vision/Sacred Space, to expand the church. That work will begin after Easter, 2008 with completion in 2009. Just in time to welcome our new Rector.

#### CHRONOLOGY OF ST. ANDREW'S LEADERSHIP

Walter Howard Moore - 1874-1875  
C. N. Allen - 1875-1879  
John Quick (Archdeacon) - 1879-1880  
Henry Harrison Haynes - 1878-1880  
Charles H. Marshall - 1880-1895  
D. L. V. Moffett - 1896  
Charles Ysla Grimes - 1897-1901  
Arthur G. H. Bode - 1901-1904  
Pelham Williams - 1904-1906  
George H. Holoran - 1907-1918  
Henry Steele - 1918-1919  
Thomas J. Haldeman - 1919-1920  
Neil Stanley - 1920-1942  
John W. Hudston (Assoc.) - 1924-1937  
W. L. Hogg (Assoc.) - 1926-1932  
Ralph J. Rohr (Assoc.) - 1927-1929  
Emmett Jones (Assoc.) - 1935  
Charles Evans - 1942-1948  
Albert E. Stephens, Jr. (Assoc.) - 1947  
Gordon L. Graser - 1949-1954  
James N. Harkins (Assoc.) - 1954-1955  
Justin A. Van Lopik - 1954-1969  
Roy B. Flinchbaugh (Assoc.) - 1955-1956  
Jon Marr Stark - 1969-1984  
Cecil Franklin - 1984  
Kenneth Near - 1986-1991  
Ernest Priest - 1991  
Constance K. Delzell - 1992-2007  
Carol Meredith (Interim) - 2007-