

*100 Years of
Memories*

*St. David's
Episcopal Church*

Remembrances

The downpour drenched us as we made a dash for Nana and Pappy Carver's on Cronley Street, Laurinburg, N. C., July 1972. We had reached our destination and when the rain stopped, we were back in the car following my parents, headed to our new home in Gibson, some 6 or 7 miles from the South Carolina border.

My heart sank as we pulled up to the 65 ft. veranda and entered the fourteen room home of the late Mrs. Myra Gibson. All I could think of was how I'd manage this house and where would I put my furniture since all of hers was still in the house.

One of our first visitors was James R. Mackenzie, a very personable gentleman farmer and former banker inviting us to come to St. David's Episcopal Church.

The population sign in Gibson went from 252 to 257 overnight with the arrival of five Whiteheads. We attended St. David's the very next Sunday and were warmly welcomed by a small group of loyal parishioners including Edna Southall, the Ellis's, the Harts, Vicky Arms, and her parents, June and James Mackenzie, Polly and Evelyn Adams, the Duntsons, Ron Bayes, Harold and Cookie Gibson, the Alford's, two families of Everett's (two different spellings) and others. However, they did not have a priest, but services continued just the same and Vicky played the little organ every Sunday. And how glad they were to have two new voices in the little choir.

My stern looks from the choir kept our three, ages 10, 9, 7, pretty much line for there was no Sunday School at that time.

Rev. Al Scogins and wife, Helen, were called soon after our arrival.

The building was cold and dreary with chipped linoleum and a dingy, plastic, heavy as lead screen that when closed, separated the nave from the Chancel. I remember yanking that thing around the semicircular track every time there was anything going on in the nave other than a regular church service! The heavy gold dossal (drape) covering the windows behind the altar was a real nuisance to take down and put up.

It was our church home, and we quickly became active in every aspect of church life even though my mother desperately wanted us to join the First Presbyterian Church downtown, we remained steadfast in our Anglican traditions and our children were all confirmed.

All three children were acolytes carrying banners and flags at Acolyte Festivals in Raleigh, N. C. and Lolly sang in our little choir. One Christmas Eve, we came close to total disaster when Lolly's hair went up in flames during the Candlelight Procession. We really needed incense at that time, but as I recall, Timothy Kimbrough was the first to have "Smoke N Bells."

We held fast to the traditions. The flowers could not be higher than the altar cross, which had to be placed to the right of the altar. When Father Kimbrough moved the altar out from the wall and faced his flock for the first time, this caused great consternation.

Gradually, the complexion of St. David's began to change. Additions to St. David's include beautiful new chandeliers, warm red carpet, the renovation of the entire inside of the church and the construction of a new parish hall by Whitehead Enterprises, Design and Construction, Inc., the installation by James Whitehead and his father, Oren, of the beautiful Tiffany windows from the original church, the very lovely memorial windows designed and created by local stained glass artist, Steve Weir, Dan Williamson's gilding of the Celtic cross and the votive stand, the laying of the labyrinth, using buttermilk and moss, involving everyone, the additions of the memorial garden, and the columbarium built by Whitehead Enterprises. David Adam's faithful and steadfast tending of the grounds supplies us with beautiful beads of color.

Our struggle with numbers is an ongoing fact. But it is quite amazing what has been accomplished in my 34 year membership with this special congregation. My dear fellow parishioners have survived the ebb and flow over the years, the doors have never closed, the work of the church, and the message of Christ continues to touch lives, near and far. We have lost precious families not to the Christian faith but to the freedom of choice. I thank God that we are free to choose where we feel most nurtured in our spiritual journey.

Thanks be to God!

Carol Whitehead

Memories of St. David's Episcopal Church

Pancake Suppers - David Adams

I have many good memories of St. David's. It is a wonderful family, sharing love, tears, ups and downs. In 1987, even though this branch of the Williamso family had been in Laurinburg for 13 years, we had not found a church which we felt was "our church" . I was the first to attend St. David's and was soon joined by Dan, Todd, Lourdes, Lauren, and Alexander. The "little girls" were baptized on All Saints Day and the adults were confirmed later that fall. Grandson Daniel soon followed and then son Eric. Matt and Aaron were baptized. A bitter, sweet time was Dan's memorial service in 1999 at which time Daniel served as crucifier and Lauren and Alex carried the torches. Suzanne played Rachmaninoff on the piano and the service closed with "Amazing Grace" played on the bagpipes. We are blessed to be joined by our new Missioner, Marty. - Jackie Willamson

Market Days - William Adams

I remember Reverend Timothy's Kimbrough's service which had a sense of mystery and the Spiritual. I had never experienced incense and all the "bells and whistles" before. I just loved it! I also remember singing with the choir lead by Timothy Kimbrough. - Minor Glenn

The removal of the huge trees and replacements - Anonymous

The celebration of the Millennium was quite an event at St. Episcopal Church. Lights hung from the trees outside the church, a barrel fire was set up outside the church and a TaizÈ prayer area was arranged in the church. The candlelight and music in the TaizÈ area was beautiful. Parishioners enjoyed great fellowship at this special New Year's celebration. - Bonnie Glenn

Upon returning from a trip to Illinois, Eric was so excited as he wanted me to see something he had made for the church. The surprise was the Fourteen Stations of the Cross which he had wood-burned and gold leafed on slabs of ash. Needless to say, I was thrilled. and always look forward to seeing them displayed during Lent at St. David's, - Jackie Williamson

James "Mac" Mackenzie, installing the stained glass windows, and Morgan windows reinstallation - Brad Bethel

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Dan and I visited several churches on our trip to California. Upon our return Dan crafted a beautiful votive candle stand, using ideas from candle stands he saw on our trip. The votive candle stand became a beautiful artifact of St. David's. - Jackie Williamson

Our small youth group traveled to several areas of Mexico in August of 1998. Michele Moore planned a horseback riding trip up the mountain to a small village. I had never tried to ride a horse but decided I would try on this occasion. A guide and his horse was attached to my horse by a rope and I rode a horse the whole trip. I am so glad I did! - Bonnie Glenn

Katie Smith and Alice Deaton did attend the "old St. David's" before it was torn down in 1951 after Sam Rizk bought the property on which he built the A&P store - he bought additional property so that he had a large enough lot. The Smith family, which included Alfred, Alice and their mother lived across the street from the church. Katie lived there for awhile after she and Alfred were married. As I understand, St. David's congregation met at the American Legion building from 1951 until 1953 when the present building was erected. Denise was baptized in the American Legion building. When Denise was 18 months old the whole family moved to Florida where they lived for 20 years. Joe and Alice Smith Deaton also moved to Florida. - Anonymous

Special memories of St. David's to me are the Ukrainian Egg Decorating Workshop and the Finger Labyrinth Workshop that Jane Bruce led, the spiritual qualities that Jane Bruce brought to the celebration of the Eucharist, the comfort and support that Jane gave me through difficult times, that worked because Jane knew me and therefore said just the right thing! I am very thankful to Jane Bruce for bringing the organ and music she brought to St. David's. - Minor Glenn

When I was in high school, Timothy Kimbrough took our small youth group to Durham, NC. We stayed the night at a church, where that night we watched "The Life of Brian," and volunteered at a soup kitchen the next morning. - Bonnie Glenn

Memories

E.C.W.

Our women's group has been the longest-lived group in the church. We have had various formats over the years. Some years we met for tea and conversation in various homes. We would have formal meetings and agendas. Other years we met in homes for affirming sessions and baby showers and salad suppers. Lately we have been meeting in the Parish Hall at the round tables. The bands of friendship, and motives of helping others have kept the group afloat. Our yearly Market Day has stood the test of time also. We have experienced changes here also. We used to have the event in the Sunday School Building and sell natchodoches for lunch. We had a White Elephant table and crafts. Now we have soup and bread lunch and sell poinsettias with our baked and frozen goods. There has always been some type of tension with Market Day and the sale of wreathes and garland. Kind of goes back to Adam and Eve, men and women looking at completing a task differently. The good of the funds raised by the ECW has spread far and wide. We have many organizations that we support through the Diocese. We purchased the heating unit for the Sanctuary, which has served us over 20 years. We paid for the new Sanctuary carpet, that moved us into the 21st century, from lime green to burgundy. We are not yet done in our evolving. We have talk of new meeting venues and avenues for fellowship. Who knows what our group will look like in another 100 years?

Volleyball

Back in the days B.C. (before children) the younger folk at St.David's met twice weekly for volleyball tournaments. We had joined the Parks and Rec league and would travel to the old Gibson Gym to play other co-ed adult teams. We had our team t-shirts and our own cheering section. It was a good time of fellowship and exercise and bruises. We played for a couple of years, until the babies that had been born stopped being content to stay in the strollers while their parents hit the white ball.

Music

The bell ringers of St.David's played together for about 3 years. We met weekly under the direction and wand of Deb Bridges. We started simple; most of us had never touched a bell. We became a cohesive unit that could perform some darn tough music, to our distinct surprise! We would look at the music Deb had picked out, or the music that the Director of the Bell Choir Festival had selected and declare that there was no way we could learn to play it. Months later, playing along with all the other choirs, we would have to pinch ourselves, our little bell choir could play the music, and up to tempo to boot. We worked hard and played hard and enjoyed ourselves. We had "St.David's Ringers" shirts

to perform in and looked smashing in our yellow shirts with our burgundy tables and flashing gold bells.

Rectory Upgrade

I remember the workdays that we had at the Rectory before Jane Bruce moved in. I was told about the renters we had before the Kimbroughs moved into the rectory. We had had renters for a while. They were not like our wonderful renter now, Scott Freshcorn. These renters had done some damage to the interior and even had a fire in the middle of the living room! We had to have the carpets changed, the cabinets cleaned and lots of painting too. This was also a time before the siding. We had to paint the house, and it had lots of dentifrice just below the roof that was a royal pain to paint. That's when some of the windows got painted shut. We had a big "pull-it" day when we did some yard renovations and pulled out lots of the old ragged shrubs in front of the house.

The Divorce


Our priest, Timothy Kimbrough, took us by surprise when he announced that he had taken another position in Chapel Hill. We always knew that he would leave us for "bigger and better" but not so soon. We had about 6 of us who were pregnant at that time and Timothy told us that he would not be able to baptize our babies. We did have a "blessing of the pregnant women" and it was quite a sight to see, all those "preggers" women up at the altar surrounding the young bearded priest. Before Tim left, we had a service of terminating a pastoral relationship. We called it the divorce service, and it was very painful.

Saints and Sinners

This was an eclectic group that met fairly regularly during the year. It was comprised of the young adults and other self-selected adults in the church. It was a time for them to fellowship with no kids. We had potlucks, progressive dinners, road rallies, treasure hunts, beach trips, volleyball games, you name it. Someone had an idea and called a date and the ball rolled from there. We usually had some type of discussion during the time together. I remember one long discussion of whether Jesus would allow beer in the sanctuary. We compromised and put the beer in the kitchen. At that time, we had no Parish Hall so used the body of the church for all our activities. We would move chairs around and bring tables in and sit to eat.

The Curtain

Actually, we had two memorable curtains. The dossal curtain was behind the altar, where the Morgan windows are now. There was nothing to see behind it. We had to hang curtains on the curtain rod according to the season. The way I did it was to stand on the altar in my stocking feet and change the curtain. Of course, I made sure I was alone when I did it, so as not to shock anyone. When we moved the altar out the dossal curtain went away because the layout was changed.

The other curtain was St. David's version of a rood screen. It was an old, ugly curtain that was shaped like this: . One had to pull it slowly so the accordion shape would

unwrap correctly. It was where the Epiphany star hung in the altar area. The Vestry decided that when we did our renovations that the curtain had to go. One day, it disappeared into the dumpster. With a new coat of paint the sanctuary looked like new and visitors did not even know that it was gone. And Jesus was not upset to see us eating and drinking and fellowshiping in sight of the altar and umbrae (which holds the reserve sacrament).

St.David's Day

Many times our patronal feast day is in Lent and we do not really celebrate it. One year, we decided to have a potluck that featured leeks. Leeks were what the soldiers on St.David's of Wales's side wore to differentiate them from the enemy. We had all sorts of tasty dishes with scallions, leeks, and onions. One parishioner took the idea all the way and wore leeks pinned to her hair and tucked behind her ear. That was memorable.

The other "real" celebration of St.David's Day was about 5 years ago when we set aside the day for our festivities. We had an Eisteddfod, a Welsh festival, including a weird ball game that was a type of soccer/football/rugby game. We did Welsh crafts and ate Welsh foods and learned some Welsh traditions. Then we had a good old potluck of all types of food. It rained that day but that did not dampen our spirits!

Carolyn Beranek