

# This Far By Faith

A HISTORY OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN  
PRESENCE IN

★ The Episcopal Diocese *of Texas*





# The Mission of the Commission on Black Ministry

The Commission on Black Ministry is an outreach ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas for the clergy and laity to promote awareness, education, and reconciliation for racial and cultural concerns in the diocese.

Carole A. Pinkett, Commission on Black Ministry Chair, 2015



The history of Blacks in the Diocese of Texas reaches to back to the very formation of the Episcopal Church in this part of God's Kingdom. Some of that history is marked with sorrow, as when our missionary bishop left to serve in the Confederate Army. Some of our earliest church members owned slaves. Our history is marked also with joy in the planting of the very first Episcopal Church in Texas specifically for the African-Americans in Galveston.

Within these pages is our shared history, for it belongs to all of us. It is a part of all of us, in our formation as Christians and in our formation as a Diocese. I am grateful to Carole Pinkett, Kathy Culmer and the entire Commission on Black Ministry for their work over a period of three years to gather the stories of the growth of the Episcopal Church through this very diverse group of Black Episcopalians. Each and every one has brought distinction to our Church and to the faith given us by Christ Jesus.

Blessings,

The Rt. Rev. C. Andrew Doyle ★ The IX Bishop of Texas

***On August 2, 1863, Bishop Gregg held services for black slaves on a plantation in Wilbarger. He baptized one black child in private on November 3. On February 9, 1864, the Bishop baptized five black children in Austin County. During the year between the 1863 and 1864 Annual Councils, Bishop Gregg baptized nine black children and officiated the funeral of one black person.***

—Summary of Bishop Alexander Gregg's (First Bishop of Texas)  
Address: A Report to Council on Black Outreach, Christ Church, Houston, 1864

# *This Far By Faith*

## A HISTORY OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN PRESENCE IN THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF TEXAS



Council records reflect that the Episcopal Diocese of Texas has extended the ministry of the Church to African-Americans in one way or another for much of its existence. Facing the challenges of slavery and its aftermath, two world wars, the Civil Rights era and more, the Church has been challenged for as many years to find meaningful ways to reconcile the message of the Gospel with living out the Gospel. While it has remained committed to serving all of God's people, it continues to seek meaningful ways to provide ministry, support ministry and provide leadership that will sustain healthy and vibrant congregations where there is a minority presence.

The Episcopal Diocese of Texas currently includes seven predominantly African-American congregations, where African-Americans make up seventy-five percent or more of the church membership. They are St. Augustine of Hippo, Galveston; St. John the Baptist, Tyler; St. Luke the Evangelist, Houston; St. James', Houston; St. James', Austin; St. Francis of Assisi, Prairie View; and Hope, Houston (the name given to the merged St. Michael's and Incarnation). Additionally, Christ the King Episcopal Church, currently under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Johannes George, serves a racially and culturally diverse congregation, with membership that includes descendants from many parts of the African Diaspora.

Since St. Augustine was established in 1884 as the first Episcopal congregation to serve people of African descent in the Diocese of Texas, these seven churches as well as Resurrection Church(1956-2000) have been identified as primarily African-American congregations in the Diocese of Texas. Council records indicate that a mission for coloreds in Houston, The Mission of Our Savior, was proposed to Council in 1900, but never received approval and that there were at least two other groups that held worship but never made it to Mission status: St. Michael's in Beaumont (1920-1928) and St. Stephen's in Lufkin (1945-1955).

For the surviving congregations, theirs has been a journey of faith, hard work, endurance and the blessing of Almighty God. The stories of their journeys included in this document have been gathered from a variety of sources, including journal notes compiled under the auspices of the late Janie Stevens, Missioner for Christian Formation; histories generously shared from the archives of the individual churches; and from Robert Joseph Moore's 1993 dissertation, *A Narrative History of Black Episcopal Churches in the Diocese of Texas*.

It has been my pleasure and privilege to read and begin to tell their stories...as One.

Sincerely,

Kathy H. Culmer ★ Storyteller

*We've come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord,  
trusting in his holy word. He's never failed us yet.  
Oh! We can't turn back, we've come this far by faith.*

—Albert A. Goodson, 1963 *Lift Every Voice and Sing Hymnal*, p. 208

*We have in Texas to-day about three hundred thousand of this class of people [Freedmen], taking the census of 1870... And five-sixths of this number, or two hundred and fifty thousand, are to be found within the limits of Middle and Eastern Texas proper, the bulk of whom is embraced in fifteen or twenty counties widely removed from each other. Here, then, is work—ample, glorious work for one Bishop... A Missionary for multitudes of souls, ignorant and benighted, with hereditary tendencies to the wildest religious fanaticism and superstitious excess. And yet a race, for the most part of deep religious instincts, full of emotional feeling, inclined to follow, and easily led; but, for these very reasons, needing most of all other to be properly trained, thoroughly instructed, and guided and led aright.*

**—Bishop Alexander Gregg, First Bishop of Texas  
On “The Spiritual Care of the Freedmen,” 1874 Council**

# ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO EPISCOPAL CHURCH GALVESTON, TEXAS

## 1884

St. Augustine of Hippo Episcopal Church, originally St. Augustine's, is the oldest African-American church in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas. St. Augustine has the added distinction of having been recognized as a historical treasure, nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as one of the ten (10) Endangered Sacred Spaces to Save in 2001.

The congregation was first organized in June 1884, in response to the petitions of fifty (50) seamen from the British West Indies to the Rev. Charles M. Parkman, then rector of Grace Episcopal church, for pastoral care and Episcopal ministrations. Prior to 1884, the African-American Episcopalians of Galveston could attend worship services held at Grace Church only on Wednesday and Friday evenings. For many years, St. Augustine was known as the "Islanders' Church."



In the summer of 1885, Bishop Alexander Gregg, the first Bishop of Texas, brought the Rev. Dr. William Floyd, a Black clergyman and medical doctor from Louisville, Kentucky, to the shores of Galveston. Charged with organizing a mission on the island for people of color, Floyd served as founder and first vicar of the mission, which then became known as St. Augustine's Mission. A temporary site for the first chapel was established on the corner of 15th Street and Avenue L. Floyd preached his first sermon on July 5, 1885. The congregation began to grow, and by 1886 a listing of their regular worship service information could be found in the *Galveston News*.

Floyd traveled tirelessly around the diocese and the country preaching and seeking funds for a permanent chapel; however, he did not live to see the chapel become a reality. He died during the epidemic of yellow fever in August 1887, having contracted the disease while helping to care for victims of the epidemic.

On September 16, 1888, the Rev. Thomas White Cain of Richmond, Virginia, arrived in Galveston, Texas, as a missionary priest. Cain was born a slave in Petersburg, Virginia. He was made deacon and priest by Bishop Francis McNeece Whittle, fifth Bishop of Virginia, and was in charge of St. Philip's Church for colored people in Richmond, Virginia, for many years. He transferred to the Diocese of Texas in 1888 and was placed in charge of St. Augustine's Mission. A graduate of the very first class of the Bishop Payne Divinity School (founded in Petersburg, Virginia in 1878 to train African-Americans for ministry in the Episcopal Church), Cain was sent to be the second vicar of this newly organized mission. Under his leadership, the congregation made a great deal of progress raising funds for a permanent chapel. By 1897, there were more than 180 active African-American communicants. A church was built in 1889 on the southeast corner of 22nd Street and Broadway, right in the heart of Galveston. The first service was held on Ash Wednesday 1889. Just before 1900, a new chancel area had been constructed within the church.

On September 8, 1900, disaster struck. The devastating hurricane, which has become known as the 1900 Storm, washed away the church and the rectory. All records, confirmations and other official acts at the mission before the 1900 Storm were destroyed. The greater loss, though, was both Cain and his wife, who both perished in the storm. After the storm, surviving members of St. Augustine's parish held their services in Eaton Memorial Chapel at Trinity Episcopal Church, Galveston, through the courtesy of their rector, the Rev. Dr. Stephen Moylan Bird.

Following Cain's death the congregation remained without a vicar until the arrival of the Rev. Walter Henry Marshall in 1901. Marshall had been the vicar of St. Phillip's, San Antonio. He inherited the daunting task of building a new church, and under his leadership, the current sanctuary was constructed on the former site. The total cost of construction was \$8,500 and the first service in the new church was held on Easter Day, 1902 with great joy and pride. By the end of 1902 the loan had been repaid in total with funds raised solely by the congregation and the vicar. Bishop George Kinsolving consecrated St. Augustine's Mission on St. Thomas' Day, December 21, 1902, as a memorial to the life and ministry of the Rev. Thomas White Cain and dedicated it under the patronage of St. Augustine of Hippo, the fifth Bishop of North Africa.

Trinity Church donated its former altar to St. Augustine's in memory of Bird. It is the very altar that graces the sanctuary today. Cain and Bird had been friends since boyhood in Petersburg, Virginia. Cain's father worked as a sexton at Grace Church, the same church where Bird's father had served as senior warden. Friends and associates, both Cain and Bird served as deputies to the General Conventions of 1889 and 1892, representing the Diocese of Texas.

Marshall served the congregation tirelessly for nearly a decade during a difficult reconstructive missionary period and resigned in 1910. During his tenure, the first ordination was held at St. Augustine's.

David Franklin Taylor, a confirmand from St. Augustine and former African Methodist Episcopal minister, returned to St. Augustine in 1910 after spending his first four years of ministry at St. John's, Tyler. The following year, he was ordained to the priesthood and remained as vicar until 1912, when he was transferred to Louisiana.

While serving as chaplain to the Sixth U. S. Calvary from 1913 to 1915, the Rev. C. W. Freeland held



services at St. Augustine's, as well as at Episcopal churches in Dickinson and Texas City. The Rev. George Gilbert Walker, who had transferred from Kansas to serve as archdeacon for Colored Work, succeeded Freeland, serving from 1918 to 1921. He served simultaneously at St. John's, Tyler and St. Clement's, Houston, but his primary care was for St. Augustine's. The Rev. George Beaufort moved to Galveston in 1926 where he served as archdeacon for Colored Work, vicar of St. Augustine's and vicar of St. Luke the Evangelist, the new name given to St. Clement's, Houston.

The Rev. William Hastings Bright-Davies—born in Ghana and educated in Africa, Britain and the U.S.—moved to Galveston to serve as church school superintendent and lay reader in 1925 and was sent to seminary in 1928 by Bishop Clinton S. Quin as a candidate from St. Augustine's. He was ordained to the diaconate in 1930 and ordained to the priesthood in July 1931. From 1931 to 1940, he lived in Galveston and served both St. Luke's and St. Augustine's, continuing at St. Augustine's until 1948. During this time, he also served as archdeacon for Colored Work in the Diocese. He was the cornerstone of the mission's growth and St. Augustine's longest tenured priest, serving faithfully for 18 years until he was transferred out of the Diocese. He started the summer camping program for Black children and desegregated Camp Allen when it was located on Trinity Bay, the northeast portion of Galveston Bay.

In 1940, in order to facilitate St. Augustine's growing ministry to young people and to better serve its members, St. Augustine's sold its property at 22nd and Broadway and purchased a more spacious lot on the corner of 41st and Avenue M½. The church was literally cut in half and moved with the parsonage to its current site between July and August 1940. A small fellowship hall was constructed at the rear of the church. This structure served the congregation until a larger fellowship could be constructed sometime before 1955.

Six months following the resignation of Bright-Davies in 1948, the Rev. Charles Taylor arrived as the thirteenth vicar. He remained for two years, until 1951, when he was reassigned to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. During the interim, lay reader Tim Mack maintained Morning Prayer with the Rev. Lionel DeForest, celebrating Eucharist monthly.

In 1953, the Rev. Fred Walter Sutton, a recent graduate of the General Theological Seminary and a deacon in holy orders, arrived in Galveston. He began his ministry with daily services and vacation church school for the neighborhood children. Youth involvement was at the core of Sutton's ministry. In 1954, St. Augustine celebrated its 70th anniversary by making preparations for the erection of new classrooms and a new vicarage. The old vicarage, a two-story frame house, was sold and removed from the premises to make room for the new building. Sutton's ordination to the priesthood by Bishop John Hines capped off an eventful year. In December 1955, the construction of a two-story classroom facility and parsonage was planned. In 1957, St. Augustine was admitted to Council as a parish, and Sutton became its first rector.

St. Augustine has a long history of commitment to community outreach and discipleship. Historically, it has been the cornerstone of civil rights activism and the locus for African-American youth activities in Galveston. St. Augustine is the founding church and contributing congregation to the formation of St. Vincent's House, a social service agency to the underserved population of Galveston. What started in 1954 as a summer outreach program to the youth living in the disadvantaged area "North of Broadway" evolved into a comprehensive ministry serving the wider Galveston community. On May 15, 1955, Bishop Hines dedicated St. Vincent's Settlement House. Sutton is best remembered for the energy and commitment he put into this small missionary outreach to the African-American youth. Then known simply as St. Augustine Mission House, it provided a nurturing space and safe haven for the children to play and grow under Christian leadership.

The Rev. James Murray served as associate rector under Sutton from 1958 to 1959, while also serving at St. Vincent's House. After Sutton left, Murray continued to work at St. Vincent's House until 1964. The

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Rev. Harvey Buxton served as rector from 1981 to 1990. In 1985, St. Augustine of Hippo celebrated her centennial.

Today, the legacy of these many pioneering Episcopalians continues with a church family that comes from different ethnic, social and economic backgrounds, but who are knit together by the Holy Spirit.

In 2008, Hurricane Ike destroyed St. Augustine's parish hall and classrooms, but the community remained, rebuilding the structures better than before. Under the leadership of its current vicar, the Rev. Chester Makowski, St. Augustine has once again become a leader in the Galveston community. The church is an official host for World AIDS Day, as well as a home to a community garden, an annual art show and an annual BBQ featuring Neil "Bigmista" Strawder, a nationally famous BBQ chef, who grew up and acolyted at St. Augustine.

Of the church's role going forward, Makowski offers this: "I think the role of St. Augustine's is to continue the rich tradition that it always has had of ministering to those who are, societally, a little bit on the edges. That is what we will continue to do now; break through these social barriers that we have."

*Surely a grave responsibility rests herein upon the Church. This large class of our population, to which we are bound by so many sacred ties and affecting associations, demands the most anxious care at our hands, and we should strive to give them the inestimable benefits and incalculable blessings in the church, of a sound, well regulated and enlightened Christianity.*

—Bishop Alexander Gregg, 1874

## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST TYLER, TEXAS

# 1892

The second African-American congregation in the Diocese of Texas began as a Sunday school for Blacks in Marshall, Texas, and eventually grew to become St. John the Baptist in Tyler. James I. N. Thompson, ordained deacon at Trinity Episcopal Church in Marshall, had been conducting Sunday school classes, but efforts to locate a suitable building for a Black mission there were unsuccessful. When a group of people in Tyler showed interest, Thompson founded St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church as a parochial mission of Christ Church, Tyler, in 1891. A building was purchased, a school and a church began to function, and St. John the Baptist was admitted at annual Diocesan Council as a mission of the Diocese of Texas in 1892. The parochial school began with 59 students.

In August of 1892, St. John's had eight families, and by the end of the year, 24 persons were baptized. Thompson served St. John's until 1897, when he was transferred to Alabama. During the five years he was at St. John's, more than 45 persons were baptized and 33 were confirmed.

From 1898 to 1900, Robert Gordon, lay reader, served as minister-in-charge, conducting Morning and Evening Prayer. In June of 1901, Gordon left to serve at St. Phillip's, San Antonio.

While it continued to face challenges, the congregation persevered in their efforts to have an impact on the community under the leadership of Deacon Robert Gordon, who wrote the following in his 1901 report to Council in 1901: "It is still uphill work here. There are, notwithstanding, some encouraging features of the work. More of the young people are being reached and brought under educational and religious influence. The public services are better attended on Sundays, and on the whole there is an increased interest in the cause, for which we are devoutly thankful."

Having confirmed 24 persons in St. John's in May of 1902, Bishop George Kinsolving realized the potential good St. John's could do for the community, but expressed his misgivings in a later journal entry. "The Church," he said, "has an opportunity of doing a good work among the colored people at this point, but I am not sure whether the Church cares to save and uplift these people or not. During my visit I was compelled to surrender the fire insurance policy on the property, and that, too, by a New England company, which informed me that they would insure no property used by negroes, whether owned by the Church or not. God pity New England and Texas, if we fail in our duty in this direction."

In 1904, Bishop Kinsolving licensed David Franklin Taylor to act as a lay reader at St. John the Baptist's Chapel in Tyler. That was also the year the Bishop gave authorization to erect a school building. Bishop Kinsolving held the examination of Mr. Taylor for the Diaconate on January 24, 1906, and the next day he was ordained to the Diaconate in St. Augustine's Chapel in Galveston. Rev. David Franklin Taylor served as Deacon-in-Charge from 1906 to 1910, when he was ordained priest and moved to St. Augustine's in Galveston.

At the time, Rev. Taylor's term of service was the longest in the history of the Mission. In his 1906 report to Council, he reported the following progress of the school, which remained an important outreach of the Mission: "The school room has been furnished with desks, and 30 pupils have been enrolled during the present session. Industrial features would greatly increase the usefulness of the school." As the parochial

school continued to play a significant role in the life of the church and community, Taylor continued his appeals for support from the Diocese to expand to the inclusion of an industrial school.

Records show that Robert Gordon, who served from 1898 to 1900,, returned to serve St. John's again from 1912 to 1915. In 1912, the school was still showing signs of being healthy with a reported enrollment of 55 and an average attendance of 35.

During the year following the departure of Rev. Gordon, the Rev. George E. Platt, Rector of Christ Church, Tyler, conducted regular services for St. John's from 1915 to 1916..

The Church was under lay leadership until the arrival of the Rev. J. Beaufort Boyce in 1920. Rev. Boyce, a graduate of Bishop Payne Divinity School, had transferred from Kentucky. He was ordained deacon in 1920 by the Bishop of Kentucky and priest by Bishop Quin in 1921 at St. John's. He served St. John's until 1926.

In his 1925 Council address, Bishop Quin praised the progress of St. John's work and the leadership of Rev. Boyce: "We really have at St. John's, Tyler, the foundation for an excellent work. The school numbers 53, and has domestic science and agricultural courses. The Rev. John B. Boyce has remained faithful in this field and deserves honorable mention for refusing the temptation of alluring calls elsewhere."

From 1930 to 1934, the Rev. Millard F. Newman served as vicar. Then, in 1935, John Dublin Epps was ordained deacon at St. Luke's, Houston, and placed in charge of St. John's. In 1938, he was ordained a priest at St. John's and maintains the distinction of being its longest serving clergy. Bishop Quin is credited with having known the needs of the varying sectors of the Diocese and of the people. It was this sensitivity, along with his insight that led him to realize "the makings of a rector for the Negro mission at Tyler" in the college-trained insurance man serving as sexton at Houston's Christ Church.

Born in Kingstree, South Carolina, John Epps received an undergraduate degree at Claflin College in Orangeburg, South Carolina, and a law degree in 1914 from Howard University. He practiced law and sold insurance in Oklahoma until 1927, when the family moved to Houston, where he was instrumental in building St. Luke's Episcopal Church. He served as vicar at St. John's until his retirement in 1956. While serving as vicar at St. John's, he also served as "Dean of the Colored Convocation," supervised work at Church of the Advent (now St. James') in Austin, St. Francis of Assisi in Prairie View and the summer camping program for Black youth. Many years after Rev. Epps retired, he continued to serve as the priest of St. John's. Having never owned a car, Rev. Epps walked nearly everywhere in Tyler. When traveling to Austin, Houston, or Galveston, he took either the bus or the train.

In 1953, the church building for St. John's was moved to its current location at 514 W. Vance Street with rectory and parish house. This location had the advantage of being closer to the neighborhoods of parishioners and to Texas College, where several parishioners taught.

For many years following the death of Rev. Epps in 1979, St. John's operated under the leadership of various supply clergy and lay leaders until the arrival of the Rev. Susan Davidson in 2009.



*The Christ-like mind, however, recognizes the worth of others, and frequently acknowledges that no man can live to himself. It says: I am my brother's keeper, and his sufferings are my sufferings, and his needs my opportunity for ministering to them as far as it is in my power to do so... It rejoices to give of its means, be it little or much, with which God has blessed it.*

—Bishop George Herbert Kinsolving, 1899

# ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST HOUSTON, TEXAS

## 1920

St. Luke the Evangelist Episcopal Church is the oldest African-American Episcopal Church in the city of Houston. St. Luke's began in 1920 as St. Clement's Episcopal Church through the organizational efforts of Dr. R.O. Roett and others. The first service of the church was held in the basement of the Carnegie Library at Robin and Frederick Streets, near what is presently downtown Houston. The Rev. George Walker preached the first sermon. The Rev. Walker was recruited from Kansas in 1918 by Bishop Clinton Quin to serve as Archdeacon for Colored Work and to serve primarily at St. Augustine's in Galveston. His work was expanded, however, to include serving as clergy for St. Clement's and St. John the Baptist in Tyler.

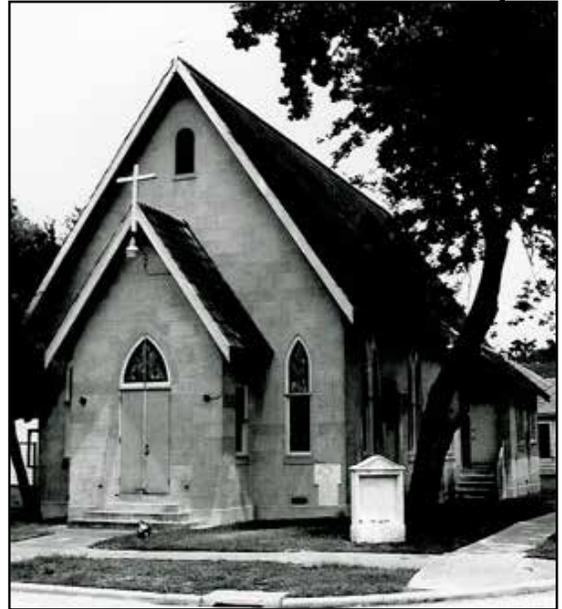
The Rev. John Wilson Freeman was received from Washington as a deacon in 1920 and was placed in charge of St. Clement's, where he served for two years, before returning to Washington at the end of 1922. Rev. Freeman was succeeded by Walter Payne Stanley, who had been received as a candidate for Holy Orders from Kentucky.

He was ordained deacon in 1922 by Bishop Kinsolving, who placed him in charge of St. Clement's. On December 3rd of that year, St. Clement's held its first service at a new chapel located in a building at 2409 Hadley St. The following year, on June 7, 1923, the Rev. Stanley was ordained priest by Bishop Quin, and in February of 1924, he transferred back to Kentucky.

St. Clement's was formally accepted as a mission of the Diocese of Texas at Diocesan Council in 1923. The organization of this mission represented the third church for African-American in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, preceded only by St. Augustine of Hippo in Galveston, which was begun in 1884, and St. John's in Tyler, which was begun in 1892.

The Rev. J. Beaufort Boyce, who had been brought into the Diocese earlier to serve as Archdeacon for Colored Work and to serve St. John's, Tyler, served at St. Clement's, along with St. Augustine's in Galveston from 1926 to 1928. In 1927, while being served by Rev. Boyce, the congregation was renamed St. Luke the Evangelist and readmitted as a Mission of the Diocese. Several families played key roles in helping to bring this effort to fruition; among them were those of Carter Wesley, John D. Epps, G.P.A. Forde, Donald McClean, Connie Guess, Dr. Roett, and the Mitchells.

The Rev. William Hastings Bright-Davies, who was born in Ghana and educated in Africa, Britain, and the U.S., moved to Galveston to serve as church school superintendent and lay reader in 1925 and was sent to seminary in 1928 by Bishop Quin as a candidate from St. Augustine's in Galveston. He first served as lay reader and later attended Bishop Payne Divinity School as a postulant under Bishop Quinn. Ordained to the diaconate in 1930 and into the priesthood in July 1931, Rev. Bright-Davies served both St. Luke's and St. Augustine's from 1931 to 1940, while still living in Galveston. He continued to serve St. Augustine's until 1948.



Under the leadership of the Rev. Thomas (Toussant) V. Harris, who served at St. Luke's from 1949 to 1953, St. Luke's became a parish in 1945, making him the church's first rector. It was also under his leadership that the church began its outreach efforts on the campus of Texas Southern University in 1951, to Episcopal students as well as non-Episcopal students on campus, providing counseling services, as well as opportunities for recreation and fellowship. For a number of years, the Episcopal Club was considered to be a leader in the activities of the Religious Council at Texas Southern.

In 1931, using funds raised by the congregation and a grant from Bishop Quin, St. Luke's built its first permanent structure at the corner of Simmons and Burkett streets. This facility served the congregation for more than 30 years. Later, Lamar Fleming, an Episcopalian and Houston businessman, donated the two and a quarter acres of land on which the church is presently located. For a brief period, St. Luke's met at the YMCA across the street from its present location, while the new church was under construction. The present building was occupied on November 3, 1963, while under the leadership of the Rev. Granville V. Peaks, Jr., who served as rector from 1954 to 1981. The mortgage was paid and the mortgage papers ceremoniously burned on St. Luke's Day 1979.

The current facility seats nearly 200 people and has a marble altar standing parallel to a wall of Colorado River-washed stones. The windows are of irregularly designed stained glass, which allows the sanctuary to be doused with poetic light. Hanging in front of the wall of stone is a gigantic red wooden cross.

At the turn of this century, St. Luke the Evangelist was almost destroyed by Tropical Storm Allison. Without a permanent rector, the members of the congregation banded together with interim rector, the Reverend Jim Scott, and completely restored all of the real property. The beautiful facility where St. Luke's holds its worship today is a testament to the resolve and commitment of its many members and friends. St. Luke's has been a "sturdy rock" and "resting place" in Houston's Third Ward for nearly a century and looks forward to many more years of ministry. Today, St. Luke the Evangelist is a vibrant and active congregation led by the Rev. Francene Young.

*And in the fourth place, I am thinking of the situation close at home*



*where we have been satisfied simply to pass resolution after lynchings have occurred instead of building up a Christian atmosphere or attitude of mind in which it would be impossible for constituted authorities of the law to be thwarted in their protection of prisoners or to connive with or weakly yield to anyone. Do we not have the right to call upon—in the language of the Prayer Book—“all Christian Rulers” whether they be Governors or Peace Officers—to let it be known that such disgraceful lynchings as have taken place in the State of Texas in the past fifteen months shall never again happen.*

**—Bishop Clinton S. Quin, 1936**

# ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH HOUSTON, TEXAS

## 1937

The Rev. Thomas Clarkson organized St. James' mission while serving as City Missionary in Houston. The congregation held their first service on October 3, 1937. The 1938 Diocesan Council approved St. James' as a mission of the Diocese. When Clarkson resigned, he was succeeded by the Rev. Thomas Bagby, who came from St. Mary's, Houston, in 1938.

In 1941, St. James', with Bagby as its first rector, achieved parish status, and the church was consecrated on St. James Day in 1944. The 1940s and the early 1950s marked a period of great physical and spiritual growth. Ground was broken in 1949 for the church building. It was "conceived," financed and built in three months at a cost of \$15,000. As the church grew, the staff was increased to include the Rev. Gordon T. Charlton, who served as assistant rector from 1949 to 1951.

The Rev. Robert L. Johnson served St. James' from 1952 to 1958 and continued the work in progress after Bagby accepted the bishop's call to found a new mission in west Houston, St. Martin's.

St. James', serving at that time an all-Anglo congregation, became one of the largest Episcopal congregations in Houston. It boasted several very active women's guilds and a youth program that involved and included in its activities and programs young people who lived in the area but were not members of the church.

By the late fifties, the neighborhood around St. James' was changing. African-Americans were buying homes and white flight had begun. The winds of change intruded and disrupted the harmony of this previously idyllic enterprise. The push for integration of neighborhoods and schools motivated many who lived in and around the church to relocate to areas where churches and schools might not be affected by integration. St. James' membership suffered a drastic reduction and its future was in doubt.

At the same time, some members of St. Luke's Episcopal Church (an all-Negro parish) who sought spiritual fulfillment and geographic proximity began, in small numbers, to attend St. James'. Their reception, while not rude, was not warm and probably caused more members of St. James' to leave. The Rev. Keith Bardin arrived at St. James' in 1958 and offered his voice to the concerns. At a St. James' vestry meeting on June 16, 1961, he said: "Along with all of our problems, we are involved with one of the roughest of church problems today, namely, how parish responsibility can be achieved in a world of such extensive and rapid change. It is a question from which no Christian can walk away, though many have and will try. Christian accountability is to God himself and not to what we may think or feel or what someone else thinks or believes. The Spirit will intervene if we can put aside our antagonisms and solutions long enough to hear. It is in this spirit that I hope we can meet and begin to forge some difficult answers to some tough questions."

In September 1959, Joan Bookman, at that time a recent Howard University graduate, became the first African-American to transfer to St. James'. In October of that year, Bardin met with and invited several members of St. Luke's to become members of St. James'. Several persons accepted the offer; among them were two founding families of St. Luke's, the R.O. Roetts and the G.P.A. Fordes. Nine families transferred immediately; Evelyn Thornton is currently the only surviving member from that group.

Several white families remained or joined early on and contributed to the peaceful integration of St. James'. Among them were the Tellepsens, Cantrells, Kahles, Horseys, Nettletons, Spears, Malletts and Eugenia Rayzor. Other families joined as extensions of the chaplaincy programs at the local universities:

those Rev. Penrose and Derby Hirst, the Rev. John and Vivian Worrell and the Rev. Albert and Emily Etting.

By the time Bardin left in 1962, the pattern of integration was well established, and African-Americans were an integral part of St. James' Church.

Prior to the arrival of Rev. John Clarke Sanders in 1963, the Rev. Hartsell Gray and the Rev. Frances Parke Smith, Jr. served as rector

pro-tem and locum tenens, respectively. Sanders wrote a thesis on the Episcopal Church in racial transition and noted: "with all the problems of any parish, yet with people who choose to be there and were willing to pay the price to be there. Perceived as strange, unique, frightening, St. James people wanted to stay and grow as a fellowship in Christ and bear witness to the diocese and community of its oneness in Christ." Sanders established the practice of annual family visits, which did much to unify the membership. At the close of the 1960s, St. James' position in the community and the Diocese was again secure.

In 1970, the Rev. James L. Tucker, who had served as locum tenens from 1968 to 1969 while Sanders was on study leave, became rector of St. James'. The Rev. James Murray continued his tenure as assistant rector (which began in 1965) until his death in 1978. The Rev. Wallace Wells served as assistant priest from 1970 until his death in 1984.

St. James School was organized in 1971 by members of the church to provide educational excellence and a positive experience of racial and cultural diversity. In 1975, Marjorie Tucker joined Emily Etting and Eddie Queen, on the school staff. Under her leadership, the school was accredited by the Southwest Association of Episcopal Schools. In 1981, Tucker Hall, a new building to house the school was dedicated; and in 1990, the Eugenia Porter Rayzor Hall, designed to house middle-school students, was dedicated.

During Tucker's tenure, Theodore Lewis, Jr., John Stephen Hines, Helen Havens, William "Dub" Brooks, James T. Tucker and Alice Tucker began their seminary study.

Tucker retired in 1992, having devoted twenty-two years to the growth and progress of St. James' Church. Bettye White served as lay administrator from September 1992 until the Rev. Glynn Harper began as interim rector and served from February 1993 to April 1994.

The Rev. Antoine Campbell was installed as rector in 1994 and served until 1999. The outreach ministry of the church is among the most enduring legacies of that era. The Contemporary Jazz Service, a worship experience to attract young families and college students to St. James'; the Jubilee Ministry, which serves meals to the underprivileged each week; and the St. James' Keepers, which encourages members to stay in contact with persons who live alone, are activities established under the leadership of Campbell.

The Rev. Scott Blick followed Campbell and served as interim rector from 1999 to 2000, and the Rev. Brian Porter served from 2000 to 2001 in that same capacity.

In October 2001, the Rev. Irving Cutter IV became the seventh rector and served until 2006. Cutter spearheaded a re-examination of the mission of the church and the establishment of the Core Values Councils. In November 2003, the main sanctuary was destroyed by a tornado. After a period of mourning



and readjustment, Cutter organized a building committee and a capital fund drive to begin rebuilding the nave and to design a strategic plan for the entire St. James' campus that would greatly enhance the utility and beauty of the campus. "The Steadfast Faith: Embracing the Future Capital Campaign" began as a vehicle for funding the new plan. Hundreds of significant donations, from church members and many others in Houston and around the United States, completed the project. The new church was dedicated in 2007.

In July 2005, the Rev. Roberta Knowles, who had served as transitional deacon under Cutter, became assistant rector. She was ordained a priest in February 2006 and led St. James' for six months after Cutter accepted a call to another church in September of the same year. The Rev. William DeForest and the Rev. Brian Porter served as interim rectors until the Rev. Victor Thomas became the eighth rector of St. James', beginning in January 2009. The Rev. Betty Divine began serving as permanent deacon in 2010.

All of the ministers, interim ministers and assistants, as well as dedicated and hardworking parishioners, have enabled St. James' to remain a united church, determined to carry on its mission to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ through sharing our gifts and bringing together all people.



*Resolved, That we make our own the statement of the Anglican Congress that "in the work of the Church we should welcome people of any race at any service conducted by a priest or layman of any ethnic origin, and bring them into full fellowship of the congregation and its organizations."*

—Statement made on the floor of General Convention, 1956

# ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH AUSTIN, TEXAS

## 1941

The Church of the Advent, the first name for St. James' Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas, was organized on December 7, 1941. The Rev. John D. Epps, vicar of St. John's, Tyler, visited Austin once each month to conduct services during 1940 and 1941. The Diocesan Journal listed Advent, Austin, as an "unorganized mission." Initially, Church of the Advent met in the homes of its members and friends and in other community facilities. After they moved to their first church home in 1947, their name became St. James'.



Church records show that from 1946 to 1949, Epps served as priest-in-charge in Austin as well as being priest-in-charge at St. John's. Epps was also dean of the Colored Convocation of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas.

There was a need to organize a "Negro" congregation because, during this period in the history of the United States, especially in the South, the Episcopal Churches as well as other educational institutions did not welcome "Negroes." According to church records, there were sixteen persons, of whom at least six were already confirmed Episcopalians, who met with Epps to form this congregation.

In 1947, a church building was purchased from another denomination and moved to a site adjacent to the Huston-Tillotson College campus at 1624 East Seventh Street. Shortly after this move, Advent changed its name to St. James'.

The Rev. James Murray served as priest-in-charge from 1949 to 1951. While serving St. James' in his second year, he also served the recently formed St. Francis of Assisi at Prairie View.

At the September 15, 1959, Bishop's Committee meeting, held at the rectory, the Rev. Arthur J. Calloway, vicar from 1952 to 1959, said, "The business consisted of a discussion of a new site for St. James'" Subsequently, a site committee was appointed to investigate the acquisition of additional church property on which to relocate.

The Rev. James Billingsley, vicar from 1959 to 1961, and the Rev. Louis Buck, vicar from 1961 to 1963, were instrumental in leading St. James' in the acquisition of 2.47 acres of land at 3701 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. Buck purchased the land with a personal note that was later assumed by the Diocese of Texas and St. James'. In 1966, concerned about possible urban renewal plans for the Blackshear area surrounding St. James' and pressed for larger facilities, the growing congregation decided to build a new church on the property on East Martin Luther King Blvd. This facility would provide a large church and parish hall to meet the needs of the congregation, and provide a place that would be open to community organizations. On October 4, 1970, the congregation moved into its new location, drawing membership from a number of ethnic groups.



On February 2, 1987, the Bishop's Committee authorized Edward Elliott, treasurer, and Bertha Means, senior warden, to sign a note at First Federal Savings on behalf of St. James' to secure a loan to purchase the land adjacent to the church. This is the land on which the current office is located.

In 1996, St. James' committed itself to the idea of an Episcopal School in East Austin. The school served the needs of children, ages 2–6½, for nearly 20 years before closing in early 2015.

On February 6, 1997, St. James' Church officially became a parish within the Diocese of Texas. Its vicar, the Rev. Bill Miller, became the first rector.

On March 16, 2001, after much work by many, the church's second rector, the Rev. Greg Rickel (now Bishop of Olympia), signed the closing documents on 20.5 acres of land on the corner of Webberville and Tannehill Roads. Since 2007, St. James' Episcopal Church has served God and the community from this most recent location. Members gathered to break ground for the new church building and brought soil from their homes, and in some cases from their countries of origin, to mix into the soil at the base of the church. Vestments and altar hangings for the new church, which included pieces of fabric meaningful to members, were donated to the project. These were crafted into a Gee's Bend style quilt pattern for a truly unique and beautiful offering for the church.

Today, as a result of its commitment, vision and effort, St James' is a blend of nationalities, ethnic groups, and gender orientations that stands proud of its rich cultural community and worship.

*Resolved, That we make our own the statement of the Anglican Congress that "in the work of the Church we should welcome people of any race at any service conducted by a priest or layman of any ethnic origin, and bring them into full fellowship of the congregation and its organizations."*

**—Statement made on the floor of General Convention, 1956**

# ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI EPISCOPAL CHURCH PRAIRIE VIEW, TEXAS

## 1950

St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church had its beginning in 1939 when a small group of Episcopal Church members of the Prairie View A&M College community met to discuss the formation of an Episcopal congregation in Prairie View, Texas. As early as 1943, the Rev. John Epps, as dean of the Colored Convocation, reported to the 94th Council of the Diocese of Texas that, “The work at Houston and Prairie View is showing steady growth ...” Prairie View’s Dean of Women, Maude Ernestine Suarez, was a leading member of this group that worked during the succeeding decade of the 1940s to establish a permanent Episcopal chaplaincy and congregation at Prairie View. The congregation met in the Guest House building on the college campus. In its early days, the Rev. Theodore Lewis, from St. Luke’s, held the service on one Sunday of the month and a layman the remaining Saturdays of the month.

In 1950, this group realized its ambition and formed St. Francis of Assisi mission congregation. It was officially accepted as a mission during the 1950 Diocesan Council. The first vicar for the St. Francis congregation was the Rev. James Murray. A native of Charleston, South Carolina, Murray had attended Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Bishop Payne Divinity School in Virginia. While he served as vicar of St. Francis, he continued to serve as vicar of St. James’ Episcopal Church in Austin, Texas.

Other early leaders in the establishment and development of the church included Dr. E. B. Evans, who served as president of Prairie View A&M College from 1946 to 1966; Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Atwood; Bishop Suffragan E. T. Denby of Cleveland, Ohio; the Rev. John B. Boyce; Mrs. Ann C. Preston; Colonel West A. Hamilton; the Menke family of Hempstead; Mrs. Eula Dooley; Mrs. Jimmie Ruth Phillips; Dr. and Mrs. C. H. Nichols; Mrs. Eloise Williams; Dr. J. L. Brown; Mrs. Naomi Thomas Baker; Mr. John Ledbetter; Dr. and Mrs. R. Von Charleton; Dr. and Mrs. E. G. High; Dr. and Mrs. D. S. Yarbrough; Mr. and Mrs. Julius Jones; Ms. Kathryn Jordan; Ms. Nerissa Stickney; Mrs. Ollie Mae Scott; Mr. and Mrs. William E. Reid, Sr.; and Mr.



H. E. Mazyck, Jr.

On June 16, 1957, the Rev. Charles F. Hood relieved Murray as vicar and served the congregation until December 31, 1959. From its inception until the administration of Hood, St. Francis's congregation met in the Guest House on the campus of Prairie View. In June of 1958, the Old Church, which had served as the place of worship for the people of St. Bartholomew's in Hempstead since before 1900, was moved to Prairie View.

On June 15, 1958, the former church building of St. Bartholomew's began to serve as the church building for the St. Francis congregation.

This building, erected in 1870 and one of the oldest frame Episcopal churches in the Diocese of Texas, is now one of the three remaining churches consecrated by the Rt. Rev. Alexander Gregg, the first Bishop of Texas. At a special service in the evening of May 16, 1963, the Waller County Historical Society, with the assistance of the Army ROTC of the College, erected a Texas Historical Society plaque in the vestibule of the historic church. Since 1994, the building now serves as the home for Hope AME Church in Prairie View, Texas.

With a church building of their own, the St. Francis congregation was able to conduct the full ritual of the Episcopal Church. Dannis "Frontious" Michael Ledbetter was baptized during the opening day services. On the Feast of St. James the Apostle, July 25, 1957, Bishop Suffragan Frederick Percy of Goddard conferred the Rite of Confirmation for the first time within the congregation on nine candidates.

The Rev. Hugh Donald Keeling succeeded Hood as vicar on January 1, 1960, and served the congregation until his transfer to St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Bellville, Texas, on January 15, 1963. Keeling's successor as vicar was the Rev. James T. Moore, who served the congregation until 1968.

On October 4, 1964, the congregation inaugurated the annual custom of celebrating the patron feast of the mission, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, with a Solemn High Eucharist followed by a procession with the Saint's statue through the streets of Prairie View and concluding with a parish supper. The congregation marked the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with appropriate Requiem services. Earlier in the day, the Bishop addressed a campus-wide luncheon in the Memorial Student Union. A particularly happy occasion for the congregation was on June 15, 1969, when the first vicar, Murray, since attached to the Houston Metropolitan Ministries and Incarnation Episcopal Church, Houston, Texas, returned to St. Francis to celebrate the 25th anniversary of his ordination as a priest.

Five organizations—the Women of St. Francis, the Senior Choir, the Altar Guild, the Men of St. Francis, and the Church School—have served the parishioners of St. Francis since its inception as a congregation. In the late 1950s, the Episcopal college students formed themselves into a Canterbury Club, a part of the National Episcopal Ministry to the Campus. Mrs. T. P. Dooley, in 1968, founded a junior choir, which has performed at most Sunday services and presented an annual Christmas program.

The Church School was established in the early 1960s with Dr. C. A. Wood as superintendent. It was the first regular church school available in the community.

At the urging of Bishop John E. Hines, the fourth Bishop of the Diocese of Texas and later, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States, and his successor in the Diocese of Texas, Bishop James Milton Richardson, a rectory was built. On June 3, 1967, Bishop Suffragan Scott Field Bailey formally dedicated the completed rectory. With this task completed, the congregation turned to raising funds for further expansion of the facilities. After the addition of the rectory, Moore, who had served as vicar of St. Francis while living in Tomball and also of Good Shepherd there, began to live in Prairie View, which allowed him more time for ministry at the church and on the campus.

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From 1983 to 1990, the Rev. Andrew Mephram served as vicar and chaplain. During his tenure, an addition was made to the church that expanded the parish hall and provided additional work space for the vicar.

St. Francis was admitted to the 143rd Council as a Parish in 1991, and the Rev. Earlie Clemons became St. Francis' first rector, serving until 1998.

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Engle has served as vicar of St. Francis of Assisi since 2011. Today, the mission of St. Francis is to show the loving presence of Christ in Prairie View and the larger community through prayer, worship, teaching, fellowship and service. The church offers a variety of mission programs that support the community, including the St. Francis Community Bell Troupe, Episcopal Church Women (ECW), and the Men of St. Francis Monthly Prayer Breakfast.

*Race is not a southern or northern or American problem.  
Race is a universal and human problem. If we are to be true  
to our Christian principles, we need to reach the point in our  
spiritual maturity where we see people without regard for  
racial factors.*

—Bishop Milton Richardson, 1966

# CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION

## HOUSTON, TEXAS

# 1956

The Church of the Resurrection was organized in October 1956 when the Rev. J. Turner Whaley, vicar of St. Barnabas' Episcopal Church in Houston, met with a group of interested persons in the home of Mrs. Emmanuel Campbell. Included in this group were twelve adult communicants of the Episcopal Church. Prior to this, those attending the meeting had written a letter to the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, expressing their interest in establishing an Episcopal Church in the Chocolate Bayou area of Houston. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Church of the Resurrection was under way.

The first service of the newly formed congregation was a Morning Prayer service led by Whaley on Sunday, October 10, 1956. It was held in the second floor auditorium of the fire station located at 8117 Corinth Street in Houston, where the congregation continued to gather for worship over the next 20 months.

Under Whaley's care, the recently organized congregation, now called the Church of the Resurrection, was admitted as a mission at the 108th Diocesan Council in January of 1957.

During November of 1958, the church moved its worship services to a different fire station at the corner of Doris and Seabrook streets. In the absence of a priest, the services were led by a lay reader for several months. During the summer of 1960, the Diocese acquired an Assembly of God church building and moved it onto a lot on Reed Road. Through the efforts of nine laymen, led by John J. Johnson and Raymond James, improvements made the building suitable for liturgical worship services and other activities. The congregation held its first worship service in the renovated building on Sunday, October 30, 1960.

The site on Reed Road would be their home for the next 20 years. Through the efforts of Bishop Maurice M. Benitez and Sheldon Crocker, treasurer of the Diocese, arrangements were made so that Resurrection could move into the building on Fuqua that was occupied by Grace Church before its closing in 1979. A great deal was done by the congregation to refurbish the building before the move could be completed. On Whitsunday (the Feast of Pentecost) of 1981, the people of Resurrection held their first service at 3831 Fuqua. The congregation met at the church on Reed Road and drove in a procession to the new location. Ninety people attended the service celebrated by the Rev. William Kegler, chaplain at St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital.

In 1982, the Rev. Jerome Burns was called from the Diocese of Mississippi to serve as the first vicar of Resurrection at its new location. He served there until the latter part of 1983 when he became associate rector at St. James', Houston. Between the time of Burns' departure and the church's closing in 2000, there was a steady decline in the membership as leadership changed hands from ordained to long-term supply clergy and lay leadership.



*The Church, in Christ's name, must be concerned about such things as adequate housing, proper care for the aging, poverty, population explosion, alcoholism, drug addiction, and racial injustices. A Christian cannot escape his personal responsibilities or his social responsibilities.*

—Bishop Milton Richardson, 1967

# INCARNATION EPISCOPAL CHURCH HOUSTON, TEXAS

## 1958

In the beginning, a group of missionaries led by the Rev. John A. Bosman of St. Michael's Episcopal Church, an all-Anglo congregation, set out to establish a church for Negroes in the Garden City Park area in Northwest Houston. The group went door to door, canvassing members of the community to see if there were residents who had an interest in forming an Episcopal Church in the area. The first service, Evening Prayer, was held on September 21, 1958, with Bosman officiating and G. McKay assisting as server. There were 17 in attendance. Then, in 1960, Incarnation was admitted as a mission to the Diocese of Texas. Bosman served as priest-in-charge, and St. Michael's came to be known as the "Mother Church." Some of the first members were Allen B. Edwards, Dorothy Johnson and James Ward.

In the early years, they met in the homes of prospective communicants and the Garden City Park Elementary School. As the numbers grew, the "band room" at George Washington Carver High School on South Victory Street was secured to provide a place of worship and instruction to the fledgling parishioners. Holding services in a band room gave them access to a piano, and with the help of an occasional musician from St. Michael's or Janie Ward, they would have music during the worship service.

Jan Schroeder, Judy Hutzler and Thelma Fields from St. Michael's would set up the altar in the beginning, until members were trained in the process. It eventually became the "task of honor" to the first member arriving to set up the portable altar. Members would distribute the *Books of Common Prayer* that Bosman brought with him, to be collected and returned to St. Michael's following worship. Morning Prayer was held each Sunday and Holy Communion administered monthly.

Because they had property but no building, they continued to hold services in the high school and later at Hubert's Nursery School on Paulquinn Street. The first church clerk was Jacqueline Cockrell; the first treasurer, Allen Edwards; and the first senior warden was Emerson Beauman. Servers, lay persons and acolytes were trained to assist Bosman and soon they were able to continue Morning Prayer in the absence of a priest.

In 1960, property was purchased from Dr. R. O. Roett on Nuben Road in the Acres Homes area. When a member of St. Michael's who worked for the school district donated a small school building, it was moved to the site at 6902 Nuben Street, a four-acre lot that extended to Little York Road. This two-room building had no running water, heat, air conditioning or bathrooms, and yet it became the church's first worship space. Bosman would vest in one room and hold services in the other. Because the property was not within the city limits, a well was dug and a septic tank acquired. Later, the congregation borrowed money to renovate the facility, and the city expanded the city limit to encompass the area. By the time the first service was held there on Palm Sunday, March 22, 1964, the church had an entryway, a kitchen, restrooms and running water. The building was dedicated on May 3, 1964, with 70 in attendance.

Persistent burglaries were the plight of the congregation during the early years on Nuben Street. Two organs were lost to theft, one of which was bolted to the floor, along with the refrigerator, stove, numerous air conditioning units and the utensils used for serving Holy Communion. Members of the congregation and the community donated replacement air conditioners, appliances, furniture and Communion vessels on numerous occasions.

Incarnation continued to grow, and in 1964, the Rev. James Murray joined Bosman in serving the

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church, and each celebrated Holy Communion every other Sunday until Murray's death in 1978. After Bosman's retirement, services were led by numerous visiting priests, including the Rev. Jack Leighton on a somewhat regular basis and Dean Robinson on certain occasions. In the spring of 1994, Leighton was appointed to serve as rector of St. George's Episcopal Church in Port Arthur, Texas. For the first time, Incarnation began to interview candidates for the position of full-time priest.

In 1994, the church received its first full-time priest, the Rev. Philip A. Jackson of Chicago, Illinois. Jackson was a 32-year-old lawyer, who brought a vast array of new ideas to Incarnation. During his tenure, the congregation moved from its Nuben Street location, which it had outgrown, to a large commercial building at 8230 Antoine Drive. The new building provided ample space for growth and expansion of ministries and outreach programs. At that time, the building housed a medical clinic sponsored by St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital, Communities Conquering Cancer, the DePelchin Children's Center, Vacation Bible School, Daughters of the King and the Brotherhood of St. Andrew. In October of 1998, Jackson received a new appointment to the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Detroit, Michigan. In November of 1998, the church received its second full-time priest, the Rev. Bill DeForest, who served until 2003.

After experiencing a number of challenges over the years, in 2006, Incarnation Episcopal Church and St. Michael's Episcopal Church, which had once served as "Mother Church" to this congregation, mutually agreed to merge and changed the name of the congregation to Hope Episcopal Church, currently located at 1613 West 43rd St.

Since 2010, Hope has been under the loving and capable leadership of the Rev. Roberta "Bobbie" Knowles.

*I fear that there are those among us who think of the question of minorities as a question we have conveniently left in the 1960s. They are wrong as they must surely know. Wherever there is suffering and wherever there is need, the Church must point the way to concern and to serious efforts to effect change... We must take seriously God's command that we go to all people, not just to people like ourselves.*

—Bishop Milton Richardson, 1967

# CHRIST THE KING EPISCOPAL CHURCH HOUSTON, TEXAS

## 1981



On August 31, 1981, at the call of Bishop Maurice M. Benitez, the Rev. Elizabeth Masquelette and a group of Epiphany parishioners came to Alief to found Christ the King. The first service was held on October 4 at the home of the Honorable Robert and Patricia Hinojosa, who graciously offered their home for the first service of Holy Eucharist in the Mission Bay area. Approximately 80 people were present.

October 11, 1981 the second service was in the lobby of Alief Alamo Bank. Folding chairs had to be transported and set up each week. On February 12, 1982, Christ the King Charter was signed by all the founding members of the church. On the May 16, 1982, the service moved to the Quillian Center (owned by the United Methodist Church) at Kirkwood and Bellaire. For about a year parishioners met in a big gymnasium, which featured a beautifully carved altar and kneelers that were rolled and scooted in and out each Sunday. Parishioners were lucky the Sundays the air conditioner worked! When it was really hot, they set up on the patio.

At Diocesan Council in February 1983, Christ the King was received as a mission in the Diocese of Texas with Masquelette as the founding vicar. She was given five and a half acres of land at 15325 Bellaire Blvd by the Diocese on which the present church was built in 1983. The building was designed by Joseph Canady, architect, and built by the Tellepsen Company. It was designed as a multipurpose room, which would eventually become the parish hall and was completed in time for Christmas Eve 1983. The back parts of the building, where the EYC room and the offices are now located, were added to make more room for a Montessori School in 1985 and 1987. One big room was divided with portable walls (donated by a member) so it could be used for the worship service and Sunday school rooms.

In 1984, the Montessori School opened with 20 young children between 2-1/2 and 5 years of age. Its first director was Helen Appelberg, followed by Shanti Hapuarachy, Kathi Parrish, and then Carol Baker. The school was the original and major outreach project for the church. In 1996, the community suffered a major financial crisis and many people lost their jobs and homes. The school was closed May 30, 1997.

Masquelette served as vicar from 1981 to 1996 and was succeeded by the Rev. Gary Jones (1996-1997), then the Rev. Dick Johnson (1997-2002), the Rev. Mike Michie (2002-2004), and the present vicar, the Rev. Dr. Johannes George, appointed on August 1, 2004.

Christ the King is made up of people from all parts of the world—from many lands, many cultures, many traditions, yet they share one faith, one baptism and one church, united in common beliefs, love, strength and dignity. The cultural diversity is the congregation's strength. Christ the King is a caring and loving church that reaches out to all people with a mission to share the love of Christ to everyone.

The second and third bishops' wardens became Episcopal priests: Bruce Laird and Helen Appelberg. Two additional members, Deborah Rankin and Blake Ryder, were also later ordained. Aston Brown, a native of Jamaica, is a candidate for diaconate (2015).

Outreach programs include the Mission Bell Food Pantry and support of St. Vincent House, Galveston.



*I fear that there are those among us who think of the question of minorities as a question we have conveniently left in the 1960's. They are wrong as they must surely know. Wherever there is suffering and wherever there is need, the Church must point the way to concern and to serious efforts to effect change... We must take seriously God's command that we go to all people, not just to people like ourselves.*

—Bishop Milton Richardson, 1967

## A SPECIAL GIFT TO THE TEXAS DIOCESE

This gift categorizes the history of our Black churches in the Diocese of Texas.

It seems only appropriate that the Commission on Black Ministry again attempt to allow the spiritual feelings of many who were there in the “early days” to be remembered—not being fully recognized and embraced within our church. Yes—this shows separatism and inequality, but that’s the fundamental base we have come from. We offer this document to be used as an educational resource that would complement COBM’s first medium—Telling Our Story video, which orally told the story of many—again exemplifying the dedicated work accomplished by black clergy and laity.

Although we term this as an historical document—it is really a living one as well. For our young people, it is imperative for them to know and appreciate where we’ve come from, which helps to determine where we are going.

The Commission on Black Ministry also hopes this deepens the awareness of many as we attempt to appreciate the rich diversity within the Diocese of Texas, and do the best we can in reconciling our differences.

Special acknowledgements to Kathy H. Culmer and LaShane K. Eaglin for extending their talents and showing the patience in pursuing my personal dream.

*There is one Body and one Spirit,  
There is one hope in God’s call to us;  
One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;  
Our God’s and Father of all.  
Ephesians 4:4-6*

Carole A. Pinkett ★ Commission on Black Ministry, Chair





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 The Rev. Victor J. Thomas, Rector, St. James, Houston  
 The Rev. Francene Young, Rector, St. Luke the Evangelist, Houston

IN MEMORY OF

The Rev. Israel W. Ahimbisibwe, PhD (deceased, 2015)  
 The Rev. Fitzgerald S. "Jerry" Critchlow (deceased, 2014)

