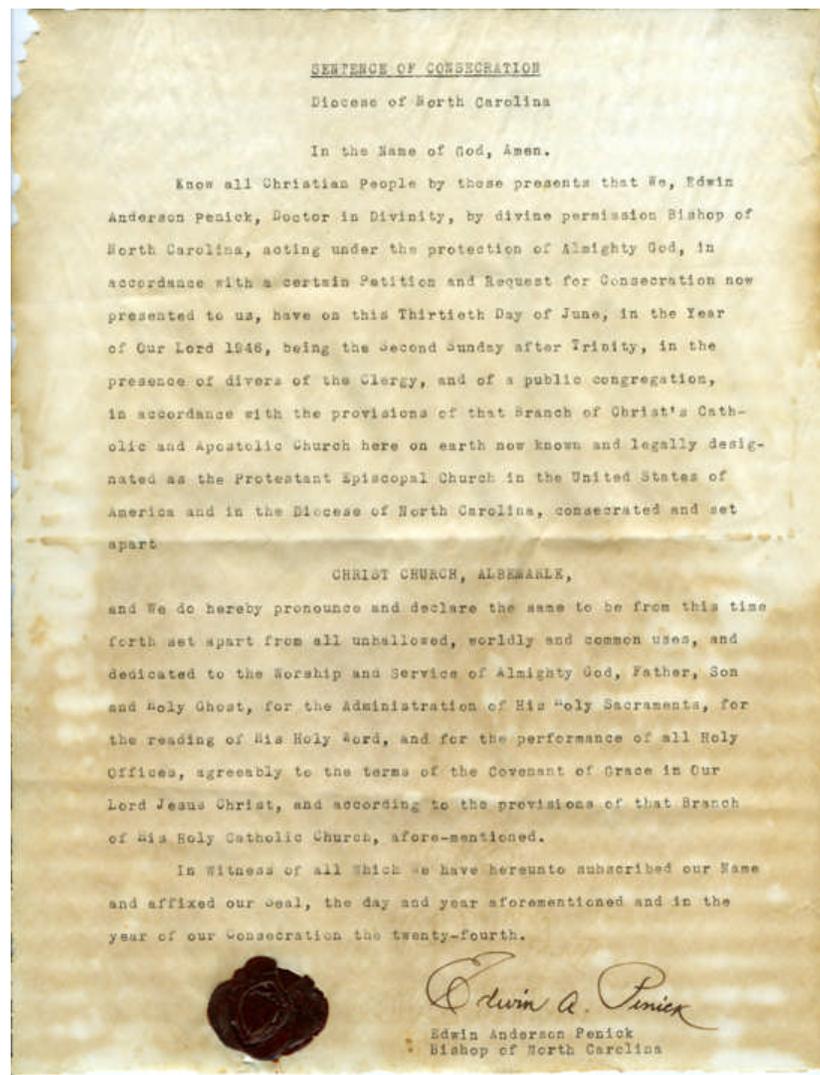


Timeline of Events in the Life of Christ Church, Albemarle 1945 - 1972

- 1945 Rev. Robert Hampton Price concludes his service to Christ Church on February 25. The Rev. Edwin B. Jeffress, Jr., rector of All Saints Church in Concord, begins serving as priest-in-charge on July 8.

Through the generosity of parishioner, Dr. J. U. Loftin, the remaining indebtedness on the church building is paid permitting the consecration of the church. The Petition of Consecration for the Church is prepared on June 6, 1946 and on Sunday, June 30, S. M. Percival, Senior Warden, reads it followed by Mr. Jeffress reading of the Sentence of Consecration. Bishop Edwin A. Penick calls the service "the hour of fulfillment" of a hope cherished by the congregation since the church was founded. The church members celebrate the occasion with a picnic lunch on the terrace of Morrow Mountain Lodge and the congregation expresses its gratitude for the event by dedicating the day's offering to the rebuilding of churches in countries devastated by war.

1946



The Sentence of Consecration with Bishop Penick's signature and seal

1948 Hall Partrick, a seminary student, works at Christ Church during the summer before returning to his final year at the seminary in the fall. The parish, anxious to have a full-time resident priest, sends three parishioners to Raleigh to request that Bishop Penick assign Mr. Partrick to Christ Church upon his graduation. They tell the bishop that it is the desire of the church to build a Parish House that would include living space on the second floor for Mr. Partrick who is single. The bishop, however, insists that a rectory be built first because Mr. Partrick is to be married prior to his arrival in Albemarle. Mr. Jeffress conducts his last service as priest-in-charge on December 26.



1949



The Rev. Hall Partrick

In January, Eddie Gehring holds lay reader's services and in February, The Rev. Robert Bird, newly arrived in Concord, agrees to serve as priest-in-charge until Mr. Partrick is ordained. On Easter Monday, April 18 construction begins on the new rectory on Cannon Avenue. Mr. Partrick becomes Christ Church's first full-time minister in charge on July 1 and is ordained to the priesthood at Christ Church on December 22. He quickly gains the love and respect of the congregation and is well-respected in the community.

1952 The Rev. Hall Partrick earns the award "Young Man of the Year in Albemarle" for his extensive activities in the community. In December, Bishop Penick commends the congregation and especially Mr. Partrick "for the vigorous way in which you all have cooperated in building up the Episcopal Church in the Albemarle-Badin area."

1953 The Christian education of youth becomes a priority of the parish. In January a Sunday School workshop is held that results in regular Sunday School faculty meetings. The Women's Auxiliary sees to it that every child is able to attend church camp each summer. The churches of the community agree to assist with the salary of a Bible teacher for the high school. The church acquires its first organ and the Altar Guild works to provide hymnals and prayer books. The first parish cookbook, *Song of the Kettle*, produced by the women of the church, is published and sold as a fund-raising project.

To the sorrow of the congregation, Mr. Partrick leaves Christ Church on June 1 to begin mission work in Haiti where he is appointed Dean of the Theological Seminary and serves on the staff of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Port-Au-Prince. Through his position and keen interest in Christian Education, he becomes closely

associated with the Sisters of the Society of St. Margaret and the Holy Trinity school headed by Sister Anne Marie. His introduction of their work to the Christ Church community establishes an on-going relationship with the parish.

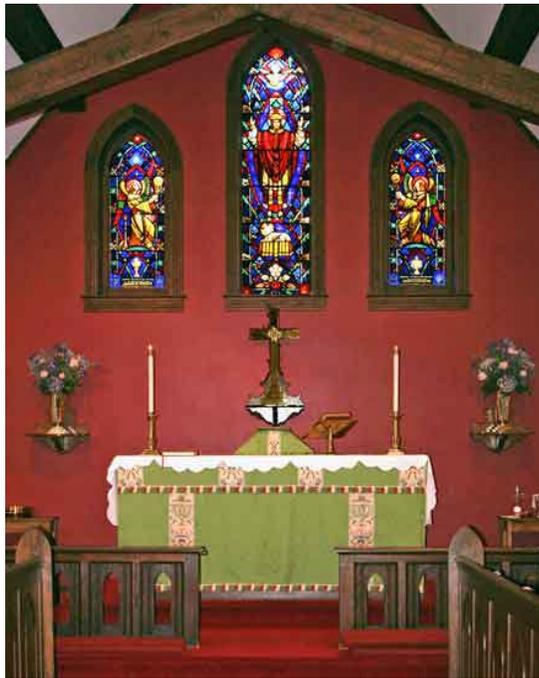
Bruce Daniel Sapp, who graduates from the Virginia Theological Seminary, is ordained a deacon at Christ Church in Raleigh on June 17. He begins work in Albemarle as minister-in-charge less than two weeks later. He is ordained at Christ Church on December 18.



Daniel & Tharon Sapp with their daughters in 1953

Parishioners remember that Hall Partrick was at first a hard man to follow. People were rather prone to tell Mr. Sapp that “Hall did it this way.” This was particularly true when one of the tiles of the church roof came loose. Members of the congregation kept pointing it out to Mr. Sapp, apparently expecting him to fix it. Frustrated when he did not respond, they said, “Well, Hall always fixed the tiles himself.” Dan Sapp calmly replied, “It’s going to be awfully expensive to get Hall

Hall back from Haiti to fix the roof.” That brings an end to such remarks and the new priest quickly wins the respect of the congregation in his own right.



Several serious efforts at evangelism are made during his tenure. Parish organizations at this time include the Woman’s Auxiliary, Layman’s League, Acolyte Guild, Altar Guild, Junior Girl’s Auxiliary and Junior Choir.

The three lancet stained glass windows over the altar are donated by Allen and Elmina Hearne Surratt in memory of Irving F. Surratt and Eben L. Hearne. These are the first stained glass windows to be installed in the church.

1954 Of major concern to the church is the construction of a parish house, which the Mission Committee discusses with Bishop Richard H. Baker in 1953. He is in agreement but indicates that the debt on the rectory should be reduced first. In 1954, with the rectory debt diminished and the new organ fully paid for, the church begins to concentrate on the building of the parish house. Bishop Penick gives permission to proceed and sends a check for \$1,000 to help with the project.

1955

A petition is circulated and signed by a majority of the communicants requesting that the new building be named the Edward L. Gehring Parish House to honor Eddie Gehring, active parishioner and personnel manager at Wiscasset Mills who died in 1954, in recognition of his contributions toward the establishment and subsequent growth of the church. The petition is passed unanimously by the Mission Committee.

1956



Participants in the Edward L. Gehring Parish House Ground Breaking Ceremony

Mrs. J. E. Johnson Jr., president of the Women's auxiliary; Johnny Gehring, son of the late Eddie Gehring in whose honor the Parish House will be named; the Right Rev. Richard B. Baker, of Greensboro, Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of North Carolina; Johnny Turner (in front of Bishop Baker) representing the Sunday School; Rev. Daniel Sapp, priest in charge of Christ Church; J. Reid Clark, warden of the church; B. S. Liles, chairman of the building committee; and Allen A. Surratt, finance chairman. *The Stanly News and Press*, April 20, 1956

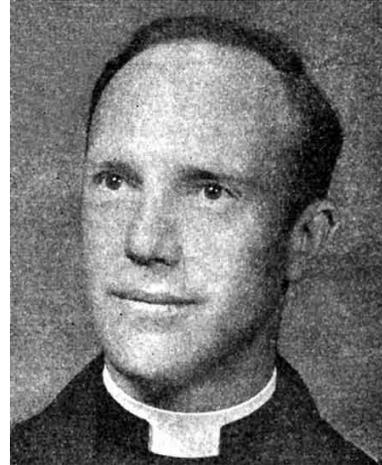
Bishop Coadjutor Richard B. Baker is present for the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a parish house on April 16. Bishop Penick participates in the laying of the cornerstone on May 29.



The Rev. W. Moultrie Moore, The Rev. Daniel Sapp and Bishop Edwin A Penick, at the cornerstone laying ceremony
May 29, 1956

The Edward L. Gehring Parish House is officially opened on September 2 by Bishop Baker assisted by the Rev. Daniel Sapp and the Rev. Hall Partrick. On September 30, Mr. Sapp conducts his last service at Christ Church to move to Raleigh to serve the parish of Christ Church. He retires from Christ Church in 1992 after serving that parish for thirty-six years as rector.

1957 Eric Collie, assistant rector of St. Peter's Church in Charlotte accepts the call as priest-in-charge in Albemarle and begins his duties on January 16. He brings an unusual background to our parish. He was born in Tuxedo Park, New York and moved to England at an early age where he was educated at Eton College and Sandhurst, the Royal military College. During World War II he served in North Africa and was captured by the Germans, escaped twice, the second time through American lines. After demobilization, he came to the United States where he worked for Eastman Kodak before receiving a call to the ministry.



1958 The church experiences a growth spurt during his tenure from approximately fifty communicants in 1957 to just under one hundred by 1961. Mr. Collie develops a strong association with Pfeiffer College, which is accredited as a four-year institution in 1959. His campus ministry results in two students entering seminary from Christ Church.

The Woman's Auxiliary proposes that the congregation hold a smorgasbord in February with the cost of the meats to be taken from the proceeds while the other dishes are provided by the women of the church. These dinners continue for many years and become an event eagerly anticipated by members of the community at large.

1959 The Women's Auxiliary is renamed the Episcopal Church Women. The Christ Church ECW is very active and reports that fifty percent of their budget is given to projects for the needy.

1960 The Episcopal Young Churchmen (EYC) is organized and meets every Sunday evening.

1961 Mr. Collie tenders his resignation effective October 1. The Mission Committee adopts the following resolution:

That whereas the Rev. Eric Collie came to Christ Episcopal Church on January 15, 1957, following a period of four months without a rector and whereas he has worked among the communicants of Christ Church with true pastoral care, love and Christian affection and whereas his efforts led to an increase in our communicants of fifty over his four years and nine months as a pastor, and whereas under his leadership our Sunday School grew in strength from thirty to forty-six and grew in an even greater degree in spiritual quality and whereas he has captured love and affection and gratitude and respect of the parishioners of Christ Church and whereas in God's plan the Reverend Eric Collie has been called to expand his ministry to enter a year's clinical training. Now therefore the Mission Committee of Christ Episcopal Church, Albemarle, North Carolina, hereby adopts this resolution of appreciation for the Rev. Eric Collie for his faithful pastorate and resolution of the best wishes in his future work in Christ's Kingdom.

- 1962 The Rev. James Walker, formerly priest-in-charge of Galloway Memorial Church in Elkin, North Carolina, preaches his first sermon on February 4.
- 1963 Bishop Richard H. Baker conducts the Service of the Office of Institution on May 19 establishing Christ Church as a self-supporting parish thus making Rev. Walker its first rector.



Principals in Christ Church Service on Sunday

In a traditional Service of Institution Sunday night at Christ Episcopal Church, The Rev. James O. Walker, Jr. became the first rector of the local church. The Diocese last week officially gave its approval to the church as a financially self-supporting parish. Previously it was classified as a mission. Shown above, left to right: James C. Walker, Junior Warden; The Right Rev. Richard H. Baker, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina; Everett T. Lesure, Secretary to the Vestry; The Rev. William P. Price, first resident minister of Christ Church, Dr. Claude Ballenger, Senior Warden; The Rev. James O. Walker, first Rector of Christ Church; Dr. Joel Huneycutt, Vestryman; Jack Chivington, Vestryman, The Rev. B. Daniel Sapp, former Vicar of Christ Church; L. Worth Little, Treasurer. *The Stanly news and Press*, May 21, 1963.

The former Mission Committee becomes the Vestry and resolves to increase its membership from five to nine male communicants. The new vestry establishes the Christ Church Theological Training Fund to assist church members who enter the seminary. On August 11, the vestry votes unanimously in agreement with the presiding bishop's recent proclamation on the freedom to worship without a color bar that "all people are welcome to worship in Christ Church".

- 1965 Mr. Walker tenders his resignation effective May 1 to serve as rector of St. Peter's-by-the-Sea in Charleston, South Carolina. During his tenure in Albemarle an effective prison ministry is established and the relationship with students attending Pfeiffer College is fostered through the efforts and assistance of Elmina and Alan Surratt in their work with The Canterbury Club, an organization of Episcopal students.
- 1966 The church is without a rector for over a year due to a shortage of priests and feels fortunate to attract The Rev. Paul C. Morrison from Philadelphia who begins his tenure as rector of Christ Church on July 3. Christ church has a membership of one hundred three communicants.

The Smorgasbord, held every fall from 1965 until 1968 continues to be an important fund raising activity. In 1968 the event receives a large write-up in the Charlotte Observer, which characterizes the occasion as “a sell-out” every year, with many townspeople maintaining standing orders for tickets.



Everyone in the parish, from youth to adults, participates in the event. Betty Watson, Stanly County’s home economics agent and an active member of the church, is in charge. In 1967, two years after the Diocese of North Carolina allows women to serve on vestries, Betty Watson becomes the parish’s first female Senior Warden. While this event is significant it should be remembered that the women of Christ Church have been in leadership roles for many years including being unofficially associated with the congregation’s governing body, the Mission Committee, during the time of World War II.

The Episcopal Church Women is an active organization with increased membership and attendance at meetings and activities. They provide money for overseas missions, pay for improvements to the church and parish house and collect toys and clothing for children in Vietnam. They begin a tradition of holding annual dinners for the mentally and physically handicapped citizens who work at the Stanly County Vocational Workshop.



Jean Ritchie, Betsy Ballenger, Helen Harris, Bette Hanham and Chris Johns serving meals at the annual Vocational Workshop Dinner.

The parish begins a gathering on the third Friday of each month called “Friday Nighters”, the purpose of which is both social and evangelical with the hope that friends of parishioners will be introduced to the fellowship of the parish.

1968 On October 13, Father Morrison leaves to go to Durham to become rector of St. Joseph’s Church. The number of communicants is one hundred twenty-two.

1969 The Rev. Philip R. Byrum, formerly at St. Michael’s Church in Tarboro, begins his ministry at Christ Church on February 1. In an early parish newsletter he relates what he seeks for and from the congregation—that they should find Christ together and be Christ to their neighbors.

It is autumn and things are bustling in the parish. I believe that our parish offers a lot to us as individuals and as a community. I am old-fashioned enough to think that the parish is still the place for a creative and rewarding ministry. It is in the fellowship of a local congregation that men and women can discover the reality of the living Christ and

commit their lives to Him as Lord. It is in the parish that we receive the continuing nurture of Word and Sacrament. It is in the local parish that we become the Body of Christ and from here become Christ to our neighbors.

The church installs air-conditioning and a new Allen organ, which is dedicated on December 7.

1970 The Men's Breakfast group is started.

A residence on Main Street, behind the Parish House, becomes available and is purchased for future use and expansion of the church property. Needing much work, parishioners sign up to help. The EYC, in particular, works to renovate the rooms they are to use for meetings. Following the renovation, the Main Street House is used for Sunday School classes and youth activities. In 1979 it is rented to a day-care facility. In 1984, the house is sold to a group of physicians for use as offices. Land adjacent to the existing Parish House is retained by the parish.



Father Phil plays the new organ

1972 Parishioner, Gerry Palmer proposes that the daycare center operated by the Department of Social Services be held in the Parish House. Although the use of the facilities from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, is somewhat of an inconvenience, the Day Care Center turns out to be an asset in a number of ways. It gives the parish a chance to be involved with the children, an involvement that was particularly evident at Christmas. A letter from one of the staff expresses this as



follows: "How wonderful it was! the party, the gifts, Santa, the fellowship and love you showered upon the children was certainly a beautiful expression of the real meaning of Christmas!" A poignant expression of gratitude came from the father of one of the children after the party in 1997. When the staff explained to him where the presents his daughter had received came from he said, "I didn't think she was going to get anything this year, but it was the best Christmas she's ever had. I really appreciate what the church did for us."