

HISTORY OF ST. LUKE'S CHURCH

St. Luke's Church was built after 1843, when William Henry Harrison and his wife, Debra, conveyed  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land for the purpose of building the church.

Mr. Harrison, an immigrant from England and a veteran of the Battle of Waterloo, came to this neighborhood in the 1820's and in 1827 bought a part of the "Middlesex tract" from J. P. B. Harris of "Millwood" and built his house. This house is still owned by William Henry Harrison's great, great granddaughters, Catherine M. Layne and Inez M. Williams.

The clay was dug and the bricks were made on the tract of land given for the church. Mr. Harrison supervised the making of the brick and was the main director and builder of the church.

Subsequently, and within the present generation, a descendent of the Harrisons, Mr. Bernard Harrison Mayo (a great grandson of William Henry Harrison) and his wife, Annie Palmore Mayo, made a gift to the church of two acres of land extending the original one and a half acre property to the present three and a half acres. A cross over the front door on the outside of the church was given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Harrison Mayo by their daughters, Catherine M. Layne, Ethel M. Tilman and Inez M. Williams.

St. Luke's was dedicated in 1844. The original building was 20 by 36 feet. In 1890 a recessed chancel was added, and in 1915 the choir room and vestry room were built. The church is beautifully decorated with stained-glass memorial windows. St. Luke's was consecrated by the Right Reverent John Johns on April 10, 1845. At that time St. Luke's was in Powhatan County and in the southern parish of the Diocese of "Southham" Virginia. In 1853 that parish was divided and the portion containing St. Luke's became Powhatan Parish; thus, this parish is a part of and is the direct descendent of the original Henrico Parish founded in 1611. By action of the Council of the Diocese of Virginia in May, 1892, approved by the General Convention in October of that year, all that portion south of the James River including St. Luke's was constituted the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

The Reverend Andrew Fisher was the first rector of St. Luke's Church. The Reverend Lewis Walke served the parish during the War between the States and Reconstruction period. The Reverend Martin Johnson was rector from 1886 until his death in 1915.

The concrete wall around the churchyard was given in memory of Lieutenant James McCaw Pickrell, U.S.N., by his wife. The brick walk from the front door to the vestry rooms was given by Mrs. Armistead Harvey in memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert R. Lee. In the churchyard a stone bench has been installed with a bronze tablet attached: "In memory of Edward Darrell Jervey by his Nieces and Nephews".

In 1848 a silver communion service was given by "The Millwood Sewing Circle". It consists of a flagon, two chalices and a paten. The large alms basin was given by The Reverend John Garlick Scott in memory of Edmund Lee Tompkins. A small alms basin was given by the Misses Constance and Serena Finney in memory of their sister, Mrs. Martin Johnson. A matching small alms basin was given in memory of Mrs. Octavia Sublett Ingram by her daughters, Elsie Ingram and Mrs. Carter Carrington.

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The two brass altar vases were given in memory of Sarah W. Williams by her family. The altar cross was given by Mrs. Byrd Pendleton Jervey. The altar candlesticks were given in memory of General and Mrs. James P. Jervey by their children.

The chairs on either side of the altar are, one, in memory of Mrs. Sally P. Henderson; the other, in memory of Alice Finney. Various members of the families were the donors. The communion rail was given in memory of William Wood Finney by his family. The baptismal rail and ewer were given by the "Ladies Aid Society" in memory of Katherine Thornton Kennon.

The memorial gifts are too numerous to mention all. The oldest and perhaps the most prized is the communion service given in 1848 by the "Millwood Sewing Circle", the forerunner of the present Women of the Church. Last, but not least, the linen closets in the vestry room were given in memory of Miss Serena Finney by the Women of the Church.

Within this generation the first Boy Scout Troop 869 was sponsored by St. Luke's Church under the leadership of Colonel Alexander S. Quintard as scoutmaster and Dr. W. G. Christian as minister. Five boys received the "God and Country Award", the highest award given by the scout organization. Scouts receiving this award do so after qualifying and following a special program set forth by their church and the Boy Scouts of America and after having rendered various services to their church. Boys receiving this award were William R. Blandford, Jr., Billy Mayo Williams, Robert H. Layne, Danny Mitchell and Keith Evans. This troop had one Eagle Scout, Keith Evans.

There have been many ministers, vestrymen, layreaders and students who have labored faithfully since the church was founded 145 years ago.

-Inez Mayo Williams