

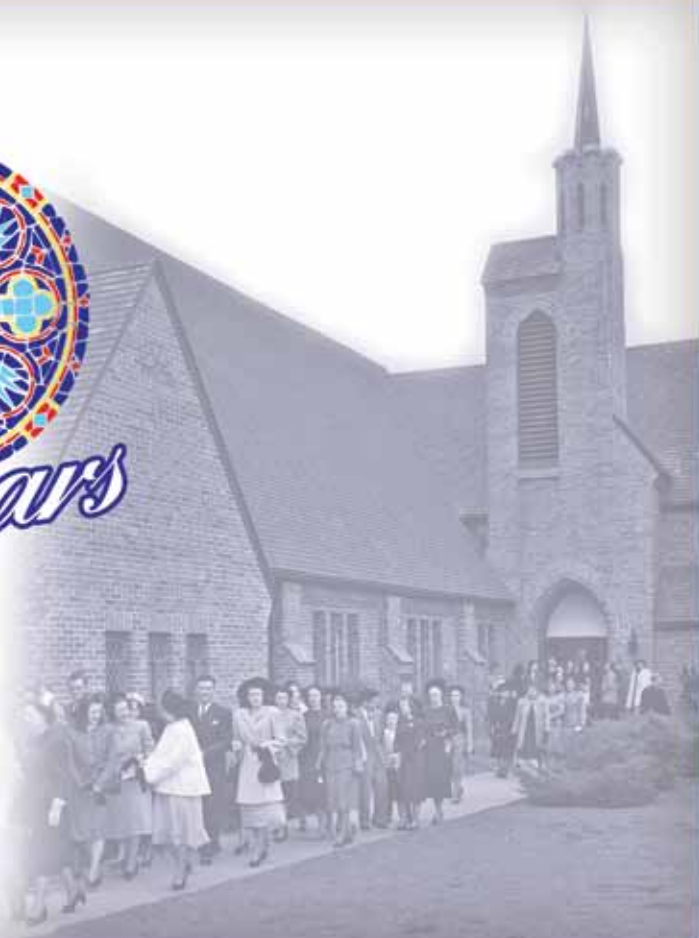
Celebrating

15



Years

A BRIEF HISTORY OF
ST. ANDREW
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DECEMBER 2, 2012



A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. ANDREW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Over the past 150 years, St. Andrew Presbyterian Church has built a proud heritage of faith, loyalty, sacrifice, and service. As the third church to be organized in Denton, Texas, this congregation has witnessed many exciting changes, not only in its ministry and size, but also in its name. Five different names have been associated with the church and four permanent sanctuaries have been a part of St. Andrew's rich and wonderful history.

EARLY BEGINNINGS

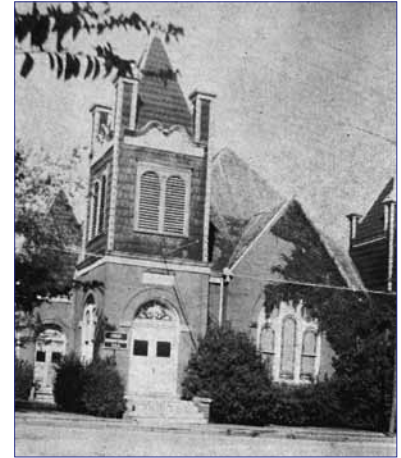
In November of 1862, a group of six families led by a Presbyterian minister, Rev. R.R. Dunlap, organized First Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Denton. This was the third congregation in the city, following the Methodists and Baptists. Before a permanent structure was built, church members gathered once a month at the Old Masonic Hall located on what is now South Locust Street. They shared the facility on a rotational schedule with the other churches in town. Presbyterians met on the second Sunday, while the Methodists met the first (and fifth, if there were a fifth), the Christian Church on the third, and the Baptists the fourth Sunday.

According to *The Presbyterian Centennial History*, the Presbyterians erected Denton's first permanent church building in 1874 on the corner of West Oak and Bolivar

Streets east of our current sanctuary. It was a small, one room wooden structure, but its existence was short-lived purportedly because of the infamous Sam Bass gang. In December of 1875, the gang burned down the Denton County courthouse in an attempt to destroy papers of indictment against them. The judge at the time, Jesse M. Blount, requested that the proceedings be moved to the recently completed church building. Two days later, the church was burned

presumably also by the gang. It is interesting to note, however, that in neither fire were the papers of indictment destroyed.

Undeterred by the recent tragedy, the congregation led by its pastor, Rev. D.R. Grafton, raised funds for a new building. Within three months, a white wooden structure was finished on the west side of Bolivar facing Pearl Street. Of particular note were the windows in the sanctuary which were painted



*Brick Church on Bolivar Street
1901-1941*

white on the inside so worshipers would not be distracted by anything going on outside. However, congregants quickly learned the windows had to be repainted often to remove the ambitious scratchings of youthful artists. Rev. Grafton has the distinction of being the only pastor of our church during whose ministry two sanctuaries were built. The church continually grew in membership until a new church building was needed.

TURN OF THE CENTURY

During 1901 under the pastorate of the Rev. J.H. Curry, a brick church facing Bolivar Street north of Pearl Street was constructed and paid for in full when occupied. Construction costs were \$8,000 with an additional \$3,000 spent on fixtures and furnishings. It was also during this period of the early 1900s that the first of several name changes occurred.

Under the leadership of Rev. F.L. Wear in 1906, a majority of the congregation decided to affiliate with the Presbyterian Church in the USA and renamed the congregation the American Presbyterian Church. A majority of the congregation remained in possession of the church facility after a legal battle while some 30-50 members stayed in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and were forced to find a new place to worship. For some time they held services in the county courthouse whenever a traveling Cumberland minister was available. With no church home or regular preaching, the congregation eventually disbanded.



*Christian Endeavor Convention at First Cumberland
Presbyterian Church, early 1900s*

The newly adopted name was short lived and was changed to Central Presbyterian Church during a business meeting in March of 1910. The church's manse at Pearl and Bolivar Streets was remodeled in 1914 for use as a church school annex during the leadership of Rev. J.H. Caldwell who served this congregation during two separate pastorates. Rev. Caldwell was the grandfather of Robert Caldwell, a recently deceased long-time member of St. Andrew. Membership of the church exceeded 300 by 1919 and in that year the first women deacons

were elected, positions primarily responsible for the finances and operation of the church.

THE 1920s

In 1920, the congregation took steps to become officially incorporated. In February of that year, the women of the church purchased the property at 305 Mounts Street to be



Sanctuary before Lattner Organ Installed

used as a manse for the church. Later that year, the former manse serving as the Sunday school annex burned down and the brick church next door also was damaged. Robert E. Lee Elementary School was used for church activities for a short time, and in early 1921, a long, rectangular frame building was constructed on the Pearl Street corner to replace the Sunday

school annex. It was used until a new church building was constructed in 1941.

A committee was appointed in 1925 to explore the possibilities of purchasing the property on Bolivar and West Oak Streets, where the current sanctuary now stands. In January of 1926 with a \$500 deposit, the property was purchased for \$15,000 during the pastorate of Rev. W.S. McBirnie. Because of what was then considered a huge indebtedness, the Session attempted to sell the property, but there were no buyers. In an effort to raise funds for this purchase, the church women, who had previously purchased the property for the manse, sold the house and property on Mounts Street. Construction on a new building did not begin immediately but outdoor services, which were very popular in the community, were held during the summertime.

PLANS FOR THE CURRENT SANCTUARY

With Rev. L.P. Parker as pastor, tentative plans for construction of a new building were developed in 1937 although they were abandoned because the plans were declared illegal by both state and church law. It is unknown what those plans were. A new plan adopted by the congregation on July 23, 1939 put the construction site where the current sanctuary now stands although construction did not begin until 1941. Also at that special congregational meeting another name change was approved.

At the time there were two Presbyterian churches in Denton: Central Presbyterian Church, now St. Andrew, and First

Presbyterian Church which was then located on South Elm Street. The members of Central thought that since it was the first Presbyterian church in Denton, it should be so named. The local congregation did not realize the confusion it would create when changing the name to First Presbyterian Church, USA. The Fort Worth Presbytery was dismayed that the name had been changed without its approval and having two Presbyterian churches named First added to the lack of clarity.

A PERIOD OF MANY “FIRSTS”

The 1940s saw many “firsts” in the life of this congregation. The first worship service in the new sanctuary took place on March 15, 1942. Another site on Oakland Street had been considered, but the congregation continued with the original plans voted on in 1939. Session minutes from Feb. 22, 1942 reflect that expenditures on the new church were not to exceed \$45,000 and debt limit was set at \$20,000.

In the following September, Dr. Joseph J. Copeland began what was to be the longest pastorate to date. During his tenure a long list of “firsts” took place including the hiring of a full-time church secretary, Dorothy Gentry (Braly) who is currently a member of St. Andrew. The first Director of Religious Education, Bethea Wilson, was employed, and the first weekly church news bulletin, *The Challenge*, was published. The news bulletin was renamed *The Tie* shortly thereafter and is now called *The Shield*. Initially, the newsletter



Friendly Service Sunday School Class, 1958

included paid advertisements and \$1 subscriptions were sold. The first women Elders, Mrs. Alice Angell and Dr. Imogene Dickey, were installed during the early 1940s. The first double morning services were established and seminary students were employed for various programs and ministries of the church for the first time.

The lot immediately west of the sanctuary was bought for \$7,000 in 1945 and an army surplus building was erected for

a church school. An education building addition was started in 1947 and included the present narthex, church offices, and music wing. Construction cost was \$150,000.

FINAL NAME CHANGE

During the pastorate of Dr. John G. Marvin which began in 1952, church membership continued to grow, the budget doubled, benevolence giving tripled, and church property expanded. In 1953 the church purchased the Rogers property for \$8,000, and in May 1955 the church paid \$12,000 for the R.E. Jackson home which joined the church boundaries on the north facing Bolivar Street. Air-conditioning at a cost of \$21,601 was added to the sanctuary and some of the church offices in 1956, over the objection of many members. The church extended its holdings on the block in 1953 by acquiring property from Central Baptist Church. This property extended to Pearl Street adjoining the church property on the north. The cost was \$53,000 and the property included one large, two-story building which was remodeled and named the Westminster House.

On January 14, 1959 the congregation changed its name for the fifth time and last time. A union of the Presbyterian Church USA and the United Presbyterian of North America established the United Presbyterian Church in the USA. All congregations were required to change their name to include the new denomination. So in an effort to eliminate the confusion with the name of First Presbyterian Church

on South Elm Street, the congregation voted to change the church's name to St. Andrew Presbyterian Church.

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The desire on the part of many St. Andrew members to form a new congregation coupled with the rate of expansion at St. Andrew, resulted in the establishment of a new church in 1960. Trinity Presbyterian Church was built on the corner of Bell Avenue and Sherman Drive, where it still stands as a vital church in the community today. Some 38 members of St. Andrew were among the original members of Trinity.

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

The Rev. Lloyd S. Hindman became the senior minister in December 1961 and during his pastorate, St. Andrew observed its centennial anniversary in 1962. The \$180,000 educational wing was completed and dedicated in 1964 and construction began on the remodeling of fellowship hall, the second floor classrooms above fellowship hall and the new library and church parlor. All of these projects were completed in the early 1970s.

Dr. Hindman left Denton in 1966 to establish a Christian ministry for American military in Bangkok, Thailand. After retiring from active ministry in 1976, Dr. Hindman returned to Denton and served as St. Andrew's interim pastor from 1981-83.

THE 1960s AND 1970s

Dr. Fred W. Cassell became senior minister in April of 1967 and during his pastorate, the custom of Maundy Thursday dinners and communion was instituted. Each year that he was pastor, the per capita giving increased and each new amount became the highest per capita in the church's history. Upon his retirement from Princeton Theological Seminary, Dr. Cassell returned to Denton and St. Andrew and was elected Pastor Emeritus in 2010.

On January 1, 1971, Brazos Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church, USA and Central Texas Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church US united to become Central Texas Union Presbytery. This meant that all churches in the new Presbytery, which included our congregation, became members of both the Presbyterian Church in the United States (southern) and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (northern.)

In February 1976, Rev. John H. McCoy, Jr. became the senior minister. During his tenure, the Christian Education department was reorganized and five new adult church school classes were started. The fellowship hall, second-floor classrooms in the west wing, the new library and church parlor were completed at a cost of \$600,000. Additionally, per capita giving doubled and an "Owe No More in 84" financial campaign was undertaken to retire building fund debts.

With the reunion of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) and the Presbyterian

Church in the United States (PCUS) in 1983, USA was officially added to St. Andrew's name.

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

The Lattner Memorial Organ was installed in the sanctuary in 1986 and dedicated in March of 1987 during St. Andrew's 125th anniversary and the pastorate of Dr. Richard E. Nygren who was installed in September of 1983. Renovation of the chancel area and sanctuary was done to accommodate the new instrument. In conjunction with the installation of the organ, the Estelle Brown Organ Recital Series was established.

Also during Dr. Nygren's tenure, the Roberson Memorial Bells were given to the church, office equipment was modernized, and the "Owe No More in 84" debt retirement was completed. Excess funds from the campaign became the basis of the first endowment trust account. The Super Wednesday program featuring dinner, classes and activities for all ages was initiated.

LONGEST SERVING PASTOR

The Rev. Steve Plunkett became St. Andrew's senior pastor in August 1989 and with his 23 years at St. Andrew, he is the longest serving minister in the church's history. Because of the various expansion efforts, the church needed to facilitate ease of travel throughout the building. An elevator to connect the various levels of the church was installed at a cost of \$85,000 in January of 1994. Again due to the growth and expansion of programs and ministries at St. Andrew, a \$3 million

renovation and construction program began in 2000. Included in the project was the construction of a new recreation center, the addition of several classrooms, and the expansion of the narthex, the office wing, and the music wing.

The church acquired the property immediately to the west for \$320,000 in November of 2005. This property had housed the former Goen-Hudgens Funeral Home and has provided more parking facilities and room for future expansion. In September of 2006, a Birthday Endowment Fund was established and maintains a very healthy participation. Also the same month, *The Shield*, became available on-line. A third worship service on Sunday evenings, known as SEW, began in September of 2008 and provides a more non-traditional venue.

ONE HUNDRED FIFTY YEARS AND MORE

Many educational, mission-oriented, and outreach programs have been supported by St. Andrew during the past 150 years. Currently Our Daily Bread, a soup kitchen that serves Denton's homeless and indigent operates five days per week from the St. Andrew kitchen and fellowship hall. Two additional on-site ministries operate daily during the school year: The Children's Place, a pre-school for children in Denton, and The Treehouse, an after-school program for latch-key elementary school students.

Among other community programs that benefit from St. Andrew's participation are the Denton Community Food

Center, HOPE, Friends of the Family, the Fairway Apartments summer lunch program, the Apple Tree Project, and Meals-on-Wheels.

Several youth and intergenerational mission trips take place each year. Communities in New York City, Boston, Ciudad Juarez, West Hollywood, San Antonio, Bay St. Louis, Vancouver, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Alaska, and New Mexico among others have benefited from these trips in recent years.

St. Andrew has long been known for its outstanding music program and works closely with the University of North Texas to include scholarship soloists each semester. Additionally, worship services often include special instrumental music along with hand bell and children's choirs. Each year, children and adults participate in worship and music camps at Mo Ranch. Morris Martin continues as the Minister of Music after 40 years of outstanding leadership.

Other programming for children and youth, in addition to Sunday school and Super Wednesdays, features Children's Chapel with Godly Play, sacrament workshops for children, youth ski trips, Vacation Bible School, and summer Mission Quest. Disciples I and II, Stephen Ministries, The Fall Festival of Faith, Prime Timers senior adult ministry, blood drives, hospice events along with men's and women's retreats, and Bible studies are geared for adult participation. The LINK serves the growing needs of college students, and St. Andrew continues a long tradition of an active Presbyterian Women's Association which promotes varied studies and activities.

Each Advent season, St. Andrew members support an Angel Tree for boys from the Goodland Academy and children enrolled in The Treehouse. A Christmas pageant is presented and an all-congregation dinner follows. An Advent Adventure of arts, crafts and food kicks off each Advent time of the year and a Market for Mission supports local, church, and international mission work and artisans from developing countries.

During the 150th anniversary year, the basement section of the office wing was renovated at a cost of \$150,000 to better accommodate the needs of St. Andrew's active youth group. Known as "The Den," this area offers a comfortable and youth-friendly hang-out for our teens.

As the congregation celebrates 150 years, we congratulate and honor those who came before us and take pride in the many accomplishments of this congregation. St. Andrew looks forward to a continued commitment to the Lord's service as we discern our future and the Christian traditions of our congregation.

Compiled by Sara W. Turner,
Moderator, 150th Anniversary Committee

SOURCES USED:

Centennial Celebration of Saint Andrew United Presbyterian Church of Denton, Texas, by Leo Bennett
Archives of The Denton Record-Chronicle
St. Andrew Presbyterian Church Cookbook
A Brief History, prepared for the 125th Anniversary Celebration
Dedication Bulletin, September 1, 1980
1978, 1984 and 1987 St. Andrew Directories
The Tie (newsletter) - various issues
The Shield (newsletter) - various issues
Together We Pray...Together We Build (campaign brochure)



Early 1950s Nursery Class

PASTORS FROM INCEPTION THROUGH 2012

FIRST CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN 1862-1906

Rev. R.R. Dunlap, 1862

Rev. M.B. Donald

Rev. John Haynes

Rev. W.R. Baker, 1873-1874

Rev. D.R. Grafton, 1874-1883

Rev. H.G. Nicholson, 1884-1886

Rev. R.W. Benge, 1886-1888

Rev. W.H. Berry, 1889-1890

Rev. T.J. Richards, 1890-1891

Rev. D.C. Dewitt, 1891-1895

Rev. L.A. Dunlap, 1895-1896

Rev. A.B.C. Dinwiddie, 1896-1898

Rev. F.T. Charlton, 1898-1900

Rev. J.H. Curry, 1901-1905

AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1906-1910

Rev. F.L. Wear, 1906-1909

Rev. A.F. Heltman, 1909-1910

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1910-1939

Rev. Harry Burton Boyd, 1911-1915

Rev. J.W. Caldwell, 1913-1915

Dr. C.M. Collins, 1915-1918

Dr. J.W. Caldwell, 1918-1920

Rev. A. Reilly Copeland, 1920-1922

Rev. W. S. McBirnie, 1925-1930

Rev. Charles W. Estes, 1930-1935

Rev. L.P. Parker, 1935-1939

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH U.S.A. 1939-1959

Rev. L.P. Parker, 1939-1942

Dr. Joseph L. Copeland, 1942-1952

Dr. John G. Marvin, 1952-1959

Rev. Prentice H. Barnett, AP, 1952-1955

Rev. Joe David Ruffin, AP, 1956-1958

Rev. Carl G. Schrader, Jr., AP, 1958-1962

ST. ANDREW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1959-

Dr. John G. Marvin, 1959-1961
Dr. Lloyd Hindman, 1961-1966
Dr. Fred W. Cassell, 1967-1975
Rev. Michael Price, AP, 1968-1975
Rev. Bill Parr, AP, 1978-1982
Dr. John M. McCoy, Jr., 1976-1982
Rev. Twining F. Campbell, III, AP, 1983-1986
Dr. Richard Nygren, 1983-1987
Rev. Stephen W. Plunkett, 1989-
Rev. Julie A. Riley, AP, 1992-1994
Rev. Clint W. Loveall, AP, 1995-2003
Rev. Jeanne Marie Heisler, AP, 1997-2000
Rev. James Nathan Byers, AP, 2004-2006
Rev. Brandon D. Lewis, AP, 2007-
Rev. Lisa B. Patterson, AP, 2011 -

DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH U.S.A. 1939-1959

Bethea Wilson, DCE

ST. ANDREW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1959-

Hermon S. Arrasmith, DCE, 1962-1967
Michael Gillespie, DCE, 1987-1989
Bettye Killgore, DCE, 1990-1992
Paul Collier, DCE, 1993-1996
Lisa B. Patterson, DCE, 2000 -2111



Westminster House in the early 1960s

