

THE WYMAN MEMORIAL CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW

MARBLEHEAD, MASSACHUSETTS

The Marblehead Church familiarly known as "St Andrew's" began in the 19th century, as a dream in the heart of Isaac Chauncy Wyman, a life-long resident of nearby Salem, who was a communicant of St. Michael's Church in Marblehead. Among his extensive real estate holdings was a large tract of land in Marblehead, bordering the Forest River and containing the Wyman family burial plot. In contrast to the pastures surrounding it, this land was densely covered with trees; hence, it was known as Wyman's Woods. Few people lived in the area, which was considered at the turn of the century to be out in the country, but as the area began to build up, Mr. Wyman became concerned about the absence of Sunday school opportunities for the children.

When he died in 1910, Isaac Wyman bequeathed part of this land and a sum of money for the building of a memorial chapel near the burial plot. The chapel was to be used for religious services, for the spiritual education of children of all denominations, and for social activities of neighborhood groups. Mr. Wyman seems to have been an early advocate of ecumenism, for he stipulated that the bequest first be offered to St Michael's, but, if his own parish did not act within a certain number of years, the opportunity was to be opened to any Marblehead church.

In 1922, Lyman Rollins, then rector of St. Michael's Church, petitioned and received permission to undertake the construction and maintenance of the chapel. The original building was completed in the fall of 1924.

In 1924, the congregation was organized as a mission served by the Reverend David R. Haupt, a senior at the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, as Curate-in-Charge. At the time, Mr. Haupt was serving as curate to the Reverend Robert B. Parker, Rector of St. Michael's Church in Marblehead. Several lay members of the new church canvassed the neighborhood, encouraging parents to send their children to St. Andrews for Bible study and recruiting adults for the choir. One of these early workers remembers when choir members were directed to move from the choir stalls to the nave, so that the preacher would feel he had a congregation to preach to.

By 1929, the dedicated involvement of early lay leaders led to school enrollment of 109 children. A parish hall was constructed even before the church itself was consecrated in 1930. Strong lay leadership had been evident during the early days as Father Haupt was succeeded first by the Rev. Albert N. Gilberson, who, after a brief ministry, was called to the rectorship of a church in the middle west. He was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Benjamin Parker, who volunteered his services, having recently retired from St. Michael's. The Rev. Roy M. Grindy was called as Rector in September 1927.

Under Mr. Grindy's leadership, which was to continue until 1965, Altar Guild, day and evening

Women's Guild groups, church school, vestry, acolytes, and youth groups flourished. The Wyman Memorial Church of St. Andrew was incorporated as a separate parish in 1933. New pews were installed the same year.

Growth can be charted by additions to the original structure. A parish house was built and completed in November 1929. At that time, it was separate from the chapel. A major building drive in 1947 and 1948 resulted in enlargement of the sanctuary, new classrooms and sacristy. The 1949 addition also included the Music room and Music Office, and it linked the old Parish Hall to the rest of the building. In 1952, the Guild Room, Cloister Gallery, and Garth were added. In 1968, active young people, with very little professional involvement, built themselves a youth room out of attic space. Complete with ping pong, a small pool table, and a record player, the room was a focus for teenage community activities. After the 2004 addition, the youth room became much-needed storage space.

In 1964 the bell tower was erected, through a bequest from the estate of Martha Higginson Hills (1868-1945). Built in the style of the traditional free standing bell towers of the early middle ages in England, it houses a historic Marblehead bell. The bell was made in Sheffield, England in 1861 and brought to Marblehead, where it hung in the old South Church until the first great Marblehead fire destroyed the church. It is the same bell which called the men of Marblehead to fight in the Civil War; subsequently it was hung in the first School Street fire Station and was there until Marblehead's second great fire destroyed the station. Known as "Old Calamity", it was rung for fires and other calamities. It was then hung in the belfrey tower of the Methodist Church on Summer Street and remained there until St. Stephen's was moved to its new church and present location. The bell was then turned back to the town and was given a place of honor at St. Andrew's Church.

The Chancel was renovated in 1974.

The Saint Andrew's Cooperative Nursery School, founded in 1969, moved into its present quarters in 1982, a new addition having been built to house the school.

In December 2000, a feasibility study for a new addition was prepared by the Office of Michael Rosenfield, Architects. The attached plan, *Building History*, from that report, shows the footprint of the buildings at that time. It includes the Rectory, built in 1959, to which a second floor was later added. It also shows that the entry cloister and the Narthex were built in 1961.

In 1966, the Rev. Howard Ward Gamble, Jr., was called as rector of St. Andrew's, and he moved into the Rectory with his wife Joanne and 2 children, soon joined by 2 more siblings. An addition to the rectory was made to accommodate the growth of this family. Ward's ministry began during a period of great social and spiritual questioning. There was some controversy over prayer book revisions and over political action (in the form of lettuce boycott petitions) on church property. Black speakers from nearby Lynn came to say that all was not well between the races, between rich and poor. Encounter groups and consciousness-raising seminars were open to parishioners and non-parishioners alike. Following the controversial and irregular ordination of 11 women to the Episcopal priesthood in Philadelphia in 1974, Ward and many parishioners became advocates of women's ordinations, and since women's celebrating the Eucharist in the church was illegal, the rector and parishioners celebrated

Eucharist in a parishioner's home with a woman priest.

Ward and two parishioners served on the original five member council of Marblehead Metco, a group which advanced educational exchanges with inner city students, beginning in the mid-60s. St. Andrew's was among the original sponsors of the Marblehead Community Counseling Center in the early 1970s.

Shortly before the fall of Saigon in 1975, a medical emergency airlift was housed in the parish hall, an event which resulted in the sponsorship of Vietnamese families. St. Andrew's sponsored a Vietnamese family, who became active in the parish and the larger community. In 1979, with enthusiastic backing from St. Andrews, the Lynn Common Ministry elders program was begun.

When Pope John opened the Catholic Church to the winds of change, St. Andrews responded quickly to increased interfaith communication. Parishioners worked with other denominations to establish the Marblehead Ecumenical School of Religion, and to act with other Christian churches and the local temples to express opposition to anti-Semitic actions in the town. The Marblehead Ministerial association was formed and Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant clergy began to exchange pulpits. St. Andrews was a significant factor in each of these events.

With Ward's encouragement, lay influence on the spiritual life of the parish and lay involvement in community social action grew. In his first years at St. Andrew's, Ward inaugurated the then-radical policy of parish-wide nomination and election of vestry members. Parishioners began to develop their own ministries -- as chalice bearers, as pastoral care team members, planning, conducting, and staffing special and regular worship services. In 1976, parishioners including Bob Franke, Bobbie Thomas, Barbara Golden and Roseanne Moss started Saturday Night in Marblehead where, most weekends during the academic year, the Parish Hall transformed itself into a coffee house venue for performers from across the U.S. and Canada.

During Ward's tenure, the parish's outreach into the community grew. In the 1980's parishioners were active in the nuclear freeze movement and in Beyond War, an organization dedicated to peace through international understanding, which developed a dynamic local chapter with the enthusiasm of many parishioners, including Ward and Joanne Gamble. Through this program, Ward, Joanne and other parishioners traveled to Russia. Also in the 1980s, St. Andrew's also cultivated a sister parish relationship with San Andres Apostol in El Salvador. Parishioners have taken many trips over the years to El Salvador traveled to Russia and to El Salvador to visit and, in 1995 and again in 2006. Fr. David Alvarado from San Andres Apostol visited and preached at St. Andrew's.

Ward Gamble retired in 1995 and was succeeded by the Rev. Paul Garrett, as interim priest. In 1997, the Rev. Kevin Bean was called as Rector. He, his wife Megan, and their three children occupied the rectory for several years.

Under Kevin's leadership and that of the Vestry, a capital campaign was conducted, and a major addition was built. A new Parish Hall, administrative offices, and meeting rooms were built. The new space was completed and occupied in July 2004. Also included in the project were a new heating system for the entire building and new washrooms. Many people contributed to the capital campaign,

but particularly significant were contributions by Vincent Wilbur and Joseph Sidebottom. A renovation of the kitchen was planned but not completed at that time, due to lack of funds. In 2006, the renovation was planned and completed. The entire kitchen was made new, in accordance with current regulations.

In early 2005, Kevin accepted a call to a large church in New York City. While at St. Andrew's, Kevin had experienced Bob Franke's Good Friday Cantata. He thought highly of it, and he invited the choir and the rest of the singers and musicians to come to New York and perform the Cantata. A bus was provided by an anonymous donor, and the Cantata was given before a large gathering.

Bob Franke, a nationally-known musician who was also a parishioner, became Artist in Residence at St. Andrews in 1979. Bob wrote original various original pieces of music for St. Andrews. Best known are his Epiphany Cantata, first produced in 1979, and his deeply moving Good Friday Cantata, which was first presented on Good Friday 1980. The Epiphany Cantata retells the Epiphany story in a moving and humorous way, and it is beloved by young and old. As of this writing (2012), the Good Friday Cantata has been presented almost every year at St. Andrew's for over 30 years. In 1994, to the delight of the congregation, Bob's original Christmas Pageant premiered and has been performed nearly every year since.

After the departure of Kevin Bean and his family for larger, if not greener, pastures, the Rev. Arrington Chambliss, who had been hired as the assistant rector in 2004, covered all priestly duties until the hiring in the spring of 2005 the Rev. Beulah Kouloris as the interim rector. Beulah stayed until June of 2006, when Arrington Chambliss again assumed the duties of priest until the calling of the Rev. Mary Scott Wagner to be our rector in October of 2006. She resigned in March of 2008 for personal reasons, and Arrington resigned that May to accept a call to position at the Diocese. The Rev. Jennie Anderson, who had been hired several months previously to be the director of Christian Education, was asked to temporarily take over the duties of priest of the parish.

The vestry felt that it was appropriate to ask the Diocese to appoint a priest-in charge for a three-year tenure. The Rev. Susan Russell was appointed, and she and her husband Jack moved into the Rectory in the fall of 2008. During the subsequent years, some controversy developed as to whether Susan was the right priest to be our rector in the future. Some members of the Vestry felt that she was not right for the church. Others thought that her quiet style of leadership was just what we needed. She resigned as of the end of her three-year tenure, and the Rev. Clyde Elledge was called to be our Rector as of September 2011. He, his wife Kate, and their two children, Charlie and Mary Rose, soon moved into the Rectory.

While not particularly diverse in membership, this parish does welcome all spiritual seekers. A series on Christian and Jewish faiths was held here, and several parishioners have participated in the interfaith Seder held annually at the Jewish Community Center. St. Andrews has held healing services for people afflicted by AIDS and those who care for them. The Anti-Racism committee has been very active, with the support of interim minister Paul Garrett. In 1996, parishioners took part in an ecumenical service at Zion Baptist Church in Lynn to lament the burning of black churches in the South and to pray for

healing. In 2012, Clyde invited the Marblehead Zen Center, which was looking for space, to share our space. What was formerly called the Music Room was renamed the Zen Center, and it was used for meditation almost every day until the Center moved to Beverly in 2014. On Sundays, the Zendo/Music Room continues to be used as additional seating space for the regular worship services of the church.

St. Andrews parishioners have been active in supporting the Marblehead Food Pantry, which provides groceries to families in need; My Brother's Table, a soup kitchen in Lynn; and for many years, the Salem Mission, a homeless shelter and soup kitchen in Salem. St Andrews Outreach Community Aid Committee has evolved over the decades from a group which offered camperships and supported structured charities to a team which struggles with the ever-changing needs of the local community, providing emergency funds for fuel bills, car repairs, and housing help.

The semi-annual Rummage Sale not only brings funds into the parish, but provides opportunities for people on limited budgets to purchase clothing and household goods. Whenever possible, what doesn't sell is given to local shelters and community aid groups.

In fact, the lights of St. Andrews burn bright most evenings as community groups and church committees meet here. Several AA groups meet each week. A cooperative nursery school is housed here throughout the school year.

People from all around come to walk the labyrinth, which parishioners constructed under Ward Gamble's tutelage, and to enjoy the beauty of the memorial garden parishioners continue to tend. Recently, St. Andrew's opened an art gallery in the cloister. Local artists, some who are parishioners and others from surrounding communities, exhibit their work here.

From the earliest days of St. Andrews, an active and devoted lay leadership has helped this parish thrive. Attendance at service springs from faith and devotion, and St. Andrews is home to a diverse and open-hearted spiritual community.

Written in 1996, author unknown

Revised and updated in 2012

by Tim and Janet Parker

Information on the bell tower thanks to the Marblehead Messenger, January 1965

Alan Daley, Historian, Church of St Andrew

Revised December 2014 by Tim Parker

Building History

