

History of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church

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2007

St. Timothy's was founded as a mission for the children of the Arsenal Hill neighborhood in June of 1892. The mission was established by The Rev. Alexander Mitchell, who was the rector of Church of the Good Shepherd. The first Sunday school met in a small room that was owned by Mr. Bun Milligan on Lumber Street, which is now Calhoun Street, and three children attended. Shortly after the mission was started, an Industrial School, which taught the children sewing and church music, was formed. The Sunday School began to grow, and soon there were 20 children attending.

As St. Timothy's began to grow, members decided a chapel was needed. Many people began to donate money for the chapel, some even from as far away as Tennessee and Pennsylvania. In February of 1893, a small house was rented for \$3.00 a month and the first class was held on February 7th. The first service was held that night by the Rev. Mitchell. In December, Bishop Ellison Capers visited St. Timothy's and confirmed five people. He returned in 1895 and confirmed another five people.

Also in 1895, a lot was purchased on Lumber Street, now Calhoun Street, for \$700.00. The cornerstone was laid by Bishop Capers on July 2, 1895. The chapel was dedicated to the memory of the Rt. Rev. W.B.W. Howe, former Bishop of South Carolina. The building was the same design as The Church of The Good Shepherd in Columbia before it was enlarged. The chapel was completed several months later, and the cost of the building was about \$1,000.

Many churches donated pieces for the new mission. The altar came from St. Phillip's Church in Charleston and the brass altar rest from Grace Church in Charleston. The lectern was given to the mission by St. Michael's Church in Charleston. The brass altar cross came from Trinity Church in Columbia. The Bishop's Chair was given by St. Thaddeus in Aiken, and the prayer desk was given by The Church of Our Savior in Trenton. Several other churches made donations. One individual, Miss Zimmerman, donated a credence table and brass receiving basin, and others gave linens and vestments.

On October 8, 1899, the Rev. Harold Thomas was ordained. He became the first Minister in Charge. While he was at St. Timothy's, the mission continued to grow. In 1900, it was classified as organized, and in 1901, the chapel was enlarged. From 1902 until 1909, however, several rectors served the mission and it was again classified as unorganized. Things improved in 1909 and the mission was again listed as being organized by 1910. The debt of the church was paid in full in 1911 and the chapel was consecrated by Bishop Guerry in 1911. In 1912, St. Timothy's was admitted into union with the diocese. During that year, the church purchased the lot on the corner of Lumber, now Calhoun, and Lincoln Streets, the site of the present church. On July 7th, church leaders decided to move the chapel to the new lot. On July 12th, before the chapel could be moved to the new lot, it was destroyed by fire.

Services were held in a building on Pulaski Street, not far from the lot on Lumber and Calhoun Street after the fire. The members agreed that a new church should be built, and the cornerstone was laid in 1913. The first service in the new church on February 1, 1914. In 1918, leaders decided a rectory and parish hall were needed. A wooden frame home behind the church was converted into both a parish hall and rectory. During this time, several priests served St. Timothy's.

In 1927, the Rev. Albert George Branwell Bennett became the priest in charge. Under his leadership, the mission became an aided parish in 1943. The church debt was paid in full and St. Timothy's was consecrated on January 2, 1944. In 1948, the wooden parish house burned. A brick building replaced it, and it was dedicated on February 5, 1950. The cost of the building was \$28,000. In the 1950's, the leaders of the church talked about moving St. Timothy's because many of its members were moving out of the neighborhood, but they decided against that idea. In 1953, the women of the church purchased the lot behind the church for \$2,000. In June of 1957, The Rev. Bennett retired after serving as rector of St. Timothy's for almost 30 years. He was so loved by the members of the church that he and his wife were given a new car as a retirement gift.

A new rector, Edward Muse Spruill, came to St. Timothy's in 1957. The following year, new pews were installed in the church. In 1959, the beautiful stained glass window over the altar was given by the women of the church. The twelve smaller windows in the nave of the church were given as memorials by various individuals and families. These windows were made in Germany by the Mayer Studios in Munich. They were dedicated by Bishop C. Alfred Cole on January 25, 1959. He also dedicated the new pews, the new altar rail, chancel steps rail, three prayer desks, Chancel chair, new hymn boards, and new front doors. Later that year, a new pipe organ, a new furnace, and an air-conditioning system was installed. The old pump organ was given to a mission, but some of the original pipes are still on the wall of the church near the doors that lead to Bennett Hall.

The Rev. Spruill left St. Timothy's in 1964. During the next fifteen years, the Rev. Charles Kenneth Blanck served as deacon-in-charge for two years, followed by The Rev. David Watt Yates, who served only a year before dying of cancer He was

followed by The Rev. John Quantock Crumbly, who served as rector for 12 years. While the Rev. Crumbly was at St. Timothy's, the two large stained glass windows in the transepts of the church were installed in 1974. One depicts the ascension and the other shows Jesus surrounded by children. These windows were dedicated on January 26, 1975.

The Rev. David Eury Landholt became rector of St. Timothy's in 1978. Again, the church grew. Average Sunday attendance at the main service was over 150, and church leaders talked of expanding Bennett Hall and placing more pews in the church. During this time, The Rev. Stephen Freeman was the deacon at St. Timothy's. In 1982, the Seay Garden was dedicated to Edna Cannon Seay, a long-time and beloved member of St. Timothy's. In 1986, The Rev. Landholt left as rector of St. Timothy's and attendance dropped. Expansion plans were no longer discussed.

In 1987, The Rev. David E. Bridgforth became rector of St. Timothy's. In 1988, all of the stained-glass windows were protected from weather and vandals with a covering of Lexan applied by Shenandoah Studios of Stained Glass of Front Royal, Virginia. In 1992, St. Timothy's celebrated its 100th anniversary. Special festivities were held, including a dance, and a centennial cookbook was published.

In 2005, the vestry approved the construction of a garden honoring The Rt. Rev. William A. Beckham. Unfortunately, the Bishop died in December of 2005, before the garden was completed. On January 31, 2006, after 18 years at St. Timothy's, The Rev. Bridgforth retired. On October 1, 2006, the Quiet Garden was dedicated to the memory of The Rt. Rev. William A. Beckham by The Rt. Rev. Dorsey Henderson. Mrs. Harriett Beckham, her family, many members and former members of St. Timothy's, and priests were present for the dedication. William Burnside Bolton, a member of St. Timothy's currently living and working in New

York City as an artist, drew a beautiful sketch of the Bishop. It was framed and presented to Harriett Beckham. The centerpiece of the garden is a fountain dedicated to founding members John Bryan and Hattie Radcliffe Rodgers and their children Annetta, Bill, Susie, and John.

Beckham Garden is part of the “Quiet Garden” movement that was started by The Rev. Philip Roderick, an Anglican priest in Oxford, England. This international ministry is dedicated to finding places where individual can enjoy stillness and beauty. There are about 260 official quiet gardens around the world, and Beckham Garden is the only quiet garden in South Carolina.

St. Timothy’s has never been large in numbers, but the members are active in outreach. The Helen Hopkins Service Committee coordinates most of the outreach efforts for St. Timothy’s. Individuals donate to the service committee, and the Men’s Club annual barbeque profits also are donated to the service committee. Funds from the service committee are provided on a regular basis to the Oliver Gospel Mission, Harvest Hope Food bank, and Cooperative Ministries. A young girl in Ethiopia named Tigris is sponsored by the service committee through the Christian Children’s Fund. Annual coat drives and telephone book recycling drives are held. One and sometimes two food drives are held for Harvest Hope Food Bank. Last summer, the church donated 586 pounds of canned food to Harvest Hope, one of the largest donations they have received from a church. Seven needy families were adopted at Christmas, and the church continues to help them throughout the year, based on their needs. One woman was helped to move into better housing from an old mobile home. Another individual was helped with heating bills and other expenses. The church remains present in the lives of other families to help address needs that come up during the year. In August, school supplies are collected for those in need. A

spring garage sale sponsored by the church and end-of-summer barbeque sponsored by the Men's Club raise money to support the Helen Hopkins Service Committee in its many projects. Several members of the church have also participated in Cropwalk. St. Timothy's Guild operates a country store in the fall with money raised going to local charities.

St. Timothy's also contributes to many projects sponsored by the Upper Diocese of South Carolina. Some of these are The Hispanic Ministry, HIV/AIDS, and many Cange, Haiti projects. Contributions to the Cange projects have built schools, hospitals, and churches there. The diocese has also taught the women there to sew, and they embroider things that they then sell. The diocese has also installed a water pump so the residents will be able to get fresh drinking water. The two new Upper Diocese projects are building a vocational school in Cange and teaching the people to grow bananas and other foods that they can use themselves and also sell. These projects are different because the diocese is training the people of Cange to do the work so it will continue, instead of the volunteers going to Cange and doing the work and leaving. Members of St. Timothy's also contribute annually to the United Thank Offering for mission work and Souper Bowl Sunday.

Although St. Timothy's was formed as a mission for the children of the Arsenal Hill neighborhood, there are not many children in the church now. In past years, St. Timothy's had an active EYC (Episcopal Young Churchmen), but we do not have enough young people to have one now. The Sunday School is starting to grow again, with several young children in the nursery and beginner classes. It is hoped that a new rector will help the members grow the church so more young families and children will attend. Church growth and building a strong Sunday

School are two of St. Timothy's goals. At present, there is a small children's choir, and two young people serve as acolytes.

St. Timothy's is a small but historic parish. Its gothic architecture and stained glass windows add to the beauty of the traditional worship service, and its members are friendly and progressive. In October of this year, St. Timothy's celebrates its 115th year, and members are looking ahead with anticipation to the coming years.