

St. Bede's History

All our todays are born with yesterday,
With the hope and the faith and the courage
In those brave hearts one generation ago—
Hope that St. Bede's would endure,
Faith that St. Bede's would grow,
And courage that bound them to take that
first step.

Now we join in praise and gratitude
To those whose hopes and dreams have come true—
Of building for the future this house of God,
Of making for us a true home for our worship.

By
Fanny Brundage of St. Bede's Parish

1952



Bishop Duncan

- March 13: The Rev. James L. Duncan, Rector of St. Peter's, called an organizational meeting for the establishment of a church on 16th Street and 25th Avenue North. A petition to begin a mission was sent to the Rt. Rev. Henry I. Louttit.
- March 23: The first service was held in the auditorium of Woodlawn Elementary School under the spiritual leadership of the Rev. Hayden.



Fr. Herb

- July 1: The first vicar, the Rev. Probert E. Herb, arrives. Services continued to be held on the front porch of Woodlawn Elementary until the weather became too cool; whereupon services were transferred to the Florida Power Idea Center and later the Armory on 16th Street and 13th Avenue North.
- October 19: Groundbreaking ceremonies, officiated by the Rev. James L. Duncan, Rector of St. Peters and the Rev. Probert Herb, were held for the building of the Parish Hall.

Active organizations during the first year included Choir, Altar Guild, Women's Guild, and Young People's Fellowship.

1953

January 12: Every family unit registered in the parish on this date was declared a Charter Member:

1953

January 18: The first worship service in the completed Parish Hall was held with 143 present. Communicants on the parish register numbered 312.

March: The Men's Club of St. Bede's was organized for the purpose of fellowship and exchange of ideas.

June 5: The vicarage, built with funds provided by Fr. Herb through a GI loan, was conveyed to the mission.

The Men's Club of St. Bede's was added to the church organizations.

1954

May 5: At the Diocesan Convention in Tampa, St. Bede's was given full parish status, with The Rev. Probert E. Herb as its first rector.

May 25: This date was proclaimed the anniversary date of the parish.

July 18: Ground was broken for the church building, and work began in August.

October: Two women's guilds were organized, one day and one night guild, for fund raising and fellowship.

December 19: With two-thirds of the building completed, the first service was held. There was an Open House because the general public had shown such interest in the unique style of architecture. Members of the Altar Guild explained to visitors that the architect, Mr. David Tudeen, had designed the triangular form of the building as symbolic of the Trinity.

Note from the Sunday Bulletin: "Missing from the Parish Hall kitchen are 2 large metal cook pots, 2 large metal trays, and one set of stainless steel pots. If anyone has borrowed any of them, will you please return them promptly, as they are needed."

1955

October 30: The Rev. Earl G. Johnson came to St. Bede's as assistant to the rector.

1956

October 18: Fr. Herb resigned as rector because of ill health.

1957



Fr. Willard

February 1: The Rev. Francis A. Willard from St. Agnes Episcopal Church in Sebring, Florida, became the second rector of St. Bede's.



Fr. Elliot

- The Rev. George H. Elliott, a retired priest from Massachusetts, came to assist at St. Bede's.
- At the spring meeting of the Young People's Service League of the St. Petersburg Deanery, St. Bede's won the Good Samaritan Cup.

October: The young people of the church became known as Episcopal Young Churchmen and were divided into Senior and Junior groups.

1958

All women of the parish became members of the St. Bede's branch of the Women's Auxiliary. Three chapters of the branch were formed: St. Mary's, St. Elizabeth's, and St. Agnes's. At the year's end the Women's Auxiliary became known as The Episcopal Church women, the "EC."

Fifteen separate Church School classes met each Sunday morning. Until the Parish Hall was expanded, classes were held mainly outdoors on the covered sidewalks.

The annual Christmas Tree sale had wonderful results: approximately 900 trees sold and \$945.07 realized.

1959

The Brass Polishing Guild, composed of men of the parish, banded together to keep the brass work of the church properly shined.

The Men of St. Bede's donated twelve new cribs to the church nursery. Thirty young men were trained to be acolytes.

The EYC sponsored car washes to finance a trip to Lake Wales Passion Play and held a

Silver Tea on Mother's Day.

The YAC (Young Adult Club), a new organization at St. Bede's, maintained prayer and fellowship through supper meetings and guest speakers.

Vacation Bible School, held annually since 1957, had an average daily attendance for the two-week session of 147.

Because of leakage, the large east window of the church was rebuilt. The window was set in an aluminum sash and was of thermopane glass, tinted to reduce glare and heat.

October 5

The Rev. Francis A. Willard died.

1960



Fr. Clarkson

•January 24: The Rev. John G. Clarkson, Jr. from Ascension Episcopal Church in Clearwater, Florida, was installed by the Rt. Rev. Henry I. Louttit as the third rector of St. Bede's. The Rev. George H. Elliott had served in the interim after Fr. Willard's death.

January 24: The remodeled Parish Hall was blessed by Bishop Louttit. The remodeled building included remodeling of the rector's office and three classrooms to have folding partitions to open up into one large room, each room having its own door; building three new classrooms, a permanent storage place, and a new kitchen, with a dishwasher. Restrooms were enlarged and an electric water bubbler installed. Heat with air conditioning was installed.

1961

A new way of involving the congregation in the celebration of the Eucharist was instituted—two members of the congregation carried the bread and wine, following the ushers in the Offertory Procession.

1962

May: The new rectory at 2438 16th Street North was completed.

November: The old rectory was converted into offices and a library.

In the Parish Hall, one of the rooms was dedicated to the memory of The Rev. Francis D. Willard, hence to be known as the Willard Room.

1963



The Rev. Clyde Brown

- The Rev. Clyde Brown, retired priest from Holy Comforter Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C., joined the clergy to assist at St. Bede's. The Rev. Harry R. Hersey had served in this capacity from the fall of 1962 until his death in 1963.
- Toby Hilliker, St. Bede's native son, entered Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia, to prepare for the priesthood. The Episcopal Church women furnished \$100 each month to support him.
- Senior acolytes were awarded sterling silver crosses, and the juniors were awarded wooden crosses, to be worn when serving at the altar.

1964

At the Family Easter service, the "flowering of the standing cross" was presented. Each mite box holding a flower was placed on the cross by the children.

December: A new ECW chapter, St. Monica's, was formed for fellowship and study.

1965

After study of the problems of migrant workers, the EYC held a work night—repairing, ironing and packing children's and teenage clothing for migrant aid.

On Good Friday, the Rev. Paul C. Johansen, curate from St. Peter's, presented the three-hour meditation.

1966

Fr. Clarkson and the Youth Choir were featured on Church Services, a program on WTVT, Channel 13.

1967

The Laymen's Participation Committee asked for volunteers to form a calling committee to visit the sick and shut-ins.

St. Monica's Guild compiled a St. Bede's Cookbook with favorite recipes from parishioners.

1968

June 22: The building of the Community Day Care Nursery North was completed. Various organizations in the church contributed to the building of the nursery.

1969

August: Fr. Clarkson was appointed to the faculty of the United Theological College of the West Indies. He became priest in charge of the Church of the Ascension, in Mona.



Fr. Johansen

- December 28: The Rev. Paul C. Johansen, formerly curate at St. Peter's and vicar at St. Catherine's, Temple Terrace, was instituted the fourth rector of St. Bede's by The Rt. Rev. William L. Hargrave at St. Peter's Cathedral.

- St. Bede's became a church of the newly created Diocese of Southwest Florida under the Rt. Rev. William L. Hargrave.

1970

April 28, was declared Father Elliot Day on his 90th birthday. Fr. Elliot celebrated at the 10:00 a.m. Eucharist, and a reception that evening at the Princess Martha Hotel honored him.

September 1: a FISH (Friends In Service Here) chapter was organized at St. Bede's. This was a non-denominational organization designed to help those in need of temporary aid (driving those without transportation to the supermarket or doctor's office, etc.)

December 25: The first Chrismon Tree was used as a Christmas decoration at St. Bede's. Chrismon means "Christ's monogram," and the symbols on the tree were all made by parish volunteers.

1971

The "Save Our Window Fund" raised \$13,000 to refurbish the Sanctuary, especially the window, which had continued to deteriorate. The altar in the sanctuary was moved from under the window to its current freestanding position.

A Thanksgiving Fellowship Dinner tradition began. Each year, Fr. Johansen cooked turkeys to feed to those without families close-by.

1972

February: The first issue of "Thought, Word, and Deed," the monthly parish newsletter was published.

Joining the assisting retired clergy were The Rev. Chester Harris from St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Montrose, PA, and The Rev. Aaron Bennett from St. John's Episcopal Church, Cape Vincent, NY.



Fr. Bennett Fr. Harris

1973

The Hobby Group, women who enjoy craft activities, was formed. Invitations to sell their work were received from Charity Fairs at both Gateway and Tyrone Malls.

The first Church Pictorial Directory was completed.

Mr. Jack Hallas and Mr. Harrison Bullard were licensed by Bishop Hargrave as Lay readers. They were permitted to administer the chalice at Holy Communion when needed.

1974

September 20: The Rev. Clyde Brown, who had served St. Bede's since 1963, died and was laid to rest in the Church Biblical Garden on the south side of the church. Fr. Brown had planned and maintained the garden.

May: At the annual parish picnic, as Fr. Johansen was grilling the hot dogs and hamburgers, a sea gull flew over and dropped a dead rat on his head. Picnickers hastened to assure him that his cooking wasn't that bad!

Midsummer: Central air conditioning and heating equipment was replaced, the roof restored, and new carpet and new pews placed in the church.

The Parish Christmas Card idea came into being. In lieu of sending personal greeting cards, members contributed the cost of cards and postage to the Building Fund.

1975

May 14: After more than 65 years in the Episcopal priesthood and 18 years at St. Bede's, The Rev. George H. Elliot died. He was laid to rest in the Church Biblical Garden.

Summer: The Willard room was painted, carpeted and new curtains were hung. This was funded by the ECW.

October: St. Bede's chapter of Daughters of the King was organized.



Fr. Warren

December: The Rev. Harold R. Warren, who had answered Fr. Johansen's call to become the curate of St. Bede's upon his ordination to the Diaconate in June, was ordained to the Priesthood by the Rt. Rev. E. Paul Haynes in a glorious service at St. Bede's.

1976

Bishop Haynes declared St. Bede's chapter of Daughters of the King to be a Deanery Chapter, open to all Episcopal women in the St. Petersburg Deanery.

The new Children's Chapel was completed.

1977

January: Fr. Warren accepted the call to become rector of St. Mary's, Palmetto, Florida.



Fr. Curt

March: The Rev. George Curt accepted the post of curate at St. Bede's. Fr. Curt had been vicar of All Saints Episcopal Church, Cold Springs, Kentucky.

May 22-25: Four days of festivities were planned to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the church. On May 22, at a silver tea in the Parish Hall, charter members were honored with scrolls. May 23, everyone was invited to attend an open Vestry meeting. A slide-and-tape program, featuring all the working groups in the church took place on May 24. On the Feast of St. Bede, May 25, Bishop Haynes began the celebration with Confirmation. Following the service, the mortgage was burned and the Sanctuary consecrated. Finally, the evening ended with a reception in honor of Bishop Haynes, Bishop Duncan, Mrs. Francis Willard, Fr. Herb (in absentia) and Fr. Clarkson (in absentia).

A new building drive began for planned expansion of the Parish Hall and parish offices, to build additional Church School classrooms and a new chapel and sacristy.

1978



St. Bede's added to its buildings by the construction of a new chapel, sacristy, office space, parlor, church school rooms, and rest room facilities.

1979

February: New fire extinguishers were installed and bookcases were stained and installed in the church offices.

March: The chapel altar, made by Fr. Johansen from old church pews, was completed.

1980

January 4: Fr. Chester Harris died. His cremains were interred in St. Bede's memorial garden. Later, his wife Dorothy dedicated a new wooden sign in front of St. Bede's to his memory.



*Rev. Robert Warren
Deacon*

- September: Fr. Johansen welcomed Reverend Robert Warren, Deacon to St. Bede's staff. His major function was to minister to the ill and the shut-ins and be a liaison between clergy and the congregation.

1981

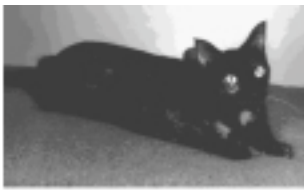
Eleanor Clifton created and donated the banners representing the church season to hang in the church sanctuary.

1982

January: After having returned from a ministry in Jamaica to the Carolina's, Fr. Clarkson passed away. St. Bede's unanimously voted to name our parish hall "Clarkson Hall" in his memory.

Ernest Davis was ordained Deacon at St. Bede's and accepted a position in an Episcopal church in Rhode Island.

May: The church rectory was sold.



Bedey, the Church Cat

June: St. Bede's "Church Cat" was officially adopted after she took up residence in the kitchen to have her kittens.

August: Fr. Johansen left St. Bede's to become Rector of St. Mary's in Dade City.

September: Deacon Bob was designated as Deacon-in-Charge during the period required to locate a new Rector. Together with Henrietta Farley (the first woman Senior Warden at St. Bede's), church functions were carried forward.

The church school children named the Church Cat "Bedey."

October: Clarkson Hall was renovated, adding stage and new carpeting.

St. Anne's Guild compiled a new St. Bede's "Heaven Help Us" cook book.



Fr. Boyd R. Carson

1983

February: The Rev. Boyd R. Carson, Sunday Supply Priest during the search period, accepted the call to become the fifth Rector of The Episcopal Church of St. Bede. Deacon Bob remained on staff as Deacon Associate.

March: Censor, Stations of the Cross, and four Holy Water Fonts were donated.

April: Fencing was installed around the grounds behind the church. A silver Gospel Processional Book was donated. Wrought iron gates were installed between the chapel and the sanctuary.

September: Carpeting was installed in the Willard Room.

1984

September: Construction began on the bell tower.

October: The first Oktoberfest was held, following the celebration of a Folk Mass on Sunday morning.

1985

May: St. Anne's Guild donated a new van for transporting parishioners.

1986

May: The church was repainted, with the help of parish volunteers.

1987

May: Iron gates were installed at the ends of the walkway between the church and parish hall.

1988

January: St. Bede's agreed to be a polling place for the city.

April: A new stove and hood fire suppression system were installed in the kitchen.

May: Men of St. Bede's reorganized as the Brotherhood of St. Andrew.

1989

April: Marguerite Flowers donated a 3-octave set of hand bells.

May: The choir participated in the Diocesan Celebration '89.

October: Ken Fredericks created and donated the banners representing the "Alpha and Omega of the Church" to hang in Clarkson Hall.

1990

February: Community Day School purchased land from St. Bede's.



The Rev. Nancy Nichols
Deacon

June: Nancy Nichols was ordained deacon and began her service in that role at St. Bede's.

1991

Parish Hall renovated with paint and new drapes.

1992

Materials and labor were donated for new library shelves.

St. Bede's formed a softball team.

Fr. Olmstead came in as supply priest while Fr. Carson attended the Episcopal Renewal Ministries Institute continuing education program.

Deacon Nichols was named coordinator for training at St. Bede's following a Washington D.C. conference on the "Issues of Human Sexuality," attended by four lay members of the Diocese.



EGG (Episcopal Garden Group) painted the parish hall, replaced doors and worked on memorial garden.

1993

A new cross created by a church member was mounted on the front lawn..

Lay visitation of new members became a telephone call, followed by a visit to bring a fresh loaf of bread.

Renovations to the Parish Hall: kitchen and hallway tile were laid, new countertops and sinks installed in the restrooms and kitchen painted.

Neighborhood children were invited to St. Bede's Homework Station , where volunteers helped from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. A letter went out to the neighboring schools to publicize the service.

St. Bede's gathered as a community to celebrate Oktoberfest , complete with car raffle.

ECW, comprised of 40 members, hosted the St. Petersburg Deanery meeting and luncheon.

1994

November 6: A "Day of Discovery" took place in the parish hall with continental breakfast served by the vestry .

1995

St. Bede's saw the organization of a new youth group.

A historic compilation of all memorial plaques on pews in the church was created and secured in the office safe.

1996

Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner became an annual event sponsored by the Brotherhood of St. Andrew. They also hosted the Bishop's Dinner, attended by the district director of the Brotherhood.

St. Anne's sponsored a ham dinner to kick off the summer schedule.

Biblical trading cards became the "in thing," with parishioners swapping cards and striving to complete a set.

Children's Worship Bags were created, filled with toys and activities for children while they sat during mass with their parents.

Everyone enjoyed an Olde Fashioned Christmas Dinner and were entertained by the choir.

Nursery was available again, decorated with a Noah's Ark mural, created by Ann Monroe.

1997

Entire outside of the church and all property buildings were painted.

St. Bede's regularly began renting out church space.

December: After 15 years of service and love, Bedey was laid to rest in the grounds of the outside chapel.

1998

"That no one should perish" was the parish theme.

The church air conditioner was replaced.

Easter tide became confirmation time for Deanery instead of individual churches.

Part of the Parish Hall was rented on Sundays to a Hindu congregation.

College Youth Group began.

Summer breakfast program became an annual event. Cooking was done by the Brotherhood of St. Andrew.

In the fall, St. Bede's adopted a new schedule of one Sunday morning church service, preceded by refreshments and Church School.

1999

"I am with you always" was the parish theme.

Our Youth Group became connected with St. Giles', St. Vincent's and Holy Cross.

A Mardi Gras party was enjoyed by all with a King and Queen crowned.

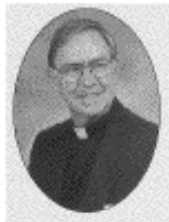
Church participated in National Children's Service Day.

October: Roy Lightfoot began training for the diaconate, a five-year process.

Commemorating St. Francis of Assisi, Fr. Carson blessed parishioners' pets and dedicated a stone marker on Bedey's grave.

2000

"With all that I have and all that I am, I honor you" became the new theme.



Fr. William Bosbyshell

The Rev. William Bosbyshell from St. Peter's Cathedral joined St. Bede's as assistant priest.

2001

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your insight. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your path" was the new parish theme.

March: A reception was held in Clarkson Hall for The Rev. Robert Warren to honor him as he retired after over 20 years of active service as deacon.



Fr. Nabe

August: The Rev. Clyde Nabe from Trinity Episcopal Church, St. Louis, Missouri, joined St. Bede's as assistant priest.

The newsletter, "Thought, Word, and Deed," changed from a quarterly to a bimonthly publication.

The annual church picnic was held on church grounds this year.

2002

"Cast all your anxieties on Him, for He cares about you" is the parish theme for 2002.

May: Marguerite Flowers, Directress of the Altar Guild for 10 years, retired and was honored by the Altar Guild with a brunch in her honor. The entire parish honored her for 40 years of service to St. Bede's at a farewell potluck dinner.

A new ministry of "kitchen steward" was instituted to bring better organization to the kitchen and facilitate its use for weddings and community events.

May 26: The first of several gatherings to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of St. Bede's Episcopal Church was held on the patio after Sunday mass with an anniversary cake. Later that day, a Beating of the Bounds was celebrated, followed by a parish supper.

October 6: The traditional Octoberfest was transformed into Homecoming as part of the 50th Anniversary. The Hindu congregation joined us this year as an expression of support.

October 26: A dinner dance culminated the 50th Anniversary Celebration.

2004

Sponsored 5 children in Haiti.

Sent \$2,500.00 to hurricane victims.

We give supplies yearly to the day care nursery behind the church.

We also work with the courts with community hours and assist the deaneries food pantry.

Memorials and donations and fund raising 10% goes to out reach those in need.

We have Swadyaya group from India that meet every Sunday at our church.

2005

Several Raise the Roof fund raisers to put a new roof on the Parish hall were held.

2006

August: "Taste and See" Parish Cookbook Published. This cook book was dedicated to all those (past and present) who have been touched by St. Bede's Episcopal Church: Who have "Tasted and Seen how gracious the Lord is..." Psalm 34:8 To all Priests, Assistant Priests, Deacons and to the congregations committed to their charge. "Surely the presence of God is in this place."

2013

The Rev. Boyd R. Carson retired on September 1, 2013, after serving St. Bede's for almost 31 years.

When Fr. Carson retired, Fr. Bosbyshell and Fr. Kress were the Assistant Priests. Then Fr. Kress took over until Fr. Mann came. Then continued to substitute on Thursday's when Fr. Fred couldn't come.

July 2014 – January 2015

On July 1, 2014, The Rev. Frederick Mann was designated as Priest-in-Charge of St. Bede's. Fr. Mann retired from 33 years of full-time parish ministry in July 2011. At that time, he was Rector of St. Andrew's, Kansas City, MO (Diocese of West Missouri). He and his wife, Denise, are both Florida natives and returned to live in Sarasota in 2012. As Priest-in-Charge, he was responsible for the worship and pastoral care of the congregation; and is a consultant to the Vestry in their work of leadership. Fr. Mann brought skills in Congregational Development, Appreciative Inquiry, and Family Systems to St. Bede's in this phase of congregational life.

2016

The Rev. William Bosbyshell Assistant Priest, retired from St. Bede's

2016

On March 20, 2016 The Reverend Jonathan B. Percival announced his tenure as Priest-in-Charge of St. Bede's

