

All Saints Chapel exists today, as at its founding, as a mission of Grace Episcopal Church at Cismont. The chapel's origin is best described by the Rev. Frank Leslie Robinson, through whose efforts and leadership, All Saints and two other chapels were created on the west side of the Southwest Mountains in Albemarle County. All Saints is the only surviving mission of those three. Mr. Robinson's history is entitled "The Founding of All Saints Chapel" and is included in a small booklet printed (or reprinted) in 1992 by Grace Episcopal Church entitled *Three Addresses*. This, in part, is his account.

The corner stone ... was laid in the year 1926. In January, 1929, the structural work was begun by Mr. J. A. Walters, a builder and contractor of Stony Point, Albemarle County, Virginia. Mr. Stanislaw J. Makielski, of Charlottesville, was the architect who designed the plans.

The contract was let for \$1736, which figure included the pews, the altar railing, and the communion table. The chapel was completed in May, 1929, and the first service was held there on May 12th, 1929. ...

Immediately beneath the corner stone lies another stone which, rolling down the mountain, struck and killed instantly a little child, Nancy Feagans, three years old, playing in the roadway beneath. ...

The chapel stands upon two acres of land at Stony Point, presented and deeded to the trustees of St. John's Episcopal Mission Church by the Shackelford family of "Dovedale", Albemarle County, on February 17th, in the year 1923. ...

By vote of the congregation, duly recorded, on Sunday, September 8th, 1929, the name was changed from St. John's Episcopal Mission Church to All Saints Chapel. On Sunday, September 15th, 1929, the building was consecrated by the Rt. Rev. H. St. George Tucker, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Virginia.

Highly symbolic in its design, the chapel was described thus in a cover article in the November, 1944, edition of *The Virginia Churchman* magazine, attributed to Mr. Robinson: "[I]t is built of rough wooden boards, to indicate human nature, the roof is of wood, and over the whole is thrown a coat of white, the robe of righteousness. The rock chimney is in the shape of a half turret of a tower, the Almighty being a Tower of Defense. The roof line is broken to let the iron cross upon the turret be above all. The plank fences, coming from each corner of the front of the building and curving to the roadway, are its outstretched arms."

In its first 85 years, All Saints has been served regularly by the rectors of Grace Church. Originally, afternoon services of Evening Prayer were held once monthly, with Holy Communion only occasionally (e.g. semi-annually?). In more recent years we have had twice-monthly services at 9:00 a.m., all using Rite I, with Holy Communion on the second Sunday and Morning Prayer on the fourth. The use of lay leaders for Morning Prayer was instituted by the Rev. Charles Leavell.

The congregation, mostly but not exclusively local, has always been small, with attendance averaging 15 to 25 for most services. For many of the initial years, the chapel was physically maintained almost exclusively by Charles West, a local painter whose extended family (including one of the original trustees) were stalwarts of the congregation for most of its history.

Among these West family members was a lifelong communicant, Thomas F. Crenshaw, who died in 2011, having expressed his wish that his estate should be given to All Saints Chapel. Unfortunately, Tommy died just before he was to sign his will, but enough of his heirs donated enough of their bequests to enable construction of the new parish hall addition, completed in November, 2016. The expenses of the construction were further funded by numerous communicants of All Saints and Grace, by other individual donors, and by a \$10,000 grant from the Peter James Lee fund of the Diocese of Virginia.

The process of acquiring the addition, however, was not simple. It became necessary to employ Marcia Joseph to shepherd the approval process through Albemarle County and Virginia Department of Highways stipulations. In the lengthy process, Ralph Dammann, who had agreed to build the structure, retired from his construction business, but remained to contribute his experience and expertise as our general contractor, hiring Robertson Renovations, Inc., as the builder, with other contractors providing certain functions. Among them, Wayne Gentry contributed his installation of the septic system, charging only for materials. Our architect, Adams Sutphin, carefully and thoroughly designed the addition to reflect the symbolic architecture of the original chapel, described above (except that the wood shingle roof had been replaced by copper for several years). He contributed his services *gratis*, charging only for his assistants' work.

Now that the parish house has been added, there are numerous possibilities for its use, which now need to be identified and employed. This process will likely be facilitated by the Rev. Miles Smith's welcome emphasis on All Saints among the general congregation of Grace Church. Thus far (in 2018), it serves comfortably for post-service coffee hours at least once per month, and it is providing meeting space for at least one civic organization. It is to be hoped that the chapel's newly added possibilities can be further utilized to expand the congregation and provide benefit to the local community. Such growth of mission will require ideas, cooperation, and support from many in addition to our small regular congregation. Members of Grace Church and others are urgently sought to provide all possible efforts toward this goal.

1/1/2018

All Saints Chapel, 1926-2018



Services monthly at 9:00 am: 2nd Sunday: Holy Communion
4th Sunday: Morning Prayer

Location: 3929 Stony Point Road

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