

The Ellison Years

(1953 - 1965)

by John W. Ellison
1988

The following is not intended to be a history of the Parish of the Epiphany during my rectorship; it is some of my memories and impression as much as thirty-five years after the events.

Nothing in my previous experience would have singled me out as a likely candidate for rector of a substantial suburban parish. Two years as assistant chaplain to university students (4th man down on the totem pole at Christ Church, Cambridge), two years as vicar of a small mission in Idaho, and three and a half years as chaplain to students at the University of Arizona hardly prepare one for the situation I found in Winchester.

Brad Eddy's history of the Parish of the Epiphany glossed over certain aspects of the situation because too many people who had been highly involved in deeply emotional struggles were still around. When invitations were issued for the consecration of the church on the 50th anniversary of laying the cornerstone (1954), strong opposition was expressed toward inviting Mr. Hemingway to attend. Let me recapitulate the situation a bit.

The Rev. Mr. Hemingway's theological change from Evangelical to Anglo-Catholic resulted in a three-way split in the parish: a group who thought he was a spiritual gift from God for a moribund parish, another who wanted to be rid of him "decently and in order," and those who wanted him out last week! Antipathies within the parish were strong, and no one acquainted with the parish wanted to become rector. Bishop Sherrill asked his good friend and classmate, the Rev. Dwight Hadley, to leave Grace Church, Medford, where he was very happy, to move the two miles to Epiphany "to bring peace to the parish."

Bringing peace was a gift which Mr. Hadley had, and over the decades his healing touch soothed old wounds. His skills were as a quiet, devoted pastor who loved his flock. He specifically required that he have no responsibility for the Church School. He declined all offers of an assistant or a secretary on the grounds that he would not know what to do with one. Except for funerals and weddings, he rarely appeared at the church between Sundays except for the weekly Eucharist on Tuesdays. When opposition to any proposal developed, he tabled the proposal, avoiding further conflict.

Parish organizations effectively ran themselves. The women had many capable leaders who ran the Tuesday work days, the Tuesday Luncheon Group,

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and the annual bazaar. Mr. Held ran the music department which eventually included a junior choir which sang for the 9:30 Church School worship. The Church School, so well organized in the 1920's by Deaconess Lane of blessed memory, was run by Ethel Davis who spent five days a week on the task, all without pay. The young people were led by a succession of seminary students.



An Epiphany Service in the Early 1950's

Following World War II, attitudes in suburbia required participation in a church. Harvard Business School graduates were advised to pick out the three most popular churches wherever they settled and to join one of them. Epiphany gradually filled with younger families, most of whom had three or more children. Tension developed between them and the older members, ul-

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timately over money.

In the 1930's when it was difficult to make payments on the mortgage, Clarence Perkins and Gerald Hills, wardens, agreed that every dollar possible was to go toward paying off the mortgage. It was finally discharged in 1947. But the attitudes toward unnecessary expense continued, with every dollar possible going into a reserve fund. Even though nearly 300 children were enrolled in the Church School, only \$200 a year was appropriated for that purpose, "a waste of money" in the opinion of the finance warden.

Ethel Davis was a woman of strong convictions, one of which was the missionary imperative of the Church. In addition to the \$200 appropriated by the Vestry, she was given permission to use the offerings of the children as she saw fit. She saw fit to set aside half of the Sunday offerings and all the Lenten offering for missionary purposes. She carefully had the children study several foreign and domestic missions each year, and they voted how much of their offerings was to go to which ones. For those who remained as adult members of the congregation, a strong and positive attitude towards missions was established. Dissatisfied with the available Church School curricula, she wrote her own for all grades, painstakingly typing out a copy of the text for each child, combing hundreds of magazines for pictures to paste in as illustrations. The young parents in the parish considered her efforts as "home-made trash," but if she had taken it to a publisher, she would have been amply paid. The Rev. Charles Batten later reviewed it and said it was better stuff than anything published by various agencies in the Episcopal Church and equal to the best published by anyone.

In pushing for more money for Christian education, the younger element antagonized the older ones who were convinced that "we give all the money but they want to spend it!" A meeting was held at the home of Ralph and Florence Jope to ascertain the facts. Names on the parish list were divided between those with children in the Church School and those without; the canvass chairman noted the family's pledge in the appropriate column. When the two columns were totaled and divided to find the average, the two averages were identical.

So the younger element pushed through a plan for a Board of Christian Education with a full-time paid director. This was the crisis which led Mr. Hadley to believe that his twenty-one years at Epiphany were a failure, for the lines were well-defined and open, and the younger element would not be silenced. What Mr. Hadley did not sense was that his healing ministry had been a resounding success. By 1951 the parish had been restored to its size at the beginning of Mr. Hemingway's ministry, and it was healthy enough to stand a good family fight.

By the time I arrived a year and half later, the dust was settling. With the help of the diocesan staff, a Board of Christian Education was defined and established. The Board was functioning and the first director of Christian education, Philip Krug, a graduate of the Yale Divinity School who was a

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convert to the Episcopal Church and who was taking a year at ETS, had been a great help during the interim when there was no rector.

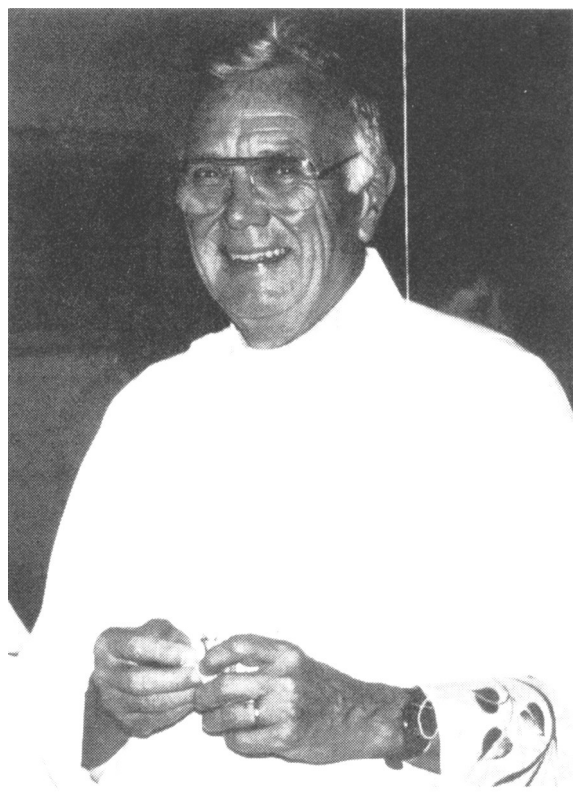
About a week before Mr. Hadley's heart attack, the annual letter to try to stimulate Lenten contributions had been sent. It called for greater participation by the parish in the life of the diocese and the national church, and more emphasis on Christian education. It asked people to make an Easter offering equal to ten percent of their annual pledge, or to double their weekly offerings during Lent for which envelopes were enclosed. This was the first strong financial appeal in years, and it was signed by Mr. Hadley and the wardens. When canvass time came in the autumn, with no new rector in sight, the Vestry decid-

ed to re-issue the Lenten letter, using it as a strong tie to the past with a thrust into the future. Again in Lent the same letter was sent to the parish! Little did the Vestry realize how the new rector would turn things around.

This was the situation into which I came, inexperienced, but with enough common sense to know I could do nothing of my own strength, but only with the help of others better equipped than I to do most of the things. I truly believed (and still do) and stated from the pulpit that no matter what else happened at my ordination when the bishop laid his hands on my head, nothing happened to my brains. Many in the parish were smarter, and they knew more about management than I, so they would have to do the work while I preached.

Finances

At my very first Vestry meeting, the budget for the following year was brought up to have it ready for the Every Member Canvass in November. The pledges for 1952 had totaled about \$20,000; with expenses for a new rector looming large, the Vestry had asked the congregation in the fall of 1952 to pledge \$27,000 for 1953. Only \$24,000 was pledged. "We tried



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for \$27,000,” the finance chairman reported, “and did not make it, so we have drawn up a budget for \$24,000 in pledges.” I countered, “You should fail twice before giving up.” The budget was padded to justify the additional \$3,000, and sent out to the parish.

Now it was my turn. I approached the senior warden privately to secure his approval of my asking the parish to over-subscribe the budget for three purposes: (1) to have enough money to get a truly competent director of Christian education; (2) to support a diocesan mission with the view of pushing it into parish status; and (3) to build a house for a new missionary in Okinawa. He agreed and I launched into a series of sermons about stewardship of time, treasure, and talent.

The parishes of the different denominations in Winchester cooperated in designating a particular Sunday as “Canvass Sunday,” and virtually everyone in town stayed home to meet the representatives from their church. Fortunately, the chairman of the EMC that year was Robert Nyere, a competent manager eager to do a good thing for his parish. In building his canvass organization, he extracted the commitment from each person that the calls would be made on the designated Sunday. No pledge cards were sent in the mail or handed out at worship services. Each and every household was to be called on: The young people were asked to participate and about fifteen volunteered to accompany the adult canvassers.

When the big day came, at about three o’clock Bob Nyere began calling canvassers who had not come to pick up their cards. “You promised you would do it, and I promised that I would stay at the church until you get your calls finished and report in. Now get going!” Oh, he did have to call some of them twice, and they apparently believed him when he said he would call their home all night long if they did not get the calls done. It worked! By nine the last canvasser had reported in, and we knew we were over the top. By the time the pledges were in from those who had been out of town, we had exceeded our goal by 33% over the last year’s total pledge figure, nearly 20% over our goal. The parish was ready to move ahead.

But not all the Vestry were ready. “This may be a flash in the pan. Let’s put the money in the bank and if the parish repeats it for two years, then we can move ahead.” I turned a deaf ear to that, saying that my sermons had committed us to do what we had said.

The Archdeacon wanted us to contribute our money toward some mission’s mortgage to help them become self-supporting. I insisted that it must go to augment the salary being offered by a mission to a new vicar so that a more capable man could be attracted. As a result, the Rev. Paul Twelves was called to the mission in Chelmsford, where we augmented his salary for two or three years, in which time the mission became a self-supporting parish.

The house was built on Okinawa (four rooms) at a cost of \$1000. We shipped a great box of old choir vestments and a fine silver-plated commun-

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ion set which the parish had not used in years.

Calling the Rev. Charles E. Batten to be our director of Christian education was not an easy matter, which brings us to the larger subject of...

Christian Education

The previous year the new Board of Christian Education had won Vestry approval of a "very large" expenditure to purchase the entire new curriculum of the Presbyterian Church (at an expense of about \$3 per child) with the promise that it would be used for several years and that it was not full of Presbyterian doctrine. (In fact, our own diocesan director of Christian education has since recommended it for use throughout the diocese.) The Board was learning how to deal with the Vestry.

My choice for director of Christian Education was Charles E. Batten, professor of Christian Education and dean of Crozier Seminary, a Baptist institution then located at Chester, Pennsylvania. The confidence to offer him the position at a large cut in salary was derived from the information that he would like to become an Episcopalian.

Under the chairmanship of William Hopkins, the Board carefully made arrangements to interview Mr. Batten, duplicating precisely the method used to call Mr. Krug. They feared that if they sought directions from the Vestry first, they would be told not to try for such an expensive director. They began with a small committee interviewing Mr. Batten on a Friday evening, the full Board on Saturday morning, and if at that time all agreed, with the Vestry Saturday afternoon. The senior warden declined to attend the afternoon meeting on the grounds that a \$4,000 salary plus housing was too much to spend on the Sunday School.

Bill Hopkins patiently and skillfully presented the case to the full Vestry at its next meeting. Among other things, he stressed that under Mr. Batten's leadership we would have a program of education for all ages. After an hour's discussion with much foot dragging by those who wanted the money kept in the bank, Dr. Arthur Hertig finally said, "I think Mr. Batten is the right man at the right place at the right time and I move we hire him." That broke the logjam, and even the opposition joined to add the nuts and bolts of financial details to the motion.

At that time Episcopal canon law required a convert clergyman to be a confirmed Episcopalian for one year before being ordained by the bishop, and then to serve a minimum of six months as a deacon. Mr. Batten agreed to stay with us for a minimum of two years. Mr. Batten and his wife were promptly confirmed and his sons baptized. They moved to Winchester in mid-summer in time to begin planning for the activity year beginning in the fall.

The first courses of the new Episcopal Seabury Series were about to be published, with the caution that they be used only in parishes in which the

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Church School teachers and a significant number of other leaders had attended Parish Life Conference. The PLC was a week-end experience designed to contrast the average parishioner's concept of the Christian life (participation in a parish activity in preparation for life in heaven manifested by ushering, working in the parish kitchen, singing in the choir, and such activities) with the more profound concept of "salvation now" being offered to all people through the concern of the People of God (salvation in the midst of the stress, turmoil, and even hell that most people live in). The diocesan PLCs would admit only five people from any one parish for the week-end, which would have required us to send a delegation to every PLC run by the diocese if we were to expose most of our teachers, the Board itself, and others. We rented the Episcopal conference center in Whitinsville and had two conferences of our own. With the members of the congregation who attended diocesan PLCs, we had about seventy-five people beginning to grasp what the Gospel is all about.

Epiphany had long had the typical Episcopal Sunday schedule of 8:00 a.m. Holy Communion, 9:30 Church School, and 11:00 regular worship. Because we had twice as many children as the parish house could accommodate, we had grades 4 through 8 at 9:30, and the younger ones at 11:00. With child-sitting problems, some families made four trips to church each Sunday, and they begged for a schedule that would permit all to come to one service.

The Seabury Series required forty-five minutes of instruction in class plus worship for the entire family. In the fall of 1955 we offered two complete family services which, after experimentation, were set at 9:00 and 11:15. An adult class was inserted at 10:00 which could be attended by anyone. Doughnuts and coffee were served to encourage and strengthen those who had not had time for breakfast. We filled the old parish hall every Sunday except the first one of each month; on those Sundays we had Holy Communion at 8, 9, 10, and 11:15. When the new parish hall was completed, this schedule was modified.

(Incidentally, the doughnuts provoked a minor parish controversy. The children were usually dismissed before the adults, and at the end of the adult class they rushed into the parish hall to seize the uneaten doughnuts, some children grabbing three, others none. From time to time some parents objected to this unseemly behavior, and it would be voted not to have doughnuts. Those who had been absent when the vote was taken would object to "no breakfast" next Sunday, and doughnuts would be back in—until they were voted out again. Mr. Batten warned his classes at ETS that doughnuts were more divisive than heresy!)

Organizations

Although the acolytes were never organized as a group with meetings other than instruction, it was a problem to be solved my first month. Previously there had been six acolytes, one who always served at 8:00, four who carried cross, candles, and banner each Sunday, and a spare. All but the spare were

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going off to college or boarding school. Every boy (sorry, girls!) in the seventh grade and upward was invited by letter to become an acolyte, and we soon had about forty, causing a crisis in the vestment department.

Clean, crisp vestments were *de rigueur* for the parish. All senior choir vestments were pressed each week under the supervision of Dither Swanson; mothers rotated with the junior choir vestments. The adult choir had duplicate cottas, so that one cotta was laundered each month. For Christmas and Easter, both sets were ready so that the choir did not appear in unpressed vestments at the later service! Mrs. Margaret Wightman lovingly pressed six linen surplices for me each week (refusing to touch my spun rayon one which hardly ever wrinkled) and proudly reported at each annual parish meeting that she had spent “fifty-four hours and thirty-eight minutes” at the task, her husband always accompanying her and timing her. I have never known any other church procession to be so splendidly clean and pressed!

We had to solicit funds for acolyte vestments, which were of a special design: “flying rochets,” a long garment with full sleeves, like a bishop’s but slit from shoulder to hem, having no cuffs. The boy’s service was conditional upon his mother taking her turn at pressing. (One year they tried having each mother press the vestment at home, but by the time the boy had rolled it under his arm while he rode his bike to church, it might as well not have been pressed.) Two acolytes served at 8:00 and 10:00, and one at 12:00 noon on communion Sundays and festivals. The processional order was: crucifer, two candle bearers, banner, choir, crucifer, two more candle bearers, banner (junior choir if it was singing), almoners, (altar servers at communion), clergy. Altar server was the honored position. A schedule was worked out so that each boy served the various positions in rotation, except that the oldest and most faithful boys were crucifers and altar servers at festivals. In June we rewarded them with a barbecue, and some years with a Red Sox game.

The first serious organization problem was brought to my attention by Betty Haley, president of the Tuesday Luncheon Group. She was spending from eight to ten hours each week calling the members (approximately a hundred women paid the \$2 annual dues) trying to get anyone to agree to prepare lunch the next Tuesday for the women’s Tuesday Work Day, the very *raison d’etre* of the organization.

The Women’s Work Day had begun in Mr. Dewart’s time, rolling bandages for the hospital, sewing baby layettes for missionary work among the Sioux Indians and Puerto Ricans, and (beginning in World War II) mending clothing before it was sent to Church World Service. In the 1920’s a few younger matrons who did not care to do that work decided to take turns preparing a hot lunch for those who did; these younger women lived on the most prestigious streets, had maids to serve lunch to their own children, and were otherwise “elite,” but they did not necessarily know each other. After a few years, one suggested that they all come to her home one afternoon for

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tea. They had such a good time, they began entertaining themselves with a monthly tea.

When it became known that one ticket of admission to these prestigious homes was by serving at one of the lunches, many women volunteered, and soon only the largest homes could accommodate the teas, making it even more imperative for some women to join the Tuesday Luncheon Group, and capitalize upon the chance to get into those homes. Programs were introduced which rarely had anything to do with religion, such as demonstrations of fine table setting by experts from Shreve, Crump, & Lowe, and similar subjects. After a few years, serving the lunches was a drag, and numerous women paid their dues but declined to have their names put on the list of actual luncheon workers. As a result, fewer and fewer women were serving the luncheons, and doing it more and more frequently, some more than once a month.

The problem presented a great opportunity at a new thrust which numerous women wanted: regular meetings where they would learn more about Christianity and the Church. They were emphatic that the new Director of Christian Education should have study programs for them as well as for the children. (After all, he was Director of *Christian Education*, not Director of the *Church School*, the title previous people had held.) We decided to draw the women's names from a hat, creating ten "circles" of about fifty members each. Each circle would be responsible for three lunches and only three lunches; they would take turns at other parish functions. They would meet once a month in the morning for coffee and discussion of subjects agreed upon by the ten leaders and Mr. Batten. He would train individuals in each circle for each month's presentation.

Many of the real workers were delighted at the prospect of serving only three times at the luncheons. Some who rarely, if ever, served grumbled: "What if you are assigned to a circle with someone with whom you cannot get along?" Jessie Brown, the incoming president of the women, opened (and finished!) the discussion at the annual meeting of the Women's Church Service League, as the women were then called: "I can't imagine anyone so bad that I can't get along with her for one hour once a month!"

The circles were a great success. Luncheon was dropped from the name of the Tuesday Group. At the end of each year, new circles were composed by drawing names. After a few years, some wanted to form the circles around basic interests, and one of my major mistakes was to agree to that plan. Only half a dozen circles formed {several concerning the bazaar, work that would have gone on anyway), then four, then... But our attention was diverted to getting a new parish hall built.

So many people were moving into Winchester, finding friends outside one's immediate neighbors was a problem for many. We helped them by organizing a special group, the Tandem Club. It met for dinner once a month with program. After a few years a certain pattern developed: John MacLellan or-

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ganized and directed a “mellerdrummer” in the winter. A dance topped off the year’s program in June; for the occasions one of the members brought in a non-professional dance band in which he played.

By the spring of 1955 a new problem was emerging: scheduling parish activities. The Church Service League, the Tuesday Group, the circles, and the Tandem Club all made plans separately, and we sometimes had three activities in the same week for which a woman might need a baby sitter, presenting a financial problem for some families. We inaugurated a Parish Planning Day, which was held on a Saturday at ETS to get us away from local interruptions. The officers or board of each group made plans for the coming year; then the groups met as a whole to compare and shift dates, making certain that no week had more than one activity, not counting such regulars as Vestry meetings, the Tuesday Work Day, and the choir. Sundays for baptism, confirmation, and special dates such as All Saints, men and boys’ Advent Corporate Communion, Epiphany, men’s George Washington’s Birthday Communion, Mothering Sunday, children’s Lenten Tea, and all Sunday and weekday services were filled in on a calendar, along with the group activities. It was mailed to the parish in September with the suggestion that it be kept near the telephone to be used for personal dates. This was written with tongue in cheek, because so many days were too full for personal notes to be added. Paradoxically, although the Parish Life Conferences taught that drawing people into parish activity does not usually deal with their deeper religious problems, we were becoming a parish bustling with activities. We had yet to learn the wisdom of an agnostic sociologist at the University of Chicago who was writing, quite literally; at the time that “salvation for many people is found by joining the right small group.”

In my first year we followed the old custom of appointing a Vestry Nominating Committee, made up of the warden not standing for re-election that year and the outgoing three Vestrymen. This committee made very conservative nominations, bringing to the Vestry several whose views no longer fit the mood of the parish. The slate of candidates had never had any opposition; a candidate considered it a rebuff if he drew two or three votes less than the total number of ballots cast. That year two candidates drew votes of ten and twelve less than the total ballots. It was widely admitted that people were dissatisfied with the system.

A new plan was drawn up: The Parish Nominating Committee now would consist of one member chosen by the Vestry, one by the women, and one elected by the Annual Parish Meeting. They were expected to meet throughout the year, not just in December.

The first Nominating Committee chosen by this method were vigorous in their support of my program. Beginning in March, they met frequently, inviting two or three parishioners to meet with them to express their views on the parish and the kind of people needed for the various positions. Anyone not perceived to be a strong, enthusiastic supporter of the parish program was dropped from consideration for office, although few of their visitors re-

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alized that the meeting had been designed for that screening purpose.

Because the Nominating Committee regularly began nominating the outgoing chairman of the Board of Christian Education to a position on the Vestry, many men became willing to serve on the Board of Christian Education and worked hard, hoping to be chairman in their third year. Their three years on that Board were excellent apprenticeships in the affairs of the parish. It assured strong Vestry support for Christian Education.

Another problem of Vestry structure needed correction. The wardens had decided between themselves which one was to be "Finance Warden" and which one "Property Warden," the terms which had been used for many years, perhaps from the beginning of the parish. I was used to the nomenclature of Junior and Senior Warden and I began referring to the one who had been in office longer as the Senior Warden. Due to the new custom of wardens serving two-year terms, one man was Senior Warden for three years, the other for one. (It would be in other parishes that I would exercise the customary right of the rector to appoint the senior warden.)

My first Saturday as rector I found the Property Warden, Max McCreery, going over the property with the sexton, making minor repairs, and so on. And on every succeeding Saturday it was the same. The Property Warden was spending from three to six hours at the parish every Saturday! I planted the seed for a new committee structure, so that the wardens would be in a more supervisory position, and the other members of the Vestry would serve as chairmen of finance and property.

In a few years the parish was ready for another innovation: a woman on the Vestry. When Marion Grush was selected by the Presiding Bishop to represent the whole Episcopal Church at the first meeting of the National Council of Churches, who could deny that she was qualified to serve on our Vestry? In a few more years Florence Jope (Smith) would be the property chairman.

The Building Program

From its inception, the Board of Christian Education knew that the facilities of the old Parish House were inadequate for the task. The kindergarten was crowded into 80% of what is now the Chapel of Praise. The nursery was where the basement rest rooms are now. Every room (except the one now used for the photocopy machine) was crowded with students, some so closely packed that three or more children would have to leave the room to make space for a fourth to get out to go to the rest room! This matter had been deferred for action until "after the new rector comes."

The Board decided that it was their function to notify the Vestry of the problem; it was the Vestry's responsibility to do something about it. Three times a year the chairman of the Board informed the Vestry that additional space was needed. "It looks as if the Board is getting ready to ask for a building program, so we better put every dollar we can into the reserve fund." The

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Board stuck to its opinion that it was the Vestry's responsibility to generate the building proposal.

Furniture was also a problem. Although the parish hall had 100 fine, straight oak chairs, the class rooms were furnished with home-made benches designed to hold a child up high enough to write at an adult table. High, and only eight inches wide, they were extremely uncomfortable. At an annual parish meeting, I had the tables set with four chairs on one side, the benches on the other. Grumbling could be heard throughout the dinner. When the meeting began I remarked about the benches, but assured the people that I knew they would not mind sitting on them. After all, they not only expected the children to sit upon them every Sunday, but to learn something while they were doing it. We soon had a proposal to devote the Easter offering toward new furniture for the Church School. From then on the Christmas offering was marked for "something for the children" and the Easter offering for a missionary project.

Three days before the first parish planning day, the house adjacent to the church on Church Street went on the market. It had twelve good-sized rooms which could serve as class rooms, and was priced at about \$30,000. I put the purchase of it as the first item for the Vestry to consider at the planning day. It was the only subject they discussed, spending the entire day on the need for classrooms and other spaces, the financial strength of the parish, and other related matters. (I absented myself from the Vestry meeting to "drift" from group to group.) The decision was to pay \$500 for a two-week option-to-buy and to call a special parish meeting.

In many matters I had sought and obtained sage counsel from such people as Brad Eddy (professor of public relations at BU), Ralph Jope (alumni director and chief fund raiser for MIT, and Harlow Russell (sales manager for the first company to make individual packets of salt, pepper, and sugar). They were especially helpful over the next two years. My youthful impetuosity would have pushed for quick decisions; they were solidly for moving forward, but they knew the importance of having at least 90% of the parish behind a project. We moved slowly, always hoping for unanimous support.

First, a large committee of some fifteen or twenty members was appointed to survey the needs of the parish and to make a proposal. It would take them nearly a year to fulfill their task. It was done so skillfully that every small segment of the parish was drawn into the planning in some way. Even those who were opposed to a building project (remembering the unhappy mortgage years) finally signed the report which called for a building program; they did have their own reservations about the size of the project.

A special parish meeting acted positively on the project, and the Vestry appointed a committee to select an architect. Brad Eddy, himself a trained architect, chaired this committee, and they sought an established firm with a reputation for blending new construction with old styles. The firm of Hepburn and Dean was selected because of their extensive work in Williams-

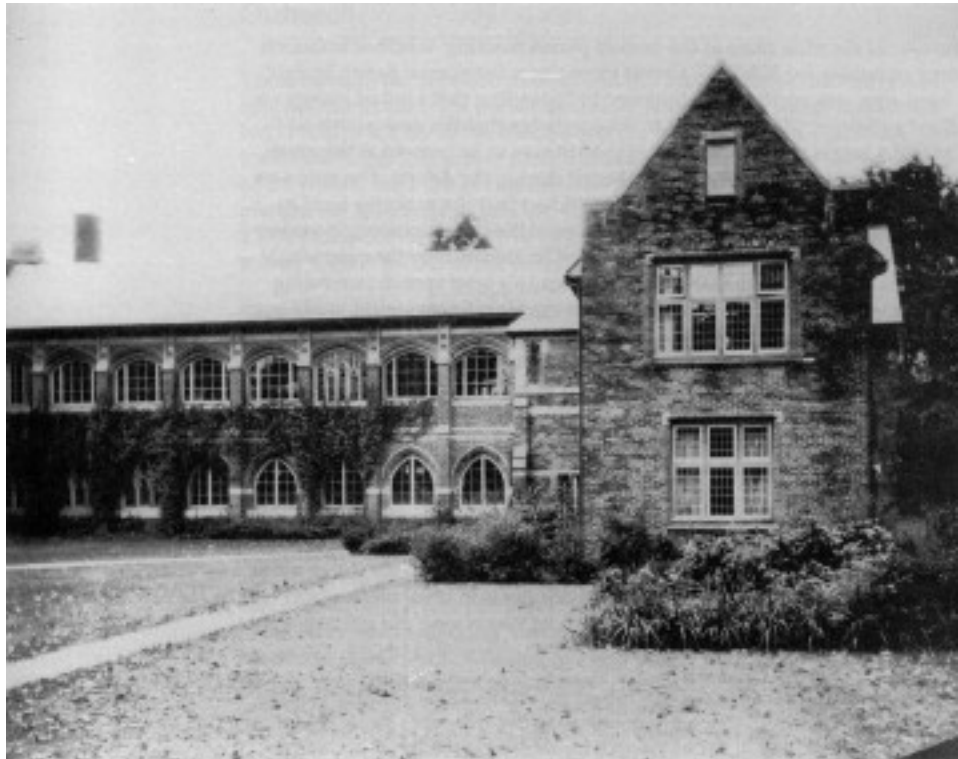
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burg, Virginia. Andrew Hepburn personally took on our task.

Andy had a reputation for bringing buildings in at a cost at or near the original contract price; most church building committees overspent their contract with changes which might add 10% to 20% to the cost. “You will end up at the contract price. I will draw pictures as long as you want me to draw pictures. We will make all the changes you want before it goes out to bid.

“After the bid is accepted, if you want any changes that will add to the cost, you must make another change to cover that cost.” He stuck to his guns, and our final cost was within a few hundred dollars of the contract, a remarkable achievement.

Ralph Jope had presided over MIT’s drive for \$10,000,000, the largest university campaign up to that time. Brad Eddy often served as a paid consult-



The Parish Hall Before the Addition of Hadley Hall in 1959

ant for fund raising campaigns. Both men were willing to serve on a parish committee, but each refused to be the director of the parish building fund campaign on the ground that “a prophet is not without honor except in his own country.” They knew that a paid director’s directions would be followed, but theirs would be debated at every turn. We chose a firm which charged a flat fee of \$4,000 and which said the campaign would take eight

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weeks regardless of how much we sought. (Most firms at that time took a percentage, and applied pressure to finish the campaign as quickly as possible.)

The crucial decision came at the annual parish meeting: whether to launch into a campaign for \$250,000, almost three times the annual parish budget. A hard core was vociferously opposed to “spending that kind of money on a Sunday School.” They refused to acknowledge that the new parish addition had a larger purpose. I asked Bishop Stokes to be present at the meeting, and he opened it with a prayer; he left during the debate. The vote was by written ballot, and although I was confident that the majority were in favor, I was apprehensive about the reaction of the losing minority; so many people had remained silent that it was hard to predict how the vote would go. While the votes were being counted, I made a brief speech reminding the people that the Bishop had prayed that the Holy Spirit would guide our meeting. “Let’s accept the vote, whatever it may be, as the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Either that, or we do not believe what we say or what we pray.” As I recall, the vote was something like 119 in favor of the building program, 22 opposed. (If that memory is correct it is ironic that the number of votes against the project was the same as the positive ones to build the church in the first place!) The minority gracefully yielded, some of them making very substantial pledges to the building. One of them, William Shoemaker, whose house is across the corner from the church, stopped me one day several years later to say: “I am a builder and you are a builder. I was opposed to that new parish hall. But every night I sit in my living room and see the cars coming and going; that building is in constant use. You were right and I was wrong.” Even though he was wrong, his gift was the second largest toward the building.

You know the result. Although we raised only \$210,000 in pledges, the Vestry felt secure in proceeding without reducing the architect’s plans except to postpone remodeling in the old parish house, and to undertake a modest mortgage of \$30,000 to be paid at the rate of \$3,000 a year. We paid \$4,000, however, creating a cushion should the parish ever have financial difficulty in meeting this obligation.

In the building process, one small item I brought up was overruled by the architect. I wanted the walk from the street to slope up to the level of the breezeway. Andy Hepburn was adamant about a four-inch step at that point. He dealt with my concern about ice on the walk by insisting there would be ice either way. He never answered my question about water standing on a hill—and the winter ice problem remains. I should have been more forceful

Outreach

Three times in the eighteen months before I became rector the Vestry had solicited funds from the parish ostensibly for purposes which included a

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larger role in the life of the diocese and the national church. Apparently, for many, the larger role meant more diocesan appointments for lay members of the parish, but I did not realize how many felt that way until after the pledge; for 1954 were in and the Vestry was preparing to deal with the \$5,000 pledged over and above budgetary needs. It was not intended that money should go out of the parish.

Beginning in 1919, the parish had failed to pay its quota to the diocese every year until Mr. Hadley resigned. In September 1952 General Convention was meeting in Boston, which the Vestry welcomed as an opportunity to meet and hear outstanding clergymen from all over the country. To their dismay, they discovered that as soon as a prospective candidate heard about the failure to pay the quota, he broke off further discussion, not wanting to be connected to such a parish. At its meeting following General Convention, the Vestry voted to pay the quota in full.

One former finance officer of the parish undertook to explain to me the failure to pay the quota. The parish had used an envelope system then in wide use; each envelope was perforated in the center, with the “black side” going to parish expenses, and the “red side” going to the diocese and the world mission of the Church. “We sent in every penny that was given on the red side. How could we have done more?” I replied, “You could have considered the quota as a parish obligation and paid it out of Christmas, Easter, and other offerings.” He was appalled at the suggestion.

It was being whispered, “The parish isn’t missionary minded and it never has been. It will not stand for those thousands of dollars going to Chelmsford and Okinawa.” The few Sundays in Epiphany leading up to the annual parish meeting provided an opportunity. Without mentioning the whispering campaign, I launched into a series of sermons on “the great missionary heritage of this congregation.” I felt I was rewriting history, but it had to be done.

First, I pointed out, the original name proposed for the congregation, St. Swithin’s Church, had been rejected “for a name of wider significance,” Epiphany. Epiphany, the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, was the official church season for emphasizing the world mission of the Church. The three kings in the tapestry over the altar, and the three crowns on the cornerstone, symbolized this missionary thrust, the Outreach of Christ to the Gentiles. Every Sunday as we looked at the altar, we had a constant reminder of the purpose.

The windows, the details decided upon by Dr. Suter in the beginning, pictured the theme. On the “north” aisle were the Apostles, whose very name meant “Ones Sent Out.” Several Epiphany Gospel selections were pictured in the lower scenes. On the “south” aisle were saints who figured prominently in spreading the Gospel to Asia Minor, the Greek world, Italy, France, Spain, Hungary, Puritan exiles, and the Virginia Company. Over and over I congratulated the parish on their great heritage and how they were about to

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carry it on with gifts to Chelmsford and Okinawa. At the annual meeting, there was no opposition.

The news of our annual gifts spread and Bishop Stokes did us honor by asking all parishes in the diocese to follow our example and “go the second mile.”.

In 1956 the women undertook the support of a Dutch refugee family who had had to leave Indonesia. In 1957, after the Hungarian crisis, we led the town in a response undertaken by few other communities. Many parishes took in one or two refugees. With the support from all the churches in town, I personally went to Camp Kilmer and brought back twenty-two Hungarians, one of whom was sent back the next week by the FBI. Before placing them in jobs, we gave them two weeks of all-day English lessons in our parish hall, and other churches served them a hot lunch. (Ethnic note: all but one of them went hungry rather than eat clam chowder!)

At my request, the diocese notified me of up-coming visits by missionary figures, and we had some distinguished preachers. We hosted the suffragan bishop of Winchester, England. The Bishop of Hawaii and an Indian from South Dakota graced our pulpit. On very short notice, we entertained Bishop Solomon of Dornakal in India. We had to take him on the Thursday morning after Labor Day, so only a handful of women heard him—but it was enough. In response to my question as to whether he had a dream that might be fulfilled, he said he had a presbyter studying in England that he would like to have come to America to study our new insights into pastoral theology (which merged psychology with traditional teaching). Transportation from and back to England and support for one year would, he said, be a blessing.

Shortly after that Dr. Hartley Rodgers came to the rectory to give me a discretionary check for \$500 “in thanksgiving for our children.” That was half the amount needed for a ticket from England and personal expenses for a year; ETS promised board, room, and tuition for such a man. The women and the Vestry approved the project. I was stunned at Bishop Solomon’s reply: “The man I had in mind has been elected bishop and has already returned to India. But I am sending you Christopher Duraisingh for three years.”

It was no longer air fare London-Boston-London, but South India-London-Boston-and-return, and expenses for three years!

Our venture with Christopher was blessed a thousand-fold. His great simplicity, exuberant joy, and obvious intellect endeared him to us all. He astounded the ETS faculty with his answers to the Bible content exam administered the opening day. He wrote four pages on the first missionary journey of Paul, then decided to save space by handling the second journey in terms of the companions Paul had at each city he visited, and the third with the missionary methods he employed at each city—all with book, chapter, and

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verse citations. Who will forget that Sunday when the lights in the church all failed while he was reading an obscure passage from the Old Testament? In almost total darkness he unflinchingly went through every syllable to the end of the lesson! He could quote two-thirds of the New Testament and vast portions of the Old Testament from memory. He had a great impact upon the seminary and upon the diocese.

Bishop Solomon's confidence in him and the training he received at ETS were well founded. Four years after returning to India, he was sent to the Theological College in Bangalore to earn a Master's degree, after which he was asked to stay on to teach theology. (Ironic it is, but he had no great interest in "pastoral theology," but rather the "real" theology.) He was appointed to the commission working to unify the Church of South India with the Church of North India. He became the representative of the Church of South India to the World Council of Churches. The World Council underwrote his return to America to obtain a doctorate in theology at Harvard Divinity School. He was the first person not a bishop to lead the meditations of the bishops at Lambeth Conference, which he did for a week at the 1968 meeting, sharing the three weeks with the new Archbishop of York and Archbishop Bloom, the Russian Orthodox Metropolitan of Paris. Our outreach exceeded our grasp.

Social Issues

In one area our outreach efforts failed, perhaps due to my lack of skill in public relations. I was trying to be low-key, accomplishing results without great fanfare. It was in the area of suburban churches and the inner-city black community. We first addressed the issue of disparity in quality of education. We drew up a plan to fund bringing thirty black students from South Boston to Winchester daily for the Winchester High School Summer School. The plan was quietly approved by the School Committee. If it generated strong opposition, it could be defended as a summer project; if it succeeded, it could be extended to other time periods. The funds for train and subway fare, lunches, books, and tuition were pledged. I took the matter to Bishop Burgess who referred me on to one of the Black clergy in the South End. He reported after a week that he could not find a single black young person who wanted to go to summer school.

That September at the annual conference of the clergy of the diocese, Bishop Burgess singled me and one other suburban rector out by name as examples of suburban race prejudice! The following year, another suburban parish came forth with almost the identical plan we had had, but thoughtfully had it spread across the Boston newspapers; the diocese hailed them as great progressives. That was the beginning of "METCO," but we had first tried to open the way.

At the same clergy conference mentioned above, Bishop Burgess spoke of the many black scientists and others who were being offered jobs in plants along Route 128 but were not accepting them because of housing discrimi-

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nation. “Open housing” was the theme for the era, and these people did not want to live in the inner city. Trained in the same colleges as white suburbia, enjoying the same music, art, and similar things as the whites, they wanted homes in white suburbia. Stung by Bishop Burgess’s remark about me, I wanted to redeem myself in his eye, so I repeated his message almost word for word the following Sunday. In a few days a former warden called upon me. “I don’t believe a word of what you said. If you can produce such a black person as you described, I will personally provide the housing.” My call to Bishop Burgess was referred to the same inner-city black rector. “I hear you have a man who wants to serve on the diocesan fair-housing commission.” “No, just the opposite. We must put up or shut up. Give me the names of some of these Route 128 plants so I can contact their personnel directors to offer housing.” He was unable to provide the name of a single plant or office. I found myself twisting and turning in the wind.

Not long after that Bishop Burgess came to Epiphany for confirmation. In his sermon he dealt with the contrast between rectors who are pastors and those who are prophets; the times required that the pastors become prophets and exert leadership on social issues. I knew he was prodding me, but the congregation thought he was congratulating them for having a prophet. After all, everyone in Winchester knew where I stood on most issues, on the liberal side except in those matters pertaining to liquor and sex.

Partly due to certain of my sermons being reprinted in the *Star*, the town had been alerted to the sexual revolution a full year before *Time* did a cover article on the subject. Perhaps my sermons against parental permissiveness, even encouragement, toward alcoholic drinking by high school students, reached beyond the town. A new judge in Woburn made a devastating announcement: He would let any high school student off a drinking charge, provided the parents brought charges against the person who supplied the liquor. He said they could use whatever parental coercion they desired to get the information from their child. The resulting consternation was due to the fact that frequently the supplier was the family liquor closet or refrigerator. This was the unpleasant side of leadership, but I believe that Winchester, at least temporarily, was better off because of it.

Lest my motives in recounting this here be misunderstood, it is significant that the parish for the most part supported my stance. No warden or member of the Vestry complained to me about my sermons or other public statements. The parish as a whole was ready to take a strong position on matters of social concern, and it has continued to do so in subsequent decades.

Because Charles Batten and I discussed so many things pertaining to the parish and found that we were thinking along similar lines, it is not always easy to remember which of us originated certain thoughts. We did agree on the following summary of certain movements in Christianity in our day.

In the 1940’s, under the stress of World War II, millions of Americans turned to the Churches, in effect saying, “Give us a faith worth dying for.”

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Churches and synagogues were filled to overflowing. A significant book of the era, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, pointed out that it had become *de rigeur* in America that a person have a religious faith—the precise faith did not matter as long as it was Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish. In the 1950's the same people were saying, "Now tell us the meaning of the faith we have adopted." Virtually every denomination embarked on massive programs of Christian (or Jewish) education. A major publisher issued a series under the repetitive title: "Why am I a..." Baptist, Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc. Millions of children of those converts of the 1940's were being heavily indoctrinated in Christianity in a way that perhaps no previous generation has been since colonial times. By 1961 Charles and I were predicting that in the 1960's these people and their children would be saying "Now let's apply our faith to our society and its problems."

We did not have to wait long for the fulfillment of our prophecy: the Montgomery bus strike, lunch counter sit-ins, Selma, and so on.

Now, a thought of my own. Today we often find groups trying to regenerate the passion of the civil rights movement of the 1960's without success, probably because two basic ingredients are missing. First, the long-pent-up frustration of the North and West when confronted with States' Rights laws in the South, an obstacle that was finally overcome on the issue of interstate commerce. Remember, the lunch-counter sit-ins were upheld by the Supreme Court because they took place in the lunchrooms of interstate bus companies, not because the issue was ethically right. Second, almost a hundred million Americans had spent upwards of three hundred Sundays each in Sunday classes of worship services, studying the depth of the Gospel and its implications. The crowds were predominantly made up of the young people who had been in Sunday Schools in the 1950's! It will be a long time before the nation again has this amalgam to produce another social revolution.

The Parish Office

It had been about a quarter of a century since the parish had had a regularly-staffed office, and certain adjustments had to be made. Numerous people called my wife at the rectory, "I didn't want to bother Mr. Ellison at the office, but would you please tell him..." Barrie replied, "I am sure he would want to hear this from you. Please call him at the office." Many dozens of times on Christmas Eve or Easter Eve people called the rectory, interrupting my preparations for the big festival by asking for me personally, and then asking me the hours of the services for the Holy Day, something whoever answered the phone could have told them. I patiently chastised them: "Give me your name and address so you will get our notices in the future." "Oh, I received the Three Crowns but I threw it away..."

These were trivial compared to a built-in attitude that any cast-off equipment was good enough for the church. My secretary complained about the ancient typewriter. A vestryman offered to buy one from his company which was in-

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stalling new electric ones. The “new” office typewriter would not space correctly either vertically or horizontally, but it only cost the parish \$20.

A generous action by John Colony enabled me to solve the problem. At the time of the 1963 pledge drive, he came to me in private. “I want to increase my pledge but I am already one of the largest givers. If I make my pledge what I think it should be, word will get out and all the organizations in town will be after me. Can I give anonymously?” I suggested the Rector’s Discretionary Fund. His pledge was \$200, his gift to the RDF was \$1,000.

Not wanting to return to the Vestry with a complaint about the “new” typewriter, I searched and found a slightly-used IBM Model A variable-spacing electric typewriter, at a cost of \$250. It produced beautiful work which resembled letter-press type, but it was regarded by some as a wasteful expenditure.

For many years communication with the parish was done through a monthly publication with some such inspired name as the “The Parish Leaflet.” A semi-invalid addressed envelopes at her convenience for \$5 a month, about one cent per envelope. I wanted weekly communication, but she could not possibly produce four sets of envelopes per month. I asked the Vestry for a small addressing machine which would have cost about \$125. Harry Chadwick came to me saying the Appalachian Mountain Club was disposing of their old addressing machine which we could have for \$50. I bought it from the discretionary fund.

A Mr. Howe had a printing business opposite the Common at which our monthly leaflet was printed. I inquired about the cost of a weekly publication. He assured me it would not be much, and that the Congregational Church was most enthusiastic about the weekly publication for them. Without knowing the cost, we launched *The Three Crowns of the Epiphany*. It was mailed weekly, not in envelope; an envelope can be ignored but a well-worded headline might get attention.

To my astonishment people were asking why that name was chosen. So I created the Church Mouse, who announced that the next Monday at 1 p.m. he would give a lecture at the church cornerstone about its symbolism. The next week he apologized that the sub-freezing temperature had kept him indoors, missing his own lecture. He would give another the following Monday on the symbols carved on the sides of the pulpit. Again he apologized, this time for his height; he had heard voices but could not see over the edge of the pulpit. Not to worry; the following week his lecture would be given from the top of the Sunday School banner (three crowns on a white background), which was carried in procession every Sunday, and which was kept during the week standing at the end of one of the choir stalls. By that time no one was asking “why *The Three Crowns*?”

The Church Mouse was a most fortuitous conception. He was brash, flip-pant, incisive, at times humorous, and he greatly enjoyed needling overinflated

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ed opinions. Almost every week he had something to say: “The Church is neither a winter resort nor a last resort.” Some people laboriously put a few coins in fifteen or twenty envelopes when catching up on their pledges at the end of the summer; “The Treasurer doesn’t need all the unused envelopes—just the money.” People loved him, and he said things I would never have dared to say. June Moffat drew his portrait, and many parishioners delighted in presenting me with do-dads on which he appeared. It took me twenty years to determine that it was Kay Philbrick who helped him send me a birthday card each year; she still does but now she signs her own name.

No bill came from Mr. Howe for three months! He astutely waited for the parish to become used to the new publication. But his price of \$90 per week was beyond our means—I was only being paid \$100 a week! The remainder of Mr. Colony’s gift paid for a second-hand offset printing press. The IBM typewriter met the Post Office requirement that the publication look like printing not typewriting and we were accepted for second class postal rates. The weekly mailing fee was reduced by 80% so our total cost was about what the previous monthly leaflet had cost. The Vestry had to conclude that this was good management! We prepared our printing plates, printed, addressed, and mailed the paper every Tuesday and Wednesday.

Ethel Davis was a delightful problem for me. For many years she had assisted Deaconess Lane in the Church School, and then spent five or six days a week for twenty-five years directing it herself, only to be abruptly dismissed in 1952. A spinster who lived in the house her grandfather built in Stoneham when he was married, her whole life was wrapped up in the parish, and now she came regularly almost every day out of habit. She agreed to continue her work with the parish library which she had created almost single-handedly. (Later Mr. Batten would declare it the finest small parish library he had ever seen; she had no worthless books, although some, important at the time they were published, were out-dated. All the significant books which the laity should read in the 1930-1954 era were there!) Nearly eighty years old, she insisted she would prefer to die than not be able to entertain new ideas! She learned to operate the foot-treadle of the 40-year-old addressing machine we had bought from the Appalachian Mountain Club, and came faithfully each week to do her duty. {A cultural comment: twice a year she had to remain home on the day S. S. Pierce delivered her canned goods and other groceries.}

For years the duties of the ushers included opening and recording the Sunday offering before they could go home {on specially printed sheets which carried the envelope number, the only names being those who put in loose checks}. As the attendance and offerings increased, this became an onerous chore, spoiling many a Sunday roast. The system protected the pledge secretary {Sally Riley} from any accusations of pocketing any offering. The accounts were so carefully kept and saved that at one annual meeting one gentleman rose to point out an error of twelve cents in the official Treasurer’s

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Report, something the auditor had not caught! {One auditor required the parish secretary to contribute the \$1.52 that was needed to balance her petty cash fund.) In time, we came to a committee of retired people who opened and counted the offering on Monday mornings. Not only did they have the leisure to do this, they relished the opportunity of serving the parish in this way.

It was several years before I realized a rigid system governed the ushers. Originally, every Sunday, two vestrymen passed the plates from the side aisle, the two Wardens from the center; in presenting the offering, the Wardens came last in good ecclesiastical order. When we introduced the family service, the Wardens agreed that one would be present at each service. This had its strong point: every Sunday a parishioner could consult a vestryman or warden on any matter. We had to begin using former vestrymen as ushers. The Warden was always in the rear of the four ushers presenting the offering, on the right.

One Monday as I entered the cloister, I met an indignant woman who had come in to complain that her husband had been an usher for thirteen years and had never been allowed to seat anyone by means of the center aisle; he always had to take the side. How could I have failed for nearly ten years to see that only wardens and former wardens ushered the center aisle? We had more social stratification than I had dreamed!

The Assistants

In September, 1953, the first paid Director of Christian Education, the Rev. Philip Krug, had left to become an assistant in another parish, and our parish needed help immediately. Mrs. Jacqueline Lawton, wife of a student at ETS, was beginning to teach English in the Winchester High School. She became our DCE on a part-time basis to give me time to search for a properly qualified leader. Her husband, Keith, became our ETS student working with the young people. Most directors of Christian Education were women, and the number being produced by our training centers for women could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Scores of parishes were searching for them, and they commanded higher salaries than ordained clergy assistants, picking and choosing from several offers. The parish budget provided \$3,000 for this position, and women were receiving offers in excess of \$4,000 plus apartment. In this context, offering \$4,000 plus housing to Charles Batten was almost miserly, but it was the maximum which would be acceptable to the Vestry.

Charles' entire career had been spent at Crozier Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, as instructor and librarian, then professor, finally dean. The Rev. David Hunter, who had assisted in setting up our Board of Christian Education before he went to New York to become Executive Secretary for Christian Education in the National Council, suggested that I invite Charles to come to Epiphany. It was most fortuitous and rewarding for me, because he became my mentor and tutor. Never once did he aspire to replace

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me or to undercut my position; in fact, he went out of his way many times to buttress the position of rector, teaching the laity the proper Episcopal way of doing things. This was significant, following Mr. Hadley's "hands-off" regime.

We understood each other and had a kind of mental telepathy between us. Either one of us could make an emergency exit by saying to the other, "I was about to discuss thus-and-so. Will you take over so I can leave?" We called on each other in the midst of lectures to make comments, and even reached a point where we could freely interrupt the other on occasion if it seemed wise to do so.

As a professor of Christian Education, he had long had a vision of what could and should be done in a parish. The Episcopal Church was about to launch a new curriculum which he heartily endorsed on educational as well as doctrinal grounds. We had an enthusiastic crowd of parents eager for the best that we could offer their children. God dropped an angel into our midst in the person of Robert Anderson, new professor of education at Harvard.

Bob and Charles made a superb team for training the teachers to have them ready for the new Seabury Series. Our worship schedule was revamped to provide forty-five minutes of class every Sunday except Communion Sunday. The Board of Christian Education, already heavily immersed in educational theory through their organizational effort and adoption of the Presbyterian curriculum, grew in wisdom, strength, and courage. The diocesan and national departments of Christian Education turned to us and to Charles for leadership in many areas.

In his second year with us, Charles Batten was asked to teach Christian Education at Berkeley Divinity School, which school is now incorporated into Yale University. At the end of the term, our own seminary in Cambridge secured him as a full-time professor of Christian Education and director of student field work. He left us—but only temporarily.

With the parish continuing to grow, it was apparent that we needed both a Director of Christian Education and an assistant clergyman. Mrs. Anne Austill, of Wellesley, who had served in several parishes, became our Director. Not having the theoretical foundation of Charles and Bob Anderson, she did not work harmoniously with the Board, and after one year she left.

We then entered into a special arrangement with Charles Batten, using the \$4,000 we had been paying Mrs. Austill. Charles would give us Sundays and ten hours per week for \$2,000; he would send two seminary students to be with us both Sunday morning and evening (to work with the young people) to whom we would pay \$500 each, and Elizabeth Hopkins would do the "leg-work" (assembling materials, dealing with teachers' problems, purchasing) for the other \$1,000. It gave us the best of Charles' talents and relieved him of many details which could just as well be handled by people of lesser training. It was a marvelous set-up which endured until Charles' un-

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timely death in 1963. We were able to continue the forward thrust of our program through the new building program which was rapidly coming upon us.

Bishop Stokes had put me in touch with the Rev. Ralph Putney in the spring of 1956. Ralph was nearing the end of a long and rewarding ministry, serving a parish in Delaware, Ohio, after having been at Lenox, Massachusetts, for many years. He wanted to slow down with less responsibility for his final five years (at the time clergy normally retired at age 68). He and I both remembered my opening remarks his first day on duty: "You have never been an assistant before and I have never had an assistant before, so we will have to learn how to do it together." Team-work came easily for both of us, and he was a most faithful and supportive assistant. When I asked for advice, he freely gave it; if I did not ask, he withheld his criticism but unwaveringly supported whatever program I launched.

"Now that you have an assistant, you will be able to call on people in their homes." Little did people who made such comments realize how much of a rector's time can be consumed by administration; it is the assistant who has time to call! But when people were ill or had other crises, they wanted (and deserved) the attention of the rector. We hit upon a very workable plan: Using our fairly complete parish file cards, we recorded every birthday in the parish in a date book. Special birthday cards were printed, and we endeavored to deliver the birthday card to every confirmed member on his or her birthday; it included an invitation to attend the 8 o'clock service for the birthday prayer and to a light breakfast afterwards. The secretary of the Board of Christian Education sent cards to the younger children.

This plan had many virtues. Except for Sundays and holidays, it was not very effective to call several days after the birthday; no, we had to do it on that day without exception. If the person was home and we called late in the afternoon, a birthday dinner was usually being prepared and both they and we were happy to make it a short visit. If no one was home, the card in the door showed that we had tried. With two or more birthdays in every family, we almost always were received in each home at least once a year.

It had its amusing side-effects. One afternoon Mr. Putney went to ask a particular woman to take on some parish task. She had invited seven friends for lunch and bridge. When they saw him coming up the path they exclaimed, "You didn't tell us it's your birthday!"

It also had another side-effect, for the visits were duly recorded on the back of the family parish record, along with all other contacts made with the family. When anyone complained to the parish secretary (Jessie Salter) that "no one ever calls on us except to ask for money," she would quietly pull out their card. "Well, it says here that the Rector saw your husband in the hospital in March and Mr. Putney saw him twice; Mr. Putney called on your birthday and you were in; Dr. Ellison called on your daughter's birthday but no one was home." "Oh, yes. I forgot about those."

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Ralph Putney endeared himself to the parish in countless ways, and returned to give his loving service after his retirement, serving as interim pastor when I left, and carrying on at times in Mr. Bishop's absence.

His sense of humor always delighted and provoked me. Once, when the Sunday bulletin listed me as the preacher although he was to deliver the sermon, I remarked during the announcements that if anyone did not know which one was which, I was taller than Mr. Putney. Upon entering the pulpit, Mr. Putney said, "The Rector could also have said that he has more hair!"

When he retired, he, Mary, and her sister spent nine months touring Europe, and we missed him sorely. It was also the year that cancer ate its way through Charles Batten. The Putneys were at sea two days short of New York when I send the sad radiogram: "Alas, poor Charles, we knew him well."

One of Charles' dying requests pertained to his funeral. It was at the ETS chapel (filled to overflowing by scores and scores of clergy, former students, friends), conducted by Bishop John Coburn, dean of ETS; I read the lessons and Bishop Stokes pronounced the benediction.

The Rev. John Hill was a contrast in so many ways: young, single, subject to the enthusiasms and errors of those not yet tempered by the hard realities of parish life. (I was getting older and a bit sedate, I guess.) He regularly attended all the sports events at the high school; he was available at any hour for those who wanted his guidance. He was very popular with the young people. After two years he left us to work in another parish.

At this time (1963-1964) we had the Rev. Christopher Duraisingh with us every Sunday while he was a student at ETS; he was a deacon in the Church of South India. Two seminary students were in the chancel each Sunday. From time to time the bishop turned to our parish to sponsor an experienced clergyman from another denomination who wanted to become an Episcopalian. Normally, the man would spend a year studying at ETS, serving on Sundays in an Episcopal parish. The Vestry balked at having both a DCE and a separate assistant: "look at all the clergy we have up there every Sunday; we don't need another one." But during the week they were elsewhere and that was when I needed an assistant, not on Sunday!

Ultimately, the Rev. Stephen Walke came to us as a combination Director of Christian Education and assistant. The DCE—one mark of the growth and widening influence of the parish—had become an albatross in trying to deal with the Vestry pertaining to assistants.

The Rev. Steve Walke, in on the Seabury Series from the beginning, was somewhat disillusioned with it. He wanted to switch our program to one run by a friend of his from a foundation in Cincinnati. He was also studying to become a lay psychiatrist. A very small parish near Washington, D.C., called him to be rector with the understanding that he could spend three days a week pursuing his psychiatric interests, and he accepted that call.

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In the summer prior to my resignation, the Rev. Keith Lawton and his wife Jackie returned to the United States, after several years as missionaries in Alaska, to take on the job as assistant rector and Director of Christian Education, respectively. He also assisted Mr. Putney in the interim between rectors before becoming chaplain at a school in Maryland.

In my subsequent parishes I had a total of ten assistants. None of them could hold a candle to Charles Batten or Ralph Putney.

Although not officially designated as assistants, two people deserve mention for their faithful and daily assistance: the parish secretaries. Mrs. Dorothy Keyes, old enough to be my mother, gave unrelentingly of herself for several years, serving while the parish was undergoing numerous transitions. When she needed additional help, Jessie Salter began working part-time. Mrs. Keyes reached retirement age—no, age to collect Social Security—and she left us, returning to the Harvard Cooperative Society to work part-time in the book department. Jessie Salter took over the position on a full time basis.

The position of parish secretary is not usually well-understood by many people. The Vestry constantly wanted to pay the secretaries the same as a new graduate of a high school secretarial course. She is worth far more than that, because in many ways she becomes the executive assistant to the rector. She needs great tact, a sympathetic ear, a close mouth, infinite patience, a good knowledge of the Episcopal Church, as well as the many things any other secretary needs. Hers is the first voice on the telephone, the first face one meets on entering the office. Dorothy and Jessie were all that could be asked for that position.

Enos Held served as organist-choirmaster for thirty-one years. He was a high school science teacher with a great love for the Church and music. Arthritis and a bit of carelessness made his fingers less nimble: “I guess the organ keyboard was very cold today—it sounded as though Enos was wearing mittens.” Nevertheless, he had a keen sense of the pastoral role. He spoke to me about one faithful choir member: “He sings off pitch. But his wife is a shrew and he tells me the only quiet hours he has are singing in the choir. He can be in the choir as long as I am here.”

Adele Heinrich succeeded him, and there began a series of one-year appointments to the organ bench. Even though they served a short time, the next three organists were professional musicians, and they demanded a high standard of performance from the choir. Adele was a very successful composer of semi-religious anthems suitable for public school choirs; this career consumed her interests.

Next came a professor of music at a woman’s college in Greater Boston. He brought true professionalism to the choir rehearsals, not allowing time for chit-chat but only about thirty seconds from one composition to the next. His custom was to publish each spring the list of the year’s preludes, post-ludes, and anthems, arranged first by composer and then by century to show

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the congregation how he had not overly emphasized one period or style. Alas, he was attracted to the First Boston Parish by the promise of a new



French style organ (\$150,000) and a 24-voice paid choir which would sing three anthems per Sunday—all supported by endowment.

Allen Birney won the New England Guild of Organists' annual competition among young organists. His direction of the choir was equally superb. But Yale University took him from us to become their assistant university organist.

Carl Fudge took over the organ bench only two months before I was called to El Paso. He served the parish well and was instrumental in bringing the parish vote for the present pipe organ.

Axel Sorenson was the beloved sexton when I came. For years, he was the only person who was regularly in the parish buildings every day of the

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week. Each summer he patiently cleansed and wiped all the oak fixtures and paneling (using turpentine, linseed oil, and bowling alley wax). And for every meeting requesting it, he made “heavenly coffee.” No matter how much snow fell on Saturday night, only once did he fail to have the sidewalk cleared before 7:45 a.m. How did he do it? “If the 11 p.m. news predicts the possibility of snow, I get up an hour earlier than usual.” The one failure was when fifteen inches of snow fell the second Saturday night in April.

The next sexton was a hard worker who covered the transition into the new building. On the advice of his physician, he had taken the position to get away from previous responsibilities. He drove a pink Cadillac; Mr. Batten drove a yellow Lark convertible; the rector drove a blue, standard Ford.

Don Wilkins brought many ways of rural Maine to his tasks of sexton, and I am certain that Mr. Bishop will have more pertinent comments than I about his work.