

Did You Know?

An Episcopal mission of 12 people called Christ Church was established in 1912 under the direction of Bishop Weed. The Baker family donated land for a building at the corner of Fairland and Baker Court in that year. The church building was constructed in 1914 and consecrated in 1915, while being led by John William Foster, Vicar. It became a parish in 1914 and changed its name to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church after the patron saint of fishermen.

During the First World War and the Depression Era, the Reverends Edgar Pennington, Randolph Blackford, Jules Prevost, Henry Durrant and Russell Carleton shepherded St. Andrew's. The original church building was moved across the street onto property donated by the McGowen family of Quincy, FL in 1925. The Episcopal Church of St. Andrew's maintained its presence in an area where fishermen and farmers were hit hard by the depression.

World War II changed Panama City and St. Andrew's. Both the Air Force and the Navy came to Bay County and have remained major players in our community economy and parish life. During this time period, St. Andrew's also grew under the guidance of the Reverends Frank Dearing, Richard Corry, and George Sauls.

Following World War II, both Panama City and St. Andrew's were busy reconstructing their lives and building foundations for the future. The church was under the leadership of the Reverend Thomas Byrne. Father Tom planted seeds that would take root, grow and nurture future generations. Under him, the church purchased bricks from the old shipyard, cleaned them by hand, and built a much needed parish hall, affectionately called "The Storm Shelter" when used as a youth center for all of Bay County. Two new missions were established, Holy Nativity in the Cove section of Panama City, and St. Thomas' on Laguna Beach. Plans were also completed for a new church building for St. Andrew's and construction began on the modified A-frame sanctuary in which we now worship. To be continued....