



Christ Church Looks Back

by Joseph A. Tomberlin

Four major items on the agenda of the Vestry meeting of November 7, 1948, related to certain aspects of construction of the new church. A topic of extended discussion was the fittings, including pews, for the building. The Vicar, Fr. Clifton H. White, reported, "No worthwhile bids . . . [have] been received except from Amidon for the furnishings, exclusive of pews." Vestry understood that "action had to be taken" and concluded that "if no other offerings were received in short order, the furnishings would be ordered from Amidon. In addition, Noah E. Fry informed Vestry that carpet for the church had not been purchased. Reaction to that piece of news was the suggestion that "carpet and flooring be referred to Mr. [Lloyd] Greer [the supervising architect]" and that he report directly to the Building Committee on the matter. Also, Vestry approved the extension of an "extra heat duct from the heating unit to the Northwest corner of the building for consideration by the architect and contractor, if the expense involved was not out of reason." There was some talk about the nature of finish to be used in the interior of the church, sand blast versus acquella, and that question was left in the hands of the Building Committee. The Building Committee's decision on the issue is unclear, given that the Committee left no records.

A few days later the subject of "insurance coverage on the new church building" came up again in a letter of November 15, 1948, from Zoë Coburn, Executive Secretary of the diocesan executive committee, to Robert Macks,

Clerk of the Vestry. Miss Coburn alleged to Macks that she had received no reply to her earlier missive about the issue and asserted that Bishop Barnwell was responsible for the "proper protection" of all diocesan property, and "we have no record of any insurance whatsoever." In fact, Miss Coburn's statement was not quite accurate. As Macks had written her on September 4, 1948, the process of acquiring Builder's Risk insurance was then underway, and "we will hold the policies here, notifying you of the company, number, and coverage. . . ." As noted in the March 2012 Vineyard, the procedure Macks outlined was not what Miss Coburn wanted to see in September 1948, nor was it what she wanted two months later in November 1948. She had implied in September that policies covering the Christ Church project should be held in the diocesan office, and now she was explicit: "The policy should remain in the diocesan safe and we should have a record if you prefer making payments direct."

Macks responded by letter on the following day, November 16, 1948. He pointed out that, in accordance with Miss Coburn's instructions, Christ Church had obtained Builder's Risk insurance "shortly after construction was started in the amount of \$50,000.00 and on directions from Vestry \$25,000.00 placed with the McKey-Tillman Agency and \$25,000.00 with the Bass Insurance Agency and policies delivered to the Treasurer of the Building Fund." Moreover, he wrote, the Georgia Inspection and Rating Bureau had not yet established "a

definite rate on the building, [so] the coverage is on a tentative basis and no payment being made until a definite rate is arrived at." Macks also declared, "However, the building is thoroughly covered at the present time." Miss Coburn had recommended that the policy be carried on a three-year basis as a means of saving money on the premiums, but Macks reported that Christ Church's policy was on an annual basis. As he put it, "the money was just not on hand to pay a three year policy even though it meant a saving of one-sixth on the premium."

Miss Coburn's answer to the Macks letter arrived as a note typed on the bottom of an epistle written to Macks by Bishop Barnwell: "Thank you very much for the information received today with reference to insurance protection. That was what we needed. I suppose when all is completed and you get down to yearly or 3-year policy you will then handle it as before — just please let me know at that time."

With the insurance commotion out of the way, Christ Church was able to return to some of the prosaic business of equipping a new church. In particular, at a called Vestry session on November 19, 1948, Fr. White presented "bids he had received from a *church furnishing company North of Atlanta* on the pews, which seem very much more attractive those submitted by Amidon or American Seating Company." Vestrymen asked Fr. White and Jamie Carroll "to investigate the situation with the thought of placing contract for all furnishings with this organization, if feasible."