



Christ Church Looks Back

by Joseph A. Tomberlin

As reported in the August *Vineyard*, Vicar Clifton H. White informed Vestry on February 1, 1953, that he had submitted his resignation to Bishop Middleton S. Barnwell on January 1. He intended to leave Christ Church on March 21, 1953. Immediately afterward, Senior Warden Jamie Carroll read aloud a letter from the Bishop that focused on replacing Fr. White. Barnwell suggested that Vestry be prepared to pay the new Vicar, whoever he was, a monthly salary of \$400. Thereupon, Vestry passed a motion for Mr. Carroll to warn the Bishop in writing that Christ Church's 1953 budget was already in effect and could not support a salary of more than \$200 a month "at the most" for the remainder of the year. The parish might be able to increase the amount to \$400 monthly in 1954, depending "very heavily on the ability of the replacement sent to this Church."

Bishop Barnwell attended the next regular Vestry meeting on Sunday, March 1, 1953, as did Fr. White. Barnwell opened the session and led a discussion "covering possible replacement for Mr. White." Mr. Carroll reported that vestrymen had seen all the candidates the Bishop had suggested, and vestrymen then made comments about each. One of the possibilities, the Rev. Vernon Quigley of Tallahassee, had written to Mr. Carroll removing himself from consideration, and the others obviously aroused little more than

feeble interest among vestrymen. Therefore, the group asked for specific instructions from the Bishop about how to proceed. Barnwell responded by urging vestrymen "not to be in great haste." He said "that he had us very much in mind, and would see that we were taken care of." The Bishop put forward a few names as potential temporary replacements to be used after Fr. White's departure on Saturday, March 21. He assured vestrymen that he would "see that we have a temporary man at any rate" and urged the members "not to worry." At that point, Barnwell left the meeting.

After the Bishop's withdrawal, the group dealt with some practical matters related to the Vicar's impending exit. Fr. White recommended a Vestry committee to "oversee the care of the rectory and grounds . . . pending the arrival of [the] new vicar." Robert G. Macks and Roy Newham agreed to accept that responsibility. Vestry also stipulated that the Parish Register was "to be in custody of [the] Senior Warden [Mr. Carroll] who will make any necessary . . . entries." The Vestry Clerk, Mr. Macks, in addition, received directions to write two candidates who had previously visited Christ Church to thank them for coming and to enclose in each letter a check for \$15.00 to cover expenses.

Having advised Christ Church's Vestry on Sunday, March 1, 1953, "not to be in great haste" to hire a new Vicar, Bishop Barnwell hastily located a promising contender in the

person of the Rev. Michael J. Kippenbrock of St. Thaddeus Episcopal Church in Aiken, South Carolina. He informed Vestry of his discovery by letter on Wednesday, March 4, 1953, and a committee of vestrymen visited St. Thaddeus Church on Sunday March 7, 1953. Vestry subsequently convened in a called meeting on Thursday, March 12, 1953, and heard the visiting committee's report, the essence of which was that the committee "was much impressed by Mr. Kippenbrock." On the basis of a Dawson-Tucker motion, which passed unanimously, Vestry agreed that Mr. Carroll should telephone Bishop Barnwell immediately with the request that he "proceed to call Mr. Kippenbrock, in line with his letter to us of March fourth." Mr. Carroll quickly made contact with Barnwell by telephone and afterward returned to the session to report that the Bishop had promised to "contact Mr. Kippenbrock tomorrow." He stated that Barnwell had pledged as well to "assume the extra for the new vicar's salary for the balance of this calendar year, but after that 'we are on our own.'" This meant that the Diocese would be responsible for \$200 of the \$400 monthly salary to be paid Fr. Kippenbrock from the date he began work, which turned out to be May 1, 1953, through December 31. Beginning January 1, 1954, Christ Church would have to pay the full amount without any help from Savannah.

More to come in the October *Vineyard* and in the following months, so stay tuned.