



# Christ Church Looks Back

by Joseph A. Tomberlin

As noted at the end of "Christ Church Looks Back" in the April *Vineyard*, Vestry learned in the meeting of February 7, 1954, that the architect, Joe Bright, and the contractor, Bill Tullis, had requested payment for their work on the Sunday School Annex. The reaction was the passage of a Marion Tucker-Robert Macks motion that "payment only be made on acceptance of the premises by the architect and the Building Committee, substantiated by the consent of the Vestry as a whole." That action indicated only that the Vestry was displeased with the quality of construction on the part of Mr. Tullis and continued to be dissatisfied with him, as we shall see later.

Meanwhile, the processing of Christ Church's loan application by the American Church Building Fund Commission proceeded quickly. Omer Franklin, acting as Christ Church's agent and attorney, had mailed the relevant documents for the loan to Richard P. Kent, Secretary of the A.C.B.F.C., on January 27, 1954. On February 8, 1954, Kent sent a registered letter to Franklin that contained a check for \$9,000.00, the amount requested by Christ Church. The check was written to the order of "The Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Georgia, Inc., and the Vestry of Christ Protestant Episcopal Church of Valdosta, Georgia, Inc."

Also enclosed were seven documents, some of which, such as the "Certificate of Value" and "Last Payment Certificate," were new and had to be  
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completed. To others Franklin had to make what Kent called "adjustments." For example, the "seal of the Vestry had to be affixed to the "Promissory Note," "if the Vestry has a seal." In the case of the "Loan Deed," one sentence had to be "stricken" from the document. And in the instance of the "Consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee," two blank spaces had to be "filled in." As Kent put it, "The words to be inserted are self evident."

On the final page of his three-page letter, Kent provided instructions to enable Franklin to complete the loan process. First, Franklin was to deliver the \$9,000.00 check to "the proper representatives of the Diocese of Georgia and Christ Church, Valdosta, upon completion of the foregoing adjustments and details. . . ." Kent also reminded Franklin that he was to make certain "that the buildings and improvements on the mortgaged premises are insured for fire and extended coverage in conformity with the provisions in the loan deed."

Upon closing on the loan, Franklin was to return the various completed, corrected, or "adjusted" documents "together with insurance policy or policies bearing mortgage clause in our favor [that is, in favor of the A.C.B.F.C.]; and a continuation of your Certificate as Counsel relative to title and certifying that Loan Deed to us is the first lien of record." Kent also stated that the practice of the A.C.B.F.C. was to "compute interest from the date of closing. . . ." Therefore, he was to be informed of "the date in this case" as

well as the name and address of the Treasurer of Christ Church, or other officer to whom statements and further communications should be addressed." Finally, he pointed out that the borrower, meaning Christ Church, was "expected to pay the recording fee and all incidental expenses."

By March 4, 1954, Franklin had completed the instructions provided by Kent and on that date mailed a letter to Noah E. Fry, Christ Church's Senior Warden. In the letter was the check from the A.C.B.F.C. for \$9,000.00. Bishop Barnwell already had endorsed it on behalf of the Diocese of Georgia, and all that remained was for Mr. Fry to endorse and deposit it. At the meeting of March 8, 1954, Franklin informed the Vestry of the "completion of details in reference to the mortgage on Christ Episcopal Church in Valdosta. . . ." Vestry agreed to pay Franklin's firm for "expenses incurred;" and Mr. Fry passed the loan check to Treasurer Roy Newham for deposit. However, Vestry "affirmed that no payment was to be made to the contractor until he has lived up to his agreement." Apparently, Mr. Tullis eventually satisfied Vestry, as the Treasurer's Report of June 30, 1954, showed \$9,186.37 for "Major Improvements" among payments made in June.

The new Sunday School rooms were used from 1954 until a major renovation of Church and Parish Hall in 1980 and 1981. During that project, the "new kitchen," still in use, replaced the Sunday School rooms.

A new story will begin in *The Vineyard* for June 2011.