



A Brief History of St. Joseph's Episcopal Church

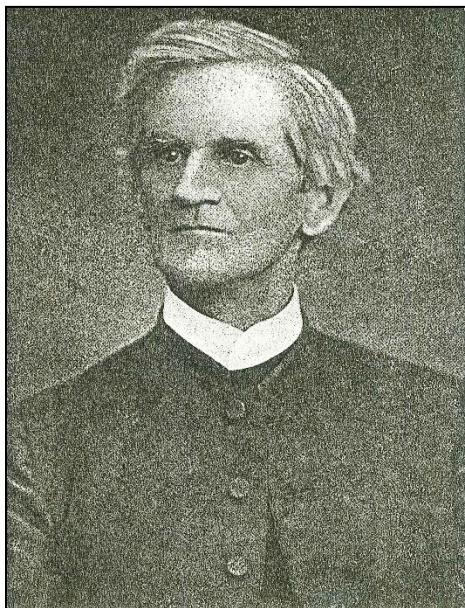


Fayetteville, NC

St. Joseph's Episcopal Church, Fayetteville, NC

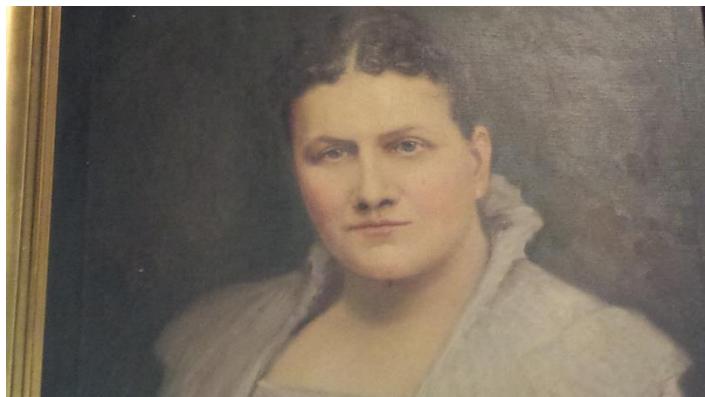
St. Joseph's congregation, having separated from St. John's Episcopal Church, was organized with the help of the Reverend Joseph Caldwell Huske, and officially chartered in 1873. It is the second oldest Episcopal congregation in Fayetteville.

The present location is the third one where the congregation has worshipped. The first one was a small rented church at the foot of Haymount Hill. The second one was on the north side of Russell Street between Gillespie and Anderson Streets. Following Reverend Huske's retirement from St. John's Episcopal Church of Fayetteville, he became St. Joseph's first Rector.



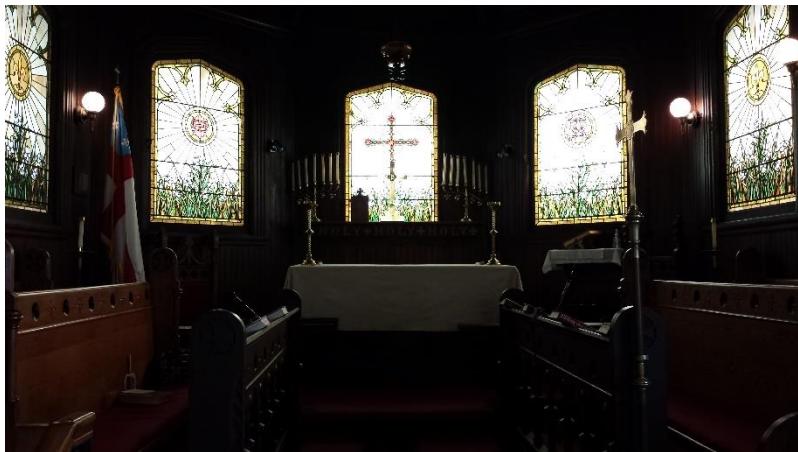
The Rev. Joseph Caldwell Huske

Reverend Huske worked diligently with Miss Charlotte McNeill. They gained financial help from Mrs. Eva Smith Cochran of Yonkers, NY. With her aid and the sale of the property on Russell Street, the present property was bought and the church was built in 1896. On Sunday, March 28, 1897, the church was consecrated by the Right Reverend Alfred Augustine Watson, 1st Bishop of the Diocese of East Carolina.



Mrs. Eva Cochran

St. Joseph's Church is a jewel of a building. The architecture of the building is a combination of Gothic, Spanish, and Queen Anne styles. There is dark wood paneling throughout. Most of the appointments are the same ones placed in the church prior to its consecration in 1897.



The chancel is the focal point in this beautiful church. Outlining the altar are five exquisite Resurrection Windows, one of the last sets of stained-glass windows produced by Louis Comfort Tiffany of New York. The stained-glass window in the rear of the church has several fleur-de-lis. This symbol represents the Holy Trinity.



The small single manual pipe organ was built by Henry Erben of New York. One of the ranks of pipes in this historic instrument is engraved with the signature, "George Hamill," and the date, June 15, 1857. The organ has been powered by hand, water, gas, and electricity. The organ was restored following fire damage in March 2015.



The beautiful Victorian baptismal font in the rear of the church, near the main entrance, was given by the members of St. Joseph's Church as a memorial to Dr. Joseph Caldwell Huske.



There are three plaques on the back wall of the church. One states that the font was given as a memorial to Dr. Huske. Another announces that the church was erected in 1896, to the Glory of God and for the comfort of all who seek Him. The third is in memory of Mrs. Eva Cochran, the benefactress of St. Joseph's Church.

In the late 1860's, several founding members of St. Joseph's were also involved in the founding or operation of the Howard School, which evolved into the first State Normal School (teachers' school) in North Carolina. This became Fayetteville State University, a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina. St. Joseph's parochial school was separate and one of the first local schools for people of African descent.

Twenty ministers have served St. Joseph's as Rectors. The first Rector in the present sanctuary was The Reverend William Montgomery Jackson, and our last Priest-in-Charge was the Reverend Ralph Clark. Holy Eucharist is held on Sunday at 10:00 AM.

The tragic fire in 1917 destroyed the first rectory and parish house. A large gazebo was destroyed by fire in 2005. Our more recent fire on March 25, 2015, severely damage the quarter of the church nearest the main entrance. The entire sanctuary was damage due to water from the fire and was masterfully restored in 2017.



Over the years, St. Joseph's parishioners have made the facilities available to the U.S.O., the N.A.A.C.P., the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity, Fayetteville City Schools, the City of Fayetteville Parks and Recreation Department, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, The E.E. Smith Alumni Association, The Fayetteville Senior Ensemble, the

Homeless Coalition, and a Breakfast Ministry which provided a nourishing breakfast to the homeless and the needy six days a week from 1987 to 2006.

On June 1, 1982, St. Joseph's Episcopal Church complex was entered on the National Register of Historic Places. On September 12, 1982, at a most impressive service, the Certificate of Listing was presented to St. Joseph's by Dr. John J. Little, Deputy State Historic Officer.

The memorial plaques that line the church walls are a constant reminder of the rich heritage we all enjoy. The current membership is committed to the restoration and maintenance of this Historic and National Treasure.



In May 2023, the church will hold a historic service celebrating 127 years on its present site, and 150 years as a parish.

