

The History Of Our Family At St. Philip The Evangelist, Calgary

THE EARLY YEARS

In the summer of 1953, our parish began, as a vision, on a piece of land in Elboya Heights. Located near the southern edge of the city of Calgary, it was hoped this new parish could serve the needs of new families as the city grew and also attract some families from Christ Church which was experiencing overflow crowds. In 1956 our name was chosen - St. Philip the Evangelist (look at Acts 5 verse 5, Acts 8 verses 6-8 and Acts 21 verse 8 for references to St. Philip).

On July 1, 1957 Bob Crowder became our first Rector and conducted services in the newly completed church hall. Bob described the early years as a pioneering experience. There were 125 parish families - mostly young and many new to Calgary. Sunday School in the church hall was very crowded with over 100 children. With great excitement and satisfaction, these "pioneer families" witnessed the building of our church and its dedication on March 19, 1961.

PROGRESS AND CHANGE

In the 35 years following the dedication of St. Philip's, we have had many happy occasions, but it has also been a time that has challenged our faith and changed our parish life. In 1965, Archie McMullen became our second Rector. Archie was devoted and caring and fondly remembered by our parishioners. When John Flagler became our third Rector in 1969, the character of our parish was changing. We were no longer pioneers on the outskirts of a small city. Parishes to the south of us - St. Peter's, St. Lawrence, Holy Nativity - experienced tremendous growth as new communities sprang up. Meanwhile our congregation was eagerly raising funds to pay off our mortgage. Twenty-two years after the dedication, our mortgage was discharged and on October 30, 1983 our church was officially consecrated. John Flagler had encouraged us to rededicate our lives and renew our devotion to our Lord. In 1986, Tom Carman became our fourth Rector and together with his young family instilled a new energy in our parish.

OUR FAMILY TODAY

In 1993, Graham Goode became our fifth Rector. Graham and his family have a special love for St. Philip's and are a wonderful encouragement to the spiritual growth of our parish family. Today our parish is alive with the same courage and vitality that stirred our pioneer beginnings. In our photo directory, we see the names and faces of our pioneering families and their children and grandchildren - Allison, Black, Clark, Hamill, Laing, Mathews, Robinson, Thomson, Wilson and others. They are joined by new families from other parishes, from other cities. We have both continuity and renewal in our family.

Our Bishop reminded us during the consecration of our church that "in a world not known for its joyfulness, there is a profound need for Christian communities who know where true joy is to be found and consequently are able to laugh and sing together". And that, after all, is what our family at St. Philip's is all about.