

Judge Charles Andrews

By Amy Mangram



Judge Charles Andrews was born in Utica one year after St. Paul's was founded. In local newspaper articles, Judge Andrews is often referred to as "The First Citizen of Syracuse". He made his mark early, being elected as the youngest district attorney at the age of 26. He was elected mayor twice and is credited with maintaining peace in the city during the tumultuous Civil War period, as well as for his strong advocacy for the abolition of slavery. He later served on the New York State Court of Appeals, including as chief justice.

He was a member of St. Paul's from the time he moved to Syracuse in 1849 until his death in 1918. His tenure at the church began during a pivotal time when the nascent congregation was transitioning from uncertainty to a period of tremendous growth, including the construction of two new church buildings and the Lockwood Parish House. The church grew and flourished alongside the City of Syracuse, facing challenges such as two major wars.

It was in this scene that Judge Andrews arrived as a young lawyer and a St. Paul's communicant. Throughout his time at the church, he served on the vestry, including as both junior and senior warden. He was also a member of the diocesan convention of Central New York, Chancellor of the Diocese, a participant in numerous ecclesiastical courts, and a frequent deputy to the national convention. Recognized by bishops of his time and the vestry of St. Paul's, he was regarded as one of the leading lay leaders of the diocese.

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In addition to helping guide the congregation through the construction of its churches and parish house, he was instrumental in bringing the bishop's home in the new Central New York diocese to Syracuse. He was known for his active and prominent role in the deliberations of the highest bodies of church governance.

One can only imagine the full extent of Judge Andrews' contributions to the community throughout his years of service at St. Paul's. The words spoken by Bishop Fiske at his memorial sermon provide insight into his lasting impact:



"His name was always spoken with affectionate pride. To me, it was an inspiration to know him. When we met, I felt he brought me a real benediction. He always showed a high sense of duty and a deep sincerity of conviction. Men from every part of the country prominent in the affairs of the church will mourn his loss. Yet he was more than a citizen or churchman; he was a sincere and consistent Christian."

As I researched the life and times of Judge Andrews, I couldn't help but reflect on how a layperson had such a profound impact on St. Paul's. We continue to see this tradition today, with lay leaders contributing significantly to the health of our church. Perhaps we have Judge Andrews, in part, to thank for that.

Sources for this article include local newspaper articles in the St Paul's and Onondaga Historical Association archives.