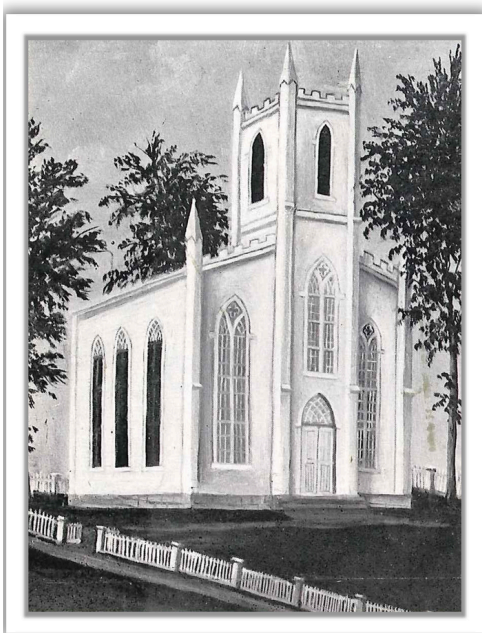
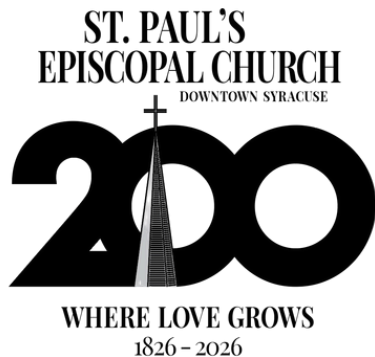


# Our First Church Building

By Marion Greenhalgh



Our Bicentennial Celebratory Year starts during this month of May. As Chair of the Bicentennial History Task Force, you will be seeing at least one article in each Courier about St. Paul's history. You will also be seeing a weekly synopsis on 'This Week, or Day, at St. Paul's'. Eventually, we will be designing and installing an edited timeline on the Hansen Dining room wall and putting the complete timeline on St. Paul's website.

I kickoff the year with a description of St. Paul's first church, built on the triangle bound by East Genesee, Washington and Warren Streets in Syracuse. The building was started in 1825 and finished in 1827.

The first St. Paul's Church was a white clapboard wooden structure - 41' by 52', which sat on a two-foot wall of cut stone. It had a shallow pitched roof above about 20' high side walls. A square tower rose almost a further twenty feet above the roof at the east end. There was some plain castellation around the four sides of the top of the tower and at the east and west ends of the roof. The four corners of the church and tower were all crowned by pinnacles. Three small lancet-shaped windows of plain glass, with green shutters, were on each of the long walls. Three long, clear lancet windows were on the east wall – one above the door and one on each side of it.

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There was one lancet window on the west wall above the altar. The unusual arrangement of a west end altar was probably due to the topography of the site. Upon entering the church on the east side, one would see a vestry room on the right, and stairs on the left leading to a raised gallery above the visitors' heads. There were two side aisles in the nave which held rows of closed, colonial type pews with doors and foot stoves, which also extended on both sides of the Chancel. One of these pews near the Chancel was traditionally occupied by young men. The Church had a raised pulpit, a large lectern, and a fine Altar topped by a slab of Onondaga limestone (which was eventually transferred to the Altar of the second St. Paul's). This Church could probably provide seats for about 200 worshippers, and about three-quarters of the pews were rented. It was lit by candles until 1831. In front of the church, facing east, was a lawn and shrubbery, a straight walk to the church door and a low white picket fence surrounding the lawn. At the east end was a well, used by the public.

September 12, 1827, the church was consecrated by Bishop Hobart, Bishop of New York State and rector of Trinity Church in New York City. The first administration of the Holy Communion followed soon afterwards, to eight recipients.

