

Dean William Hale's Fifteen Years of Ministry

By Amy Mangram



On September 13, 1975, William M. Hale was installed as Dean and Rector of St. Paul's, a position he held until his retirement in 1990. In a sign of changing times, St. Paul's used a computer to assist in the search process, the first time technology had played a role in selecting a dean for the cathedral.

During Dean Hale's tenure, several initiatives were introduced that would become integral parts of parish life. The daily meal program that eventually grew into today's Samaritan Center began under his leadership. A Capital Funds Drive was launched to address the needs of the cathedral's aging buildings, and coffee hour following Sunday services became a regular tradition. While these ministries and activities may seem routine today, they represent innovations that helped strengthen both parish life and community outreach.

Dean Hale's influence extended well beyond Syracuse. Widely respected as a liturgist and church musician, he emphasized the importance of worship and the central role of music in the life of the Church. He chaired the Standing Commission on Church Music, the body responsible for compiling, editing, and publishing the Episcopal Church's 1982 Hymnal, which remains in use today. He was also a respected leader in the wider Episcopal Church, serving as an elected Deputy to General Convention on seven occasions.

Dean Hale's fifteen-year tenure was marked by both thoughtful stewardship and lasting innovation. Through his leadership, St. Paul's strengthened its worship life, expanded its ministry to the community, and laid the groundwork for programs that continue to serve the parish today.

