

Bicentennial Bulletin

Announcement

The Bicentennial and Parish ties have arrived!

Neckties may be purchased from the Parish Office during the week and after Sunday services in November with cash or check.

Fun Fact

While searching for a lot on which to build a church, the new congregation that emerged from the November 10, 1817, organizational meeting found a temporary place to hold services at the Lancaster School on Beall Street (now O Street). The Lancaster School in Georgetown was the very first public school open to girls and African-Americans in the District. Francis Scott Key raised money for scholarships for poor children who couldn't afford the \$10/year. That building still stands and is now the home of Celia and Mac Lovell at 3126 O Street.

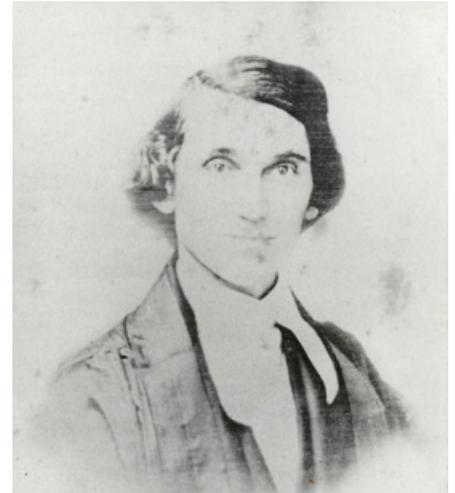


Christ Church
Georgetown
200 years

The Reverend Reuel Keith

First Rector of Christ Church, Georgetown

A fellow scholar described Christ Church's first rector as "tall and slender, but not erect, and stooped much...yet he stood very high as a preacher. His topic was always Christ and in exhibiting Him there was an unction about him which subdued the stoutest hearts, and melted the hardest." Thus did The Rev'd Reuel Keith set the tone for our church's next 200 years, and we are reminded of his influence each time we step into Keith Hall for the many Christian Education programs he would have loved.



He was born in Pittsford, Vermont, in 1792 and early on young Reuel was drawn to the liturgy and apostolic traditions of the Episcopal Church. Following an unsuccessful apprenticeship to a New York merchant, he became a tutor in Alexandria, Virginia. As there was then much interaction between people living on both sides of the river, he very likely became friendly with St. John's Georgetown parishioners.

Ordained a priest at Andover Seminary in 1817, the time was right for Reuel's return to his old friends at St. John's. Saddled with an unpopular, frequently absent rector, they were organizing a new Episcopal congregation. Keith, it was felt, embodied the qualities the rector lacked, and was called to be the new church's rector nine days after the organizers' first meeting in November. He accepted and, capping off an eventful year, married a northerner, Mariette Cleveland 14 days later. She died in 1830, leaving him with four children. He then married Elizabeth Higginson, who died in 1840.

Christ Church was dedicated to Christ in December 1818, by its consecrator, Bishop James Kemp. Throughout his tenure, Keith was an innovator, involving the congregation in an Education Society, which led to the creation of Virginia Theological Seminary in 1823. After leaving Christ Church in 1820 for Bruton Parish in Williamsburg, Keith returned to Alexandria, and became the new Seminary's first professor. He would live for almost 20 years. Sadly, his mind reportedly became "unhinged on questions of predestination and his own salvation."

True to his scholarly specialty of Christology, The Rev'd Reuel Keith defined a focus for Christ Church that was and is still Christ-centered, a testament to what one of his students called "the thrilling warmth of his devotion."

For the complete article, visit the Bicentennial page of the parish website: www.christchurchgeorgetown.org/bicentennial.

Writing A Bicentennial Hymn

By Gordon Silcox

When I told Bicentennial committee co-chair Page Smith in August 2016 that I'd like to write a hymn, surely she must have thought, "Who is this guy and what makes him think he can do that?" She had no idea whatsoever, of course, what the result would be. Nevertheless, she liked the idea and has been immensely supportive from the start!

The Bicentennial Vision provided the framework for the hymn text:

- **Express Gratitude:** *How blest are we for founders' gift/that generations tended well*
- **Build Community:** *In Christ one body all are joined*
- **Inspire Growth:** *Now 'tis our watch, our time to serve*

Tom Smith, our organist/choirmaster, was helpful in many ways including suggesting the tune: Land of Rest, an American folk tune with roots in the ballads of northern England and Scotland and known throughout the Appalachians.

Throughout, I've had a palpable certainty of purpose—that I could, and in fact must, contribute something worthy. As one facing ageing, illness and mortality, the writing inevitably involved expressing my own spiritual thinking as a "believer, seeker, unsure," which provided many moments of reflection and comfort. And as the final text was completed I felt the presence of another kind of guidance, an awareness never experienced before with such clarity that, indeed, God's Spirit has been with me in this effort.

My ten years as a member of the Christ Church Georgetown community have been enriching beyond words, thanks to every one of my fellow parishioners, the youth, the clergy and staff, the programs and the place itself.

My hope is that others today and in future years might find a word or phrase in "How Blest Are We" that might resonate—might satisfy their own "yearning deep to feel within/ God's touch, divinity stir."

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Teens for 200

The youth of Christ Church have long been a vibrant and energetic presence at 31st and O Streets, bringing their joyful noises to the 9:00 a.m. service when they are small, and taking their boundless energy to those in need on mission trips when they are older.

Our Bicentennial brings a special focus to the youth and their particular efforts to express gratitude, build community, and inspire growth. They will be taking the "200" theme to heart, and donating collectively 200 hours of their time to assist mission partners we already work with as a parish. They will live into the gratitude we all feel for the work of those groups, they will expand the CCG community that is invested and involved with them, and they will grow in Christ as they have these new opportunities to serve.

The "200" will resonate as well in their plan to assist these mission partners with a variety of collections throughout the bicentennial months, gathering 200 items that meet the needs of the various groups. These regular, simple acts of recognizing the need, organizing the response, and meeting the call will build our youth more firmly into the foundation of our parish, as they bring their enthusiasm and energy to these efforts.

KIDS' CORNER

Eyes on 200 Fun Facts

Circle 10 toys that kids played with in 1817.

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| Rocking horse | Trains |
| iPad | Yoyos |
| Marbles | Frisbee |
| Soccer ball | Kaleidoscope |
| Dolls | Tea set |
| Fidget spinners | Legos |
| Monopoly | Drone |
| Spinning tops | Toy soldiers |
| Puppets | Barbie |
| Pokémon | |



Answer: rocking horse, marbles, dolls, spinning tops, puppets, trains, yoyos, kaleidoscope, tea set, toy soldiers.