



FROM THE PARISH ARCHIVES
Number 27 October 2012

Worship and the Sacraments 1860-1880

Welcome to the twenty-seventh edition of "From the Parish Archives". We hope that you will enjoy reading about the history of the Parish. This is especially so with us in our 150th year.

The "From the Parish Archives" aims to be factual. However, any opinions expressed are personal and may not be necessarily shared by other parishioners.

Geoffrey A Sandy, Parish Archivist and Parish Historian.

Introduction

This issue seeks to describe the worship and the administration of the sacraments for the first 20 years in the life of Saint Margaret's. We have archival records that allow us some insight into the worship services and the worship space for this period. The records also allow us to make some comments on the sacraments of The Holy Communion, Baptism, Marriage and Confirmation. Unfortunately we have no records concerning The Anointing the Sick and Penance. The seventh sacrament of Holy Orders is treated under our brief discussion of the priest's oaths and declaration of assent.

The Prayer Book

Saint Margaret's, like any other Church of England of the day, used the 1662 Book of Common Prayer for worship and the sacraments. A morning Sunday service would have been *The Order for Morning Prayer* from the Prayer Book. An evening service would have been *The Order for Evening Prayer*. It was common practice for Holy Communion to be offered only once a month but always at Easter. Each month it replaced Morning Prayer or was incorporated within it. Until, the appointment of the ordained priest the Revd. Robert Mackie, probably 1 June 1864, parishioners usually travelled to Saint John's for the sacraments or relied on a visiting priest to Eltham. There is only one visit to Eltham, where Holy Communion was celebrated, by the priest of Saint John's Heidelberg. In the period 1860 to 1863 the fulltime minister at Eltham was the Lay Reader Dixon Bertram. He could not administer the sacraments.

Clergy Oaths and Declaration

In common with all clergy appointments in the Diocese of Melbourne, each appointee was, as a condition of appointment, to swear oaths and make a declaration of assent. These were recorded in the *Oaths and Declaration Book for the Diocese of Melbourne*. This was common practice in all Dioceses throughout the Anglican Communion.

Our first priest, the Revd. Robert Mackie, swore the oaths and made a declaration of assent, and then signed in the presence of Bishop Perry or his deputy on the 11 March 1864. This is recorded in the *Oaths and Declaration Book of 1847-1865*. He took the Oath of Allegiance, which was, *I Robert Mackie do sincerely promise and swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to her Majesty Queen Victoria. So help me God*. Next was an oath about detestation and abjuring the heresy of Roman Catholicism. Then, followed an oath against simony and an oath of canonical obedience.

Finally, was the declaration of assent. It read:

- 1. That the Kings Majesty under God is the only Supreme Governor of this Realm and all other. His Highness's Dominion and Countries as well as in all Spiritual or Ecclesiastical Causes or things as temporal and that no foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State or Potentate hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence or authority Ecclesiastical or spiritual within his Majesty's said Realms Dominions and Countries*
- 2. That the Book of Common Prayer, and of ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, containeth in it nothing contrary to the Word of God, and that it may lawfully so be used, and that he himself will use the form in the said book prescribed in the Public Prayer and Administration of Sacraments and none other.*
- 3. That he allowth the Book of Articles of Religion agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both Provinces and the whole Clergy in the Convocation holden at London in the Year of our Lord One Thousand five hundred and sixty two and that he acknowledgeth all and every the Articles therein contained being in number nine and thirty besides the Ratification to be agreeable to the Word of God.*

These oaths and declaration of the clergy 1860-1880 were modified over the period, especially the one regarding the detestation and abjuring of Roman Catholicism.

The Worship Space

This is a modern term, but what did the interior of Saint Margaret's look like during worship and the administration of the sacraments from 1860 to 1880? We do know that the roof was as it is now. There were no stained glass windows so all were the same as the Urie and Ferguson windows that still exist in the church. The exception was the "small" Urie and Ferguson 1861 stained glass window in the north wall behind the altar. The pews were in a dark wood with doors on them. They were purchased second hand from the Baptist Church in 1861. The more wealthy members of the congregation rented them.

A meeting of subscribers took place on the 28 December 1861. After much discussion on the pew rental, on the motion of Charles Wingrove and seconded by Henry Dendy jnr. a quarterly rental of two shillings and sixpence was passed. Wingrove also moved and this was seconded by John Lindsay Beale that those persons who had made application for sittings were to pay their quarterly subscription on Saturday the 4 January 1862. A meeting was scheduled at 8 pm that evening to determine the mode of allotting the seats. No record of this survives. The pews would have been directly facing the altar, not slightly tilted like today.

The interior of the church lacked the Matcham Skipper crucifix, no Mystery of Life carving, no Clergy Honour Board, no honour roll for The Great European War, no memorial to Alfred Williams and none for Katherine Rose Wingrove. There were no bar heaters or sound system. There was no electric light so lamps and candles were

used. There was probably no carpet on the floor. The existing floorboards were replaced in 1963.

We know that a harmonium was used to accompany the hymns sang at Divine Service and other services at Saint Margaret's as early as February 1863. At the 18 December 1876 meeting, an account for repairs to the harmonium for 25/- was passed for payment. However, by 1 November 1880 it would appear that an organ was preferred to the harmonium. At that meeting a decision to hold a bazar to raise money for an organ was made.

At the start of the Revd. Gason's ministry at Saint Margaret's, it is recorded in the minutes of the 12 January 1880 meeting that the Revd Pickering gifted the church a flagon and a collecting plate. Both gifts were accepted with thanks. It also mentions that Mrs Cole had gifted a scroll and that this had been placed near the Communion Table. Later on 13 August 1880 we are told that Mrs Wallis wishes to present the church with a pulpit cushion.

Holy Communion

As has been mentioned previously, *The Order of Holy Communion* was celebrated less regularly than now. There is archival evidence that an altar and altar rails of cedar wood was erected in July-August 1863, along with flooring for the communion area. The original altar and altar rails were replaced in 1925 but were similar to the original. This 1925 memorial to the soldiers, associated with Saint Margaret's, who died in WW1 exist in the church today.

It is likely that the original altar was covered for communion with a "white linen cloth". It may have had a small metal cross on it but this is conjecture. Perhaps it also had two small vases of flower. It is likely that the Psalm number and Hymn Numbers were displayed on the north wall for each service.

Holy Baptism

A Baptism Register was purchased from the Diocesan registry for £1/10/- The receipt is undated but it was this early period (probably 1861). The first entry in the Register for Eltham is Alfred Andrew Llewellyn Armstrong. Alfred jnr. was baptised on April 20 1862. He was born on the 30 January 1862. His father was Patrick Alfred Armstrong, who served as first secretary on the church committee. His mother was Margaret (Mopet). Alfred snr. occupation is listed as a Civil Engineer. The ceremony was performed by Dean Hussey Burgh Macartney.

Some provision was made for a font when the church opened in 1861. It was probably "temporary". We have no details about what was used for the sacrament of Baptism until 1876. At the 17 March meeting that year, Saint Patrick's Day, the Revd. Pickering convened a meeting to investigate the obtaining of a font for the church. Apparently, this had been at the prompting of the Dean, the Revd. Macartney. In response, David George Clarke moved and Charles Wingrove seconded that subscription lists be opened for the purchase of a font. Wingrove was also requested to arrange the purchase of the font.

On the 29 March 1876, the committee was informed that an offer to supply a font for £12 had been received from Candy and Scopes of Fitzroy. Charles Wingrove stated he had seen the font and thought it suitable for the church. He moved and Clarke seconded the motion to accept the offer. This was carried unanimously. He then offered to lend to the committee £5 without interest to enable the purchase to take place. At the 26 June meeting it was ordered that the minutes record that font had been purchased. We are uncertain if this font is the one used in the church today.

Holy Matrimony

Certificates of Marriage survive in the parish archives but the numbering for the early years is duplicated and confusing. Some were taken for a display in 1993 and never returned, number 2 Certificate is a case in point. The earliest certificate date is 15 March 1864. The marriage was between Charles Mash Maplestone and Elizabeth Nodin. Charles was aged 26, a bachelor and was currently staying at Ivanhoe. His profession is described as Her Majesty's Civil Service. His birthplace was Suffolk, England. His father was Charles Maplestone and his mother Sarah.

The bride, a spinster and aged 19, resided at Ivanhoe but was currently staying at Saint Helena near Eltham. She was born in Melbourne. Her father was Francis and her mother was Gabrielle Maplestone Beale. The bride had written consent of her mother to marry as she was under the age of 21. This had been given to the celebrant the Revd. Robert Mackie, Assistant Minister and it was duly noted on the Certificate. The wedding took place at the chapel at Saint Helena.

The first Certificate to indicate a wedding in Saint Margaret's church was for the 12 March 1866. The Revd. Josiah Hollis was the officiating minister. The groom was Joseph Wilson and the bride Sarah Whatinough. Joseph was a bachelor, aged 26, born in Essex England and a farmer. Sarah was a spinster, aged 20, born at Yan Yean Victoria and was a housekeeper. The witnesses were Ernest Whatinough and Phoebe Chapman.

Confirmation

We know that Confirmation took place regularly during the first 20 years of Saint Margaret's. On the afternoon of the consecration of Saint Margaret's, 26 June 1876, a confirmation also took place. After the sermon was preached the confirmation service commenced. Apparently 65 candidates had been prepared but only 54 presented. This was due to sickness and other causes. The candidates were not only from Eltham but also St Helena and Greensborough that made up the parochial district. A few were from outside the district. Presumably the consecration took place within the service of Evening Prayer. Credit for this largest number of confirmation candidates was given to the vicar the Revd. Arthur James Pickering.

During Eastertide 1879, the minutes of the 26 March meeting, reported that many were coming to the forthcoming confirmation from a distance and would be requiring refreshments. It was agreed that a Mr Purcel be approached to ascertain if he would supply the refreshments. At the next meeting 15 May, Purcel's account had been paid.

Summary

This issue of "From the Parish Archives" has given us a glimpse of what the interior of Saint Margaret's looked like in its first 20 years of ministry and mission to the Eltham district. It also describes its worship and the administration of the sacraments, especially Holy Communion, Holy Baptism, Holy Matrimony and Confirmation.