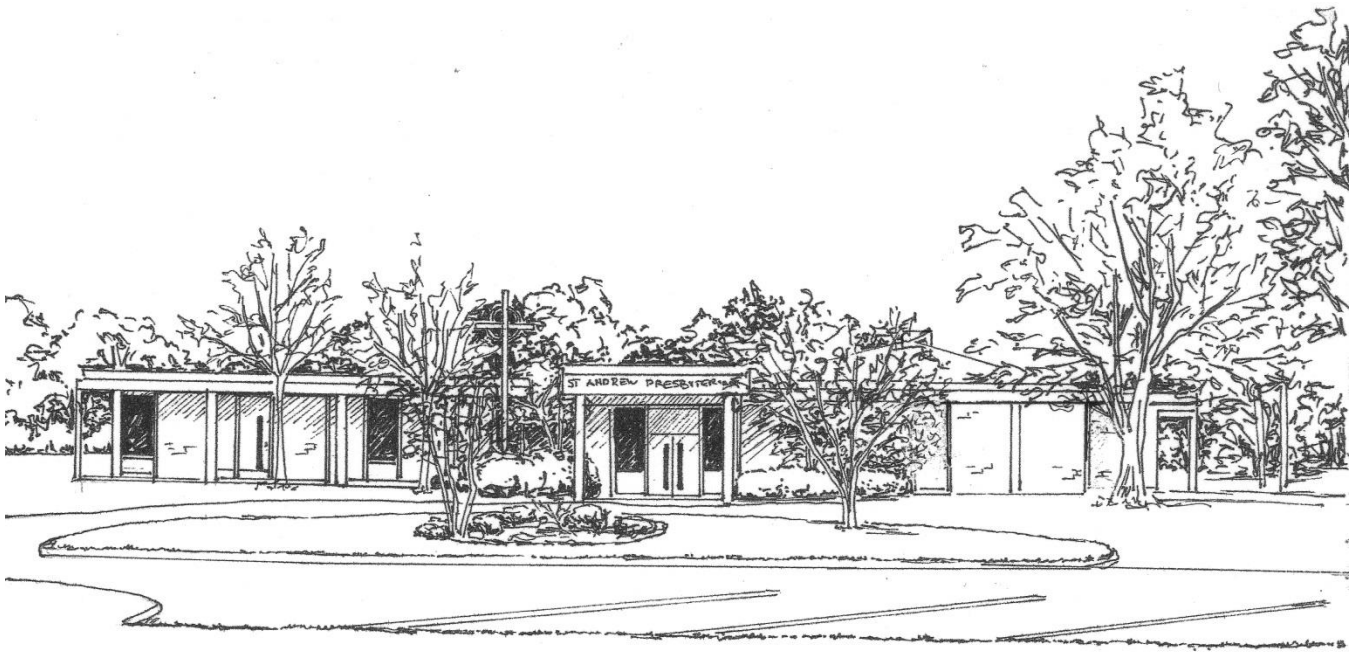


A Walk with Saint Andrew



1965 - 2015

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The people of Saint Andrew make our church special and unique with a wonderful blend of talents and personalities and a diversity of backgrounds. The congregation of Saint Andrew has had a rich and proud heritage of service to the community of Longview.

In 1963, Stephen Lucas Cook, D.O., Minister of First Presbyterian Church, Longview, Texas, had a dream: A new Presbyterian Church would be organized in North Longview, a child of First Presbyterian.

In August 1965, Dr. Joel E. May from Oak Park Presbyterian Church, New Orleans, Louisiana, was called to be the organizing minister of Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church; thus, fulfilling the dream nourished by Steven Cook and members of First Presbyterian Church. In October 1965, the first worship service was held at Bramlette Elementary School. Thirty-eight families signed the Charter Roll prior to the first worship, and after that first worship, the roll included fifty-two families.

Saint Andrew was officially organized by the Presbytery of Northeast Texas (now Grace Presbytery) on November 21, 1965. Dr. May was installed as minister. Seventy families had signed the Charter Roll by that time.

In 1966, the congregation elected fifteen Deacons and nine Ruling Elders; two of the nine elders were women. This was the first church in Longview to have women on its official Board. The first Session was installed January 9, 1966, and included Glenna Knutson (Guindon), Nancy Smith, and Bob White who have remained active members of Saint Andrew to this day. During the months of June, July, and August of 1966, services were held at the Jewish Temple Emanu-El to take advantage of its air-conditioned facility.



On October 16, 1966, one year after the first service, a ground-breaking service was held for the new church building at our present location, 2500 McCann Road. The new Educational and Fellowship Hall building was dedicated May 7, 1967. The Fellowship Hall was also used as the Sanctuary, and still is to this day. (In the original plan, a large sanctuary was to face on McCann Road.) The total cost for building, street, driveway, furnishings, and equipment was \$138,000.

In November 1968, the Saint Andrew Session voted to join First Presbyterian Church in the operation of the new Presbyterian Service Center on High Street. This Service Center provided food, clothing, and household items to the needy. This was the church's first community service project and the beginning of a love of community service, which was evident in our giving. The church budgets for 1966, 1967, and 1968 reflect that Saint Andrew pledged in total benevolences 25% of the total funds received in those years. This church began with much faith and has a history of financial commitment to benevolences.

It seems appropriate that we look at certain events which occurred during the 1960's in the United States of America: the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, his brother Robert, and the prominent Black Leader, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. There was a movement in progress with a name new to the White community--"integration." Joel and Lucy May encouraged the congregation to "take a stand" and support the integration movement.

For those who supported this point of view, it was a painful time. Saint Andrew was referred to as "that little liberal church north of town." Some of the Saint Andrew members left to join more conservative churches. This was the first potentially divisive challenge that was presented to this congregation, but the experience ultimately proved to strengthen the congregation.

On March 30, 1969, the Rev. Michael L. Parsons, a native of Norfolk, England, was called to Saint Andrew from First Presbyterian Church, Henderson, Texas. Quoting from his earliest letter to the Saint Andrew congregation, "We should remember that a witnessing church is a living church. To witness is to reach out to others, not only to our friends, those whom we know and like, but to the stranger in our midst, whoever he may be. Where this church goes depends on you, for you are the church."

The Saint Andrew congregation worshipped with a Black congregation at the Harrison Street Presbyterian Church on several occasions. In the spring of 1970, Presbytery closed Harrison Street Presbyterian Church, and Saint Andrew was most fortunate to welcome into the fellowship of the church the Algie Thomas and Ardis Moch families. During this period a new community ministry, the Children's Association, was organized by Saint Andrew. With the closing of Harrison Street Presbyterian, the Harrison Street Day School opened in the vacant building to serve low-income families.



From 1971 to 1977, Saint Andrew was led by the Rev. Dr. William K. Hedrick. He was a graduate of Davidson College (Davidson, North Carolina), Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Graduate Theological Union, University of California, Berkley, and studied on a Rotary grant for a year at Kirchliche Hochschule in Berlin, Germany,. During the next six years, the church underwent revitalization. In September 1971, the church adopted the Unicameral System, where the Board of Deacons and the Session were merged into one governing body. Three members of the church—Susan Elms, Lainey Mobley, and Trudy Morpew—handmade velvet table cloths, pulpit hangings, and matching stoles for the pastor in the colors of the four liturgical seasons. The beautiful tradition of the flowering of the empty cross on Easter continued and still does to this day.

The Session resolved to make "full use of its properties for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom" during weekdays and other times when it was not in use as a center of worship. This resolution provided for housing charitable or community service activities whose goals and methods were consistent with the policies of the Presbyterian Church. Saint Andrew has continued to open its doors to assist a number of service organizations in the community: Scouts, Habitat for Humanity, Literacy Council, Alcoholics Anonymous, soccer and baseball teams are only a few of the organizations who have used our facilities.

Under Dr. Hedrick there was a strong emphasis on evangelism in the church. The Andrew Club, which contacted visitors and other prospective members, was revived, and Dr. Hedrick conducted seminars on Prospect and New Member Visitation, Congregational Care, and Ministering to the Sick and Terminally Ill. Officer training was intensive and included extensive studies of the Confession of Faith and the Book of Church Order.

In 1974, a church member, Shirley Blackman, painted "The Saint Andrew Series"—six paintings— "Birth," "Life," "Death," "Resurrection," "Pentecost," and "Hope," which hang in the sanctuary. A brochure depicting the paintings and the Scriptural explanation for each is available at the church.

In 1977, Frank William (Joe) Sutterlin, Jr., became Saint Andrew's minister. Joe Sutterlin graduated from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, and he was also a graduate of Union Theological Seminary.

During the second half of the 1970's, Joe Sutterlin recalled, "I was at Saint Andrew during the early teenage years of the church . . . years of early adolescence. There was much enthusiasm, much willingness to try many things. The first burst of numerical growth had tapered off somewhat, and there was a process of reassessment going on. We went through goal setting and reorganization. We increased our benevolent giving and better ordered our whole stewardship situation."

On July 1, 1981, the Rev. Robert Gray Bruce, a native of Radford, Virginia, became Saint Andrew's fifth minister. Bob Bruce was a graduate of King College, Bristol, Tennessee, and Union Theological Seminary. Reverend Bruce served Saint Andrew for nine years.

Plans for a new building phase went into effect on October 17, 1982, and a new addition to the church was dedicated on February 19, 1984, which included the current Fellowship Hall, classrooms, nursery, kitchen, and renovated Sanctuary and administrative facilities.



Another gift of love and talent was presented to the church by charter member Judge William C. Martin III. Judge Martin carved a magnificent Celtic cross that now hangs on the wall at the front of the Sanctuary. Shirley Hughes Blackman continued to express her commitment to the Lord and Saint Andrew by designing and sewing intricate motifs on a series of Communion tablecloths, one for each liturgical season of the church year. In 1983, our pianist, Marcia Everingham, composed "A Baptismal Song," which the congregation has traditionally sung during baptisms in our sanctuary. During these vibrant years the church had the adult chancel choir, adult hand bell choir, three adult Sunday school classes and classes for children and youth.

Bob Bruce also established committees called "Ministry Groups," to do the work of the church. The original groups are still viable and essentially the same as Bob envisioned. Through the love of Christ and the Church, our members have formed loving and supportive friendships within these groups. The Adult Fellowship Ministry Group sponsors "Wednesday Night Live"

for dinner and fellowship. Other activities are scheduled around the dinner, originally intending to save fuel costs.

Since our beginnings as a congregation in 1965, we have maintained a tradition of voluntarism that has continued throughout the years. For several summers in the early 1980's, a Mexican border mission project, named "Starfish," sent Saint Andrew youth and adults to the Texas-Mexico border to provide labor, Christian puppet shows in Spanish, food, clothing, Spanish hymnals, and medical care for the Mexican impoverished. In addition to the projects in Mexico, Saint Andrew also sponsored a mission trip to South East Arkansas and another to an Indian Reservation at Four Corners.

On May 13, 1984, our youth began Youth Sunday. They planned the entire worship service. This service was held on Mother's Day each year. For our Twenty-Fifth Anniversary in 1990, Marcia Everingham composed a special song, which was sung by the choir. A beautiful quilt with patchwork for each family in the church was made and hangs in the hallway. Later, as membership grew, another quilt was added.

Saint Andrew has often blazed trails in the community of Longview, as evidenced by ordaining the first women Elders, taking a stand on the integration issue, initiating the MLK Service, hosting World Aids Day services, and helping to organize The Children's Association, Habitat for Humanity, the East Texas Literacy Council, and Longview Community Ministries, which now sponsors the local Meals on Wheels program. We have also supported the Foodbox, Rainbow Room, Longview Youth Shelter, Longview Child Development Center, and the Heifer Project. Saint Andrew began and continues to house a highly successful Mothers' Day Out program, the Angel Academy, which operates a two-day-per-week program.

Trudy Morphew, an elder who served five years as our Youth Director, felt a new call to the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament. In 1989 she came under the care of Grace Presbytery as an Inquirer, returned to school, and earned her Masters of Divinity from Austin Theological Seminary.

In 1993 a second, less formal, contemporary Sunday worship service was added at 8:30 a.m. By 2000 Saint Andrew had approximately 200 active members. This has remained a fairly constant number.

In August of 1994, Lee Wyatt was called to Saint Andrew. Lee was a graduate of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. In 1998, we began participating in the City of Longview Bridges program with our sister church, Bethel Missionary Baptist Church. We also participated in a pastor exchange with Trinity United Church of Christ and the First Lutheran Church. Rev. Wyatt hosted a radio program, called "White-Water Faith for the 21st Century," airing on KFRO radio on Sunday mornings.

During Lee's time as St. Andrew pastor seeds were planted to provide housing for homeless families, which later came to fruition. In the summer of 2000, a youth mission trip took place to lead Vacation Bible School and help build a classroom on a reservation in the Four Corners area of New Mexico.

On September 21, 2003, Scott Hookey was installed as Saint Andrew's seventh pastor. Reared in Washington, Pennsylvania, his father was a Presbyterian minister and college

professor. Scott's undergraduate degree was from Wake Forest. He then attended Princeton Theological Seminary, earning his Master of Divinity Degree in 1983. Prior to coming to Saint Andrew, Scott served other churches in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and he taught special education students in public schools in Fort Worth and Gilmer, Texas. Also, during this time, he was serving Grace Presbytery on several child-related committees and task forces as well as serving as moderator for churches in East Texas, which were in the pastor-search process.

In 2004 Longview Interfaith Hospitality Network (LIHN) was born. Late in 2001 several Saint Andrew members had joined a core group of churches interested in creating an ecumenical coalition (with a goal of twelve churches) to house the homeless in the various churches. Like herding cats, getting twelve different churches to agree to do anything together proved to be very difficult. So, after much prayer and faith in the knowledge that God intended for us to do this thing, the group decided to begin with only ten churches. We are happy to report this agency did achieve its original goal of twelve churches, plus a couple more, and is strong and expanding today. A side bar to this is that our own pastor, Scott Hookey, served as an early board member at LIHN and endeared himself to many when, at the annual fundraising dinner, he would quietly disappear into the kitchen to later be found with sleeves rolled up to his elbows in hot soapy water, scrubbing the pots and pans.

On September 26, 2005, a pitcher and set of four plates and chalices were dedicated at our early worship service. These are beautiful pieces of pottery with Christian symbols etched in each piece. This gift was given to the church in loving memory of Chance Neff, who on September 11, 2003, at the age of three, died from injuries sustained in a car accident. The Neff and McKinney families, along with the potter, James Sanders, were present for the service. These communion vessels have been used for World Communion services and regularly at the 8:30 worship service.



Jeannie Davis became the first of the Saint Andrew exchange delegates representing Grace Presbytery's ministry "Growing in Partnership through Sharing." Jeannie travelled to India in January 2005. Later that year, Rev. N. K. Sunny came to visit us from our partner church, St. Thomas Church North Kerala Diocese of South India. This exchange continued from 2006 to 2011: Rev. Scott Hookey from Saint Andrew (SA) and M. N. George from South India (SI), Brice Davis from SA and Justin John from SI, Steve Crane from SA and Rev. P. P. Reginald from SI, Kathy Loy from SA and Eleyamma Kunnathara from SI, Kathy Crane from SA and the Bishop Rev. Dr. K. P. Kuruvilla from SI. Phil Farmer from SA was the last delegate. There is no way to describe how meaningful this experience was for all participants. Also, in the

words of the Rt. Rev. Dr. George Isaac, "The mutual exchange of delegates has been a unique way of opening doors and windows of each church through which a great deal of knowledge concerning the life and style and Christian witness of both partners has percolated to the people at large."

Other new ventures began. Ground was quite literally broken for the new community garden. Member David Ward was the driving force behind this effort. Our garden now furnishes fresh vegetables for Longview Community Ministries (LCM) to deliver along with canned and

packaged food to needy families in our area. This idea was too good for just Saint Andrew. Steve Crane has now helped five gardens through their infancy. Along with LIHN families in 2005, we furnished a safe and inviting building for hurricane evacuees. With the hurricane effort, there arose a new association with the Red Cross. In the event of a disaster, we are now the local volunteer clearing house, with Saint Andrew sending the proper help to the various shelters. Saint Andrew joined with four other churches to build an all-Presbyterian Habitat home, and the women of the church helped construct the Women Built home. We also provided several Parent's Day Out events to offer a break for foster families with young children.

In the fall of 2005, the children of the church planted and dedicated "Regen's Tree," surrounding it with rocks they decorated. A member of Saint Andrew, Regen Stiles, died December 30, 2004, following an auto accident at the age of 20. Regen is lovingly remembered for his appreciation for music during worship and resounding "Amens."

The year 2006 found Saint Andrew celebrating when member, Jan Dittmar, was ordained as Minister of Word and Sacrament at our church. Acolytes were included in our traditional worship service starting in the fall, lighting the candles and leading the Call to Worship. A new electric piano was added for early worship in the sanctuary. It is on wheels, so it can be moved to the Fellowship Hall when needed for programs there.

In 2007, longtime Music Director, Donna McFarland, retired. Dr. Paul Seong Lee, son of a Presbyterian minister, became Director of Music. The sanctuary was redecorated this year with new pews, carpet, and paint. With some special congregation donations, we stretched our benevolent giving twice this year. Over and above budget, Saint Andrew made gifts to our partner in India to help build a child development center and to LCM locally for a Special Projects gift to Food Box and an Emergency Shelter funding. It has only been a couple of years since Tracy White's dream for a centerpiece for our Memorial Garden became a reality. The "Little White Church" started in 2005, with a memorial wall alongside. It has now reached its full glory being festooned with many plants exploding with flowers thanks to church master gardeners, Mary and Bill Gamman. Saint Andrew dedicated the Memorial Garden in 2007.



To bring in the New Year of 2009, the community was invited to a recital on our new Allen organ with music provided by our Director of Music, Dr. Paul Lee. Adult/Andrew Ministry Group continues to organize and facilitate Adult Sunday School, Wednesday Night Live meals and fellowship, other adult opportunities and advertise our church.

The Community and Presbytery Ministry Group helps provide assistance to those in need in our community. In service to Christ, we make donations to several local charities with which we have long standing relationships; e.g., Habitat for Humanity, LIHN, and LCM, as well as providing funds for new ministries, Newgate Mission. Additionally, we established Agape Health Net giving financial support to the Special Health Resources for Texas community clinic

that provides primary health care for the less fortunate. Individual members helped to support youth Nathan Lo who worked in Ethiopia teaching computer skills to young adults.

The next year, 2010, Building and Grounds Ministry Group changed the sidewalk from the parking lot to the memorial garden. The original crushed stone was too rough to navigate for some people. Now we have concrete. To this, we should add that B&G does not get much press, but fixes, replaces, and generally keeps the physical plant spruced up at all times.

In 2011, Saint Andrew conducted a mini capital campaign for the purposes of funding new lighting in the sanctuary, redecorating with new facilities the two upstairs restrooms, and completely refurbishing the sanctuary baby grand piano. The piano had been given to the church by member, Jeannie Shirley, thirty years prior. The India Mission initiative continued until 2011 when the Church of South India Diocese discontinued participating in the program.

In 2012, changes in the *Book of Order* caused Saint Andrew to lose five members this year and did not sit well with others, but they stayed, and we believe our community is stronger because they stayed, and we are thankful. The church supported member, Vanessa Butler, a recent college graduate, who joined with worldrace.org adventures in mission. She concluded an eleven-month world race mission trip in 2012 and returned the following year as a squad leader responsible for fifty missionaries. The church is still providing support for her services. In the fall, a Strategic Planning Committee was formed and began to plan for the future of Saint Andrew.

This year, 2013, has been bittersweet in our community. First, Scott Hookey announced his departure and left for his new church in Indiana. We mourned. Several old friends are now counted "with those whose rest is won." We grieve, yet we pray "Lord, give us grace that we, like them, the meek and lowly, may live eternally." On the sweet side, we found an interim pastor, the Rev. Kemper Huber who was with us for almost two years. We shared many joys and thanksgivings with Kemper during this time of transition. We have been celebrating a Saint Andrew victory at the Literacy Council's annual fundraiser, Spelling Bee. Not only did members, Kathy Loy, Ray Cottle, and William Martin spell everything correctly until they were the last team standing, but our cheerleading squad armed with prepared cheers and clad in matching T-shirts brought home the Spirit Award. It was a clean sweep.

In April of 2015 the Pastor Nominating Committee recommended to the Session that Nick Setzer and Mia Levetan be called to serve as co-pastors of Saint Andrew effective August 10. The Session endorsed the PNC's recommendation and called a congregational meeting for Sunday, May 17, at which time, the congregation confirmed the selection. We are now the only church in Grace Presbytery to have a married couple serve as co-pastors. Nick and Mia have a two-year-old daughter, Eliana. As we celebrate the Golden Anniversary of our church, we are excited that this young couple is here to help us embark upon the next fifty years of our ministry in Longview.

Today the life of Saint Andrew continues to prosper and be enriched by those who give of themselves as servants of Christ. We have a long history that emphasizes the sovereignty of God, the authority of the Bible, and the Grace of God in Jesus Christ. We look forward to the future, and we believe God will guide us through new challenges. We have much to celebrate!