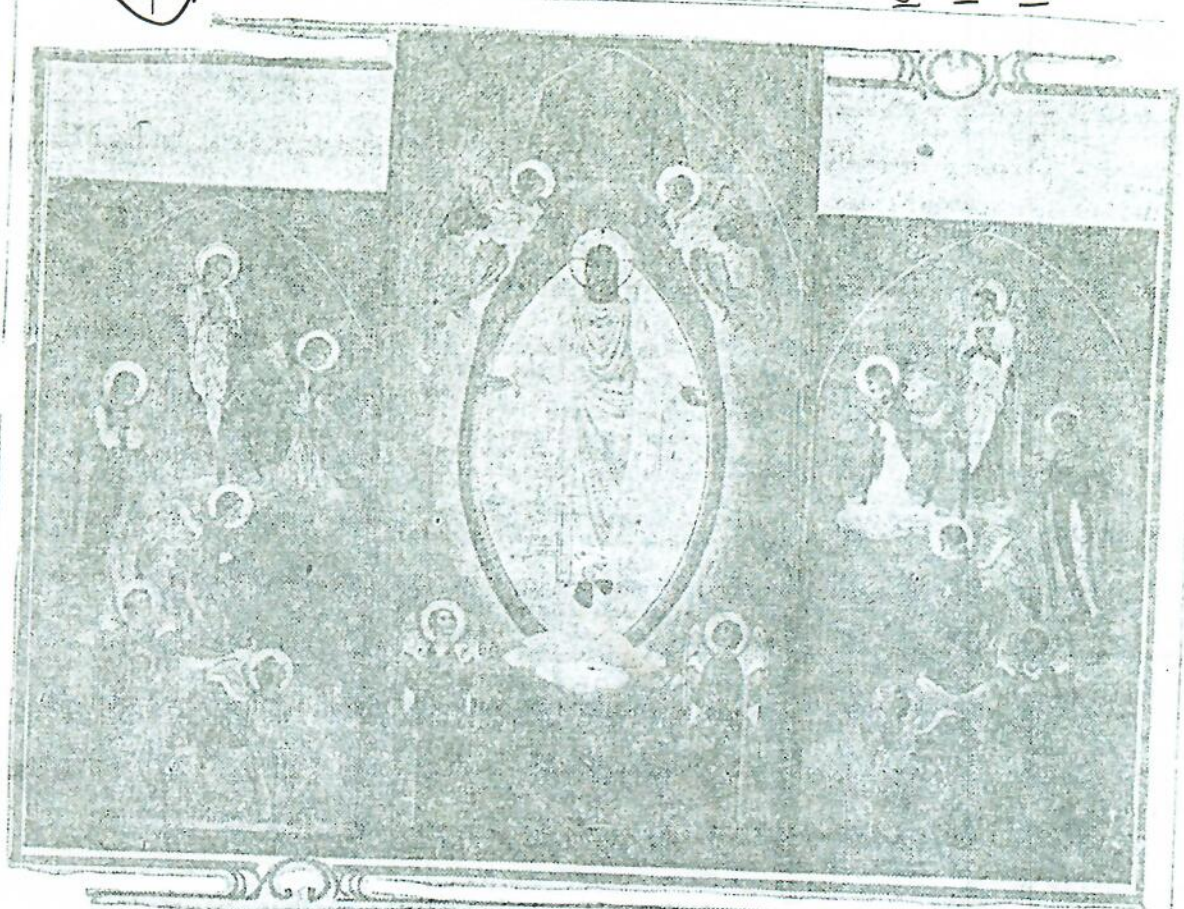


1890 - built  
 1912 - partially burned  
 1990 - St Mark's parts of  
 1994 - Regas purchases  
 vacant 20 years  
 1996 - opens as club

1890 - built  
 1912 - partially burned  
 vacant 20 years  
 1950 tower falls  
 1994 Regas purchases  
 1996 opens as club



"The Ascension and the Angels," Robert Byron Olson's brilliant altar painting for St. Mark's Episcopal church, to be dedicated at the 11 o'clock service this morning. This painting is being installed as a memorial to the late Dr. John Houghton, formerly rector of St. Mark's.—Photographed by Thomas F. Fortson.

The altar painting for St. Mark's Episcopal church, by Albert Byron Olson, has been completed and will be dedicated this morning at the 11 o'clock services.

Mr. Olson has achieved a true masterpiece. The result is one of rare beauty. There is such glory of color, such rhythm and glow, such dignity of design, such deep religious spirit, that one is spellbound before it. How such technique of color and of gold work has been attained one can only marvel. It has been a herculean task. To appreciate the labor and the skill one would have to be a master craftsman and supreme artist oneself. To gain that color one coat of pure pigment had to be laid in and dried, and covered again and again. To get the texture the surface of the wood was hammered thru the paint with small tools—and again repainted. To get the atmospheric

beauty of the background the smallest sable brushes were used, so that no brush marks could be seen. St. Mark's now has unquestioned supremacy in its religious painting, and may well become famed far and wide for its beauty.

These latest paintings of the "Ascension and the Attendant Angels," in prayer and peace and adoration and service will repay endless study and give endless joy. They are fitted for the place they are to fill excellently well. The spirit of the work, and the utter beauty and harmony of it all is deeply appropriate to the memory of the late Dr. John H. Houghton, for whom it has been placed.

The figure of the ascended Christ fills the central panel of the triptych. In the best spirit of the church of ancient days the figure is inclosed in the gloria, with the triumphant halo. The patch of light into the heavens

is marked by two radiant angels, while two worshipping angels stand before Him. The marvelous blue of the background deepens mysteriously and rhythmically into the far corners of the outer panels, where the space is filled by the most satisfying arrangement of angels in robes of clarity and richness of color value, finely adapted and harmonized. There is strength and sureness of placing and handling. The pattern is a strong and telling one, planned to show with beauty in either a dim situation, when the gold of oval and halos will make a lovely design, and also in full light. The harmony of color, the rhythm of line, the quality, the loveliness of design and detail cannot readily be put into words—the painting must be seen. That the detail might be studied by local artists, the painting was hung for one day in Chappell house last Friday. E. S.



11. St. Mark's Church  
1160 Lincoln Street

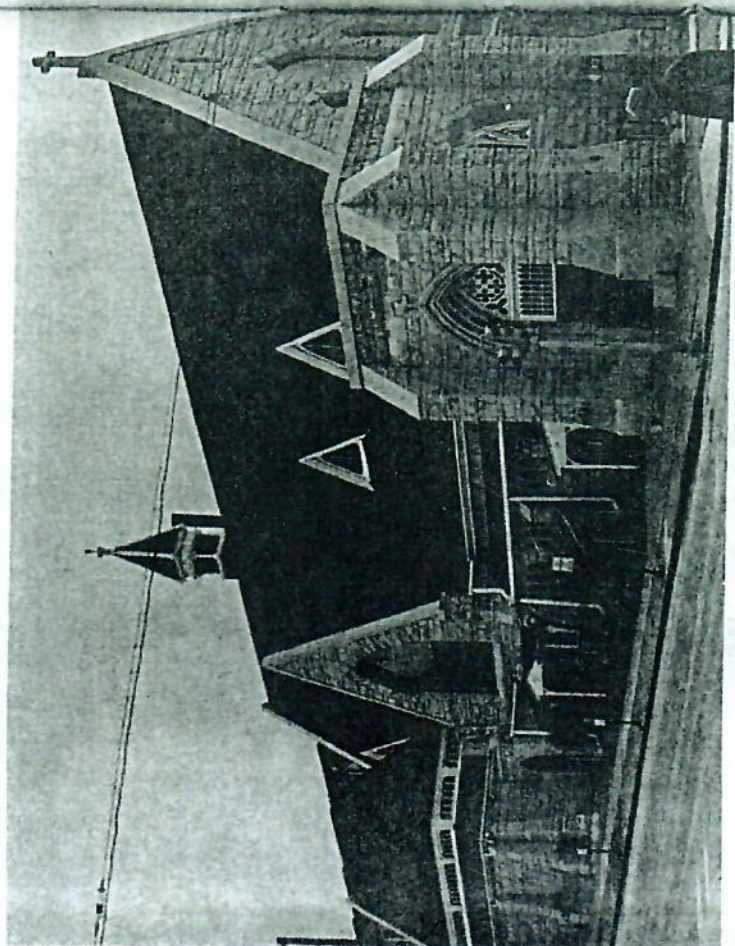
*Much of this church's design strength was lost when all but the base of its stone bell tower had to be removed because of serious structural damage basically due to the soft sandstone material utilized in its construction.*

Construction Date: 1890

Architect: Lang and Pugh

Style: Victorian Gothic Eclectic

Designation Number 17; February 14, 1970  
(listed on National Register)





## LARGE CLASS FOR CONFIRMATION AT ST. MARK'S CHURCH

MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY WITNESS THE BURNING OF THE MORTGAGE THAT HAS BEEN PAID OFF AFTER HARD WORK.

In the midst of a very stately and reverent service at St. Mark's a class of 50 was confirmed yesterday morning. These added to the fall class in December makes 83 for the year. In the evening the church was crowded to hear the year's reports of the many societies and to see the almost sacrificial burning of a mortgage which has taken \$50,000 to release. The names of the class are as follows:

Gertrude French, Ruth A. Hydon, Allan Horatio Wheeler, Frances Brown Lowry, John Wills, Fredericka Thudichurn, Royal Barry Wills, Nathaniel Peter Hill, Eleanor Wills, Julian T. Wills, Floyd Clarence Wilson, Vera Alletta Williams, Angus Sanford Adams, Minnie A. Lindsey, Dorothy Webster, Margaret Elizabeth Knight, Millie Cook Green, Charlotte E. Austin, Eugene Grisson Ruffner, Arthur H. Gale, Lillian Grisson Ruffner, Marjorie A. Miller, Sarah Taylor Brown, Helen Harrington, Annie McKay Brown, Lawrence Miles, Doris Alice Cavender, Stella C. Ramsey, Hugh Robinson, Adelaide C. Schlutter, Frank Robertson, Matilda B. Kidd, Katherine Bailey Robertson, Agnes Henderson, Frances Mary Robertson, Edith Katherine Head, Mona Head, Natalie Hyde, Harriet Rilla Kauffman, Clara Austin Sill, Bertha Constance Bennett, Martha Campbell Harris, Charlton Harriet Harris, Mildred Anna Dodge, Mabel Cocks, Grace Bruce Roehrig and Carol Samuel Locke.

## BISHOP OLMSTED MAY RELINQUISH ACTIVE DUTIES

SERIOUSLY TROUBLED BY HEART AILMENT - CALL ISSUED FOR ELECTION OF COADJUTOR AS PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE.

The Episcopal bishop of Colorado, the Right Rev. Charles S. Olmsted, is seriously troubled with a heart ailment, and as a precautionary measure, if he is compelled to relinquish the active duties of his office, a call has been issued for the appointment of a coadjutor to assist in the work.

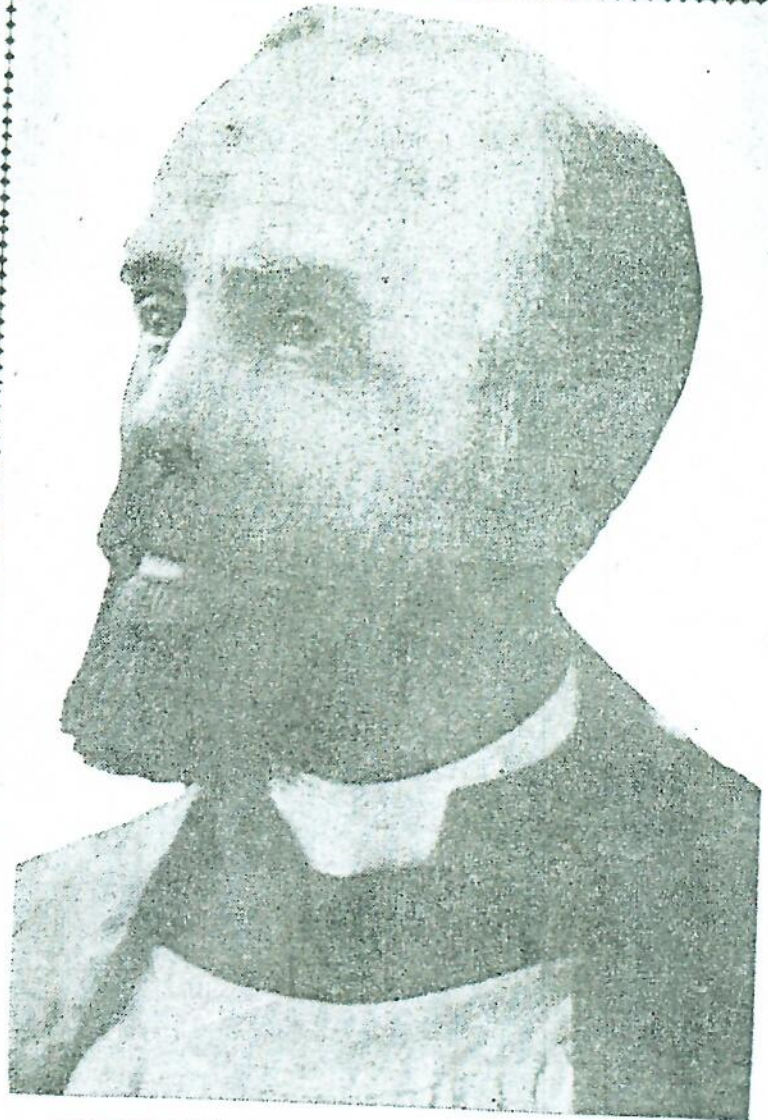
Bishop Olmsted is now in the East consulting specialists regarding his ailment. Although of rugged, robust build, Bishop Olmsted has been suffering severely for the past year with heart trouble, a condition that many of his friends were ignorant of.

The diocesan council will meet in the early part of June, but it is doubtful that a coadjutor will be elected at that time. The call is considered more in the light of a precautionary measure than anything else, as according to the rules of the diocesan council 50 days' notice is required to be given them if a coadjutor is to be elected.

## MRS. L. N. NOBLE DEAD; PROMINENT IN SOCIETY IN THE EAST AND SOUTH

Mrs. Louis N. Noble, prominent in Denver society circles and the member of a distinguished Southern family, died yesterday morning at St. Joseph's hospital. Mrs. Noble's death followed an operation. The funeral will be held this afternoon at St. Mark's.

## BURN ST. MARK'S MORTGAGE AS TE DEUM IS CHANTED



THE REV. JOHN H. LOUGHTON, RECTOR OF ST. MARK'S.

## Lien Lighted at Altar While All Sing New Composition by Organist Wilkins; Church Free of Debt.

WITH the singing of a special Te Deum composed by the organist, G. O. Wilkins, and in the presence of a joyful congregation that filled every pew, the 18-year-old \$50,000 mortgage on the St. Mark's Episcopal church was burned at the altar last night by Dr. N. G. Burnham, senior, and E. M. Spearhawk, junior warden.

When the handsome church building at Twelfth avenue and Lincoln street was built nearly a score of years ago, at a cost of \$85,000, the treasury lacked \$30,000 of having enough to clear it of indebtedness. The money was borrowed and the mortgage given. Since then the church has had the customary struggle to pay it off. The parishioners were as liberal as they could be with offerings and pledges, but it is a big church plant and expensive to keep up.

Little by little the debt was reduced, until on last Easter day the balance and interest were exactly \$4,100.00.

The church interior was decorated with palms and Easter flowers, and the service was made a special one of thanksgiving, with special music. There was a short sermon and prayer by the pastor and a financial statement by the treasurer, and in a large gold-plated bowl the mortgage was destroyed. The senior and junior wardens applied the lighted tapers. Besides being out of debt the church now has a cash balance on hand of \$400.75. Reports were also made last night by a score of the societies, whose work is connected with the parish, and all were shown to be in a thriving condition.

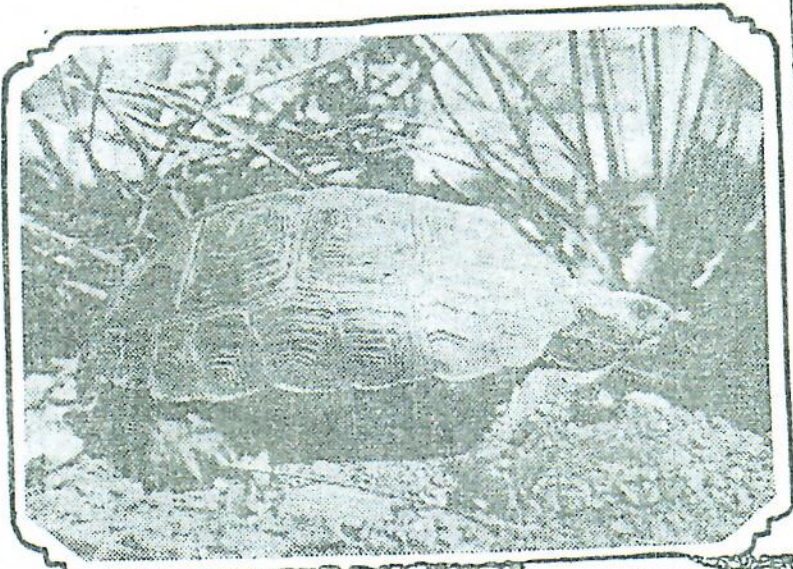
At the morning service the following class of fifty was confirmed: Frances Brown Lowry, John Wills, Royal Barney Wills, Eleanor Wills, Floyd Clarence Wilson, Angus Sanford Adams, Ruth Ann Hyden, Margaret Elizabeth Knight, Millie Cook Green, Lillian Grisson Ruffner, Eugene Grisson Ruffner, Sarah Taylor Brown, Annie McKay Brown, Doris

Rev. Loughton's Sermons 1907-1911



# Tortoise Starts Fire and Discovers Heroine

Inquisitive Menelik of Abyssinia, 75, Overturns  
Lamp in Rector Houghton's Home--  
Children Saved by Marie Harris.



T. AGASSZI, From Death Valley, Arizona. One of Dr. Houghton's Pets.

"Yes, it is too bad and disheartening," said the Rev. Dr. J. H. Houghton of St. Mark's Episcopal church, "after fifteen years of collecting but Menelik of Abyssinia, though he brought about his own destruction and that of his relatives, certainly discovered a heroine."

It was the untoward friskiness of the Rev. Dr. Houghton's 25-pound tortoise, Pardalis, a rare specimen from the ancient African potentate's dominions that last night caused the overturning of a lamp, set fire to the rectory at 1100 Lincoln street and, but for the bravery, energy and "head work" of Miss Marie Harris, an 18-year-old ward of Dr. Houghton and member of his family, would have probably cost the lives of the two children of Mr. and Mrs. Harlow B. Raymond, who have rooms on an upper floor.

### ALL DUE TO MENELIK'S UNDUE CURIOSITY.

In the room on the ground floor of the rectory set apart for the use of the thirty rare and valuable tortoises which the rector has collected from all parts of the world was a lamp, protected by a shield, but not sufficiently protected. It was placed there to furnish heat to preserve the proper temperature for the animals. Between 8 and 9 o'clock last night, Menelik, the excursive and inquisitive, though seventy-five years of age—"old enough to know better," as Dr. Houghton says, went on an excursion and, in the course of his investigations, flipped a flipper against the lamp shield to see what would happen.

Well, he didn't have to wait. Something happened at once. The shield fell against the lamp, the lamp was overturned and soon the room was in flames.

### ENTER, THE HEROINE WHO SAVES CHILDREN.

Miss Harris, who was in a room just above, scented smoke, investigated, and



MISS MARIE HARRIS.

though by this time the smoke was stifling, finally located the other little one, wandering about in the smoke and darkness, grasped it and made her way, half suffocated, down the stairs and into good air again. Having recovered sufficiently, she ran across to where the mother and father were at the 5 cent show and brought them back on the run.

1912?  
1910-1913  
Rev. Houghton's Scrapbook

**TORTOISE COLLECTOR WAS VALUABLE**  
Dr. Houghton is the greatest collector of tortoises in the world, with the Rothschild collection in this country. In his collection, in thirty tortoises, story glass boxes were three weighing from one Cynixes, Africa; two from one Agassiz of three Tabulala South America Mexico, and from the Medi-

RECEIVED  
TOP  
ST.  
THE F  
W

Three  
pal ch  
ception  
church  
M. Tow  
ed asst  
Hought  
decorat  
for mo  
of the  
ings to  
and nu  
Denver  
The  
sistant  
in Nev  
cated  
return  
He ac  
ton at  
to cor  
The  
larges  
in a D  
hung  
hall,  
the r  
ere, p  
pleted  
Fast  
many  
ful, v  
came  
A r  
Miss  
girl  
Miss  
Jek-

NEW  
The  
churc  
hours  
m. 2



was held with a full choral service from a choir of 30 boys and 30 girls," Mrs. Letts said. The highlight of the service was Dr. Houghton's story, including some of which were Ivanhoe, Westward Ho!, Quo Vadis, and others, a portion acted out and always ending at the most exciting moment. One would have to wait until the next Sunday to hear the ending."

Saint Mark's Day Festival, Easter, and Christmas Feasts were observed. One of the legacies of \$1,000 to the church was from the estate of John C. Davis, Sr., the income from which was to be used to provide Easter music. Also during his lifetime Mr. Davis had provided for the salary of an assistant to the rector for a period of two years, and the family at different times had given new hymnals with music. Mr. Davis had served as both Senior and Junior Warden.

A note in the 1904 scrapbook reads: "The only church in town to follow the old-time custom of continuing the Christmas merrymaking until Twelfth Night is Saint Mark's."

"We had a number of outstanding voices in our choir back in 1918 - 20," Mrs. Murphy recalled. "There were Alice McNutt, June King, Helen Bristol, John Gilbert, a few I remember. The choir was well-known throughout the country having both Boys Choir, Junior and Senior Choirs. Miss Minnie Berggren was choir mother for many, many years giving much time and money in keeping the choir in robes and seeing that the robes were always clean. She also sang in the choir.

"Mr. and Mrs. William Doran sang in the choir and were active members of the church," Mrs. Murphy continued. "Mr. Doran owned the Doran Coffee Company and we were always assured of a supply of good coffee for all our church dinners, etc."

On June 28, 1894 the first Grand Picnic at Elitch's was held which was an outgrowth of three picnics Saint Mark's had held in 1893. Represented at the Grand gathering were Saint John's Cathedral, white banner; Saint Mark's, yellow; Christ, at Thirteenth and Vine, red and yellow; All Saints, white and gold; Emmanuel; Saint Peter's, red. There were 1,500 persons at this Episcopal picnic.

One of the most pleasing entertainments, and one of the most remunerative, was a Trades Carnival at Broadway Theatre on November 22, 1894, when the net proceeds totaled \$675.

The first May Night Festival was given at Elitch's on May 27, 1895 through the kindness of Mrs. Elitch. The event began with a supper between 5 and 8 o'clock p.m. Attractions were the merry-go-round, the Denver Colored Jubilee Quartette, and the Zoological Menagerie. Saint Agnes Junior Guild had the refreshments stands which were served by Marie Antoinette Dairy Maids. Saint Anne's served ice cream and cake; Saint Catharine's had charge of pineapple ice and candy, and the Men's Guild, the soda fountain. At 8:30 p.m. the theatre production opened. Part I included Musical Numbers, with a Pantomime, "Course of True Love" by an all-male cast. Part II concluded with more Musical numbers.

The productions along the dramatic lines at Saint Mark's were not all above criticism, as a note from 1906 remarks:

"A crucifixion scene on the stage at one of the theatres was protested." Which is just a reminder that history repeats itself, since 70 years ago protest was also popular among the common people.

The Broadway Theatre was the site of many of the early-day Saint Mark's dramatic presentations and one recorded in the scrapbooks was about Tales of Childhood: Ali-Baba, Aladdin, and Sleeping Beauty sponsored by the United Guilds and Societies of Saint Mark's was on May 18, 1920.

"He always wanted to advertise Saint Mark's," Mrs. Letts said. "At one time Dr. Houghton planned to put an electric cross on top of the tower."

Mrs. Letts also said that her father, Father O'Ryan, and Rabbi Friedman started what was to grow into the Community Chest.

"Once a year on a Saturday and a Sunday all the young people in the parish and others whom he interested, collected on downtown street corners for the poor who could not afford hospital treatment. It was named 'The Hospital Saturday and Sunday Association' which was the origin of our present United Way.

"He was for years president of the Ministerial Alliance and it was said of him that he was the only one who could keep peace among the many denominations represented."

The Reverend Mr. Houghton also had his private life. He purchased some land in Englewood in 1900 and built a summer home, Rexleigh, (King's Meadow), from fees he had received for performing weddings. He spent many hours there and it was always open to members of his congregation. It was to this home he retired in 1917. His hobby was water lilies and a wonderful and complete collection had been maintained there. He also raised garden flowers and during the summer the altar flowers for Saint Mark's came from his gardens.

The porch on the residence was 50 x 100 feet where dances were held for all the Guilds, and on the nights where there was a full moon, many a romance was started among the young people in the choir. There was a mile to walk from the street car around the city ditch.

Another of Dr. Houghton's hobbies was the raising of turtles and frogs -- even snakes -- at his summer home, where he had built a vivarium. Hereon are tales of incidences, one of which remains an episode in the history of the Church of the Seven Candles.

During the winter, Dr. Houghton stored his tortoises in the rectory basement, taking them to the Rexleigh pond in the summer months. One of the tortoises awakened from his hibernation and knocked over a kerosene lantern, setting the rectory on fire and it burned down. The parish was then forced to rebuild on the property, but this time it was a Parish House. A gymnasium with showers, basketball court, etc., was on the lower floor, which had long since been converted to the present Church school purposes with the shower and locker rooms converted to the parish kitchen. The Church offices and sacristies are on the second floor with a large parish hall for meetings.



Loan collection of old English and Colonial china, owned by Mrs. C. F. Shollenberger.

Collection of Lumiere transparent plates of stained glass windows of French cathedrals.

Collection of Spanish-American art, including bouldos, santos and rare old Mexican zarapes, and Chimayo blankets.

Collection of Greek coins.

#### CANVAS BY RUBENS

Collection of paintings, among which are:

"Head of a Man," original canvas by Peter Paul Rubens.

(Illustration opposite page 42.)

"Andromache," by Bryson Burroughs.

"The Silver Hour," by Chauncey F. Ryder.

"Danbury Hills," J. Alden Weir.

"Studio Interior," William Chase.

"Winter Afternoon," Leonard Ochtmann.

"The Flower Girl," Charles Hawthorne.

"Moonlight," Frederick W. Ranger.

#### ALBERT OLSON'S TRIPTYCH, ST. MARK'S CHURCH

From Chappell House, one should go to Saint Mark's Church, at East Twelfth Avenue and Lincoln, for enjoyment of the brilliantly executed altar reredos, "The Ascension and the Angels," by Albert Byron Olson, Denver artist. The painting is a triptych, designed to harmonize with the Gothic interior, and is notable for its subtle gradations in color and its spiritual treatment of the subject.

#### CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS

Proceeding thence to East Fourteenth Avenue and Clarkson, one reaches the location of the Cathedral of Saint John in the Wilderness, as yet the incompleting conception of Tracey, Swartwout and Litchfield of New York, in XV Century Gothic style. In place of the present temporary brick chancel, a magnificent square tower is eventually to rise, the full width of the nave and 250 feet in height. This will make the Cathedral one of the inspiring ecclesiastical structures of the country.

Standing on the porch of the Cathedral are delicately beautiful



even when some of them have not agreed with him, because they have always known that he was an honest and humble disciple of Jesus Christ. His great heart has leaped across every barrier of race and class and creed. A powerful preacher in one of the great pulpits of America, Paul Robert's finest sermon has been the life he has lived. He has practiced what he preached, with an eloquence which has touched every corner of his city.

Two years later, on April 1, 1959, Canon Harry Watts<sup>32</sup> also retired from active service at the Cathedral after 42 years' service in the Diocese and 34 years at Saint John's. A testimonial dinner in his honor stressed his pastoral and devotional contributions, his services in the training of clergy, his participation in the intellectual life of the Diocese, and his many services to the Community. At the dinner Bishop Minnis conferred upon him the title of Canon Emeritus.

The Cathedral grew in size to over 2600 members, and despite its downtown location, the excellence of services and programs continued to attract a notable congregation. From 1957 to 1962, the Very Reverend William S. Lea<sup>33</sup> who had been editor of the *Episcopal Church News* in Richmond, Virginia, was Rector of the Parish. Dean Lea emphasized the national and international concerns of the Church, furthered attempts to develop a neighborhood parish and secured assistant clergy whose interests in Christian social relations, parish visitations, and youth work were directly responsible for an enlarged program in these fields. He was succeeded by the Reverend Herbert Barrall who became Dean September 29, 1963.

At Saint Mark's, a short distance away, notable advances in music, an excellent organ, and an open-door Chapel of the Holy Comforter, tended to offset the location of the Church in a neighborhood of increasing commercialization and high-rise apartment houses. "One of the most startling events of the rectorate of the Reverend H. Evans Moreland was that the tower of the Church fell and had to be rebuilt. This cost \$40,000 and was all raised in a very short period of time, showing the love of the people for their church." From 1904 onwards work among the deaf of All Souls' Congregation was directed by the Reverend Homer Grace, himself deaf. Farther west, Old Saint Peter's Church, at Second and Acoma, faced similar threats of decline through neighborhood deterioration. A program for senior citizens and the availability of recreational facilities did much to help, but the



**THE CHURCH OF THE SEVEN CANDLES**

**Saint Mark's Episcopal**

**1875 - 1975**

**by**

**Helen Miles Bradshaw**

**† † † † † †**

Neither do men light  
a candle, and put it  
under a bushel, but  
on a candlestick; and  
it giveth light unto  
all that are in the  
house. -- Matthew 5:15



may be procured on or reserved after 12 o'clock noon of that date.  
they will not be sold or seals reserved after 12 o'clock noon of that date.

W. H. FRASER, Secretary.

# PET TORTOISES SET FIRE TO CHURCH: TWO BABIES NEAR DEATH IN FLAMES

*October 24, 1912*

The warm rats from a lamp aroused the tortoises in a box, by the lamp, in the guild room on the south side of St. Mark's Episcopal church, Twelfth avenue and Lincoln street, at 10 o'clock last night.

The result—one tortoise wigged, the lamp overturned, smoke poured in volumes through the building, arousing Miss Marie Wilson, a young woman employed by Harlow Raymond, assistant to the Rev. John H. Houghton, rector of the church, in a room on the third floor of the building. Miss Wilson carried the two Raymond children through the church building—and the death of all but two of the tortoises?

The tortoises? They are, or were, the pets of the Rev. Mr. Houghton. He has a fat for tortoise. He has collected them from all parts of the world, and he cares for them with the love of a tortoise connoisseur. That's how they happened to be in the box, by the lamp, in the guild room on the south side of the church.

Tortoises, it is known to those who know about tortoises, are susceptible to chilly weather. And the Rev. Mr. Houghton took thought of his pets when overboard the came along. He procured a big wooden box, put in the tortoises, and placed the box on a shelf. The lamp was placed in the bottom of the box, by the tortoises. Ordinarily they lie without moving, basking in the heat.

X Miss Marie Wilson,  
X Harlow Raymond

Rev. Raymond's Scrapbook  
1910-1913

the Rev. G. H. Holburn, whose praise is in the loved Phylalan, whose praise is in the Gospel"; 8 p. m., evening prayer and sermon by the rector, "What Think Ye of Christ?"; Memorial—Sixth and Gilpin Ascension Twelfth Sunday after Trinity, the Rev. Henry Sydney Foster.

Year, Holy communion at 7:30 a. m.; Sunday school at 9:45 a. m.; morning prayer and sermon at 11 a. m.; evening prayer and sermon at 7:45 p. m. Free pews.

Emmanuel Memorial—Services for the twentieth Sunday after Trinity at 8 a. m., 11 a. m. and 5 p. m. Subjects of sermons: At morning service, "Cheerful Workers"; at evensong, "The Wedding Garment."

All Saints—West Thirti-second avenue and Wyandot street. The Rev. Floyd van Keuren, rector. 7:30 a. m., quiet celebration of holy communion; 10 a. m., Sunday school; 11 a. m., morning prayer, Litany and sermon; subject, "The Fourth Commandment in Denver"; 7:30 p. m., evening prayer and sermon; subject, "Fight the Good Fight."

An informal meeting and dinner of the Church club will be held on Tuesday evening, October 22, in St. John's Chapter house, Denver. Dinner will be served promptly at 7 o'clock, after which we will have the pleasure of listening to addresses by the Rev. Dr. C. L. Shattuck, rector of Grace church, New York city; John W. Wood, secretary of the Board of Missions, New York, and others.

Members are privileged to bring one or more guests. Tickets for the dinner may be procured on or prior to October 22, 1912, on payment of 50 cents each, but they will not be sold or seats reserved after 12 o'clock noon of that date.


St. Johns—Fourteenth avenue and Clarkson street. Holy communion, 7:30 a. m., with an address; Sunday school, 9:45 a. m.; morning service, 11 a. m., sermon by Dean Hart; subject, "We All Do Fade as a Leaf—Why Leaves Turn Yellow and Fall"; vesper service, 5 p. m., solo by Master Andrew Peterson; evening service, 7:30 p. m., sermon by the dean; subject, "The Dedication of Solomon's Temple—the Necessity of a Church Building."

St. Mark's—Twentieth Trinity celebration at 7:30; Sunday school, 9:30; adult Bible classes, 10; morning prayer and sermon, 11 o'clock, by Rev. Mr. Rector, on some lessons from the festival's coronation; children's evensong with junior choir at 5:45; meditation, 5 p. m.; evening prayer and litany, 7:45 p. m.; sermon by the Rev. J. H. Houghton on "Jesus Rejoiced in Spirit."

St. George's Mission—Cherrylyn. Sunday school, 2:30; service and sermon, 3:15 by Harlow Raymond, lay reader. The Seventh Day Adventist—Corner West Eleventh avenue and Farnham street. "The Second Coming of Christ: Is It Near? Can We Know?" Let everybody come and hear this great question discussed next Sunday evening, October 20, at 7:30. These services are being con-

News-10/29/12  
Sermon in Silence  
Sunday Morning at




 DENVER  
 W.H.  
 DENVER  
 Churchman. Episc. St. Mark's

# St. Mark's congregation packs its bags

## Church on the move forced to leave some of its sacred objects behind

By Virginia Culver 7-7-90  
 Denver Post Religion Writer

Members of St. Mark's Episcopal Church are gathering up pieces of it before the historic church is mothballed next month.

But they won't be able to take all of the church's brass, silver and gold accoutrements when they move to St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, which will be their new home.

St. Mark's will be closed because there are only 43 members, many of them over 65, and they are unable to afford the old church at East 12th Avenue and Lincoln St. The congregation, which dates to 1875, will begin meeting in mid-August at St. Barnabas, 1230 Vine St.

A split in the congregation several years ago left the church with about one-third of its former number. Others moved to the suburbs.

Many of the elaborate altar cloths, chalices, jeweled patens (communion plates) and other finery won't fit in at the recently refurbished and more modern St.

Barnabas. And St. Mark's members cannot afford the estimated \$142,000 cost to move the organ, which cost \$10,000 to install.

Frontal pieces for the altar, one depicting Easter and the other the Trinity, were made decades ago in an English convent. They now hang in frames on the wall, too fragile to be used. The Denver Art Museum may take the ornate silk brocade frontals.

The congregation will take some long candle holders to its new home, as well as the elaborate priest garments, choir robes, hymnals and prayer books. A marble altar from the church's chapel already has been moved to St. Barnabas.

But the congregation won't be taking the fancy brass communion rail with its wheat and grape design, symbolizing bread and wine, or the brass altar and lectern. The brass work throughout, some depicting cherubs and church figures, is the same age as the building.

Members also will be leaving

beautiful stained-glass windows, including the seven tall, slim red windows behind the altar shaped to look like candles. Early members of the church fought over whether the congregation would be "high church," or more liturgical, using candles for services, or low church and not use candles. At one time, the church was called "The Seven Candle Church."

Other artifacts, including the brass pulpit, lectern and memorial plaques, will be given to other Episcopal churches in the diocese, with the provisos that the churches not sell them and that the person for whom the plaque is named "will be remembered in special prayers at appropriate times, which is the original purpose of the memorials," said the Rev. John Fellers, St. Mark's vicar.

The Colorado diocese, owner of the church, hasn't determined what will happen to the sandstone building, which will be 100 years old this year. Fellers said it will cost from \$2,000 to \$3,000 to put the church into "mothballs," seal-

ing it and shutting off the electricity and water.

He predicts the diocese will study the matter for a few years and, if it cannot find a use for St. Mark's, put it on the market. "Only as a last resort will they sell it," he said. Diocesan officials were unavailable for comment yesterday.

The church and land cost early members \$100,000.

The church alone would cost from \$3 million to \$5 million to rebuild today.

Fellers said the elaborate black ash beam ceiling and hammer-beam trusses give the church great acoustics, and he hopes it can be used for musical events.

The pews, also of black ash, are divided into sections, showing how early members "bought" a pew or part of a pew. Center seats were \$2 and side aisle seats were \$1.50.

On their last day at St. Mark's, members will begin the worship there and then board a double-decker bus for St. Barnabas for the remainder of the service.



# Nightclub owner plans resurrection of church

By Virginia Culver  
Denver Post Religion Writer

You'll be able to get wine on your next trip to St. Mark's Episcopal Church. But no waters.

And forget "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

Think J&B Scotch and B.B. King. Praying, however, will continue.

The new owner, Regas Christou, is "already playing very hard" about the cost of transforming the old building into a restaurant, coffee house and blues nightclub.

He'll call it either The Church or The Seven Candles because of the red candle-shaped stained glass windows behind the altar. At times the church had been known as The Church of the Seven Candles.

Christou, a local nightclub owner who owns the Deadbeat Club in southeast Den-

ver, bought the building, at East 12th Avenue and Lincoln Street, for \$275,000 from the Colorado Episcopal Diocese.

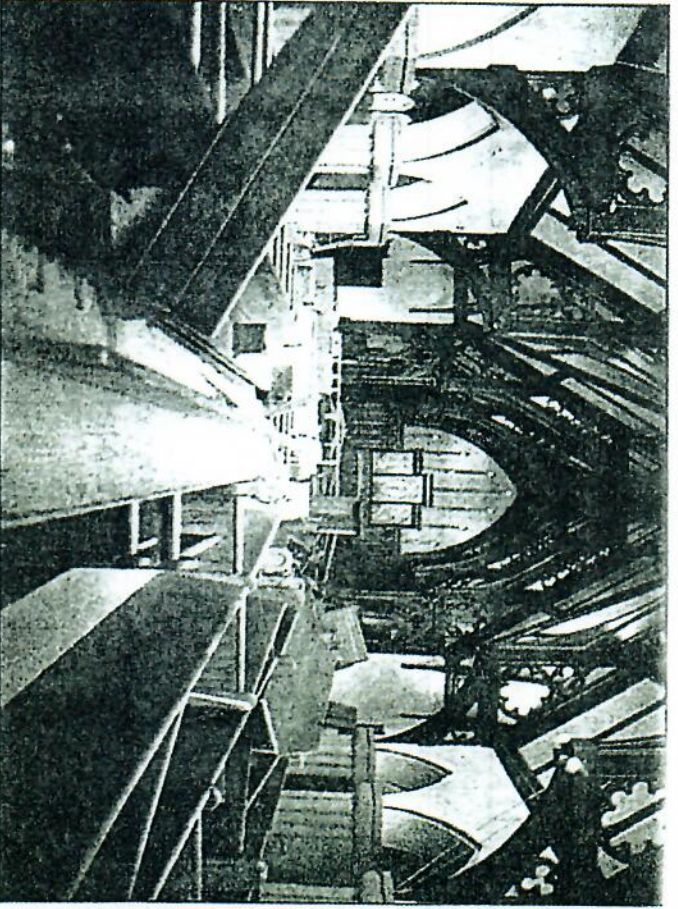
A Greek Orthodox with an appreciation for churches, he wants to retain as much "churchy" look as possible even if the "communion" will be different.

He will use pews for benches in the coffee house; the stained glass windows will be repaired and covered with protective Plexiglas and the wrought iron lectern will be used as a music stand for the grand piano.

He'll also leave the fancy brass lectern. But he's going to find a church home for the triptych (three icons) behind the altar. He'll leave the fancy Gothic arches high above the pews.

He doesn't think it would be appropriate to use the holy water font. "I'll find a

Please see CHURCH on 3B



**BIBLES TO BLUES:** The interior of St. Mark's Episcopal Church will host a different sort of congregation after it is turned into a restaurant, coffee house and blues nightclub.

The Denver Post / Jerry Cleveland

That small group disbanded last year. The other members of the congregation, who were loyal to Mark's Church, which has its own building in south Denver.

On a tour through the old St. Mark's building yesterday, Christou looked around and marveled at it. "I loved this building from the first time I saw it four years ago," he said. He's already making plans for a gift shop and a patio area south of the building for outside seating. He also hopes to provide a nursery for kids.

Vacant since 1990, the 104-year-old stone church was almost sold in 1991 to a couple wanting to convert it into a dinner-theatre, but the deal fell through. Once an elite downtown church, St. Mark's was the scene of a nasty confrontation that split the congregation in the late 1980s.

The pastor at the time, the Rev. Louis Tarstano, refused to use portions of the Episcopal Church's modern prayer book and wrangled with the then Colorado Episcopal bishop, the Rt. Rev. William C. Frey. Threatened with a church trial for disobedience, Tarstano left the state in 1985 to head a seminary in Connecticut.

Restaurants in churches are not unusual. Perhaps the most famous is Alice's Restaurant of Arlo Guthrie fame in Stockbridge, Mass. Colorado Springs, Castle Rock, Santa Fe, Atlanta and New York are among other cities with such attractions.

CHURCH from Page 1B

## Nightclub service in church's future