



*The Thanksgiving Day Chancel of Emmanuel Church*

# EMMANUEL CHURCH

IN THE CITY of BOSTON

1860 - 1960

## THE FIRST ONE HUNDRED YEARS



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## *Foreword*

IT SEEMS TO BE COMMON PRACTICE TO INCLUDE IN CHURCH centennial celebrations a short history of the Parish. It has its difficulties! There may or may not be vestry minutes and other records available, but no founder, no clergyman, no warden or parishioner is alive to tell of the beginnings, the struggles, the personalities involved in those early days that might otherwise round out the important events and add that important ingredient of human interest to make a history readable.

Most church records, and Emmanuel's are no exception, are dry as dust. Yet Emmanuel has played too vital a part in its community and the lives of its people through the past century to curtail too drastically its eventful life. What is written here makes no claim to completeness, and there will be surprise if there are no errors.

A church is its people — the clergy — the parishioners — and their services together to the glory of their God. In every period of Emmanuel's history, the laity, both men and women, have been very active, their numbers are so great, it is impossible to name them all, so it seems better to mention none. For, after all, it is the dedicated leadership of our spiritual life that defines the quality of the Parish. Therefore, this short history will try to stress the character, individuality, and leadership of Emmanuel's rectors — to show the periods of growth and decline in the all-embracing, unchanging warmth and beauty of our church.

This "history" could not have been written without the encouragement and support of many people: the Rev. Harold

B. Sedgwick, who had the idea and gave constant encouragement, and also important help in the editing and format; the Rev. Rollin J. Fairbanks for valuable suggestions and editing; Miss Eleanor S. Hunneman, for the heavy task of typing, and great help in the format and printing; the Rev. David Siegenthaler for collecting much of the reference material; Miss Gladys McCafferty at the Diocesan Library for hunting up needed information; Miss Ellen Parks and Miss Constance Worcester for material on their fathers, and Mrs. Wells Mitchell for much searching and finding of needed data.

— H. A. R.

## *Emmanuel Church — Its Beginnings*

IN THE EIGHTEEN FIFTIES THE RESIDENTIAL LIFE OF BOSTON was centered in what today is called "downtown." Trinity Church was on Summer Street, and St. Paul's on Tremont Street where it still stands; these two churches largely ministered to the well-to-do of the city. As the business district expanded, family living moved further and further away from the central city and pushed out along Tremont and Boylston Streets, and down Beacon Hill to Charles Street, moving also further away from their church.

The newly filled-in mudflats of the Back Bay made possible a whole new area of residences, Beacon Street (known as Western Avenue or the Mill Dam until 1857), Commonwealth Avenue and Newbury Street. The downtown shops charged extra for deliveries here as "out of town." Bishop Lawrence told of his mother speaking of a young couple living near where Emmanuel now is, and remarking that "they could not expect to be called on by their friends if they insisted on living so far out of town."

The question of getting to church from this new area became a problem. Summer Street was a long walk across the Common on a wintry day, and as Sunday was an accepted day of rest for both the coachman and the horses, walk they must.

As early as 1860, therefore, there developed a need for a church for this expanding community. A group of forward-looking citizens undertook the study of local conditions and finally selected the lot where Emmanuel still stands today. Its beginning is closely associated with the Lawrence family.

Dr. William Richards Lawrence was the pioneer and personally bought the land. The first meeting of the Parish, on March 17, was held in his residence, 98 Beacon Street.

From the minutes of this meeting we quote: "The self-constituted committee of subscribers beg leave to report as follows.

"The plan of forming a New Church originated with those residing on the Mill Dam who have long felt the inconvenience of attendance on distant places of public worship. Many others in favor of extending the sphere and influence of our church, sympathize in the movement. And a third class, who for various reasons wish to connect themselves with some new Society, favor the project.

"It is designed to raise for this object the sum of at least \$50,000 within one year. Of this sum \$16,500 are now subscribed by 23 persons.

"At the same time a search should be made for a clergyman who shall command respect by his character and excite interest by his powers and ability as a preacher. A committee has been named to secure Dr. Huntington's promise to become Rector of the New Parish."

Adopting a constitution and by-laws and organizing themselves as a Corporation were the following:

GEORGE P. UPHAM	E. S. RAND
HENRY SIGOURNEY	HENRY TIMMINS
B. F. BURGESS	JOHN JEFFRIES, JR.
WM. R. LAWRENCE	FOSTER WATERMAN

On Easter Monday, April 9, 1860, the organization was complete, the name Emmanuel Church formally adopted, and on September 16, 1860 the first service of Emmanuel Parish was held in Mechanics Association Hall on Bedford Street. (Still a long walk but with hopes!) Dr. Huntington officiated in the capacity of Deacon until on March 24, 1861, he was ordained to the priesthood and became Rector of Emmanuel.

It is told that Mr. Lawrence was unanimously chosen Senior

Warden but was too modest to accept. Edward S. Rand became Senior Warden, Mr. Lawrence, Junior Warden, John B. Alley, Clerk, Jere E. Bridge, Treasurer, with a vestry of ten.

It is well to realize that in 1860 the country was in a state of great unrest and even before Emmanuel's consecration the Civil War had begun. No mention of this is recorded in the records of the Vestry meetings, though through the next fifteen years there is frequent reference to the financial difficulties of the congregation and of the Parish.

There seems to be little doubt that money to complete the church, and to carry it on, was derived from the policy of selling the pews and annual taxes thereon.

A committee was appointed to "appraise the Pews and fix rate of taxation (taxation to be by a percentage upon the appraised value)." The method was to "offer choice of Pews at Public Auction and after selection shall have been made by persons offering a premium for a choice, to sell remaining Pews as wanted at the appraisement price." This sale made it possible to complete payment on land and church — \$60,378. The tax levied on the pews was 4 per cent. Little by little the annual tax was raised until by 1869 it had reached 20 per cent.

It may be of interest to know that the salary of the Rector began at \$4,000. Not until '66 was he allowed \$2,000 for "equivalent of rent and taxes on his house." When he left in 1869, he was receiving \$6,000 plus the \$2,000. The sexton began with \$400 a year and as his duties multiplied, and included collection of all pew rents and taxes, it was increased to \$1,000.

On June 17, 1861, the cornerstone of Emmanuel was laid. The choice of heterogeneous articles placed in cornerstones is always mystifying but no mention can be found in the church records or in the newspapers of that day that anything was placed within the cornerstone of Emmanuel. On this same day the direful battle of Bull Run was fought.

On April 24, 1862, Emmanuel was consecrated. The following account was in the Boston Evening Transcript of that date:

#### CONSECRATION OF EMMANUEL CHURCH

The new church on Newbury Street erected for the Rev. Dr. Huntington was this forenoon consecrated, according to the customary service of the Episcopal Church, by the Rt. Rev. Manton Eastburn, Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts.

The ceremonies commenced at 10 o'clock.

Rev. George C. Wilde of Salem read the Service for the day. The sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Muhlenburg of New York, one of the most distinguished clergymen of his day, from Haggai 2:9. "And the latter Glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of Hosts."

## *In Appreciation*

### THE VESTRY

It has not been possible to mention all the Vestry members during the past one hundred years, but no history would be complete without acknowledgment of their tremendous contribution to Emmanuel's welfare. When reading the Vestry minutes, one is acutely aware of the time, the thought, the vision, the conscientious evaluations and decisions, some very momentous, which have gone into the life of the Parish. The responsibility has been heavier in some years than in others, but it never has been evaded. We, the parishioners, thank each and every member of the Vestry who have guided Emmanuel to this centennial year.

### THE CLERGY

So much space has been given to the Rectors that too little emphasis has been given to the assistants, the associates and the curates. Each one, in his own way, has made his contribution to Emmanuel — sometimes a vital one. Emmanuel has gained immeasurably by their service and it is hoped they in turn are the richer.

### LAYMEN AND WOMEN

No "history" has ever been written that does justice to the volunteer service of the layman and laywoman. Yet where would the church be without them? Perhaps some day the story of the sacrificial and vital contribution of women to the life and well being of the church may be written. Until then, Emmanuel can only say, "Well done" and "Thank you."

### THE ORGANISTS AND CHOIRS

What would the church services be without music? The choirs come and go, and how beautifully they sing, — but the organists of Emmanuel have been surprisingly constant — only ten in our one hundred years — Mr. Snow for twenty years, and Mr. Oberle for thirteen, being the longest in tenure of office. Each organist brought his own special talents and artistry. We are both proud and grateful for them.

W. B. KENDALL	1883
GEORGE L. OSGOOD ( <i>choir master</i> )	1883-1897
WALTER E. SPAULDING	1887
L. S. THOMPSON	1888
WALTER E. SPAULDING	1899
ARTHUR SEWALL HYDE	1900-1908
WESTON S. GALES	1908-1912
W. LYNWOOD FARNUM	1912-1918
ALBERT SNOW	1918-1938
L. S. THOMPSON	1938-1946
GROVER J. OBERLE	1946-1958
LLOYD PALMER	1958

### APPENDIX

#### WARDENS AND OFFICERS OF EMMANUEL CHURCH

##### *Senior Wardens*

1860 Edward S. Rand	1936 Hollis French
1865 Benjamin T. Reed	1941 Alfred P. Lowell
1873 Edward S. Rand	1945 Samuel Hooper Hooper
1876 Charles O. Whitmore	1948 Redington M. DeCormis
1880 Benjamin S. Rotch	1950 Albert W. Rockwood
1883 John Hogg	1955 Nathaniel T. Worthen
1907 Walter C. Baylies	1956 Bartlett Harwood

*Junior Wardens*

1860 William R. Lawrence	1937 Alfred P. Lowell
1863 Benjamin T. Reed	1941 Samuel Hooper Hooper
1865 E. R. Mudge	1945 Arthur L. Devens
1873 H. W. Sargent	1947 Redington M. DeCormis
1875 Charles O. Whitmore	1948 Arthur L. Devens
1876 John Hogg	1949 Albert W. Rockwood
1883 Howard P. Arnold	1950 John Hill
1885 Andrew G. Weeks	1952 Nathaniel T. Worthen
1904 A. Lawrence Rotch	1955 George W. W. Brewster
1907 S. Reed Anthony	1956 Dr. G. Edmund Haggart
1914 Hollis French	1957 Joseph W. Lund

*Clerks*

1860 John B. Alley	1899 Frank M. Clark
1862 E. P. Dutton	1906 Harold Peabody
1863 Alfred Grout	1907 Hugh W. Ogden
1865 Robert Codman	1918 John H. Harwood
1871 Thomas D. Townsend	1920 Hugh W. Ogden
1876 John D. Bryant	1936 Redington M. DeCormis
1879 Howard P. Arnold	1939 Bartlett Harwood
1885 Arthur B. Denny	1956 Harry F. Rice
1887 S. Reed Anthony	1959 Oliver L. Colburn
1898 S. V. R. Thayer	

*Treasurers*

1860 Jere E. Bridge	1910 Daniel K. Snow
1863 Charles H. Parker	1916 James T. Wetherald
1864 C. D. Kellogg	1926 Wayland Manning
1865 George P. Denny	1932 Warren Motley
1873 D. R. Whitney	1952 Charles A. Hinkle
1878 L. A. Shattuck	1956 Donald F. Sawyer
1895 Charles Lowell	1959 Frederick C. Wells
1906 Frank B. Bemis	