

A Brief Pictorial History of the
Church of The Messiah

October Fest 2013

Prepared by A. Mercer Sisson



One of the oldest photographs we have of the Church taken in 1905 showing the original belfry. Note the absence of the transepts.

The original bell was given in 1876 and weighed almost 400 pounds.

The first service was held on Christmas Day 1871 and the Church was consecrated May 2 1878 after the original mortgage of \$5000 was paid.

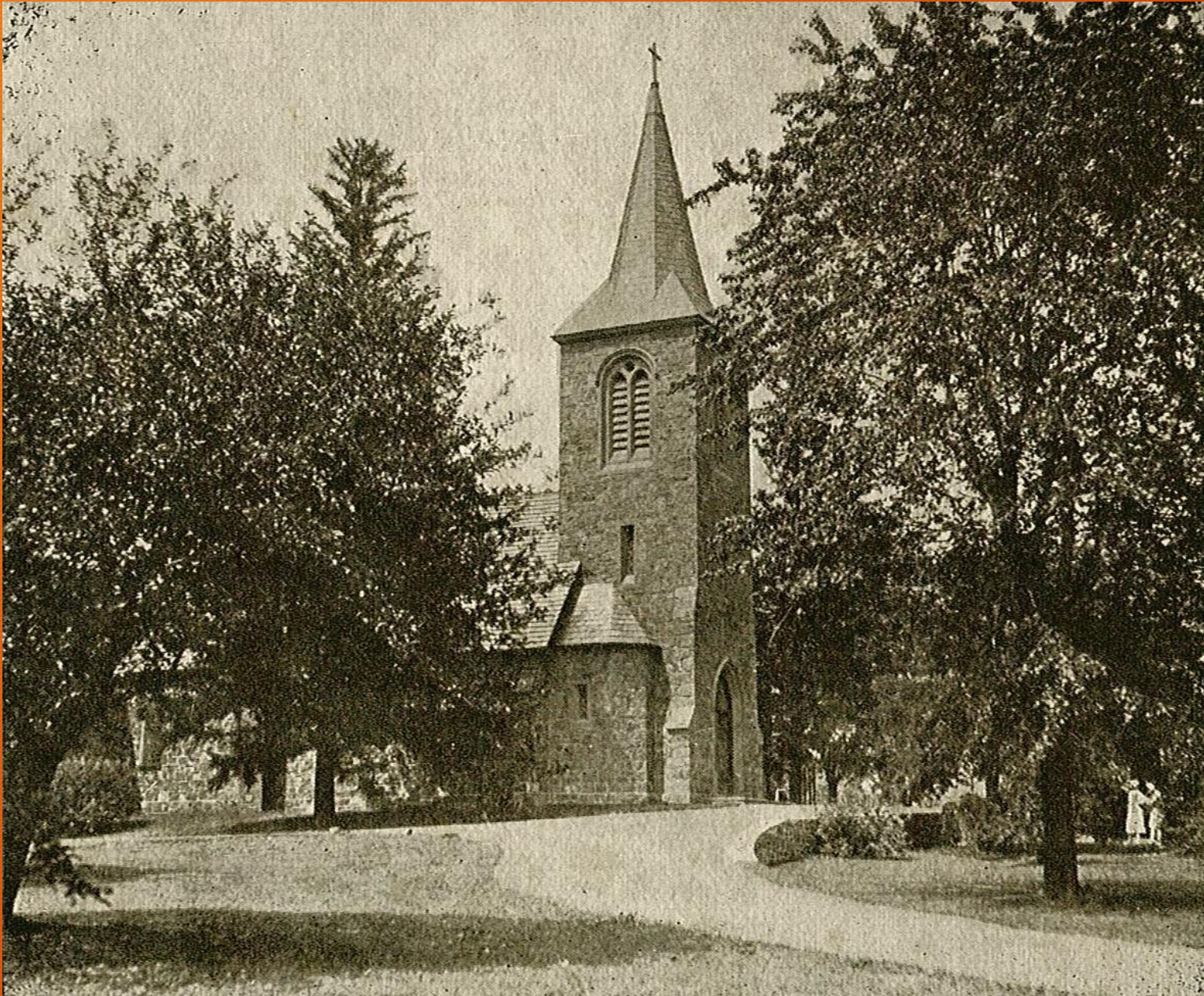
The original seating capacity was 100.



The old Rectory built in 1886 at a cost of \$2750, is now called the Patterson House.

This photo from 1905 shows the original layout of the building.

This building has been used as a Rectory, Church School rooms and now houses Belfry Bargains.

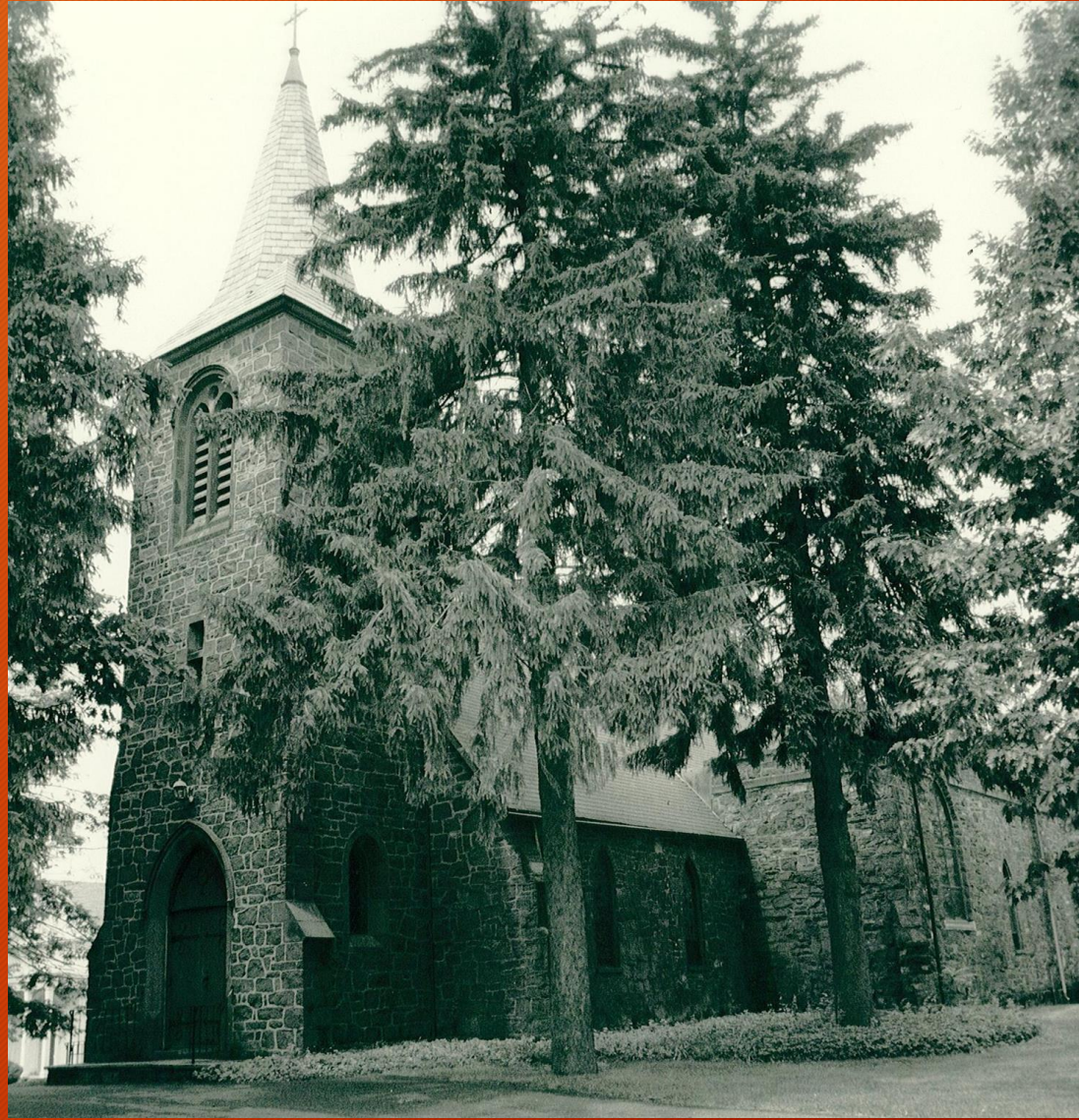
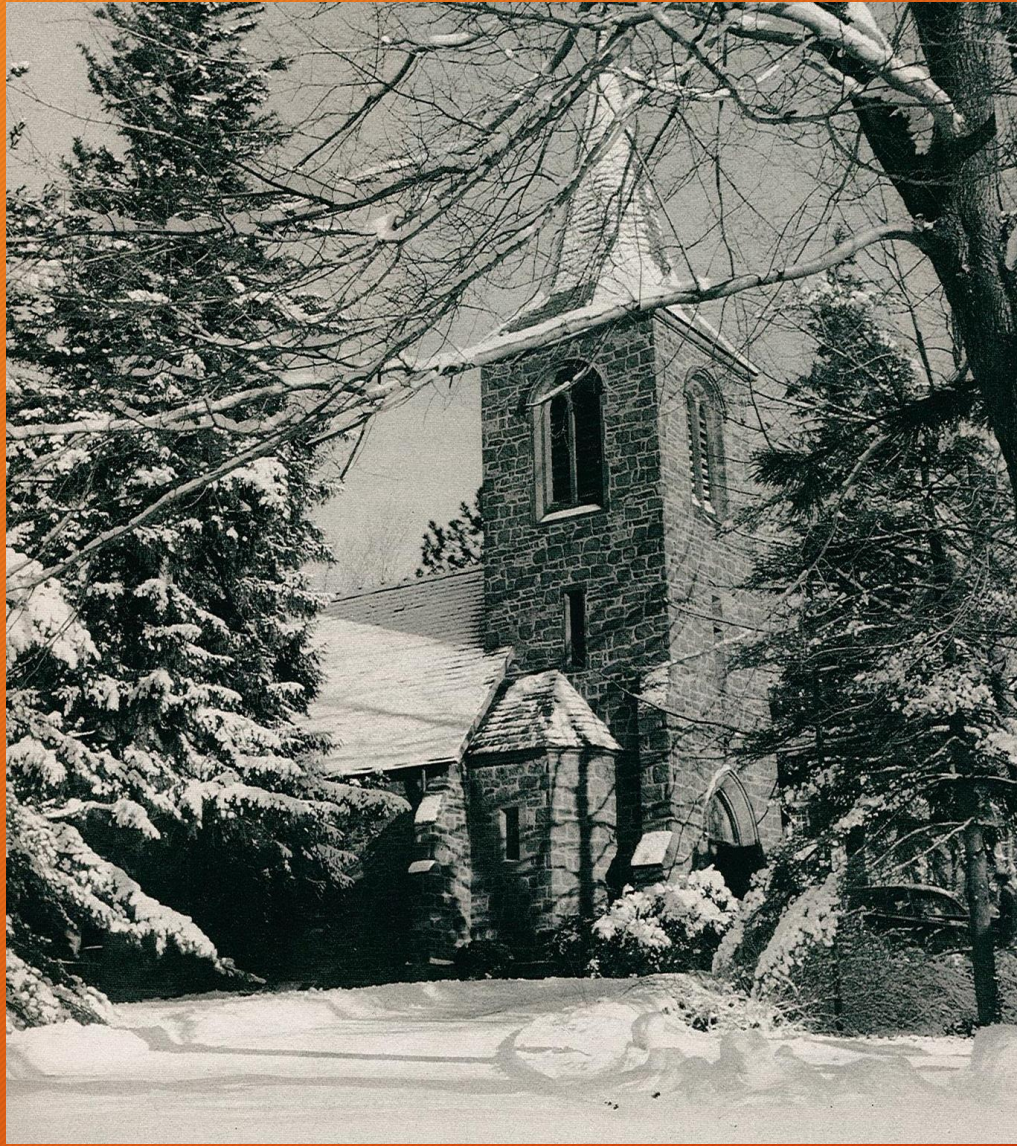


This photo from the cover of the dedication program shows the Church just after the bell tower as added in 1926.

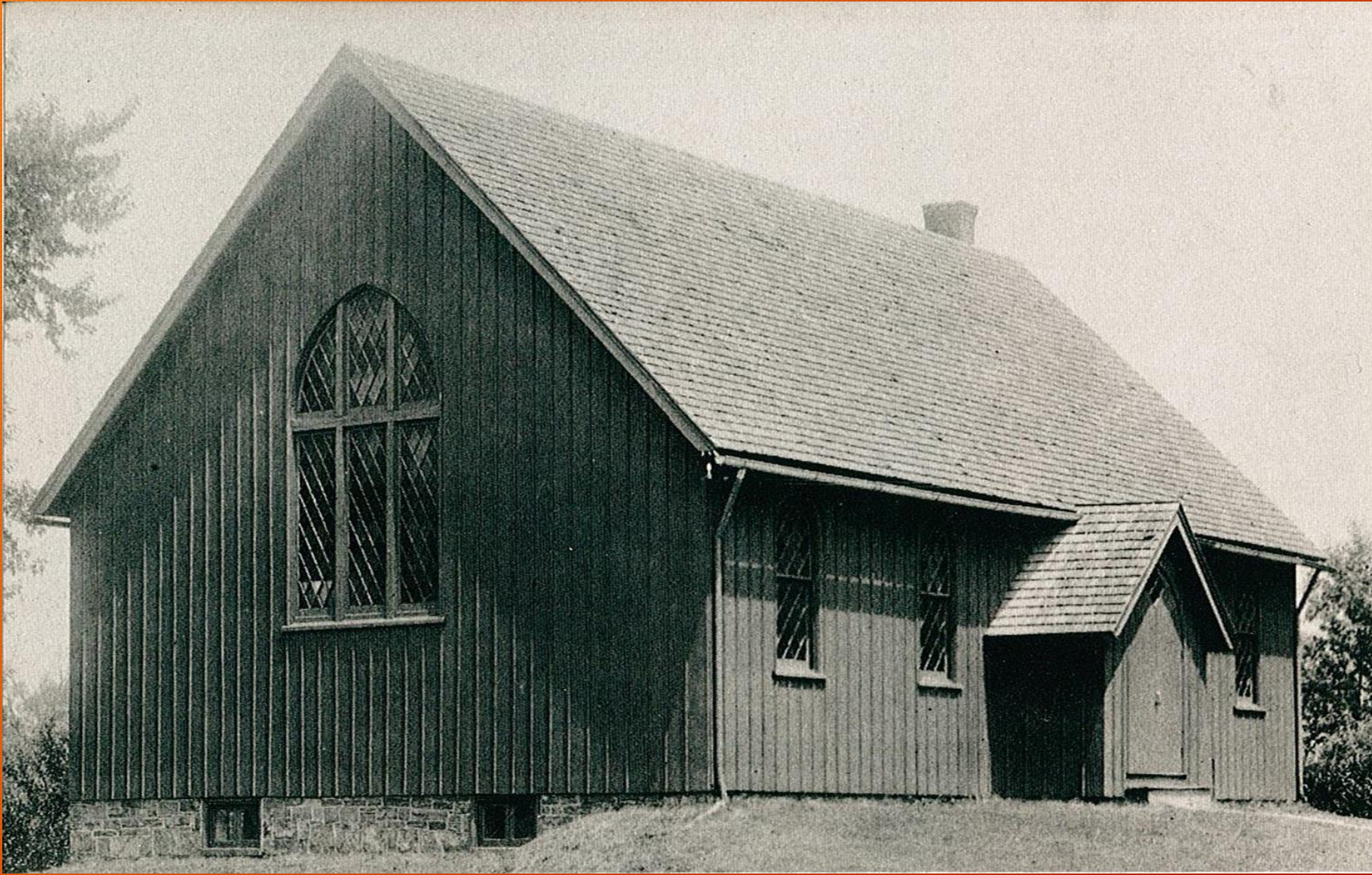
The bell tower was given in memory of Captain Harry Ingersoll and the men of his company who died in action in the Battle of Argonne in World War I.



This pen and ink drawing of the Church shows the building shortly after the construction of the bell tower.



The Church often described as a “lovely stone church”, is indeed beautiful in all of the seasons.



The first Parish House and Sunday School, built in 1899 behind the Church on the present graveyard, was torn down in 1928

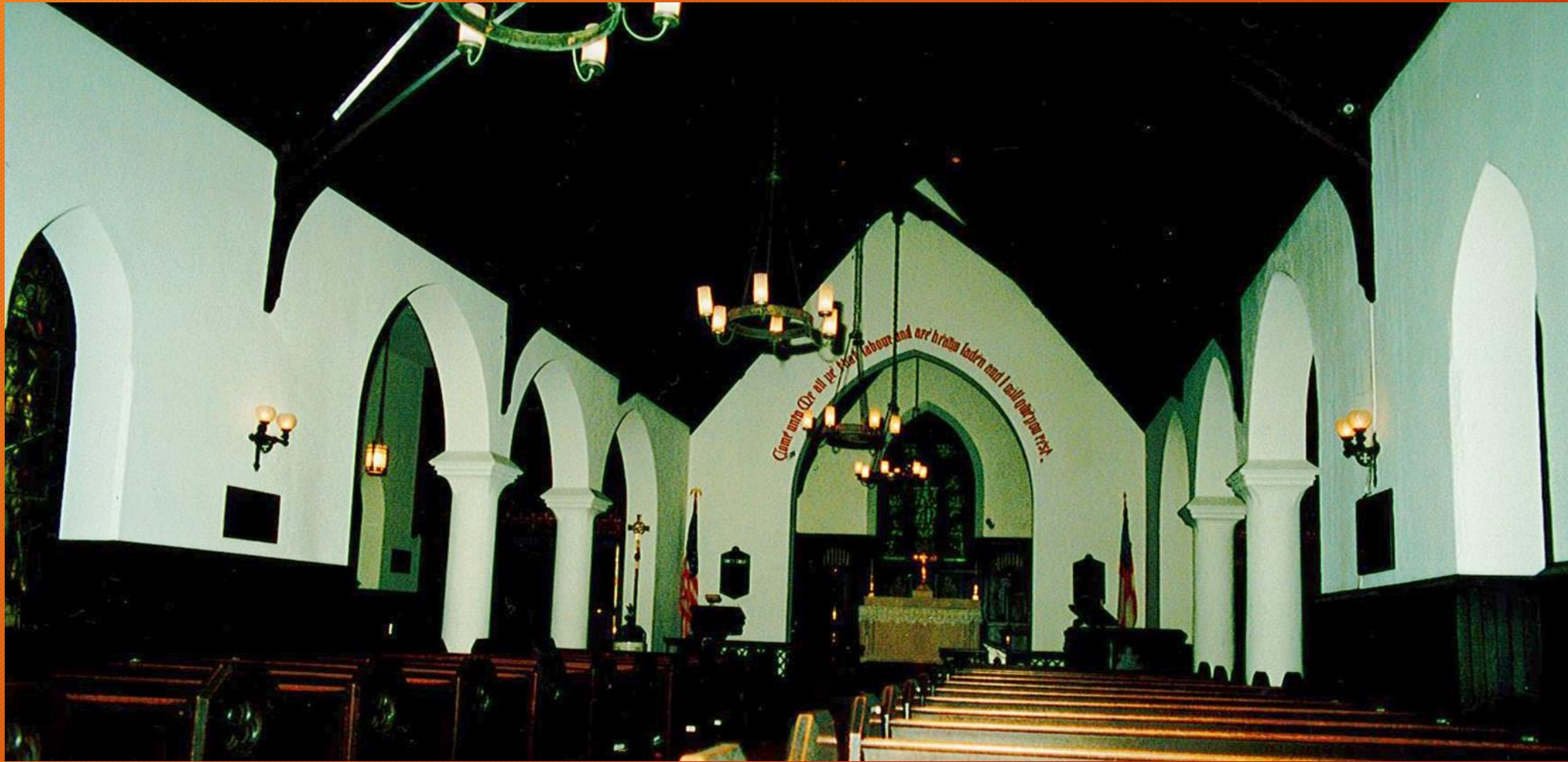


The interior of the Church as it was in 1943. Later in 1956, the Church was enlarged and the chancel rearranged. The pulpit and lectern were reversed (for the first time).

The gospel transept as added and the choir stalls were moved back into the transepts. The north transept was constructed in 1906.



This picture is from a Christmas Card sent out by many members of the congregation.



These interior shots were taken just before the major expansion of the Church in the late 1980s. Remember the altar was at the opposite side that it is today. Notice that there were only two pillars and three arches at the entrances to the transepts.



The main stain glass window was given in 1913. It has been featured above and behind the altar of the Church for 100 years.

It was made by Clayton & Bell of London. A smaller earlier version is also present in the Church.

The window was carefully preserved and restored during the most recent renovation along with the scripture quote which accompanied it.





The various stain glass windows in the church were given as memorials, mostly in the post World War I period.

Look around as we walk through to see them all.



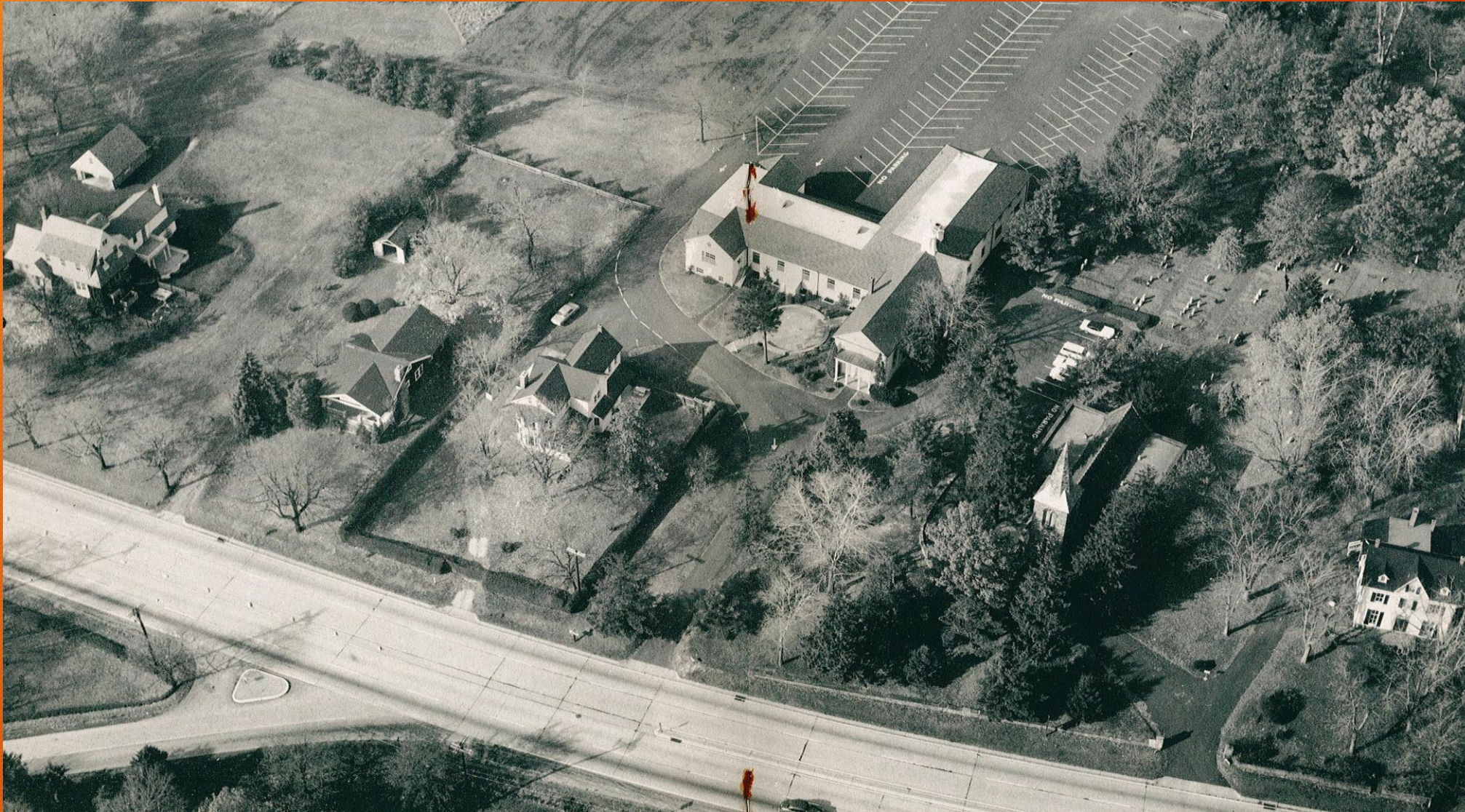
The Parish House pictured in 1945 before it was greatly expanded in 1965.

Originally the public school for the area, this is the oldest building on our campus and predates the Church. Services were held in the upper floor before the Church was built.

It was donated to the Church with an acre of ground in 1920.



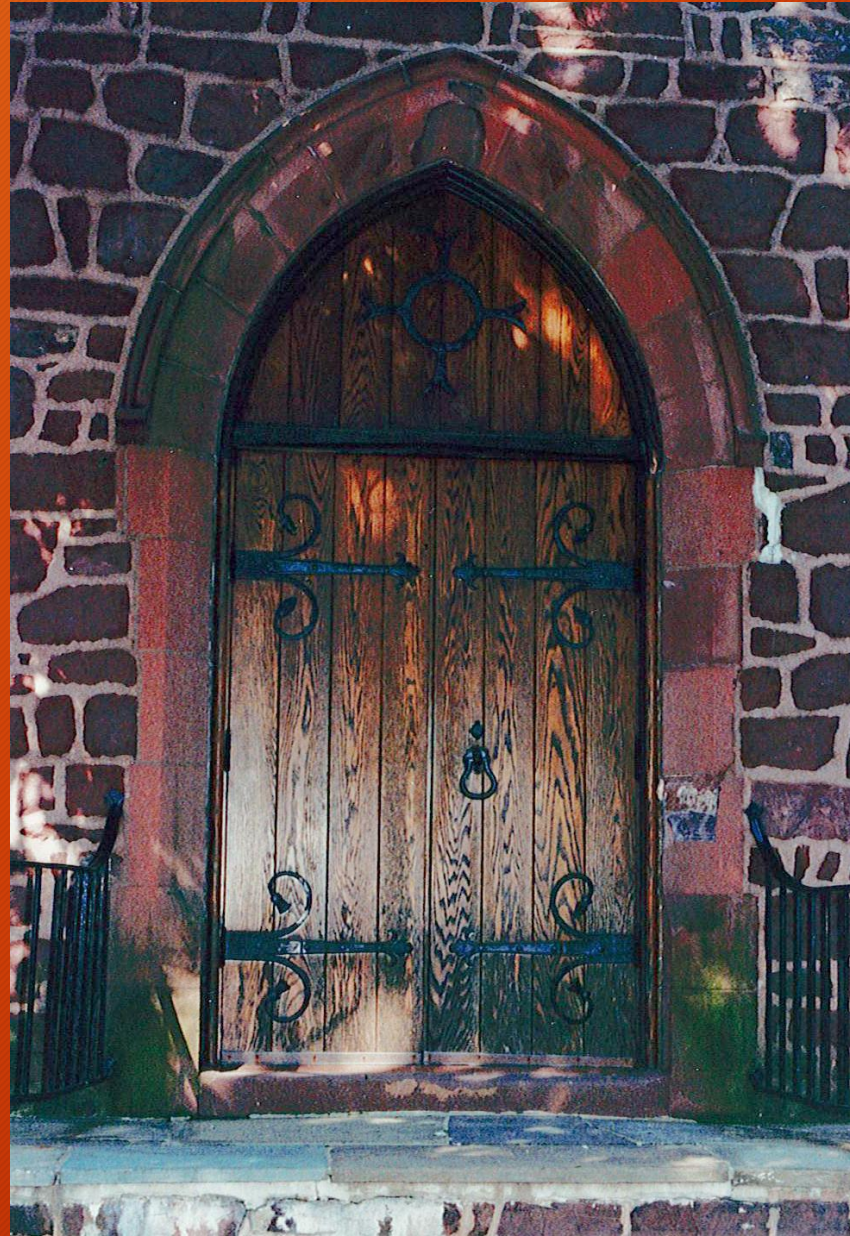
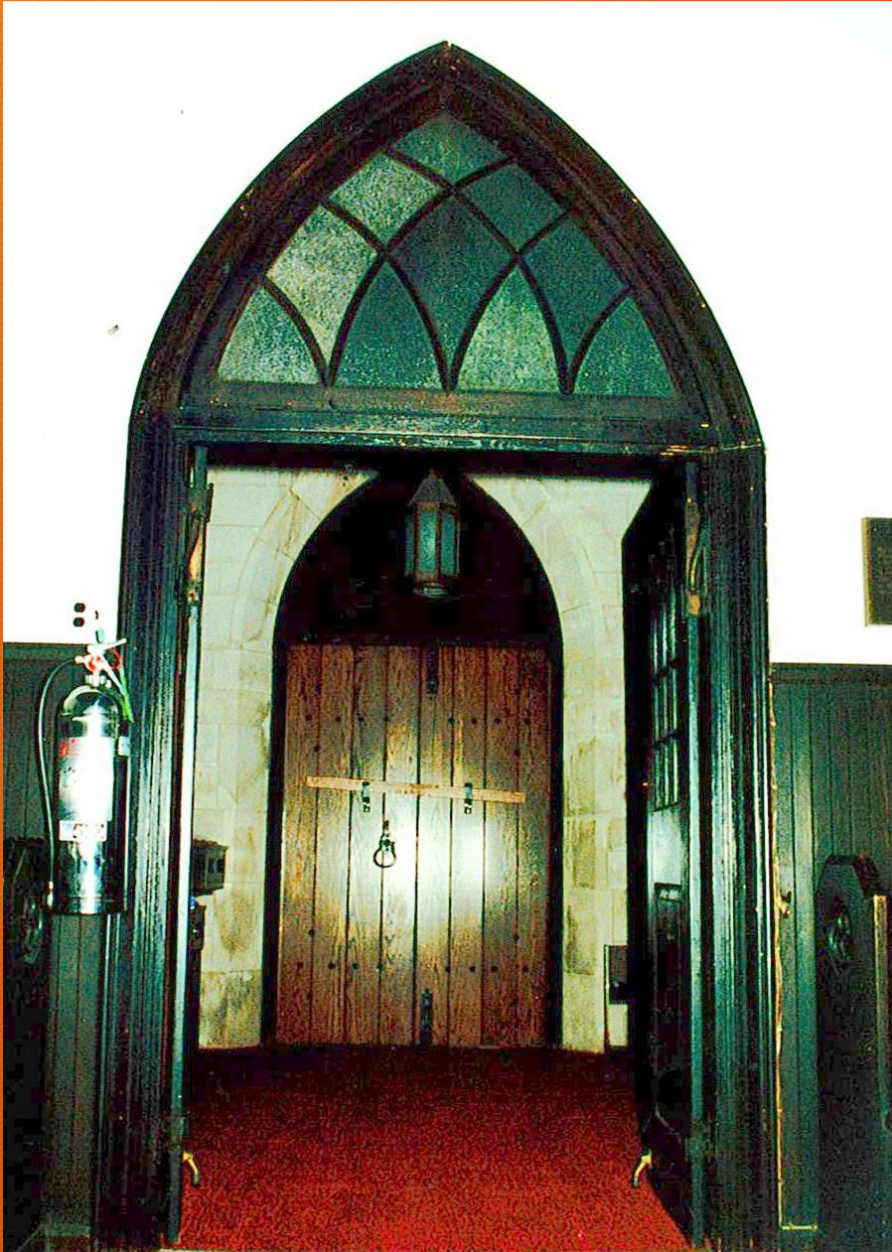
A view of the graveyard in 1965. Established in the 1890s, it was enlarged in 1928 when the old Parish House was removed, and again in 1962 with the addition of a new section of ground behind the Patterson House.



One of these buildings is no longer here on the campus. Can you spot it?

Also notice the placement of the driveways.

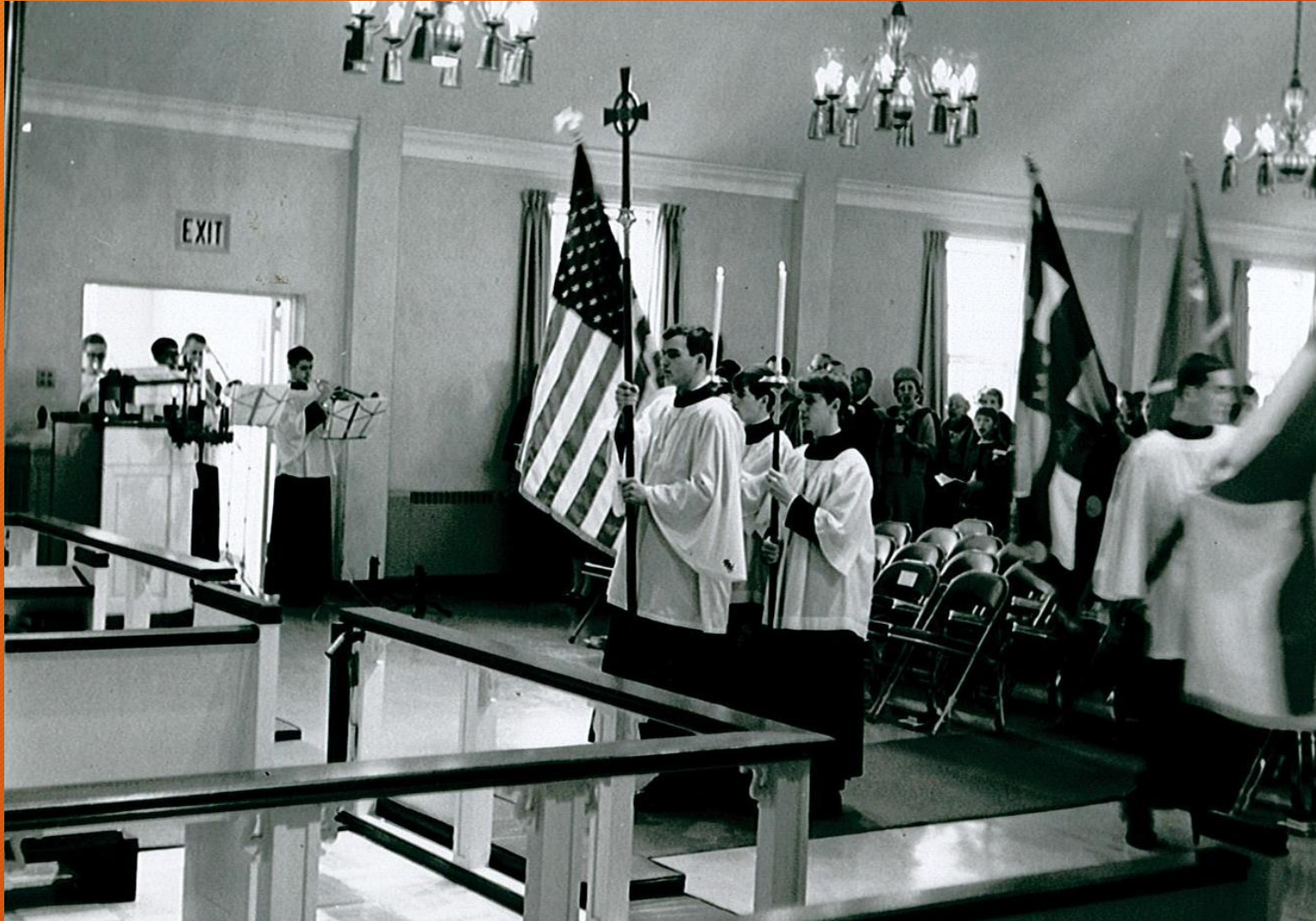
An aerial view of the Church property in 1965. Including from left to right, the Rectory (at the time), a private residence (now the Cottage), the Curate's House, Parish House, the Church and the Patterson House.



The main entrance to the Church from the expansion of the Bell Tower in 1926 until 1991.

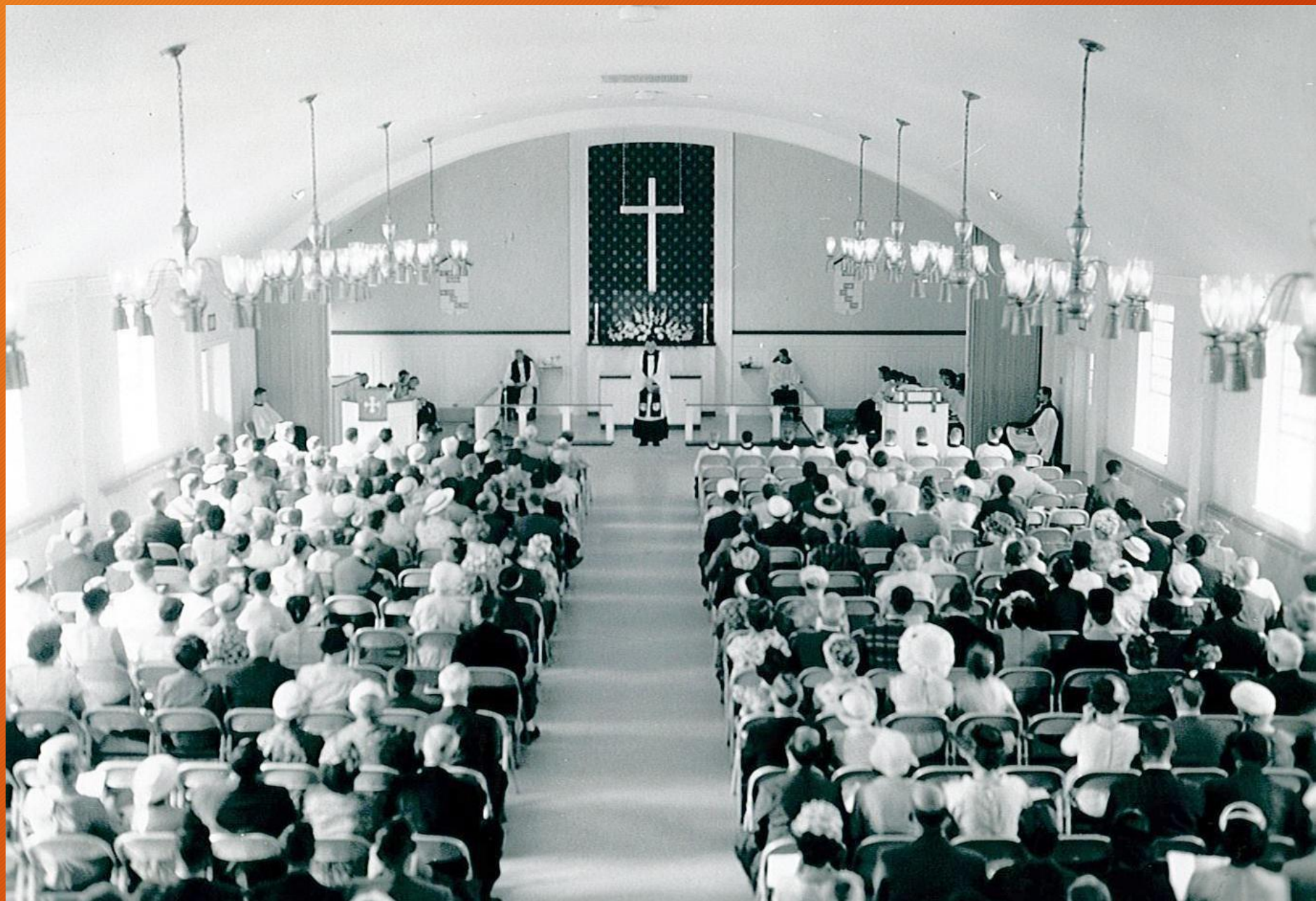
The interior picture also shows where the original doors were located.

In the 1960s and early 1970s the congregation was so large the main church could not accommodate everyone especially on Easter and Christmas.



See if you recognize the Parish Hall in these next few pictures. It is all still there just not quite how you see it today.







These next few pictures were taken in the late 1980s just before the major renovation.

Here you see the original building and the South Transept built in 1956.





Notice the position of the back of the Church relative to the Patterson House. Virtually all of the back wall was removed to increase the size of the worship space and allow for the creation of the current Narthex.





The major renovation of the late 1980s to 1991 began by removing all of the old pews and preparing the then altar wall for removal.



While not the best picture, this photo does show the Church under expansion.





The finished renovation in 1991 shows the award winning blending of the original Church and the new space.

The cleaning and repointing of the old stone walls allowed an almost perfect match to newly quarried stone used in the expansion.

Many thanks to Beverly Case for providing all of these photos and a copy of the History of The Church of the Messiah published in its centennial year 1966.

The living history found in the Church and the beautiful campus which surrounds it continue to inspire and enrich our experiences as part of the Messiah Community.