

St. John's Centennial

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In January, we announced the beginning of the centennial celebration of St. John's as the first Episcopal church on the eastside of Lake Washington. St. John's first service took place on January 8, 1922, in the Kirkland home of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Caldwell with the Reverend D. C. Lees, the pastor of what is now St. Luke's (then St. Mark's) in Ballard, presiding.

We began our celebration on January 9, 2022, to commemorate that first service. Going forward, we plan to provide brief summaries of parts of our history at least monthly. For more details about our history, please see the "Decades of St. John's."

After the initial service, things moved fast! The early founders petitioned to organize a mission on January 26, 1922. They immediately formed their first bishop's committee, and the first warden and treasurer were appointed.

Priests had to journey from Seattle to Kirkland for services. Transportation across Lake Washington was a bit more complicated in those days. The Reverend Cameron Morrison, who served the Church of the Epiphany, Seattle, was transported to the Kirkland Ferry at the foot of Madison Street in Seattle. After arriving in Kirkland, he walked from the Kirkland Ferry Dock to the home where Evening Prayer was held. After Evening Prayer, he walked backed down to take the ferry back to Madison Park.

Mr. Morrison died suddenly in August 1922 from medication poisoning. Initially, a priest from Christ Church, Seattle, filled in until The Reverend Harold Hennessey came to Epiphany and carried on the outreach to St. John's.

Meanwhile, the parishioners of St John's remained very active:

- July 26, 1922: Ten charter members formed a women's guild. It was first called St. John's Guild and became an important part of the life of St. John's. This guild became St. Margaret's Guild and functioned continuously until well into the 1980s.
- July 30, 1922: After spending the early months of 1922 searching for property for their church, the parishioners purchased 1 ½ lots on State Street from the town of Kirkland. A building committee was authorized. (Those lots remain part of St. John's current location. It's interesting to note that the site seemed to be a long distance from the Kirkland business district at that time.)
- November 1922: They had neither a building nor official sanction, but that didn't stop parishioners from organizing a church school. The first classes were held in Windsor Hall in Kirkland, and soon regular services were held there as well. (Later, members of St John's actually attended services on a ship, the Fort Jackson, which mainly served as the local American Legion headquarters.)

Soon after Christmas of 1922, the future of St John's was well on its way.

Let's begin the celebration!