



Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia
February 25, 2023

Report from the Historiographer

I have served the Diocese of Southern Virginia as Historiographer since 2015 or 2016. In that time, the diocesan offices have moved twice. The first move came when the offices moved from Talbot Hall in Norfolk to Canon Boulevard in Newport News. There is where I began my journey into the old registers, files, and other archival materials the Historiographers of years past had accumulated and filed. Much of the material had been inventoried to at least find what was in there. There were, however, many more documents, registers, vestry minutes of closed churches, etc. to be inventoried which cannot be done without a significant number of people working on such a project.

We were fortunate to have Edna Johnston of *History Matters* help us catalogue the registers and vestry minutes of closed parishes. This has helped tremendously when members of those churches have called in to find when they were baptized or confirmed, or when a parent was married or when a death occurred for transferring to another church, genealogical research, or any number of reasons the records were needed.

We are looking for economical ways to digitize our annual diocesan journals beginning in 1892. While we do have bound copies of the journals, we would do well to put these in digital form to remain secure for future generations. It would be good also to digitize the records from closed parishes in the Diocese.

In 2022, as the diocesan office moved once more, now just around the corner to Rock Landing Drive, consolidating offices and space, the closet that housed the archival materials would now be moved to a climate-controlled storage facility off J. Clyde Morris Boulevard in Newport News. With that being done, much of the documents and material have been put in acid-free archival folders and boxes. I am in the process as much as possible of sorting the material in an orderly fashion.

We have accessioned into the archives more files and materials from Bishop Gunn's family relating to his time as Bishop in Southern Virginia. We also accessioned the personal chalice and paten used by Churchill Gibson of Grace Church Petersburg from the Valentine Museum in Richmond. Please know that the material located in our storage unit is held secure and climate controlled.

I have responded to 18 requests/inquiries into the Baptismal/Confirmation files from closed churches as well as other research information for church anniversaries, etc.

If you have materials of historical diocesan interest or archival materials that you think might be of value to researchers, or to churches of the diocese in the future, please let us know by contacting the diocesan office or me directly at chanco1@aol.com.

The Rev. William B. Taylor, Jr.+
Historiographer, Diocese of Southern Virginia