

# A New Beginning

By Ken Kilpatrick

As a community of believers, we have been through much together: good times like parish picnics, bowling league outings, harvest dinner/talent shows, Vacation Bible Schools, family camping excursions, Christian music/outreach extravaganzas such as Acquire the Fire, etc.. There have been sad times as well: Father Ken Davis' retirement, the shocking blow of Father Bob Clapp's sudden passing, the loss of fellow parishioners whom God has called home, and well-liked youth and music ministers who have moved on. Until Saturday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2006 however, we had never experienced anything as earthshaking as losing our building.

And so it was that the following day; Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006, many of us - one hundred and ninety to be exact - filed into Ambassador Ballroom C of the Detroit West Holiday Inn (Holy-Day Inn as Pastor Allen humorously referred to it), on Laurel Park Drive in Livonia to begin a new chapter - a new era - in the life of the parish formerly known as St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, now re-christened St. Andrew's Anglican Ministry. It was a sign of our resiliency - and confidence in both our Savior and our pastor - that we carried on sans vaulted ceiling, stained glass windows, pipe organ, choir, pews, Sunday school classrooms... everything in short, that one traditionally associates with a classically appointed church.

I don't know about you, but being in a strange venue; a less-than-inspiring hotel conference room, under strange circumstances, deprived of resounding organ music, and lacking readily available hymn and prayer books, made me crave something of normalcy. That God graciously provided in the form of the baptism of Anna Lynn Grunkemeyer, the seven-week-old daughter of Gail Grunkemeyer. During that sacrament, while we as a congregation recited the familiar baptism litanies, I could forget for a moment that much had changed, that there was no going back, and that what lie ahead was uncertain.

There were of course, other carryovers from the old: ushers guiding parishioners up the aisle to communion, the exchange of the "Peace", familiar hymns (a cappella of course, except for Pastor Allen's quick-change, guitar-strumming alter ego during the Processional and Recessional), and the requisite coffee, tea, bagels and doughnuts available at the back of the room.

Guests of the Holiday Inn may have been somewhat surprised to hear sacred music wafting down the halls from the Ambassador Ballroom on the day of that first service away from our building, but I like to think that perhaps the curious might venture to our worship service there one of these Sundays, discover that Christian worship is what has been missing from their lives, and decide to become a member of our fledgling, re-organized ministry.

Many thanks to Marcia Fish for laboring for hours at Kinko's to put together the service bulletins we used at our Holiday Inn service. Those bulletins were yet another throwback to what we knew from before, and helped assuage some of the sense of insecurity and instability that were undoubtedly on all of our minds.

May God guide us as we venture forth into new, uncharted waters; opening our hearts, minds and ears to where He is leading us, give us courage to follow our convictions and biblical truth, and bless this new phase of our walk with Him with reinvigorated faith, a new building, and an increase in our numbers.

