

Welcome from the Dean – Cathedral Consecration and Eucharist Friday, October 6, 2017

On behalf of the Right Reverend Dan Edwards, 10th bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Nevada, our diocesan staff, and the Vestry and members of Trinity Episcopal parish and Cathedral, I most humbly welcome you and thank you for being a part of this most historic event.

So how did we get to this day in becoming the Cathedral for the Episcopal Diocese of Nevada ... a process going on prior to the 1920s?

Historically, despite being a part of the Territory of Utah, as a Church in the northern areas of Nevada, we were born separately. It was The Rt. Rev. Ozzie Whittaker, the founding father of Episcopal Christianity in Nevada, who conducted the first Reno church service on October 16, 1870 in the “School House,” which gave birth to Trinity Church.

As Bishop Dan expressed a few months ago: “Although the state of Nevada was already independent, the folks back East merged our Church into the Diocese of Utah. Nevadans still had a Bishop, but he was downgraded to a Suffragen to the Bishop of Utah.

The Rt. Rev. George Hunting was consecrated the 6th Bishop of Nevada in December of 1914. It was under his leadership, and with his urging, that Trinity Church purchased new land in which it was planned to build Nevada’s cathedral church. The land was purchased in January of 1924 at the cost of \$10,000. The year prior, the plans had been developed and published, stating that the new building would be “of the Gothic style of architecture costing \$75,000.” Unfortunately Bishop Hunting died the following month and plans fell away.

The annual parish meeting of January 15, 1925 prompted “a real outburst of enthusiasm.” The parish status was changed into a cathedral status and it was voted to build the new church as Trinity Memorial Cathedral, in honor of past bishops of Nevada. It was at this point that the rector, Fr. Brown became The Very Rev. Edward Tanner Brown, whose leadership delivered a *Building Vision* and funds of \$50,000 to build the cathedral in units with a final cost of \$100,000. Bishop Arthur Moulton, 5th Bishop of Nevada supported the idea of Nevada having a cathedral and counseled in January of 1926 that it would be well to erect one unit of it. The

Bishop was to be present for the ground-breaking on May 16, 1926, but a local paper published it would be delayed. It was delayed for years.

There was no action on the building project until after Thomas Jenkins was consecrated as bishop of Nevada in January 1929. With his first convocation in April of that year, he quickly made his feelings known about a cathedral project and his commitment to follow through on it. He was able to raise in a short time an additional \$50,000 to “provide a church both adequate and worthy.” The groundbreaking ceremony took place on September 22, 1929. The first unit to be built was the crypt or undercroft, or as the parishioners lovingly called it, the “potato cellar.” The corner stone read, and you can see it today at the front outside corner on the East side: *“Trinity Cathedral, Erected to the Glory of God the Eternal Trinity, 1929.* The structure was dedicated by Bishop Jenkins on January 26, 1930. The cost for that first phase was \$40,000.

Then hit the Great Depression, and building the next unit, a memorial chapel in honor of Bishop Hunting, or any construction at that, was further delayed by World War II and the shortage of materials. The entire cathedral project ended at the annual meeting of Trinity in January of 1934. Trinity reverted back to the status of a parish and the formal relationship between it and Bishop Jenkins was dissolved. The bishop, who requested this action, explained later that month, “The project under existing conditions had not met with the success required to continue the relationship.”

It was after the Depression and War had run its course that the Bishop William Lewis and the new rector of Trinity Church, The Rev. Garth Sibbald spurred the active planning and fund-raising projects to complete the long delayed physical plant that stands before us today. The actual building was completed and consecrated by Bishop Lewis on the 25th of September 1949. The cost was \$250,000 and was completed with no debt.

Christmas 2016 The Right Rev. Dan T. Edwards, 10th Bishop of Nevada writes in his December 2016 Blog:

“... I believe that we are a real Diocese and that the time has come to claim our status. States have capitals and Dioceses have cathedrals. If we are going to be a Diocese, let’s act like one. 46 years is long enough to wait.”

Trinity is our historic Cathedral. The decision of the Bishop of another Diocese to downgrade our Cathedral is an insult that we should no longer endure. I want to set that right.

I have gotten to know the Diocese of Nevada pretty well in the past 9 years, and I am convinced of two things:

- 1. We have grown up and are ready to do this.*
- 2. We need to take this step to further our growth into a coherent, missional, world-changing force in Nevada.*

Because we are doing this now, we will grow faster, deeper, and stronger into a coherent, missional, world-changing force for the gospel in a place that is spiritually dying of thirst for Christ. There can be no greater mission for us all to share. For the sake of that mission, it is with warm affection, we give the Diocese of Nevada a Cathedral for Christmas, 2016.”

So we gather this day to mark this historic occasion, a cathedral consecrated to the greater glory of our triune God, a gift to the Episcopal Diocese of Nevada. May God continue to bless us all.