St. Annas Episcopal Church

1313 Esplanade Avenue

This is a small Anglo-Catholic church with a long history. Established in 1846, it was originally called St. Peters Episcopal Church and was one of the first English-speaking churches downstream from Canal Street, possibly *the* first. The original mission of the churchserving seamen docking at nearby wharvesexplains that name for the parish, as St. Peter Claver is patron saint of seafarers. Forty seats were always reserved for visiting sailors. In 1869, the assets of St. Peters were sold and St. Annas parish was established.

The exterior of the church is an unassuming Norman style building built of Cordova shell limestone from a quarry outside of Austin, Texas. Inside, the churchs decor combines styles that complement its identity as an Anglo-Catholic congregation whose worship includes chanting, incense, icons and bells, formal vestments, and reverential behavior

The parish, though small, has made great contributions to the welfare of New Orleans. Its programs provide medical care for underserved neighborhoods and musicians, as well as art programs for children, a variety of programs for immigrants from Latin America, and a wall memorializing murder victims.

Todays building dates to 1952 and is the sixth for the parish. Harriet Murrell, a valued member of the Stained Glass Art in Sacred Places committee, noted that The windows and the appointments date from the current period . . . and are in scale with the intimate feel of the worship space. The modified box pews seem right at home as does the small organ in the back of the nave.

The stained glass windows represent three distinct styles of glass design. Those above the altar and the one on the rear wall were installed in 1954 by a Midwestern studio. Those in the nave, created by the William Morris Studio of London, followed two years later. The narthex window was designed by New Orleans artist/historian Boyd Cruise, a member of St. Annas, and manufactured by T. C. Esser and Co. of Milwaukee in 1965.

**Windows**

Virgin Mary Christ in Majesty St. Anna

Altar

The Resurrection Annunciation

Deposition Nativity

The Trial Presentation

Gethsemane Nazareth

Martha and Mary Baptism

Transfiguration The Healer

Lord, Save Me The Sower

Liturgical West Wall

St. Luke, the Beloved Physician

Narthex

The Hand of God in Blessing with Passion Flower

**Organs of St. Annas Episcopal Church**

Some may find it hard to believe that the compact instrument providing music to St. Annas congregants could be a pipe organ. Despite its diminutive size, it does contain more than one rank of pipes.

Built by the M. P. Möller Company of Hagerstown, Maryland, it was called a portable model organ and was built in 1936 to serve Gentilly Presbyterian Church. In 1958 the church bought a larger Möller organ for its new building, and this instrument, Opus 6440, moved to Gentillys Holy Comforter Church. There it served until 1984, when that Episcopal parish purchased another. The portable moved again, this time to St. Annas, where it continues in use, many years after its construction.

Möller, once the largest builder of organs in the world, is no longer in business.

*Visited*

*September 27, 1998*

*March 27, 2011*

Citations from this document should be attributed to the

Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans, 2021.