

# *The Church of the Nativity*

## Maysville



THE FIRST RECORDED MEETING of Episcopalians in Maysville was on February 10, 1847, at which time a parish was organized as the Church of the Nativity and six vestrymen were elected. A handsome Gothic church, designed by Bishop B.B. Smith and built on a lot on Third Street, was in use by 1850 and was consecrated four years later. Today it is the oldest standing church building in Maysville.

Nativity withstood the years of the Civil War better than many of her sister churches in Kentucky, remaining intact and functional throughout the war and its aftermath. There were about fifty communicants and a Sunday school of like number.

Throughout its history Nativity's strongest asset has been a strong and committed core of parishioners, deeply rooted in both their devotion to the town of Maysville and the Anglican faith. Their hardy steadfastness has ensured the church's perseverance and vitality for a century and a half, even in periods when there was no resident clergyman.

The Rev. Densmore Chapin was Nativity's rector when the Diocese of Lexington was established. The church building underwent many improvements, particularly to its interior, during this period. His was a strong and stable ministry, and the church grew in numbers, reaching over 100 communicants and 280 baptized members at the time of his resignation in 1900.

The years of the Great Depression were particularly trying for Nativity, but with the intervention of Bishop Abbott it survived hard



times and remained a parish despite financial problems. Bishop Abbott paid the rector's salary more than once out of his own pocket.

During the eleven-year rectorate of the Rev. Harry R. Ziegler (1934-45) the parish was invigorated and flourished. Attendance increased at all services, proper Eucharistic vestments were instituted, and the music was upgraded when a competent paid organist was secured.

At the beginning of Bishop William R. Moody's episcopate in

1946, the Rev. Andrew Dallas Milstead became rector. An Anglo-Catholic churchman, Mr. Milstead heightened the parish's appreciation of Anglican tradition, history and doctrine, emphasizing the centrality of the Holy Eucharist, with celebrations every Sunday and on all Holy Days.

When the Rev. Robert L. Peck, another Anglo-Catholic priest, succeeded Mr. Milstead in 1959, he inherited an ongoing parish, knowledgeable about the Episcopal Church and active in diocesan affairs. Mr. Peck's particular emphasis was on social activism, and the promotion of justice. In 1961 a large hall to be used for civic, social and recreational activities was constructed on property owned by the parish, and dedicated by Bishop Moody. Hunter Hall became a center of parish and community activity.

The Rev. Robert C. Kilbourne served as rector of Nativity from December 1965 until his death in 1973. A loving pastor, Mr. Kilbourne was known in the community and throughout the diocese as a dedicated priest and a man of great energy. He turned Hunter Hall into a focal point for civic and benevolent activities of many kinds.

During the episcopate of Bishop Addison Hosea, Nativity continued its splendid witness to community and diocese under the charge of three dedicated rectors: the Rev. Xavier C. Mauffray, the Rev. J. Scott Peddie and the Rev. Joseph K. Hammond.

Shortly after Bishop Don Wimberly became diocesan, he ordained the first woman priest in the history of the Diocese of Lexington. The Rev. Mary Purcell had served as assistant to the rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Lexington for two years when she was called as rector of the Church of the Nativity in July 1988, becoming the first woman to be rector of a parish in the diocese. She remained for a little over three years. The current rector, the Rev. Marvin Foltz, assumed his duties at the Church of the Nativity in 1993.



## CLERGY

The Rev. N. Newlin Cowgill, founder	1839
The Rev. Green Grove Moore	1846-1847
The Rev. J.S. Chadbourne	1848-1851
The Rev. John Ufford	1851-1852
The Rev. Hugh Miller Thompson	1852-1854
The Rev. George Alexander Crooke	1854-1857
The Rev. Francis B. Nash	1858-1861

For twenty years there was no resident clergyman at Nativity except for brief periods of a year or less.

The Rev. Densmore David Chapin	1887-1900
The Rev. Augustine Jacquelin Smith	1901-1903
The Rev. George Henry Harris	1904-1909
The Rev. James Henry Fielding	1910-1917
The Rev. Charles Stephenson	1919-1920
The Rev. James Patrick Perry	1922-1926
The Rev. William Banks	1931-1932
The Rev. Reginald Williams, deacon	1933-1934
The Rev. Harry R. Ziegler	1934-1945
The Rev. Andrew Dallas Milstead	1946-1958
The Rev. Robert L. Peck	1959-1963
The Rev. Robert C. Kilbourne	1965-1972
The Rev. Xavier C. Mauffray	1972-1975
The Rev. J. Scott Peddie	1975-1982
The Rev. Joseph K. Hammond	1983-1988
The Rev. Mary F. Purcell	1989-1992
The Rev. Marvin Foltz	1993-