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SAINT MICHAEL'S CATHEDRAL
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Early this year, the congregation of St. Michael's Episcopal Cathedral in Boise observed a major event in its history: the dedication of a new building devoted to classroom and office space. The new Funstein House (replacing the former residence that stood for decades on the corner of Eighth and Washington streets) will carry on a tradition at St. Michael's going back over one hundred years.

The first Episcopal congregation in Boise met in 1864, in a schoolhouse, and its minister was the Rev. St. Michael Fackler. Like many of his fellow citizens and parishioners, Fackler had first come west in the 1840's--to work first in Missouri, then in Wyoming, then in Oregon. Finally, in 1864, he came to Boise. For two years he led services regularly and became a valued member of the community; but he died in 1866 of Cholera while on his way back to New York by ship to visit his family.

The high regard in which Fackler was held is best demonstrated by the name given to his parish when it was finally, formally organized in August of 1867. Its members decided to name it, not for the saint, but for the man who had served his community with such devotion. The parishioners also decided--with some prodding from the new bishop assigned to the region, Daniel S. Tuttle--to build and support their own church and school. A picture in the files of the Idaho State Historical Society shows the building they built for \$1,500 in gold--raised largely by a very determined group of ladies in the congregation.

It stood at the corner of 7th and Bannock and was the first Episcopal church in Montana, Idaho, or Utah. The same little white church, now without the wing that housed schoolrooms, stands at the corner of Broadway and Campus Drive and is known as Christ Chapel. It was moved there in 1963 from its second site,

at the corner of Fifteenth and Ridenbaugh, where it had been moved after the present St. Michael's was completed in 1902.

Another Idaho State Historical Society photo shows the present church as it looked not long after completion. It looks not quite "right"--especially to those who have lived in Boise less than twenty years--because there is now a tower on the building. Although the tower was included in the original plans, the funds for it took nearly fifty years to gather; and the Cathedral's chimes did not have a home of their own until 1949 when the Memorial Peace Tower was completed.

Meanwhile, the parish's concern for education during the week as well as on Sunday continued, encouraged by the successors to Fackler and to Bishop Tuttle. The first church school was a joint project with the Baptist congregation in early Boise, and it soon turned into a full-fledged day school. In 1892 St. Margaret's School was established, and forty years later that institution converted itself into Boise Junior College. It soon ceased, of course, to be a church-related college, and at that point St. Michael's temporarily went out of the weekday education business. But as the need for day care and kindergarten facilities has become more acute, the parish has again sponsored and housed education programs for all the children of Boise.

St. Michael's has also expanded--and then contracted--as a church. When the original structure was moved the first time, it became a chapel under the direct control of the larger parish. A second chapel, Grace Chapel, was established in another part of town, at Walnut and East Jefferson; and what is now All Saints Episcopal Church, on the bench, began as a chapel of the Cathedral housed in the old Gowen Field chapel building--moved to the corner of Cassia and Latah. As population concentrations in Boise have changed, these chapels have been closed; and there is now a third Episcopal church, St. Stephen's, on North Cole Road to serve that part of the city.