

A new Episcopal Church and a new Bangor stone church

The Constitution of the United States was adopted by a Constitutional Convention, meeting in Philadelphia in 1789. That same fall, the first convention of the Episcopal Church also met in Philadelphia, organizing the former Church of England congregations which had survived the Revolution into a new national church and authorizing an American Prayer Book (1789). The Rev. William White, the venerable Rector of Christ Church, Philadelphia, was the prime architect of the new denomination and soon became the first Bishop of Pennsylvania and Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church.

After serving the congregation for three-quarters of a century, through its founding and colonial period, and into the birth of a new nation, the stone church was taken down and another stone church built in its place. At a cost of \$4,000 the present stone church was erected about a hundred feet west of the old structure. Some stones on which the donors to the old church had cut their names were incorporated into the walls of the new building and can still be seen today. The stone in the front was thought to be a fine example of the workmanship of old-time masons.

This present stone church building was completed in 1830. On Sunday, January 15, 1832, the Rt. Rev. Henry Ustick Onderdonk, Assistant Bishop of Pennsylvania, officiated at the consecration of the new church. The bishop wrote, "This building takes the place of the former one, which was old and greatly out of repair. It is very substantial, the walls are of stone and it is neatly finished and arranged."

An adjacent building, the "Chapel (Sunday School)" was built in 1844. The rural congregation continued to remain small during the middle years of the 19th century and often struggled to maintain their buildings. For about five years prior to 1879, services were suspended in the church until a bulge in the east wall could be repaired. The Chapel building, now called the Church House, was used for worship until repairs were made. Regular Sunday services in the church resumed in June 1881. A distinctive steeple and bell were added to the church in 1896. Bangor Church and Churchyard were named to the National Register of Historical Places in 1987.

Although never blessed with a large congregation, the people of Bangor Church continue to witness to their faith and heritage, forming a vibrant community and maintaining an uninterrupted schedule of worship in their historic setting. Inside the nave of the church, a Welsh flag is proudly displayed as a reminder of the hardy colonial pioneers who first made their way to this valley and founded The Episcopal Church of Bangor in Caernarvon.