



SAINT JAMES' IN THE CITY

ANGLICAN/EPISCOPAL

EVER ANCIENT | EVER NEW

THE FIRST 100 YEARS



Celebrations Evolve

For many years Commonwealth Sunday was an annual celebration at Saint James' Church that commemorated our links to the Anglican Church and to England itself. At the height of its power, England's empire spanned the globe. Inevitably these countries sought their independence, but many wanted to stay in a loose alliance that became known as the Commonwealth. Saint James' Church has always prided itself as being a microcosm of the Anglican world and celebrated its roots on Commonwealth Sunday. Bagpipes were played, kilts were worn, the most traditional of English hymns were sung, and parishioners from the British Isles read the lessons.

But it didn't escape the notice of Lynn and L. Michael Russell that far more cultures than England and Scotland were represented at Saint James'. The British Commonwealth contained 54 countries including parts of Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, yet those cultures weren't part of the celebration. With the encouragement of Rector Bob Oliver, Lynn and Michael set out to adjust the scope of the event. In 1988 Saint James' celebrated its first All Anglican Sunday and the focus was to celebrate our diversity as a church.

The service on All-Anglican Sunday included music from Africa as well as England and the participants in the service, including the lecturers, ushers, chalice bearers and acolytes, were drawn from a selection of parishioners whose backgrounds reflected the diversity of

the Anglican Community.

"We wanted to recognize and take pride in the full diversity of Saint James'," Lynn recalls.

The celebration continued after the church service. "The minute the service was over," Lynn remembers, "African drums started beating in the Parish Hall, calling the entire congregation to a communal feast." The drummers were led by Father Enoch Drati, a parishioner who would later become the Bishop of Uganda. The celebration featured long tables laden with food from Africa, the Caribbean, the British Isles, and elsewhere, all brought by parishioners and served to the accompaniment of the drums. "The old Parish Hall was packed," Michael recalls.

All Anglican Sunday continued to be popular for several years, but participation levels didn't sustain. When Father Kirk Smith took over, he suggested that we break the celebration down into different cultures, such as Caribbean, etc. Today this tradition is maintained by the annual celebrations offered by Saint James' African and Korean Fellowships. But the idea of inclusion and appreciation of all Anglican cultures took root on All Anglican Sunday and is at the heart the Saint James' mission today.

