

July 5, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MDI Churches celebrating 150th anniversary of first Episcopal worship service

Sunday, July 23, at 4:00 PM, the Episcopal Parishes of Mount Desert Island will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first recorded Episcopal worship service on MDI. The event will include a singing procession from St. Saviour's Church to the Gazebo in the Bar Harbor Village Green, a re-enactment of a worship service as it would have been observed in 1867, followed by light refreshments in St. Saviour's Parish Hall. Attendees are invited to dress in nineteenth-century costume if they wish.

Records show that Bishop Henry Adams Neely sailed from Portland on July 20, 1867, planning to conduct a service at the Hull's Cove Schoolhouse the next morning. Delayed by bad weather and forced to dock at Northeast Harbor, Bishop Neely walked to Hull's Cove, arriving too late for the scheduled service. Instead, he walked back to the Rodick House Hotel in Bar Harbor where he led a service of Evening Prayer, which thus stands as the first recorded Episcopal service on the island.

This inauspicious start was the seed that became the churches of St. Saviour's (founded 1870), Church of Our Father, Hull's Cove (1880), St. Mary's, Northeast Harbor (1882), St. Jude's, Seal Harbor (1886), St. Andrew's, Seal Cove (1914), and St. John's, Southwest Harbor (1918). All six of these churches, currently organized as four parishes, continue to serve the communities of MDI.

The re-enactment will be a service of Evening Prayer drawn from the 1798 edition of the Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer* which would have been current at the time, as well as hymns from the 1824 Hymnal. Worship will be led by the Rev. Timothy Fleck, the Rev. Jane Cornman, the Rev. Kathleen Killian, and the Rev. John Allison.

Resource: The Rev. Edwin Atlee Garrett III, "The Episcopal Church Comes to Mount Desert Island," *The History Journal of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society*, Volume 3, 2000, pp. 20-31. Accessible at <http://mdihistory.org/chebacco/2000-2/>.

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