

# Journey from Groveton Mission to St. Mark's

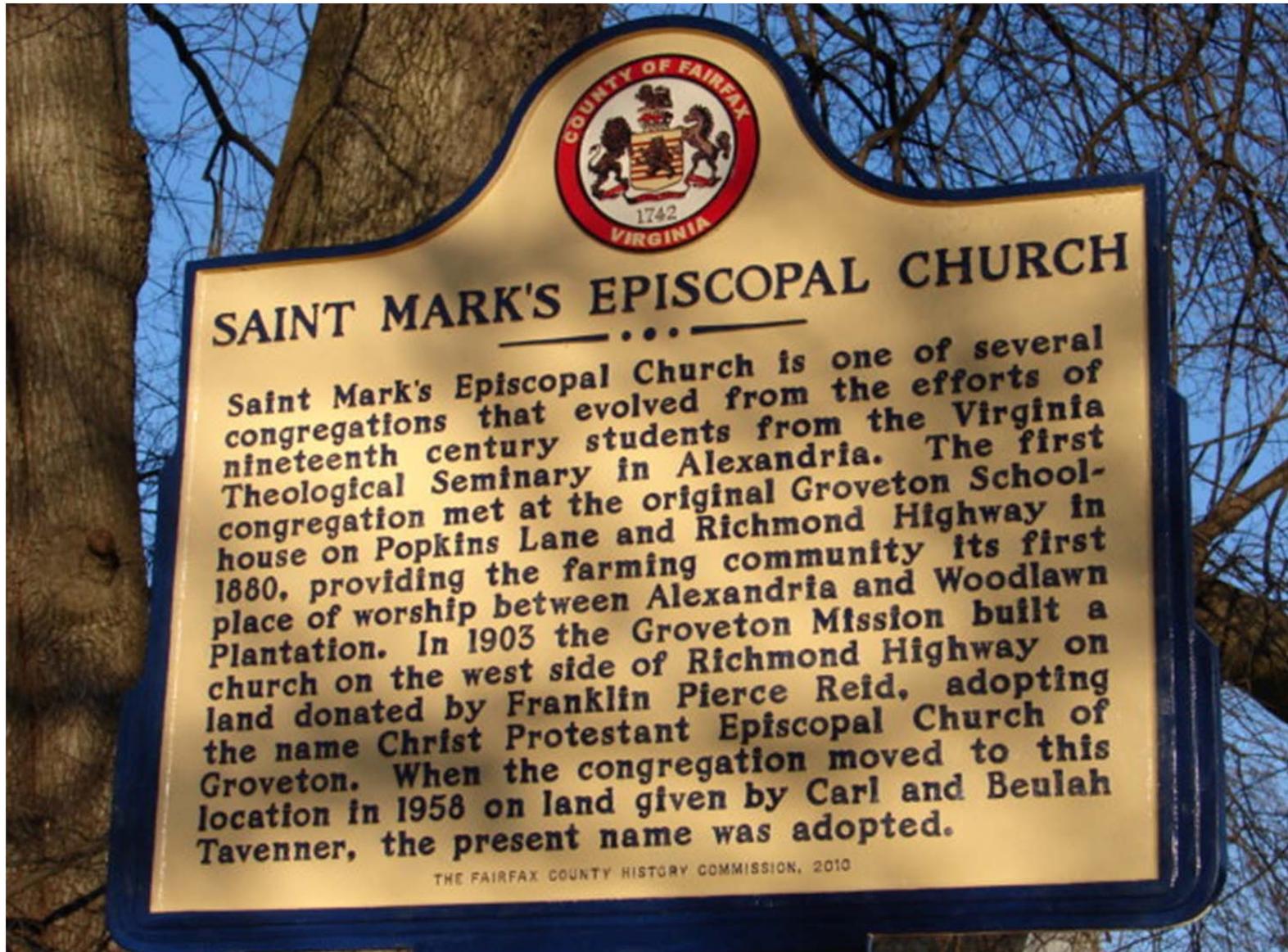


Photo by A.M. Hicks

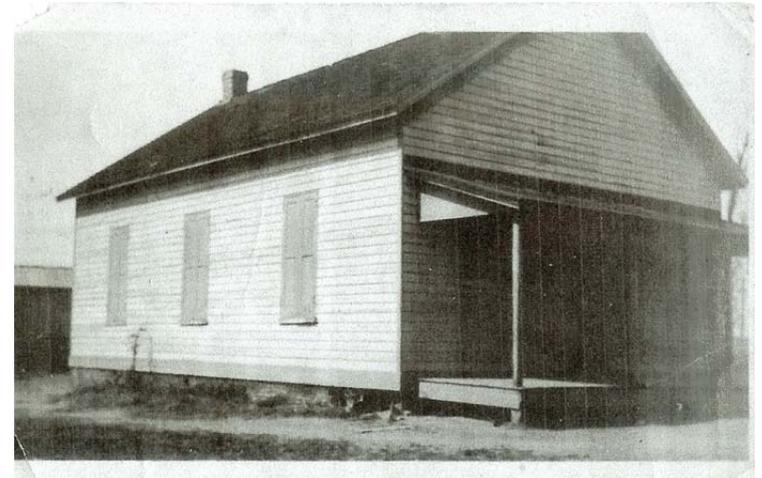
**APRIL 10, 2011 – St. Mark's Historical Marker Dedication Ceremony**

# **Journey from Groveton Mission to St. Mark's**

**Before 1880: Groveton consisted of mostly small farmers with no regular church ministry.**

**April 4, 1880: 2 seminarians  
(Kensey Johns  
Hammond & Andrew  
Johnson Willis)**

**established the Groveton Mission by holding  
Sunday School classes in the old school house at  
Popkins Lane and Richmond Highway. The first  
bible class was taught to 5 pupils on the gospel of  
St. Mark.**



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**1883:**      **Church services were conducted each Sunday evening under the leadership of students from the Seminary. Most often, they walked 5 miles each way from the seminary and reportedly suffered from “tired feet”.**

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**1903:** Through the efforts of 2 seminarians (James Luther Martin & Frank Whittle Hardy), a 1-room wood-framed chapel was built on the west side of Route 1 between what is now Memorial and Groveton Streets. It was named Christ Protestant Episcopal Church of Groveton, but was referred to as Groveton Chapel. Church services were attended by Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists.

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**April 1929:** The 25 yr old Groveton Chapel burned to the ground. By September 1929, a new chapel was well on its way to completion and was built free from debt. Groveton residents participated in the construction of the new chapel.

**Nov. 1929:** The new Christ Church (officially named Groveton Episcopal Chapel) opened its doors led by 3 seminarians. On Jan. 12, 1930, the dedication service was held with The Rev. Dr. Kensey Johns Hammond attending. 1930 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of services conducted by seminarian students.

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**1954-1959: The name was changed to St. Mark's Church to avoid confusion with Christ Church in Alexandria. The new church building was constructed in 1958 at the present site on South Kings Highway.**

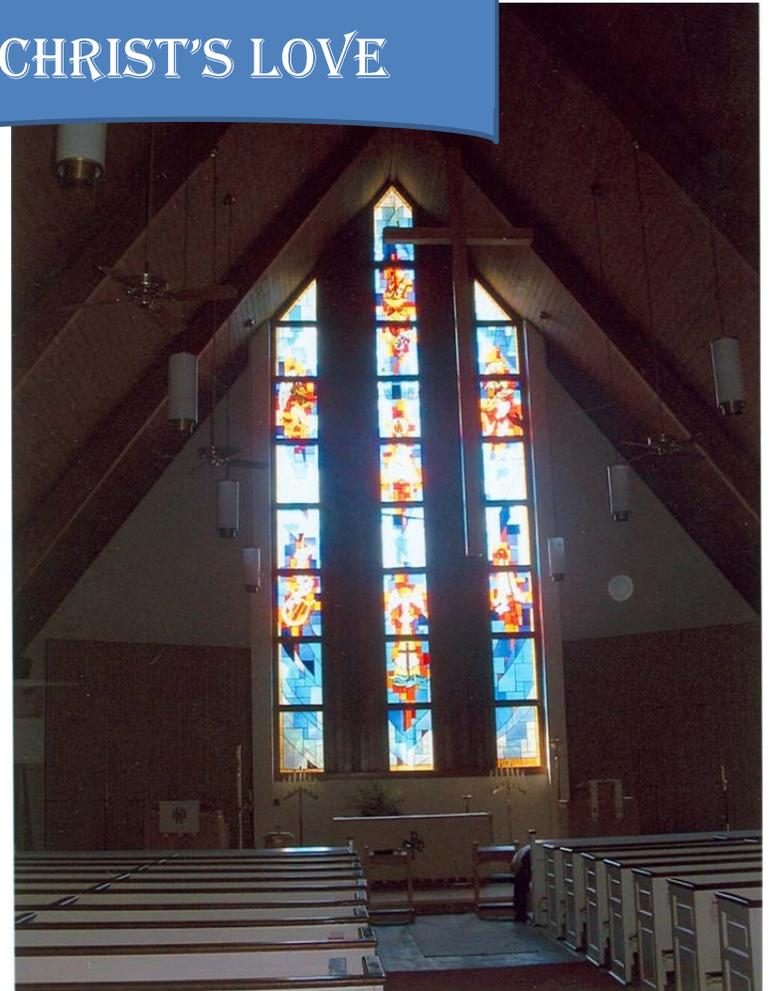


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OPENING THE DOOR TO CHRIST'S LOVE



**June 2003:**

**Construction began on the addition of a new kitchen, narthex, sacristy, offices, classrooms, and restrooms. The new building was dedicated June 2, 2004.**

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**In 1908 a new 400-pound bell was bought by the people of Groveton. The 1904 church record book stated:**

***“It’s sound can be heard reverberating throughout the surrounding country. It is the first bell ever used in Groveton. May its chimes bring many to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.”***

**The bell is still used today at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church.**