

Frederick Myers Morris: Saint Thomas Church's Civil Rights Rector

Saint Thomas Church (Fifth Avenue)
Bicentennial Lecture Series
June 9, 2024 (III Pentecost—Proper 5B)

The Rev. Dr. Brandt L. Montgomery, Speaker

Introduction

- Research Challenges

Overview of Dr. Morris's Rectorship

- Pensions for Staff
- Every Member Canvass
- Civil Rights

Dr. Morris's Emphasis on "Practical Christianity"

- Low Church Evangelicalism
 - Impact of Virginia Theological Seminary
 - Missionary Work with Arapahoe Indians
 - Morning Prayer as Principal Service

The Episcopal Church and Civil Rights During the 1950s and 1960s

- 1953—Dr. Morris's seminary *alma mater* integrates.
- 1954—*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decided by the US Supreme Court ten days before Dr. Morris's rectorship begins.
- 1959—Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity organized at St. Augustine's College in Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 1963—Presiding Bishop Arthur Lichtenberger issues his "Whitsunday Statement" in support of the Civil Rights Movement.

Dr. Morris's Support for the Civil Rights Movement

- A public disagreement with a Southern Bishop

"Liberation" Statues for Saint Thomas Church Tower

- William Wilberforce, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mary McLeod Bethune