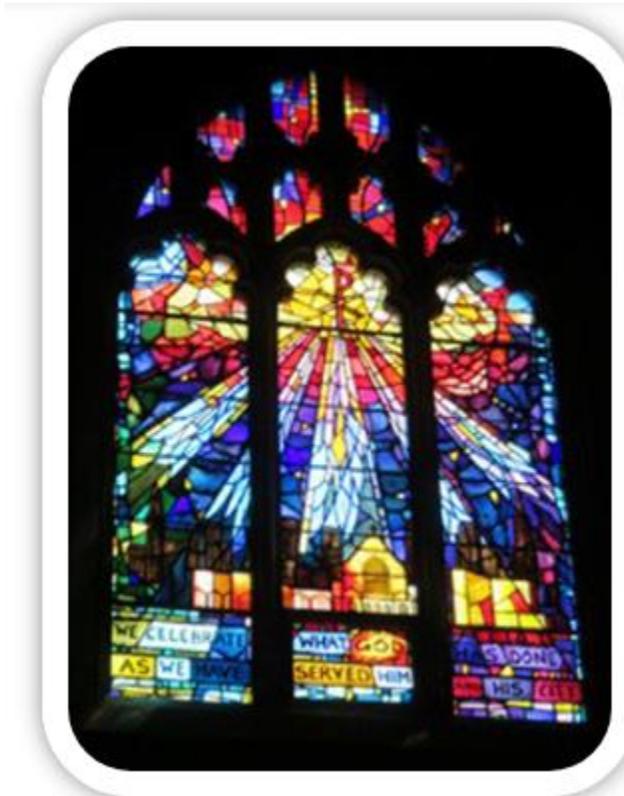


"We celebrate what God has  
done as we  
have served him and his city."



These words are inscribed in our stained glass window on the east wall of the altar. On sunny days the colors reflect a rainbow reminiscent of our diverse world onto the altar.

# The Arms of St. Philip's

St. Philip's arms was commissioned in the mid-1960s by Dr. M. Moran Weston to be its identifying symbol. Our arms represent the account of Philip, deacon and evangelist as written in Acts 8:26-40. The shield was created by Reverend Edward N. West, Canon Sacrist of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

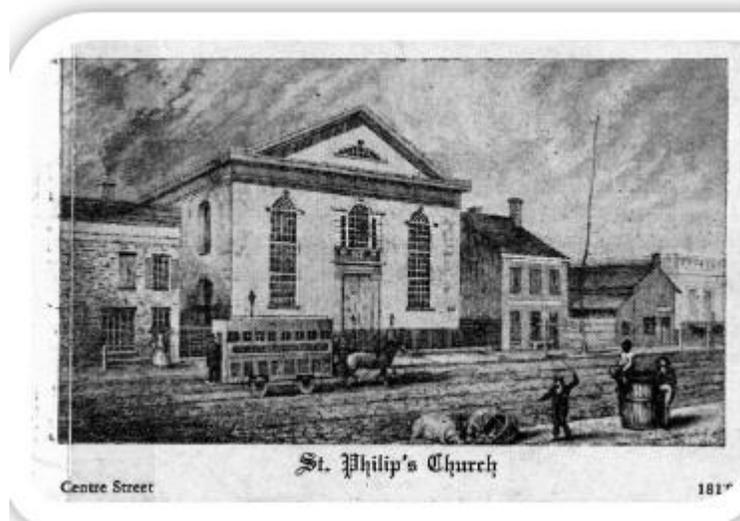
In the upper left-hand corner of the shield is the Cross of St. George, representing the Anglican Communion throughout the world.

Superimposed on the Cross of St. George is a six pointed star with a circle intertwined, symbolic of the Holy Trinity. The descending dove and halo represent the Holy Spirit that came down to Philip and instructed him to go south on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza and told him to speak to the Ethiopian sitting in the chariot. The paving stones under the chariot symbolize the road traveled together by Philip and the man, who was described as being in charge of all the treasures of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians. The board wavy lines at the bottom of the shield represent the body of water in which Philip baptized the Ethiopian.



# A Condensed History of St. Philip's Church 1809 to Present

The condensed history of St. Philip's Church reflects the trials and triumphs of the African American community for nearly two centuries. In fact the pre-history of this congregation dates back to 1702 when the Huguenot, former galley slave, and prisoner Elias Neau petitioned England for missionaries to instruct "Negroes and Indians in New York.": In 1704 the Society for the propagation of the Gospel appointed Neau "catechist to the outcast" and he was charged with opening the "School for Negroes."



The new school was located in the belfry of Trinity Church and within a year he had forty-six pupils. Neau's tenure at the school continued until his death in 1722, by which time the school had more than 200 students. This triumph was not achieved or maintained without obstacles. Racism was pervasive, even in the church at large.

Many non-Africans believed that Africans had no souls and therefore perished as beasts. All worship was segregated, and most religious establishments saw no need to educate the Africans.

# A Condensed History of St. Philip's Church 1809 to Present

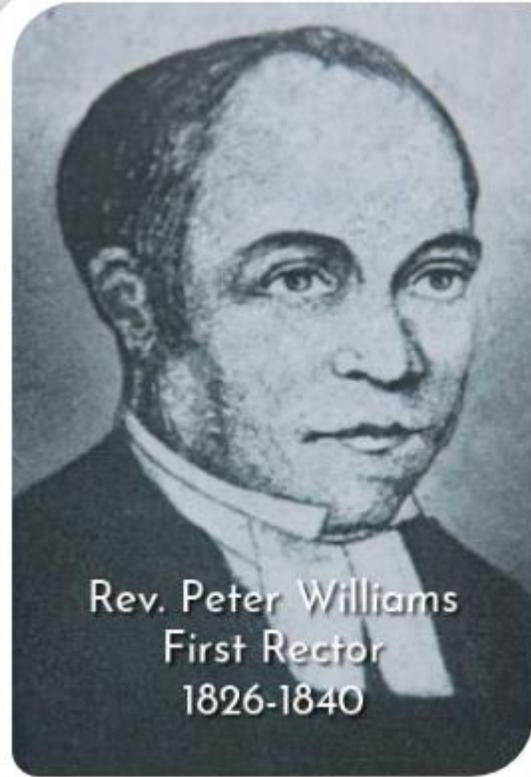
By the early 1800's, the "Free African Church of St. Philip" was formed by those who refused to continue to accept the racism they faced in worship but who wished to worship in the "Anglican Way."

In 1809, St. Philip's Church was organized and led by Peter Williams, Jr., an abolitionist who had been the first black The church was originally located on Centre Street, but that building was destroyed by fire in 1822, then rebuilt in brick. In 1826, Peter Williams, Jr., was ordained to the priesthood and became the first rector of St. Philip's Church. He remained in the position until his death in 1840.

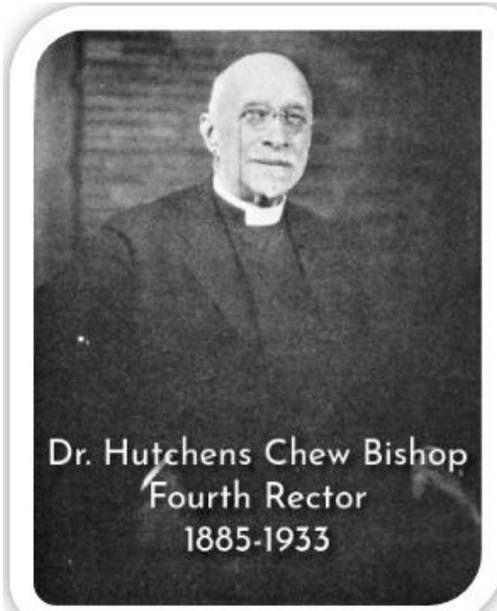
After Williams' death the congregation's spiritual needs were tended by priests-in-charge, including Samuel Vreeland Berry and John Peterson. Fr. Berry grew up in St. Philip's and was ordained in 1849. Fr. Peterson was a teacher by profession, a life-long Episcopalian and served at St. Philip's as a vestryman and warden. He was ordained in 1854 and became an assistant minister. It was not until 1872 that the second rector was called.

In the meantime. St. Philip's vestry continued to be active in the Anti-Slavery Society and its political wing, the Liberty Society. In 1845, Vestryman James McCune Smith and Alexander Elston sought and were denied admission to the Diocesan Convention. The motion to admit St. Philip's was voted down or tabled every subsequent year until 1853.

During 1856-1857 the church was moved from Centre Street to Mulberry Street. During the draft riots of July 1863 the church was used by the militia as barracks. In 1865, Elizabeth W. Thompson became organist and choirmaster. During her tenure, she enlisted African American singer and composer William Appo and lead soprano Madam Keeble to integrate.



# A Condensed History of St. Philip's Church 1809 to Present



the choir with men and women. She revived the music school at St. Philip's.

Thirty-two years later St. Philip's called its second rector, William Johnson Alston, on May 14, 1872. Unfortunately, he died two years later on May 26, 1874. After a short search, Joseph Sandford Atwell was called and became the third rector on February 9, 1875. He died on October 8, 1881.

The next search ushered in the Bishop family dynasty. In 1886, Dr. Hutchens Chew Bishop became the fourth rector.

Aware of the changing demographics of New York, Dr. Bishop led the relocation of the church from Mulberry Street to 161 West 25th Street in mid-Manhattan in 1889. Also recognizing the need for affordable housing in the African American community, Dr. Bishop purchased residential buildings along 135th Street between Seventh and Lenox Avenues in Harlem (uptown Manhattan). He also purchased the properties on 133rd and 134th Streets where the church now stands.

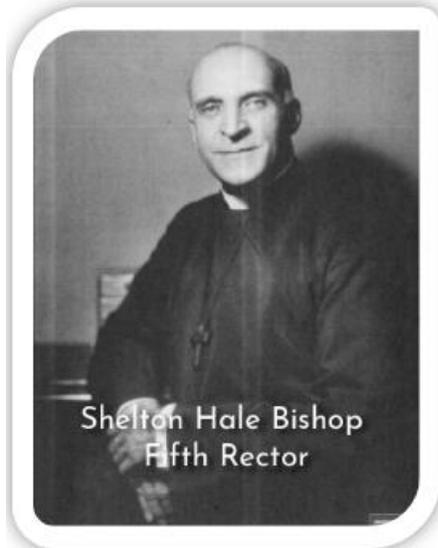
The present church building designed by Vertner Woodson Tandy, the first African American registered architect in New York, was dedicated on March 25, 1911 and was granted landmark status on July 15, 1991.

# A Condensed History of St. Philip's Church 1809 to Present

In 1933 Shelton Hale Bishop became the fifth rector succeeding his father, Dr. Hutchens Chew Bishop. During the tenure of Dr. Bishop and Fr. Bishop, St. Philip's became a force for social change by providing housing in the beginning of the twentieth century, opening Camp Guilford Bower in 1927, coordinating relief and counseling services during the Depression and opening the first psychotherapy clinic, the Lafargue Clinic.

The clinic opened in 1945 as collaboration among Fr. Bishop, Dr. Frederic Wertham, a psychiatrist, and author Richard Wright. Dr. Wertham and a staff of twenty-five provided psychiatric counseling to anyone for 25 cents per session.

By the mid 1950's the clinic served an average of sixty people per week. By the mid 1950's the clinic served an average of sixty people per week. By the end of Rev. Shelton Bishop's time of service, the congregation had grown to 4,000.



**Some members of the Board  
of Directors  
for the Lafargue Clinic at St.  
Philip's.**

**From left: writer-columnist  
Earl Brown,  
Dr. Frederic Wertham, Fr.  
Shelton Hale Bishop and  
Mrs. Marion Hernandez,  
Planned Parenthood.**

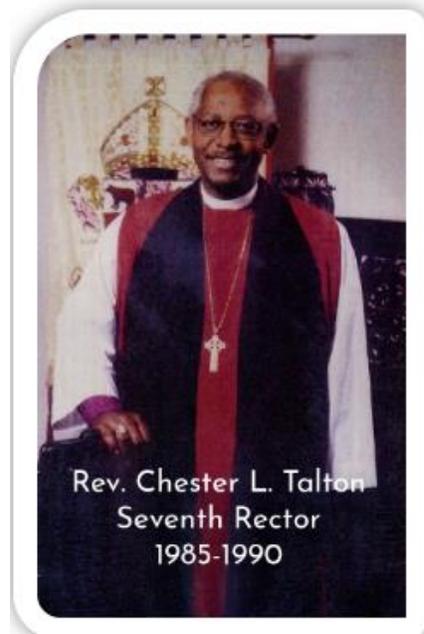
# A Condensed History of St. Philip's Church 1809 to Present

In 1957, Dr. M. Moran Weston became the sixth rector. During the next 25 years, he continued the tradition of social activism. He further expanded the church's role in providing affordable housing by opening non-profit developments such as St. Philips on the Park (St. Nicholas Avenue and 134th Street), and Senior House (133rd Street between Adam Clayton Powell and Fredrick Douglass Boulevards). He also led the redevelopment of St. Philip's Community Center/Parish House Complex



**Dr. M. Moran Weston Sixth  
Rector  
1957-1982**

In 1985, Fr. Chester L. Talton became the seventh rector of St. Philip's. In 1990, Fr. Talton was elected Suffragan Bishop of Los Angeles, CA.



**Rev. Chester L. Talton  
Seventh Rector  
1985-1990**

# A Condensed History of St. Philip's Church 1809 to Present

In June 2012, Fr. Keith Johnson came to St. Philip's as our Priest-In- Charge. In 2014 he was called as our ninth rector.

During Fr. Johnson's time with St. Philip's, he was becoming a force in the community with the Prison Outreach Ministry, and his concentration on youth. Through Warriors of the Dream, a diocese-sponsored drumming initiative as well as his ease with talking with people, he was on the cusp of leading St. Philip's toward renewal.



# A Condensed History of St. Philip's Church 1809 to Present

The Reverend Canon Terence Alexander Lee, Rector-Elect of the historic St. Philip's Episcopal Church most recently served as Rector of St Gabriel's Episcopal Church in Hollis, New York, in the Diocese of Long Island While serving at St. Gabriel's, Fr. Lee was appointed by the bishop, Priest-in-Charge of St. John's Episcopal Church, Springfield Gardens, NY. Fr. Lee believes in the wider mission of the church and also serves as a Canon in the Cathedral of the Anglican Diocese of Wiawso, Ghana, West Africa where he has had the opportunity to serve and preach. Prior to New York, he served as Canon Pastor of the Cathedral of St. John, Albuquerque, New Mexico and Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Bennettsville, South Carolina. He has a love and a passion for liturgy worship, and serving God's people.

