

## **Lengthy Pastorates in the Diocese of New Jersey**

This study grew out of a question that was asked of me: "Who was or is the longest continually serving cleric of a congregation in the Diocese?" After considerable digging quite a list began to emerge of pastorates of thirty years or more continuous service. Some lengthy incumbencies were interrupted by the Revolutionary War and will be noted below. For example, Thomas Chandler of St. John's, Elizabeth, served 39 years as rector of St. John's, Elizabeth, and much of his long pastorate was spent in the more hospitable confines of England during the Revolution. The actual number of years of each pastorate is rounded off to the calendar years involved.

### **Those clergy cures of 40 years or more include:**

Alfred B. Baker, Trinity Church, Princeton, 1866-1914, 48 years  
George Y. Morehouse, St. Andrew's, Mount Holly, 1815-1859, 44 years  
Alfred Stubbs, Christ Church, New Brunswick, 1839-1883, 44 years  
William L. Shelton, St. Barnabas', Villas, 1960-2002, 42 years  
Robert G. W. Williams, Christ, Woodbury, 1918-1960, 42 years  
George H. Boyd, St. Peter's, Perth Amboy, 1935-1976, 41 years  
Thomas A. Conover, St. Bernard's, Bernardsville, 1899-1939, 40 years  
William S. McKay, St. Augustine's, Camden, 1927-1967, 40 years  
Harold J. Sweeney, Grace, Elizabeth, 1916-1956, 40 years  
John M. Harper, St. Luke's, Gladstone, 1905-1945, 40 years

### **Those clergy cures of 30 to 39 years include:**

Edward Vaughn, St. John's, Elizabeth, 1708-1747, 39 years  
Thomas Chandler, St. John's, Elizabeth, 1751-1790, 39 years\*  
Martin Stockett, Our Savior, Camden, 1906-1945, 39 years  
Robert MacKeller, Trinity, Red Bank, 1892-1931, 39 years  
Clarence S. Wood, St. Luke's, Roselle, 1904-1943, 39 years  
William Schmaus, Trinity, Woodbridge, 1942-1980, 38 years  
Walter H. Stowe, Christ, New Brunswick, 1929-1966, 37 years  
Charles Wharton, St. Mary's, Burlington, 1796-1833, 37 years  
Parker Fish Auten, Trinity, Swedesboro, 1941-1977, 36 years  
Lyttleton E. Hubard, St. John's, Elizabeth, 1913-1949, 36 years  
William Skinner, St. James', Edison, 1722-1758, 36 years\*\*  
Wm. V. Rauscher, Christ, Woodbury, 1960-1996, 36 years  
James Chapman, St. Peter's, Perth Amboy, 1809-1844, 35 years  
Harry J. Knickle, Grace, Plainfield, 1937-1972, 35 years  
Morton A. Barnes, St. James', Long Branch, 1914-1949, 35 years  
James L. Moore, St. Peter's, Medford, 1967-2002, 35 years  
Bruce A. Weatherly, Trinity, Moorestown, 1959-1994, 35 years  
Laurence D. Fish, St. David's, Cranbury, 1968-2002, 34 years  
Thomas Higgons, St. Andrew's, Bridgeton, 1959-1993, 34 years  
E. Vicars Stevenson, Grace, Plainfield, 1902-1936, 34 years  
Elisha B. Joyce, Christ, New Brunswick, 1883-1916, 33 years  
C. Canterbury Corbin, St. Augustine, A.C., 1924-1957, 33 years

Samuel Steinmetz, Sr., St. Michel's, Trenton, 1920-1953, 33 years  
 Harry Finch, Christ, Shrewsbury, 1830-1863, 33 years  
 Lloyd G. Chattin, Trinity Cathedral, Trenton, 1960-1993, 33 years  
 Wm C. Heilman, St. Simeon's, N. Wildwood, 1931-1963, 32 years  
 Erskine Rodman, Grace, Plainfield, 1870-1902, 32 years  
 Charles P. Johnson, All Saints, Navesink, 1930-1962, 32 years  
 Bernard Garlick, St. Peter's, Freehold, 1942-1974, 32 years  
 William Lockwood, All Saints, Lakewood, 1943-1975, 32 years  
 Harry R. Sorensen, All Saints, Navesink, 1962-1993, 31 years  
 John F. Fenton, St. Luke's, Metuchen, 1899-1930, 31 years  
 John Croes, Christ, New Brunswick, 1801-1832, 31 years\*\*\*  
 H.E. Durell, Ascension, Atlantic City, 1919-1950, 31 years  
 Harry Ruth, St. Barnabas', Burlington, 1930-1961, 31 years  
 W.W. Ridgeway, St. Wilfrid's, Camden, 1930-1961, 31 years  
 William Ayers, St. Peter's, Freehold, 1767-1798, 31 years \*\*\*\*  
 John Morrow, St. Luke's, Gladstone, 1965-1996, 31 years  
 Fred Schultz, St. John's, Salem, 1952-1983, 31 years  
 David Stowe, St. John's, Somerville, 1965-1996, 31 years  
 Thomas V. Wingate, St. George's, Pennsville, 1931-1961, 30 years  
 Robert Elliot, Holy Comforter, Rahway, 1908-1938, 30 years  
 Rudolph Brestell, St. Paul's, Camden, 1905-1935, 30 years  
 Gerald A. Reiss, St. Peter's, Clarksboro, 1964-1994

\* Some years spent in England during the Revolution

\*\* This is remarkable considering that he looked after St. James', Edison, St. Peter's, Perth Amboy, and St. Peter's, Spotswood, at the same time.

\*\*\* The first two bishops were Rectors of a church as well as Bishops of the Diocese. John Croes was rector for fourteen years and bishop/rector for another seventeen.

\*\*\*\* William Ayers served both Freehold and Spotswood during his 31 years. Mr. Ayers suffered from bouts of insanity, an inherited trait and one passed on to two of his daughters. The Revolution caused him to retreat into madness and, although technically still affiliated with the two congregations, he was often missing for long periods of time.

Fifty-two clergy are on our list and they represent 42 different congregations. Twenty-two of the congregations are in Trenton or south while twenty are north of Trenton. Several of the congregations have produced multiple long-term pastorates. Christ Church, New Brunswick, had four; Grace, Plainfield, and Elizabeth (St. John's) had three; Woodbury, Gladstone, Camden (St. Paul's), Freehold, and Navesink each had two.

The Rev. Canon Laurence D. Fish  
 Historiographer  
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