**Summary Information**

**Title:** St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church
**Collection Number:** 2023:026
**Creator:** St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church
**Collection Dates:** 1899-2010
**Extent:** 7.5 cubic feet (10 boxes)
**Language:** English

**Collection Abstract:**

St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church is one of the oldest institutions in Lufkin, Texas. Beginning as a collection of laities in 1893, it grew to become an established church that still operates today. In addition to its religious functions, the church also hosts a private Episcopal school, St. Cyprian's Episcopal School. This collection contains abstracts, architectural drawings, correspondence, local histories, meeting minutes, negatives, photographs, programs, records, registers and scrapbooks showing the church's growth and development from the early 1900s to the 2000s. Emphasis is placed on the years 1969-1972, when a fire destroyed all church facilities and the congregation chose to rebuild on a new site.

**Repository:**

The History Center
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Diboll, TX 75941
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**Author/Processing Information:** Original finding aid created by Zach Tarrant in May 2024.

**Biographical/Historical Note:**

St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church began its existence as a collection of laities with no permanent dwelling. Upon request, the first episcopal service in Lufkin took place at the Shearer home on June 29, 1893, led by Reverand George L. Crockett, who visited from San Augustine. From 1893 until 1904, the congregation was forced to meet at various homes, public buildings, and the Hoo Hoo Fraternity Hall because locals did not understand or trust Episcopal practices.

The Houston and West Texas Railroad, as was customary at the time, allotted blocks of land to various Christian denominations in the area, including the Episcopalians. Because the land was marshy, they chose to trade their grant for a half block on Paul Avenue and Second Street. To fund construction, the church sold half of their lot to J. T. Maroney for $500. This was supplemented by a funding raising guild organized by female members. In 1904, construction began under R. B. Shearer with the help of church members and family. It was completed by 1906, under the name St. Mary's, before changing to St. Cyprian's.

Between 1905 and 1969, the church slowly grew as more Episcopalians moved to the area, becoming self-sustaining in 1940. The building itself enjoyed a remodel in 1929, with a brick veneer and slate roof on the outside, and an electric Ruter organ installed on the inside. John Francis Caskey, upon becoming Reverand in June 1955, insisted that a school be created similar to one he established in Galveston. An education building was erected on church land, from which started St. Cyprian's Episcopal School.

On October 13, 1969, a fire destroyed or damaged all church facilities. The Vesty, after careful deliberation, came to a resolution on January 26, 1970, that a new church and school be constructed away from the old site. A new property, previously owned by Mrs. Odom, was selected at the corner of Pershing and John Redditt Drive. The firm Greasen, Evans, and Rogers was selected to provide architectural plans. To raise funds for construction, several fund-raising campaigns were initiated with the help of Ward, Hannum, and Reinhardt, Inc. and Ross Ossman. Over a six-year period, the church received pledges of $526,000. This, in combination with funds generated from the sale of the old site, provided the necessary funds to begin construction and reduced the church's debts in the long term. On June 29, 1971, a ground breaking ceremony was conducted on the new site, kicking off construction of four new facilities by the firm L. Richardson & Sons, which were completed on July 30, 1972.

**Collection Scope and Content:**

The St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church collection is arranged in four series. The first series contains architectural drawings, clippings, correspondence, and records related to the church fire in 1969 and subsequent rebuilding efforts through the early 1970s.

The second series provides information on the church's history from the early 1990s through 2000s through abstracts, clippings, directories, local histories, meeting minutes, photographs, registers, and scrapbooks.

The third series chronicles the church's efforts to install a columbarium from the late 1980s to early 2000s. It contains correspondence, diagrams, forms, listings, negatives, and photographs.

The fourth series contains architectural drawings and maps connected to the church itself, such as an elevation map, or various improvement projects from 1971-1994; like a columbarium garden, window revisions, or special base for cross.

**Arrangement:** The collection is arranged by topical series, then by date within those series. The collection begins with information on the church fire of 1969 and subsequent rebuilding efforts, then information on the history of St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, church columbaria, ending with various church architectural drawings and maps.

- Series I. Church Fire and Rebuilding

- Series II. Church History
- Series III. Columbariums
- Series IV. Church Architecture

**Subject Terms**

**Topics**

- Fire
- Construction
- Finances
- Fund Raising
- Church
- Programs
- Episcopalians

**Corporate Names**

- St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church
- St. Cyprian's Episcopal School
- The Lufkin News
- Greacen, Evans & Rogers
- The American Church Building Fund Commission
- The Clarion
- Matthews International Corporation

**Personal Names**

- Jack R. Irish
- Reverand John F. Caskey
- Joe W. Beckham

**Family Names**

- Hess Family

**Occupations**

- Senior Warden
- Committee Member
- Reverand

**Locations**

- Lufkin
- Kerr Addition, Lufkin, Texas

**Access and Use**

**Access Restrictions:** none
**Acquisition Information:** The History Center acquired the collection in 2023.
**Custodial History:** The collection was kept by St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church. Series I materials were originally personal documents belonging to Jack Irish, who served as Senior Warden from 1969-1970. These were shared with the church's History Committee. The other materials came directly from the church and were donated by James Todd.
**Citation:** St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, 1899-2010, 2023:026, The History Center, Diboll, TX
**Separated Material:**
St. Cyprian's Church Architectural Drawing moved from Box 1, Folder 5, Miscellaneous to Box 10, Folder 6

City of Lufkin Map moved from Box 1, Folder 3, Present Site to Box 10, Folder 5
Box 10 moved to Range 10, Shelf D7, due to size

**Related Material:**
The St. Cyprian's Episcopal School Collection, 2024:006
A Reflection on St. Cyprian's Church Facilities: 1969-2013, by Jack R. Irish, 2014

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**Collection Inventory**

**Series I: Church Fire and Rebuilding**

**Box 1**

| | |
|---|---|
| Folder 1 | Church Fire Clippings, 1969 |
| Folder 2 | Book 1 – Vestry Transactions, 1969-1970 |
| Folder 3 | Book 2 – Building Program, 1969-1970 |
| Folder 4 | Church Building Records – Folders A thru G, 1969-1973 |
| Folder 5 | Church Building Records – Folders H thru M, 1970-1979 |

**Box 2**

| | |
|---|---|
| Folder 1 | Building Campaign Records, 1970-1971 |
| Folder 2 | Special Gifts Division Guidelines, 1970-1971 |
| Folder 3 | Church Opening Service Programs, 1970, 1972 |
| Folder 4 | Architect Records, 1970-1972 |
| Folder 5 | Church and School Groundbreaking Programs, 1971 |
| Folder 6 | Construction Proposal, 1971 |
| Folder 7 | Every Member Canvass Committee Report, 1972 |

**Series II. Church History**

**Box 3**

| | |
|---|---|
| Folder 1 | E. E. Hess and Family Cabinet Cards, 1899-1956, undated |
| Folder 2 | Land Abstract, Lot 9, Block 2, Kerr Addition, 1905-1940 |
| Folder 3 | Mite Box Collections, 1912-1916 |
| Folder 4 | Church Building Loan Note, 1920-1929 |
| Folder 5 | Church Records, 1926-1978 |
| Folder 6 | Tax Assessment, Church Property on Paul Avenue, 1928 |
| Folder 7 | Meeting Minutes, 1930-1934 |
| Folder 8 | Church Building Mortgage Note, April 23, 1941 |
| Folder 9 | The Texas Churchman, March 1946 |
| Folder 10 | Scrapbook, 1955-1956 |

**Box 4**

Register of Church Services, 1939-1960

**Box 5**

| | |
|---|---|
| Folder 1 | History of St. Cyprian's Materials, 1956-1974, undated |
| Folder 2 | Scrapbook – Folder 1, 1959-1961 |
| Folder 3 | Scrapbook – Folder 2, 1959-1961 |
| Folder 4 | Building Committee Report, June 24, 1960 |
| Folder 5 | Scrapbook, 1962-1963 |

**Box 6**

| | |
|---|---|
| Folder 1 | Scrapbook – Folder 1, 1964-1967 |
| Folder 2 | Scrapbook – Folder 2, 1964-1967 |
| Folder 3 | Scrapbook – Folder 3, 1964-1967 |
| Folder 4 | Scrapbook – Folder 1, 1968-1970 |
| Folder 5 | Scrapbook – Folder 2, 1968-1970 |

**Box 7**

| | |
|---|---|
| Folder 1 | Church Directories, 1968-2010 |
| Folder 2 | Scrapbook – Folder 1, 1971-1974 |
| Folder 3 | Scrapbook – Folder 2, 1971-1974 |
| Folder 4 | Guest Book, 1971-1975 |

**Box 8**

| | |
|---|---|
| Folder 1 | Dedication of Memorial Altar Kneelers, December 24, 1976 |
| Folder 2 | Church Consecration Clipping and Program, November 9, 1977 |
| Folder 3 | Miscellaneous St. Cyprian Clippings and Photographs, 1991-1993, undated |
| Folder 4 | Parish Directories, 1994, 1997 |
| Folder 5 | Bell Tower Photographs, undated |

**Series III. Columbariums**

**Box 9**

| | |
|---|---|
| Folder 1 | Columbarium Correspondence, 1985-1998 |
| Folder 2 | Columbarium Forms, 1989-1997 |
| Folder 3 | Columbarium Diagrams and Listings, 1994-2002 |
| Folder 4 | Columbarium Correspondence and Forms, 1994-2006 |
| Folder 5 | Christmas Décor Negatives, undated |
| Folder 6 | Columbarium Photographs, undated |
| Folder 7 | Columbarium Negatives and Photographs, undated |
| Folder 8 | Columbarium Negatives and Photographs, undated |
| Folder 9 | Columbarium Negatives and Photographs, undated |
| Folder 10 | South Transept Recesses Negatives, undated |

**Series IV. Church Architecture**

**Box 10**

| | |
|---|---|
| Folder 1 | Revisions to Windows in Church Building, Druwht Window Division, 1971-1972<br>Two architectural drawings |
| Folder 2 | Special Base for Cross and Memorial Plaque Board, S. K. Church Furniture Company, 1973-1993<br>Two architectural drawings with seven photographs |
| Folder 3 | Columbarium Garden Plan, St. Cyprian's Churchyard, TLC Architecture, 1989-1994<br>One architectural drawing with associated correspondence related to Garden Plan |
| Folder 4 | Columbarium Garden Plans, St. Cyprian's Churchyard, TLC Architecture, May 27, 1994<br>Two architectural drawings |
| Folder 5 | City of Lufkin Map, Angelina County Chamber of Commerce, undated<br>One map with alphabetical/numerical keys for streets, building, parks, and important areas |
| Folder 6 | St. Cyprian's Church, Greacen-Houston & Rogers, undated<br>One architectural drawing |
| Folder 7 | St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church Elevation Map, undated<br>One map with elevation lines going out from church |
| Folder 8 | St. Cyprian's Church Plans, undated<br>Two architectural drawings |