

St Matthew Episcopal Church and Jerry Monahan

Jerry Monahan has been part of the fabric of St Matthew since almost the beginning...

Jerry was born in Sand Point, Idaho in 1929. His family relocated to Milwaukie, Oregon and then moved again to Tacoma. While living in Tacoma, his family rented vacation cottages for two summers in Browns Point and moved permanently to the area in 1937 where they lived on the water side of Tok-A-Lou Avenue.

Baptized in the Presbyterian Church in Idaho, Jerry attended a Presbyterian Sunday school in the first Browns Point school taught by volunteers from Tacoma. He was awarded a bible for memorizing verses.

In 1951, a committee was formed to establish an Episcopal church in Browns Point. Jerry's parents, Vic and Alice Monahan, contributed the money to buy the land which the present day church sits on.

Jerry met his first wife, Marie Hazen, while attending Washington State College. They married in July 1951 at Christ Episcopal Church in Tacoma. Marie had been raised in the Episcopal Church. The pair was married by the Rector of Christ Church; Rev. W.E. Woodhams. During their pre-wedding classes, Rev. Woodhams shared with the young couple why he had chosen to serve in the Episcopal Church. He said he looked at other churches but since he liked a drink once in a while, play cards a bit, and dance, he chose the Episcopal Church. Jerry enjoyed that sentiment! Rev. Woodhams later became the Rector of St Matthew, under the direction of Christ Church.

After graduation from the University of Washington in 1951 and beginning life as a newlywed, Jerry started work in Seattle. He and Marie later moved to Browns Point where Jerry worked for the family business; Cascade Pole Co. Their first child, Kathleen, was born in 1952 and achieved fame as the first baby baptized in the new St Matthew's Church!

Jerry and Marie raised their four children (Kathleen, Jennifer, Jayne and Vic) in the church, participating in baptisms, Sunday school, confirmations and more. Two grandsons were also baptized at St. Matthew.

Not being a confirmed member of the Episcopal Church, Jerry was confirmed in May, 1962 by the retired Bishop of Idaho, Frank A Rhea at St. Matthew. William J. Hunter was the Vicar.

Jerry has served on the Vestry and as an Usher at St. Matthew. He has also mowed the church lawns; using a push mower to cut high grass. He brought his CAT up from his home (a stone's throw from the back of the church) to clear out part of the parking lot and has provided many Christmas trees from family land for the Church decorations.

In April, 2017, Jerry married fellow St Matthew member Beth Latsis. They were married during the Great Easter Vigil by Father Kendall. It was a busy night – baptisms, a marriage and the Lord rising again.

Jerry's life has indeed been woven into the fabric of St. Matthew. "It's my church", as he likes to say.

