

## Fun Fact, September 8, 2021

**Question:** Today, the diocesan weekly newsletter, *The Net*, and the quarterly magazine, *Delaware Communion*, are freely available to all online. What and when was the first diocesan newsletter?

**Clue:** It was started with the hope that it would aid mission work.

**Answer:** Bishop Coleman made various efforts to increase financial support for mission aid and one approach was to start a diocesan newsletter for subscription.

*The Delaware Churchman* was started as early as 1894, published in New York City by the Church Bells Association, which published similar newspapers in other dioceses. It contained mostly religious articles of general interest but very little local news.

In 1895, Church Bells Association turned over its newsletter publishing to the Church Publishing Society, which wanted such papers controlled by each diocese.

The diocesan convention of 1895 elected a committee of three clergymen and three laymen, with the bishop as chairman, to take over publication of *The Delaware Churchman*. The first edition came out in October 1895, and the last was for June, 1910.

It was discontinued due to lack of support by the clergy and laity. During its 15 years, it was always a struggle to pay the bills. As the Rev. William H. Laird, editor at the time of its demise, pointed out:

*The life and general effectiveness of a diocesan paper depend largely upon the support it receives from the clergy of the Diocese, not only in the sending in of parish news, but more especially in the urging of each family the duty of subscribing.*

We thank you for your support of diocesan communications!

From *The Episcopal Church in Delaware: 1785-1954* by Charles A. Silliman



(Moveable type sorted in a letter case and loaded in a composing stick)