
HAND BOOK
OF
Pohick Church

Fairfax County, Virginia



U.S Route 1

Marker of the Division of History of the
Virginia Commission

Inscription

*This Building was Begun in 1769
And Completed in 1774 Succeeding
An Earlier Church Two Miles to the South
It was the Lower Church of Truro Parish
Established in 1732
The Parish of Mount Vernon and
Gunston Hall
George William Fairfax, George Washington
And George Mason were Members of the
Building Committee under which the
Church was Constructed.*

“Pohick Church, Truro Parish.

The site was chosen in 1767 and the church-yard was laid out in 1769, at a Vestry held on the grounds.

A Notable Building Committee:

‘Resolved, that the Honorable George Wm. Fairfax, George Washington and George Mason, Esquires, Captain Daniel McCarty and Mr. Edward Payne, do view and examine the building from time to time, as they or any three of them shall see fitting, to whom the undertaker is to give notice when the different materials are ready.’

Pews No. Three and Four:

Colonel George Mason of Gunston Hall.

Pew No. Twenty-one:

The Hon. George William Fairfax of Belvoir.

Pew No. Twenty-eight:

Colonel George Washington of Mount Vernon.

Pew No. Twenty-nine:

Lund Washington of Hayfield, bought by Colonel George Washington.

The Cross in the pediment window is walnut from Col. George Washington’s Mount Vernon. In 1774, the church was ordered ‘furnished with a cushion for the Pulpit and cloths for the desks and Communion Table.’ Col. George Washington was requested to import the above along with two folio Prayer Books. The drapery on the front of the pulpit and the eggs on the cornice of the small frames were done with gold leaf, given to the parish by Colonel George Washington. The original Altar Piece, the Apostles’ Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments were lettered in gold leaf, given by the Honorable George Washington.

Parish Church of Mount Vernon

The new Pohick Church, located six miles from Mount Vernon, was

built from plans influenced by George Washington. He was vestryman of Truro Parish from October 25, 1762, to February 23, 1784. The latter date is the next to last meeting of the Vestry as a colonial establishment. Washington owned pews 28 and 29.

For a period beginning in 1798, the Reverend Mason Locke Weems a locum tenens (temporary clergymen) was with the Church. A favorite of boys and girls, he is more widely known as Parson Weems, author of the biography of George Washington.

Vestry House

As the parish vestry was charged with the care of the poor, guardianship of orphans, laying of levies for the support of the minister, and the erection of churches and poor houses, the Vestry House was a necessity. Yearly, the church wardens were directed to give notice for the indigent people of the parish to appear before the Vestry, and also those persons who would undertake to board them.

A Big Prayer Book – a folio edition, imprint 1761, was imported by George Washington. It came down through the Revolution, was adapted by erasures and insertions to the new order. Prayers for the king and royal family were crossed out and the petitions for “the Lords in Council” were changed to “The Magistrates of this Commonwealth.”

The Washington Bible – two Volumes, 1796 - inside cover, the following inscription in the handwriting of the subscriber and donor: ‘Presented to Truro Parish for the use of Pohick Church, July 11, 1802. With a request, that should said Church cease to be appropriated to Divine Worship, which God forbid and for the honour of Christianity, it is to be hoped will never take place. In such case I desire that the Vestry will preserve this Bible as a testimony of regard from the subscriber after a resident of nineteen years in the Parish. George Washington Parke Custis.’ Inside the cover, this inscription: ‘This was the property of Gen. George Washington, was given to P. Custis, Esq. by Mrs. M. Washington, grandmother.’ ”

The Writings of George Washington

To Reverend John Rodgers

Headquarters, June 11, 1783

Dear Sir: I accept, with much pleasure your kind congratulations on the happy event of peace, with the establishment of our liberties and independence.

Glorious indeed has been our contest: glorious, if we consider the prize for which we have contended, and glorious in its issue; but in the midst of our joys, I hope we shall not forget that, to Divine Providence is to be ascribed the glory and the praise.

Your proposition respecting Mr. Aikin's Bibles* would have been particularly noticed by me, had it been suggested in season; but the late Resolution of Congress for discharging part of the army, taking off near two-thirds of our numbers, it is now too late to make the attempt. It would have pleased me, if Congress should have made such an important present, to the brave fellows, who have done so much for the security of their country's rights and establishment.

I hope it will not be long before you will be able to go peaceably to New York; some patience however will yet be necessary; but patience is a noble virtue, and when rightly exercised, does not fail of its reward.

With much regard,
George Washington

*Rev. Rodgers' letter (May 30) suggested that Congress present each soldier with a Bible. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.



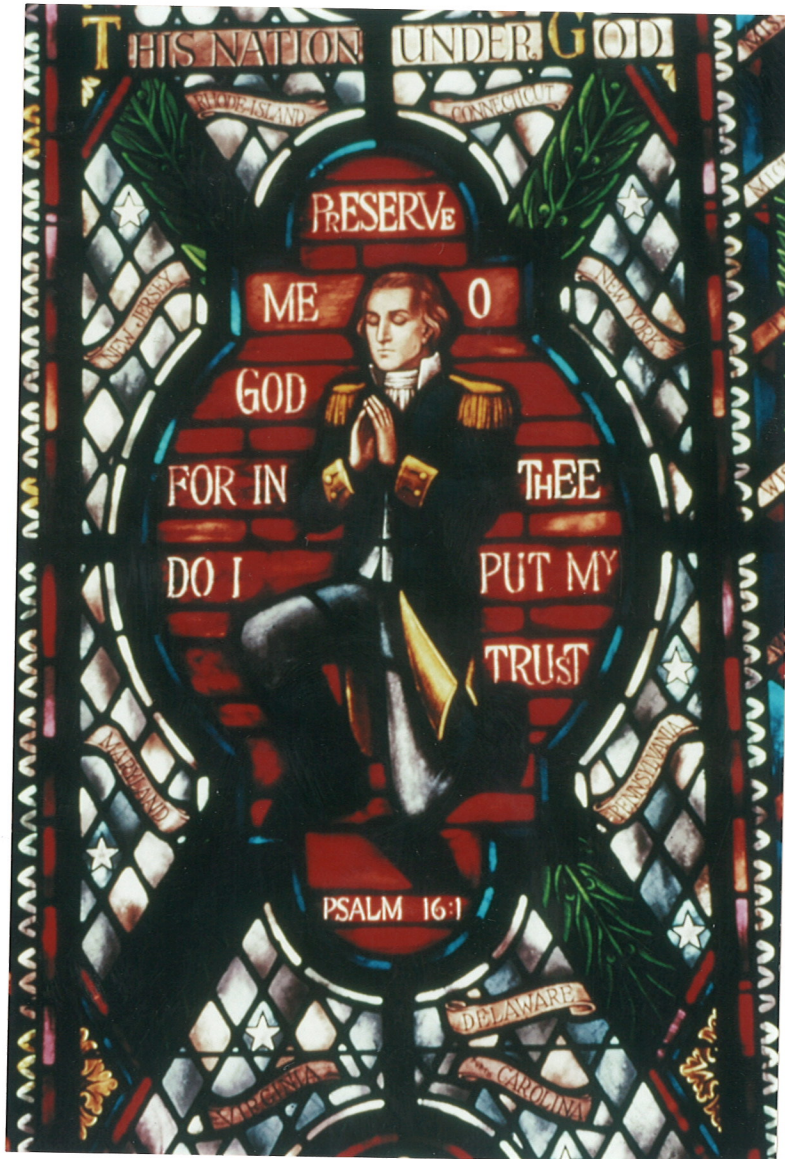
Statue of George *Washington at Prayer*. Entrance to The Freedom's Foundation at Valley Forge. Removed and placed in the extreme rear of the campus, across a bridge - out of sight of visitors. The Quaker, Isaac Potts, saw Washington kneeling in prayer early one morning in January, 1778 at Valley Forge, where the Continental Army camped. Potts' original stone house (c. 1743) still stands in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.



George Washington's Marquee Tent, in which he worked and slept while directing the operation of the Continental Army at Valley Forge, on display at the Visitors' Center, Valley Forge National Historical Park, Pennsylvania. Removed in 2004.



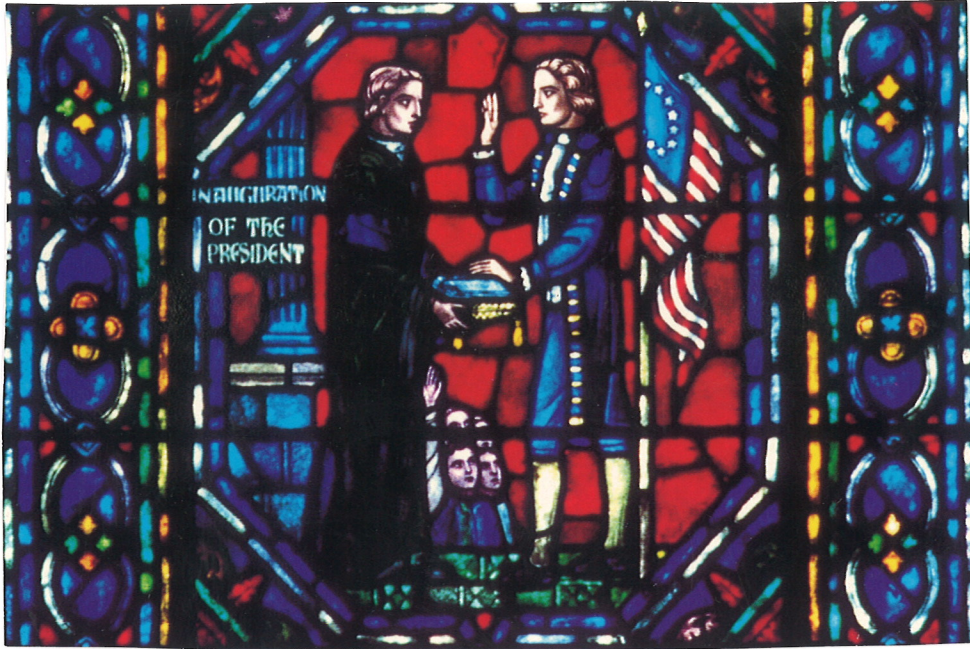
Numerous paintings of *George Washington Praying in Valley Forge* exhibited in the Valley Forge Historical Society Museum, adjacent to the Washington Memorial Chapel. The museum was closed, and the paintings removed from public view.



George Washington at Prayer in Valley Forge. Stained-glass window above the Altar, Congressional Prayer Room, U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C. Above Washington are the words, "This Nation under God." Encircling the General, deep in prayer - "Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust." Psalm 16: 1. Photographer: John W. Wrigley, copyright 1995.



The Washington Memorial Chapel Prie Dieu, upon which is inscribed these historic words - "George Washington - June 1, 1774. Kept the day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer appointed by the House of Burgesses in Virginia and made this entry in his diary - 'June 1, went to Church and fasted all day.'" Photographed by John W. Wrigley, copyright 1995.



Stained-glass window of George Washington sworn into office as first U.S. President, by Chancellor Robert Livingston, in Federal Hall, New York, April 30, 1789. Washington's left hand lay upon the Bible, opened between the 49th and 50th chapters of Genesis. His right hand was upraised, swearing allegiance to the U.S. Constitution. Washington National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.