

W.H. Graham was rector in Maumee for 21 years

BY JIM WILHELM

BLADE STAFF WRITER

The Rev. W. Howard Graham, 73, retired rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Maumee who served for 30 years before stepping down in 1986, died yesterday at his home of heart failure.



Mr. Graham came to St. Paul's as associate rector in October, 1956, and was elected rector March 25, 1965. He retired Dec. 31, 1986, and had served as rector emeritus there since.

At his retirement party in February, 1987,

Mr. Graham was honored as the "Rector of Maumee" for his many years of service to the church and to the community as chaplain of the Maumee fire department almost 30 years.

"Howard was just the most wonderful, self-giving man that I've ever known," Mary Spangler of Maumee, a member of St. Paul's since she was confirmed there in 1947, said. "He touched all of our lives so deeply at St. Paul's. The whole community of Maumee will miss him terribly."

"He was so wonderful with people. He never refused anybody who needed help," Roberta French said. She served as the church secretary from 1959 through 1965 and has been a member of the church since 1960.

Mrs. French said Mr. Graham introduced her to her husband, the late William French. "He not only married us, but he was best man and gave me away," she said of her 1975 wedding. "He always said that was his greatest coup."

Mr. Graham retired after seeing St. Paul's through its 150th anniversary celebration. As one of his last acts as rector, Mr. Graham established a list of all the deceased members of the parish through 1986 and had it displayed in the church in November, 1986.

Each November since, the list has been updated and displayed in connection with the celebration of All Saints Day in November, Mrs. Spangler said. "Now, we'll have to add Howard's name to that list," she said sadly.

Mr. Graham graduated from Sandusky High School, where he was called "deacon" and "preacher" by his classmates, in 1937. After graduating from Kenyon College in Gambier, O., in 1941, he attended the Seminary there and graduated in 1944.

He was ordained a deacon in the Episcopal Church Feb. 25, 1944, in Grace Episcopal Church, Sandusky. He was assigned to the former St. Paul's Episcopal Church in East Toledo the next day. He was ordained to the priesthood Sept. 10, 1944, and served that parish more than five years.

In 1950, Mr. Graham became rector of the Church of the Incarnation Episcopal in Cleveland.

He is survived by his wife, Marjorie; sons, David and Daniel; daughter, Jane Graham Weber; 12 grandchildren; and foster daughters, Ellen Gatherum and Ann Deborah Alter.

Friends may call from 3 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday at the Maison-Dardenne Funeral Home in Maumee, where the Maumee fire department will conduct a service at 7 p.m. Tuesday. Funeral services are pending at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Maumee.

In lieu of flowers, contributions to the Graham Memorial Fund of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Maumee, are suggested.