

# The Hidden History of The Town of Islip: The Children of St. Johns

— *Islip's Mother of Churches*



*2019 Tour Series*





The First Methodist Church of Sayville, now Sayville United Methodist Church, Main Street Sayville. The original building circa 1847 is now the Masonic Lodge. The 1893 church building at the corner of Green and Main Street is still in use for worship.



Emmanuel Protestant Episcopal Church, Great River, NY.

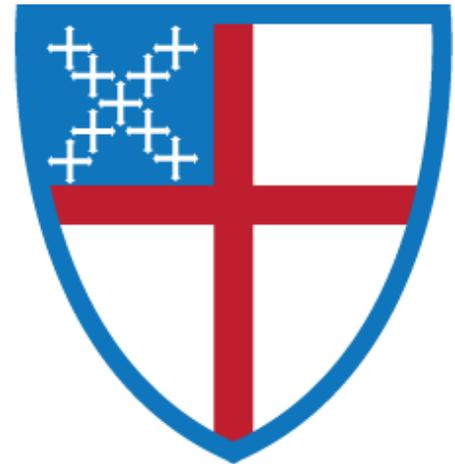


Str. Patrick Protestant Episcopal Church, Patchogue, NY.





St. Marks Protestant Episcopal Church, Islip, New York, showing the Parish Hall of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church that is believed to be a portion of the original St. Mark's Church.



St, Ann's Episcopal Church and Cottages, Sayville, New York



St. Lawrence Roman Catholic Church, Sayville, New York.

It is often asked why few churches in the Town of Islip predate the Civil War. The fact is that the population did not exceed 1000 until the 1820 and even then it was widely scattered over the Town. The population in 1776 was 375, probably reduced by the citizens in the militia, but in 1790 it was only 609 and in 1800 it was 958. Two years before that census in 1798 the then Town Supervisor wrote a letter to the State of New York describing in detail the Town. As can be seen there was not much growth during that time period. Even in 1840, the population of the Town was only 1,909 and only a portion of that was in hamlets such as Islip, Bay Shore and Sayville. St. John's Church was basically in the center of what was the Nichol grant. The letter of 1798 paints a detailed picture of the religious life of the Town of Islip at the dawn of the Nineteenth Century. Islip Town Supervisor, Nathaniel Conklin, wrote the following about religion and religious institutions: "Of Religious denominations in this Town there are Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptist, Methodist, and Quaker upon making some calculations it is supposed, that the Presbyterian are more in number, than of all the other denominations put together-there is but one house in this town built for public worship, and that, a small one and that stands on the north-side of the South County Road, and belongs to the Episcopalians, but they have no Settled minister, nor stated preaching in it [*This is a reference to St John's*]-the Presbyterians on the north part of this town are united with the Church and Congregation of Smithtown, and those on the Southwest part are united with the Presbyterians of the South part of Huntington [*This is what we now know as Babylon Town*], and are styled the church and congregation of Islip, and Huntington South, they have a convenient meeting house, which stands on the north side of the South County Road, just within the limits of Huntington; these two congregations have a Settled minister, who lives at Smithtown, and preaches stately one half of the Sabbath in the meeting house at Smith Town, and the other half in the meeting house at Huntington South-those on the Southeast part of this town are united with the Presbyterians of the Southwest part of Brookhaven, and attend public worship at a meeting house standing on the Northside of the South Country Road within the limits of Brookhaven; but they have no Settled ministers. The Methodists, meet and attend public worship at a meeting house standing near the northwest corner of the Patent of Winne Commack, just within *the limit of Huntington-and the Quakers meet for public worship at a Friend's house, at a place called half hallow hills-within the limits of Huntington.*"