

The flock which I have humbly, however imperfectly, endeavoured to feed with the Bread of life,—among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, from house to house, for more than eleven years,—with whom I have been so often, in sickness and health, in joy and sorrow,—so many of whom I have joined in Holy Matrimony, whose children I have baptised, and instructed in the Sunday School and many of whose departed friends I have committed to the grave. When thus again seeing those before me with whom I have so long taken sweet counsel, and walked in the house of God as friends,—surely it would be strange indeed, if my heart did not rejoice at the restoration of our pastoral connexion. Strange if each one of you has not been ready this morning to say with David of old, “I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the House of the Lord, I will go into thy gates with thanksgiving and into thy Courts with praise.” And especially to *such* Courts as these, which have been so nobly and disinterestedly prepared for our reception. But before I make a more particular allusion to the handsome structure to which we have been permitted to come, I would say a few words in reference to the one we have left. Humble and inferior tho’ it was, I trust it has been used to some purpose. Soon after my removal to this city, more than fourteen years ago, I suggested the occupation of that building then vacant, for the purpose of gathering in the numbers whom I had discovered to be without church accommodation, and living in the neglect of the worship of God.

My suggestion was not acted upon for a considerable time, but at last on the 2d Sept, 1855, Salem was opened for Divine Service. For several weeks, the Congregation did not number more than 20 or 30.—The singing was done by *one* individual. But by the blessing of God the numbers increased, as it became known that sittings were *free*, and as you know the place for some years has been too strait for us; and this has led to the noble effort by which this elegant and commodious Temple which encloses us to-day, has been brought to a successful completion. When I look back through the past eleven years—when I think of the thousands who have passed in and out of the doors of yonder chapel—when I think of the more than 2,800 services which have been held therein, the Prayers, and praises, and Holy Sacraments, and Word of God there read and preached; when I think of the numbers there admitted into Covenant with God by Baptism; and the many ministrations and warnings to the well, the sick and the dying, to which that Chapel has given rise; when I think of the bedsides to which it has brought me, and of the numbers who, once under my care, have departed in the faith and consolation of the Gospel, I cannot but feel, that hallowed associations will ever in my mind