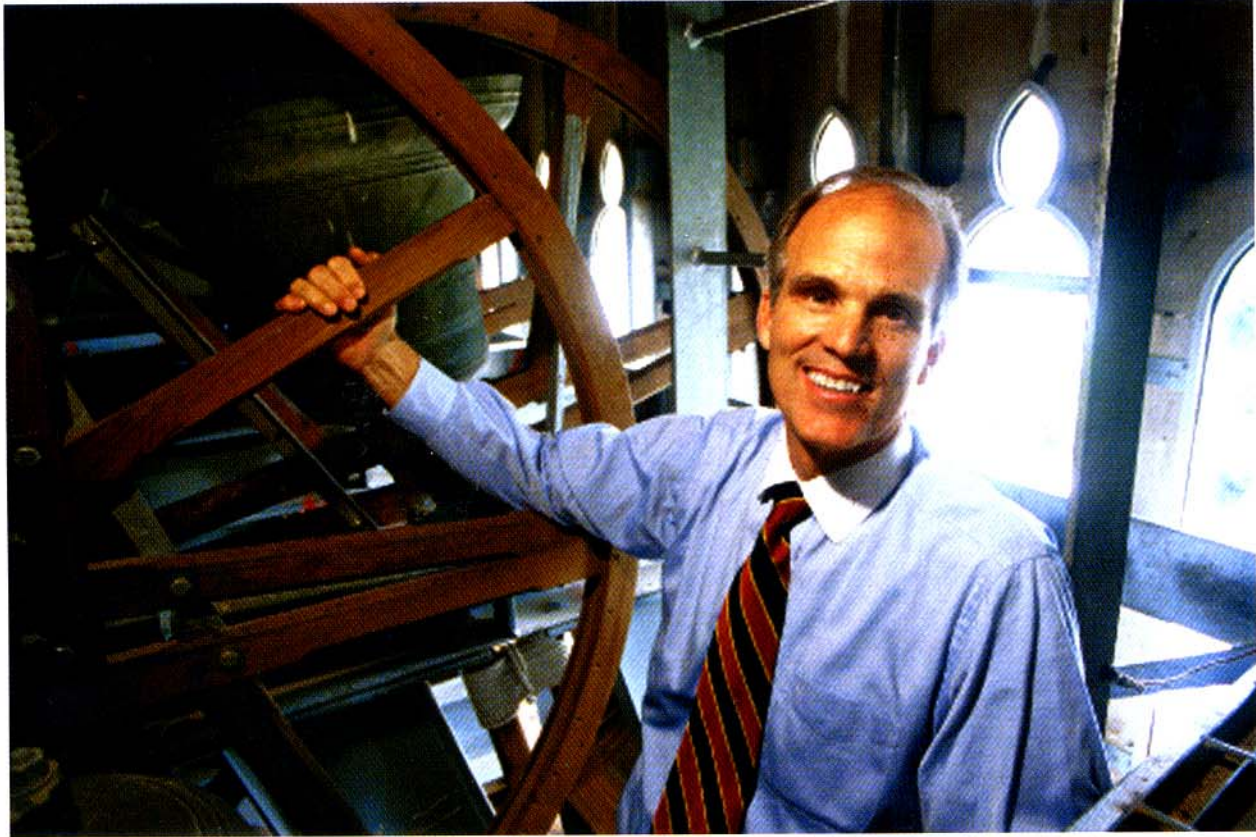


# Treasures of St. Luke's

Dedicated parishioners lovingly restore their historic church to its former beauty.

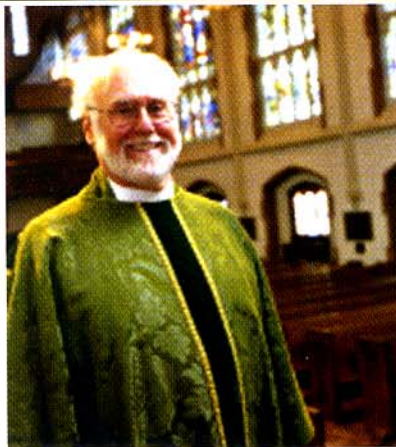


PHOTOGRAPHS: BLAKE SIMS

For many years the large congregation at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in downtown Atlanta worshiped under coal-blackened ceilings and between musty stained-glass windows rendered almost opaque by neglect.

Better known for community outreach programs such as feeding the homeless than for showcasing their nearly century-old home base, many parishioners didn't know what a gem they had until a recently completed restoration effort returned the graceful 1906 building to its original glory.

The process provided more than a physical face-lift. The 2,000-member congregation is revitalized and re-



**above:** Parishioner Cotten Alston III delights in the bell tower at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Atlanta. **far left:** Dr. John Westerhoff, resident theologian, is responsible for liturgy. **left:** Retouched by a professional, the circa-1912 Good Shepherd mural serves as an inspirational focal point above the altar.

energized as well. A parish with a rich 138-year history, dedicated attenders of St. Luke's discovered there's a story behind every brick, brushstroke, organ pipe, pew, and bell.

"We had some pretty serious conversations as a congregation," recalls resident theologian Dr. John Westerhoff. "It was very difficult to

convince an outreach-oriented congregation that we also needed to restore our worship space."

## Defining Details

After much persuasion—as well as strategic financial help from several key donors—the \$10 million restoration of the church began. Practically