

# The History of Trinity Anglican Church

STREETSVILLE, ONTARIO

Established 1841



## *The Parish is Begun*

In the early years of the nineteenth century, settlers with their teams of oxen, traveling in search of new lands to conquer, began to drift into the rich farming lands of the valley of the Credit River. Some of them settled in the place that is now known as “Streetsville”, and these formed the nucleus of the community which eventually grew and expanded until it became worthy of being called a village. Among these settlers was one Timothy Street, an Anglican, from whom the village later took its name.

As the settlement grew, the need for the ministrations of the Church was increasingly felt. There were traveling missionaries of the Church of England who occasionally ministered to the Anglicans in the district; and stories are told of their coming from Toronto (then York) to Port Credit by boat, and making the remainder of the trip by stage-coach.

The time came when the Anglicans needed a Church life of their own; so in 1841 the Streetsville Parish was founded. It comprised both Trinity in Streetsville and Hurontario Church situated at Derry West.

Under the leadership of the first rector of the Parish, Reverend Robert Jackson McGeorge, the new congregation held services in the homes of various Anglicans in the community. Later, use was made of a frame building situated in the section of Streetsville now bounded by Queen, Church, Water and Kerr Streets; tradition actually places this building on the property where the Federal Post Office building now stands.



It was not long, however, until a larger building was needed, and plans were made and carried out in 1843 for the erection of a Church on the property where Trinity Church now stands. The site for the building was given by Henry Rutledge, affectionately called "Commodore". The building was made of brick from the clay of the Rutledge farm, which at the time practically adjoined the Church property. A fire partially destroyed this building, and after closing it for repairs it opened again in 1847. At that time there were no pews in the Church, only benches were used.

It seems that the cemetery was opened at about the same time as the Church, and the first interment was that of Mrs. William Rowe in 1844.



In 1876 major renovations were made to the building with the addition of a Chancel and erection of the tower. The pews were changed and served the congregation for ninety years until they were replaced in 1965. Further changes were made in 1893 when the entrance was redesigned, the Church was re-decorated, the square tops of the windows were made Gothic, and the inscription "This is none other but the house of God" was painted over the Chancel arch.

In 1906 the announcement was made of the withdrawal of the grant from the Synod, which had partially supported the Church from the beginning now making the Parish of Streetsville independent. The following year an envelope system of contributions was inaugurated. Electric lighting was installed in 1908 and the Women of the Church provided the handsome Baptismal Font (now located in the Lobby).

A Parish Hall, (later to be called the “Middle Hall”) was erected in 1931 after many years of planning and with several large contributions it was opened debt free. In 1951 a modern kitchen was built in the basement of this building.

### *Stained Glass Window*

In 1950 on the death of Leroy Everett Pettigrew Montgomery, he left sufficient money in his will to complete the window in memory of the Montgomery family, and the outside panels were dedicated on October 28th, 1951, showing Mary, the Mother of Jesus on the left, Jesus in the centre, and John, the beloved disciple on the right. This window was placed over the altar in the Chancel and stayed there until 1997 when it was removed and placed in storage during the pre-fire renovations. It was returned and lying in a crate on the new worship area floor, when the 1998 fire destroyed the buildings. Partially damaged, it was restored and relocated in the new building on the south wall with funds provided by the Streetsville Bread and Honey Festival Committee in memory of Sam McCallion, Festival Founder and long-time Trinity member.



## *Educational Building*

In January 1962 the sod was officially turned for the new addition of an Education Building which completed the “U shaped” building format until the remodeling and renovations began in 1995. This building contained a new Parish Hall, kitchen, washrooms, classrooms and offices.



Our most recent history of growth, challenge and faithfulness has been led by the Rev. Canon Harold Percy who came to Trinity in October, 1987. These past years have been marked by immense ideological shift, faith-challenging events and extraordinary achievements. We now describe ourselves as “*A community of ordinary people learning to follow Jesus in our time.*” To reflect this new reality, Rev. Percy initiated a number of positive changes that have made a profound impact, not only at Trinity but on the Anglican Church in North America.

## *Expansion*

An increase in attendance necessitated a larger building in which to worship. In the fall of 1995, a core of 75 satellite pioneers made the commitment to worship at Hazel McCallion School at 10:00 a.m., to provide extra space for the 9:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services at the church.



After two years of planning and fund raising, extensive renovations began on our Parish Hall. The worship space was partially demolished to expand the walls to the north and a new lower level was excavated.



## *Fire and Destruction!*

In July 1997, the rest of the congregation began meeting in the school, with a dedicated remnant of 25 parishioners who made up our traditional 8:00 a.m. service staying on to worship in the Parish Hall. After several frustrating construction delays, we were poised to open our new church in September of 1998. But fate had other plans. In the early morning of Sunday, April 26, 1998, a few numbed parishioners watched in disbelief as our building burned to the ground as a result of arson. Hazel McCallion, the indefatigable Mayor of Mississauga and a faithful member of Trinity for over 50 years, brought them coffee to mix with their tears, as they shivered in the cold air. The tragedy was overwhelming, but Rev. Percy vowed that with the support and faith of its members, Trinity would rise again.

Exactly a year after the fire, April 25, 1999, Trinity witnessed a “Miracle of Forgiveness.” A teary-eyed congregation applauded the 18 year old high school student responsible for the senseless arson, as he made his apologies to the congregation. He was ordered by the court



to contribute 200 hours of community worked; (setting up and taking down chairs for our worship service at the school), give 10% of his part time job pay to the church for two years and to publicly apologize to the congregation. Rev. Percy, the architect of the sentence, intended that it would be a healing, rehabilitative act, rather than retribution for the young offender. As Christians, it was indeed the right thing to do. It also provided an opportunity for healing for the whole congregation.

## *New Building*



**L**ike the proverbial phoenix rising from the ashes, a new \$3.5 million, 26,000 square foot building was ready to be utilized. Bishop Ann Tottenham led the service of consecration on Sunday, October 21, 2000. This was preceded by a party and an Open House for the community on Saturday, September 8th, and an unforgettable grand reopening ceremony on Sunday, September 9th. The outpouring of financial support from the business community, area churches and well wishers from far and wide was amazing and most touching. Half of the funds were derived from the insurance policy while the other half came from donations. A generous gift was then made in October 2002, allowing us to pay off the mortgage.



## *Abundantly Blessed*

With the replication of the familiar Trinity Tower and brick exterior, the new building was able to create a similar look to that of the old church so much a part of Streetsville's history. Some of the original bricks from the old building were also reused in the cross behind the altar and in the fireplace in the Lounge. However, when parishioners entered the new church, they found that Trinity had entered the electronic age, complete with theatrical lighting and sound. Two huge screens projected words for hymns/songs, prayers and power point presentations to enhance the sermons. A spacious lobby and numerous meeting/classrooms downstairs added to the ability to reach many more children, youth and adults for Christ.

Over the ensuing years, our congregation has grown...not only numerically, but with a renewed sense of mission and discipleship. We have made significant commitments to helping rebuild a community in Honduras and led, along with Mayor Hazel McCallion, the Hazel's Hope initiative in Mississauga to aid HIV/AIDS work in Tanzania.

*Trinity has been abundantly blessed. Let us continue to celebrate God's wonderful love and faithfulness to us in the past and in the years to come.*





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