

A SHORT HISTORY  
of the  
CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER  
Thessalon, Ontario

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Originally built

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BISHOPS OF ALGOMA

1873 - 1881 The Rt. Rev. Fredk. FAUQUIER  
1882 - 1896 The Rt. Rev. Edw. SULLIVAN  
1897 - 1926 The Most Rev. Geo. THORNELOE  
1927 - 1939 The Rt. Rev. R. R. SMITH  
1940 - 1944 The Most Rev. Geo. F. KINGSTON  
1944 - 1974 The Most Rev. Wm. L. WRIGHT

"YE SHALL REVERENCE MY SANCTUARY"

Levit.xix:30

"Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
praise him all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

INCUMBENTS of the Church of the Redeemer, Thessalon, Ont.

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| June 1889 - Nov. 1890 | Percy G. H. ROBINSON  |
| 1892 - 1893           | William B. MAGNAN     |
| 1893 - 1900           | William M. R. SEABORN |
| 1900 - 1904           | Arthur H. WURTELE     |
| 1903 - 1905           | Charles E. BISHOP     |
| 1906 - 1908           | Leopold D. GRIFFITH   |
| 1908 - 1911           | Percy W. P. CALHOUN   |
| Aug. 1911 - Dec. 1929 | John TATE             |
| Nov. 1929 - June 1930 | James A. OSBORNE      |
| 1930 - Oct. 1934      | Alfred P. BANKS       |
| Oct. 1934 - Sep. 1935 | Edward H. RUDGE       |
| Nov. 1935 - Dec. 1943 | John C. POPEY         |
| 1943 - 1947           | Roy F. WEBB           |
| 1948 - 1949           | John V. TEMPLE        |
| 1949 - 1951           | Robert E. D. WRIGHT   |
| May 1951 - Sep. 1953  | George S. HONOUR      |
| Sep. 1953 - 1960      | Benjamin J. COOPER    |
| 1960 - Oct. 1972      | Norman HORNBY         |
| Apl. 1973 -           | Charles A. V. HORNETT |

|             |       |                |
|-------------|-------|----------------|
| Layreaders: | 1903  | Edward HAWKE   |
|             | 1905) |                |
|             | 1906) | W. E. Phillips |
|             | 1907  | J.L.S. WEARY   |

THE ORIGINAL CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER, Thessalon, was built in 1886 on a site at the north-east corner of Algoma and Dymont streets. The site, lumber, and building materials, were probably donated by Nathaniel Dymont of Barrie, owner of the mill situated at the south-end of Main Street, Thessalon. Others donated money, labour, and board for the builders. The Church was of frame construction with the usual porch, belfry and bell. The interior had arched structures which were later incorporated into the present building. Mrs. Harold Johnson (the former Fanny Simpson) remembers that the small white Church had a cosy homey atmosphere and the members were very proud of it. As children and later as adults, they greatly enjoyed working in the Church groups and for the Church. These qualities have lasted through the eighty-seven years of the Church of the Redeemer's existence.

The original Organ, a reed one and probably donated, was later replaced by a two-manual pump organ which the young boys and girls considered a privilege to pump, even though on many occasions they had to be reminded to pump harder. One organist, the rector's wife, after the sermon, invariably had to whisper loudly, "Pump, pump, pump!" as Jimmy usually slept during the sermon and was caught napping for the hymn following.

The Rectory on West Huron Street was purchased in 1886 from Tom Stroin.

The first Confirmation took place June 30th, 1889, with five candidates presented by the Reverend G. H. Robinson to Bishop Sullivan. On July 6th, 1890, one female candidate was presented. On October, 1890, the Deed for the Church was handed over by Nathaniel Dymont and his wife Annie. On Sunday, November 23rd, 1890, the Church was Consecrated.

On December 22nd, 1901, Arthur H. Wurtele, the Incumbent, was Ordained by Bishop Thorneloe, in Thessalon. Mr. Wurtele and C.F. Rothera had come as students in 1900 to look after the Services. Mr. Rothera took a position as Clerk with the Foss Lumber Company and later married Pearl Keetch, one of the members. Membership of the Church on Algoma Street included the names Keetch, Shaw, Fleron, Beadle, Nooke, Case, Hugh Jackson, Kennedy, Simpson, Piper, Dr. McCourt, McBain, Tom Wigg, Sam Hagan, Tesky, Pulford, Richardson, Nichol, E.C. Bridge, Farrell, Tom Cullis, and Winn.

In 1912 the property situated on the corner of Main and Park Streets was purchased from Richard Van Egmond and the present Church of the Redeemer was designed by the Reverend John Tate, Incumbent, who was also an architect, stonemason, and landscape gardener. Some members said a bigger Church was unnecessary as the present Church was not filled, but Mr. Tate although realising that it was a stupendous task had vision enough for all. With the sanction of all members the Church was built.

The old Church was incorporated completely into the new building. The Chancel was separated from the main body of the Church and the new transepts and clere-story were placed between the two parts and placed over the new basement. The smaller windows and one three-section window in the north transept, behind the present organ, were all in the original Church. New stained glass windows were placed over the Altar in the East, over the entrance in the West, and in the South transept. On the arch above the screen which separated the Chancel from the Nave, Mr. Tate had inscribed in old-English lettering "YE SHALL REVERENCE MY SANCTUARY" - Levitt. XIX:30. Until fairly recently this text remained and had its effect on the congregation young and old alike. Frank and Len Tooke were the last caretakers of the old Church and the first of the new. On December 1st, 1912, two priests (Geo. Phillips and Richard Haines) were Ordained in the Church by Archbishop Thorneloe.

On December 17th, 1922, Edwin Weeks was Ordained deacon and Henry Herbert (Harry) Heard, the only priest from this parish, was Ordained by Archbishop Thorneloe: Revd. R.C.W. Balfour was the preacher and Revd. Gowen Gilmour and John Tate were the ministers present.

On the 3rd of September, 1929, the rebuilt Church was Consecrated. Four years were taken to pay off the debts of the first Church and seventeen years to pay off the debts of the present Church of the Redeemer.

In December 1929, Revd. John Tate who had been the priest since August 1911, retired due to poor health. His wife having died in Thessalon in 1929, he returned to England to a retired Clergymens' Home where he lived for another ten years. In the memories of those who knew Mr. and Mrs. Tate there will always be a warm spot, All the group Meetings were held in the Rectory which always had a glow or warmth from the bright coloured chintz on the windows and window seats, from the old-fashioned coal stoves burning so cheerily in the hall and dining room, from the beautiful fireplace in Mr. Tate's study. The

Rectory was the cosiest and the friendliest place in town.

During Mr. Tate's incumbency, Mrs. Niebel, a music teacher, told the Vestry about a Pipe Organ in the southern Ontario Diocese which could be bought for \$1000.00. Mrs. Niebel, a non-Anglican, would play the Organ for us. The money was raised by Organ recitals in the Church, musical concerts put on by Miss Alma McConnell, and Mrs. Niebel,; Fowl Suppers, Afternoon Teas, Bazaars and Raffles for well-filled Hope Chests. Mrs. Niebel thrilled her listeners with her mastery of the new Pipe-Organ which she played until she retired and moved away in the '40's. Other Organists through the years were Miss Annie Keetch, Miss Pearl Keetch (later Mrs. C.F.Rothera, mother of the present Organist), Miss Mamie Case, Miss Susie Shaw, Mrs. Tate, and presently Miss Alice Rothera. Saint Francis Xavier Church purchased the Organ which the Pipe-Organ replaced.

In November 1929, Bishop Roxborough Smith sent a personal friend, Revd. James A. Osborne, who was on sick leave from a Church in Boston, to fill in until June/1930. For these six months he filled the Church every Sunday and on week-day Services during Lent. Father Osborne, as he wished to be called, left an indelible impression on the congregation, leaving with them a love of the Vestments, ritual, and colour, which still clings to the Church.

On June 21st, 1931, Bishop Roxborough Smith ordained as Deacons candidates Rudge, Rodgers, Nornabelle, and Sturgeon, and as Priests, Jewel and Sampson. Revd. A.P. Banks who had a passion for holding Diocesan Meetings in Thessalon (much to the dismay of the hard-working feminine members of the congregation) was Priest-in-charge at this time.

During the period from September/1953 to January, 1960, when Revd. Ben Cooper was Priest-on-charge, the Church (badly in need of repairs) was completely renovated, both basically and artistically. Mr. Fred Hibbett, a member of the Church, built an Altar, Canopy, Flower-shelves, Credence Table, Altar Rail, Pulpit, Lecturn, Screen, Hymn Board, west-hanging Lamps, Baptismal Font, and Hymn-book and Guest-book Holders. Most of these have been Dedicated to the following: Edward Hagan, Mrs.J.G.Pulford, Mr. & Mrs. John Tooke, Mrs. Pearl Rothera, Garnet and Keith Martineau, Mrs. Alice Chisholm Kennedy, Lee Skerton, Mrs.Gladys Hibbert, William and Rosanna Keetch, Annie C.M.Keetch.

The Standards are in memory of C.F.Rothera and F.A. Clement, long-time Wardens of the Church. The Perpetual Light in the Sanctuary was placed in memory of Mrs. E. C. Bridge.

The original Altar is in the south-transept with the original brass Candle Holders and a Cross made by Mr. Hibbert and placed as a Memorial by Ernest Stopes for his father. The present Altar Candle-sticks were donated by Miss Hazel Pulford at the time of the renovation. The Cross is in memory of Roy Shewfelt, killed in action in the 1914/1918 war. The Organ was completely over-hauled owing to the Bequest of Charles Trowers.

In 1972, \$2800.00 was spent on painting the outside of the Rectory and Church. \$2000.00 came from a Bequest of \$183.60 from the Estate of the late Hazel Pulford, retired post-mistress of Thessalon. During a vacancy of five months caused by the death of Norman Hornby (13th October, 1972), the Rectory was panelled, carpeted, and painted. A large part of the above Bequest was used for the renovating.

Revd. Charles Hornett was welcomed to the parish on Sunday, March 18th, 1973, with a good crowd present from the three points now in the parish, Thessalon, Bruce Mines, and Desbarats. Bruce Mines and Desbarats were added to the Thessalon parish on the death of Revd.

The W.A., J.A., and the G.A. have flourished since Mr. Tate's time. Mrs. F.A. Clement's tenure of twenty years as President of the Women's Auxiliary is something of a record. Miss Hazel Pulford was her secretary and Mrs. Ed. Turner her Treasurer.

The Girl's Guild formed in the '30's and known by its members as the Gossiping Girl's Guild held Bridge parties in private homes, charging 25¢ per person. This gave a good lunch and a change of a prize, as well as a good look at the home. These parties were very popular with the ladies of the town. This Guild later became the Altar Guild which amalgamated with the Women's Auxiliary.

Prepared by Fanny Johnson  
and Ester Sardick.  
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