

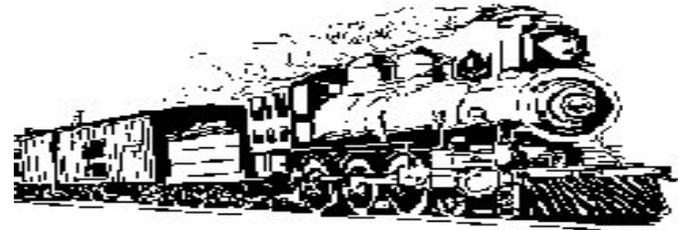
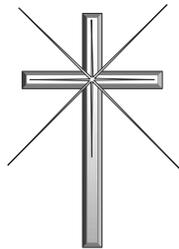
## Message from our Rector

As the present priest serving the congregation of St. George's Anglican Church it is an honour and a privilege to be the person who gives thanks for the past 100 years. A century of time has passed, a century of ministry has taken place, a century of people have been faithful to God and worshipped in this neighbourhood. Let us ask God's blessing for our future knowing that we are undergirded by faithful saints that have gone before us.

St. Paul says it best ... I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:16-19

With my love and blessing,  
The Reverend Helen Manfield



## Transcona Then

Our parish of St. George's, as everyone in the parish in this year of 2011 knows, was established in 1911. Let's go back a century and even earlier and discover how the town of Transcona came to be established.

In 1907, when the Canadian Pacific built a rail line through this area, there was virtually nothing else except the odd tree or two, nothing but waving prairie grass, although South Transcona was already in existence and boasted a church, a school, a pool hall, a barbershop and a grocery store. But South Transcona had been separated from what would become Transcona by the CNR main line. In 1908, things began to develop for the empty stretch of prairie, the future home of the town. The Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad chose this area to build its railway shops. For this venture, the company purchased 800 acres of land and named the area Transcona, 'Trans' as in Transcontinental, and 'cona' from Lord Strathcona who had hammered in the last spike for the CPR. The excavation for the foundation of the shops began in June, 1909, with the actual construction starting in 1910. On February 10, 1911, the first Board of Trade came into

being and was responsible for providing much of the infrastructure for the already burgeoning town whose population must have greatly appreciated the public utilities that the Board would soon organize.

In 1910, Mr. Peter Watt, who would later be Transcona's second mayor, did a census; he counted eight men, three women and 15 dogs. But things were already booming. By the time that Transcona was incorporated as a town in 1912, the population was 1,600. There would also be itinerant workers, such as the Italian men who came in the summer to work on the railway and returned home to Italy for the winter; several of them, apparently, lived in a boarding house they called the 'cabbage house' because it always smelled of boiling cabbage! Later, many of these men and their families settled permanently in Transcona.

Other events of 1910 included the opening of the first store. The Queen's Court Hotel (which looked like something out of a western movie!) was built in 1909 and boasted the first beer parlor in town which was called the Bucket of Blood Saloon!

The Transcona Funeral Chapel began business in 1911, and Davis and Kavanaugh's butcher shop opened its doors at the southeast corner of Regent and Day (Oxford then, of course). A real estate boom saw land prices soar to \$125.00 per foot frontage. On Regent Avenue, unserviced lots were going for \$400.00 a foot. Obviously, land speculators were laughing all the way to the bank!

The year 1912 was a banner year for more than population figures. On April 6, the town of Transcona, an area of over eight square miles, received its charter. On November 12, the Municipal Offices and the Fire Hall

opened as did Central School with an enrolment of 150 children. The first hydro power was brought in from Pointe du Bois. The first mayor of the fledgling town was elected; he was C.J.E. Maxwell, the general superintendent of construction of the shops. On May 22, 1912, Police Magistrate R.F. Webster swore in the first town councilors who "were handed the keys to the destiny of the new town and accepted the challenge to give of their best."\* This event took place in Campbell's Hall which was the second floor of what later would become the Fruit Home (and is now a Cash Store).

On January 18, 1913, the CNR Transcona Shops opened. They had been built at a cost of \$6 million and would employ 5,000 men. Long before their opening, Transcona was seeing the development of other industries, some of which supplied the railroad shops with necessary material, such as Canada Creosoting Co. Ltd. which began operations in 1911 to provide creosote for railway ties. Retail business was also booming. And Confidence Rebekah Lodge No. 40 was instituted on March 24, 1913.

A glance at later years tells us that, from 1915 to 1918, the Transcona Shops produced munitions for the war; apparently part of the machine shop was converted to a shell shop. Mr. Maranda established the first 'transit business.' He drove people to and from Winnipeg in a vehicle that carried ten. His favourite and the most direct route was straight across the open prairie – a bumpy ride! In 1915, E.H. Bate was elected mayor; I imagine he would be an ancestor of the Bates at St. George's.

Last but not least, several churches were built in the early years. The Yale Methodist congregation held its first service in May 1910 and moved into its new

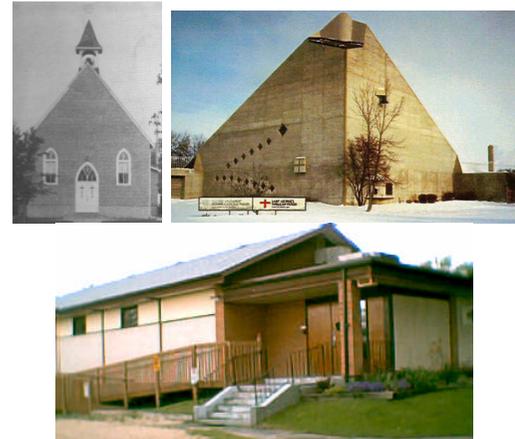
church in November 1910. Close on its heels were the people of Knox Presbyterian; their church on Harvard Avenue East opened in October 1910 and was dedicated by the Reverend Dr. C.W. Gordon (Ralph Connor). The first mass of Notre Dame de l'Assomption parish was celebrated in the home of Paul Jetté on August 21, 1910, followed by masses in the Campbell Block; the first mass in their newly built church was celebrated on December 3, 1911. On September 11, 1911, the Anglicans of Transcona held their first service in Campbell's Hall; on the same day, they decided to build a church and rectory. Under the direction of Archbishop S.P. Matheson and the rector, the Reverend A.T. Norquay, St. George's was built. The first service was held on December 7, 1911. It is amazing to think that it took only three months to build the church! Apparently, St. George's thrilled Transcona on Christmas Eve, 1911, with the tolling of its bells which were the first in Transcona. At a time, when there were no movies, no TV, no community centres, etc., "these churches were the cornerstone of the community . . . and were the centre of the social as well as the religious life of the people."\*\* How true!

\* *Golden Jubilee 1911-1961*, p. 23.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 24.



## St. George's, 1911-2011



To write this little history of St. George's, I had hoped to be able to read St. George's old registers and records held by the diocesan archives; I was told, however, that this is not allowed because of the fragility of the registers, etc., and the issue of privacy. But our diocesan archivist, Gloria Romaniuk, was kind enough to look up the names of the first people baptised, married and buried. Thank you very much, Gloria!

St. George's, apparently, was heir to a parish in Springfield. St. Margaret's had opened its doors in 1872 under the guidance of the Reverend Samuel Pritchard; he officiated at the first service in January 1873 for fifty to sixty parishioners. According to the history of the rural municipality of Springfield, St. Margaret's was moved several times, ending up finally in Oakbank where the church was demolished. Diocesan records paint a slightly different picture. The Acts of the Bishop (1912) state that the parish of St. George's was created from the lands of St. Margaret's Parish, which had been disestablished. Therefore, St. Margaret's Church was

moved to Transcona and dismantled, and the resulting materials were used in the building of St. George's; as well, the new parish inherited an organ, a reading desk and a lectern.

And so, led by the rector, the Reverend A.T. Norquay, St. George's was born. December 7, 1911 was the date of the first service held in the new church at 6 Kern Drive. The building committee, composed of the rector and Messrs. Brinston, Hall, Hunt and Dickinson, oversaw the construction, which cost approximately \$3,700. The church was illuminated by gas lights. Rev. Norquay (who, in 1912, organized the first Anglican Young People's Association in Rupert's Land) donated the bell which was rung on Christmas Eve, 1911, to the delight of the citizens of Transcona. A parishioner donated the altar rail, and the Women's Auxiliary provided the brass altar cross.

Parishioners held their first meeting on April 8, 1912. Elected as rector's warden was E.H. Bate (a familiar name to many of us!) and as people's warden, E.W. Basset. There were eight members of vestry: C.H. Edgley, R.D. Hipperstall, Arnold C. Andrew, F.W. Hall, L. Vivian, E.G. Whitney, and Messrs. Rowalt and Rowland.

Slightly before the first annual general meeting, on March 24, 1912, John Barrie Bassett was baptised, the first baptism in the parish. A few months later, Manfred Covell and Esther Vincent exchanged wedding vows on June 20, 1912, the first marriage in the new church. The first funeral, which was that of Eileen Phyllis Thomas, did not occur until August 16, 1913.

Over the years, other improvements were made. The parish built a rectory in 1913. On May 2, 1926, the choir appeared in new robes. And it must have been a

great relief to parishioners, on February 11, 1928, to see the mortgage retired. The Depression of the 1930s slowed things down in the parish, of course; the rector's salary was cut from \$150.00 a month down to \$80.00. Perhaps this was why, in 1939, the parish was debt-free for the first time! Once the war was over, the church underwent several improvements and changes. On June 26, 1949, Archbishop L. Ralph Sherman consecrated St. George's. And during the 1950s, the parish family was growing fast.



Canon T.D. Conlin, whom many will remember, arrived at St. George's in 1936. When he left, in 1961, there were 425 families on the rolls. (Transcona had grown rapidly as well.) Something had to be done to accommodate all these families. Over the next few years, land was purchased on which to build a new church. But building costs had soared, and the parish found itself unable to afford to build. By 1967, the confirmation class was so large that St. George's requested and received the use of Blessed Sacrament Church for the confirmation service. Soon after, the Reverend Tom Maxwell, rector of St. George's, and Father Oliver Valcourt, rector of Blessed Sacrament met for coffee together. Father Val suggested that Blessed Sacrament share their facilities for a time with St. George's. On September 7, 1969, the Right Reverend Barry Valentine and the Reverend Maxwell led the procession from St. George's to Blessed Sacrament where they were greeted by the Most Reverend Antoine Hacault and Father Valcourt. What

began as a temporary expedient became thirty-one years of sharing and a good ecumenical experience.

In 2000, our parish purchased our present church on Pandora. Renovations were done which including adding a much needed kitchen. Latterly, we have seen the installation of three beautiful stained glass windows, gifts of a parish family.

St. George's has been a leader in the diocese in several ways. As mentioned above, our first church had hardly opened its doors in 1911 when Rev. Norquay formed the first AYPAs in Rupert's Land. Women were not forgotten either. Beginning in 1914, women were given the right to vote on parish concerns, a big step forward, for women did not get the vote in Manitoba until 1916. The year 1966 saw the first woman in the diocese elected to vestry. That woman was Marguerite Bruce of our parish who passed away recently.

As we reach the last months of 2011 and our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, we look forward to continuing to serve our community. To quote from a Transcona anniversary booklet (1986): we at St. George's . . .

. . . can be proud of our heritage. . . . [W]e will hopefully continue in the forefront as we develop a mature Christian life and reach out to others.\*

\**Transcona 1911-1986: Celebrating 75 Years of Community*, p. 63

Sources for this article were the booklets written for the celebrations of the



various anniversaries of Transcona and information about St. Margaret's and George's held by Archives Canada and the Diocese of Rupert's Land.

## Over the years, St. George's has been served by many fine priests:

### Rectors

A.T. Norquay	1911-1919
J.H. Thomas	1919-1925
W.J. Morgan	1925-1927
A.W. Nixon	1928-1932
R.L. Taylor	1932-1936
T.D. Conlin	1936-1961
P.A. Niblock	1961-1965
T.W. Maxwell	1965-1971
C.D. Griggs	1971-1976
J.R. McCullough	1977-1979
D.G. Ash	1979-1982
W.E.B. Oakley	1982-1999
V.A. Shaw Luke	1999-2003
J.A. Holmen*	1999, 2003-05
D.R. Maynard	2005-2006
R.L. Webster	2006-2009
H.J. Manfield	2007-Present

### Assistant Rectors

(*Priest in charge)	
G.H. Williams*	1929-1930
F.I. Goodeve*	1932
M.B. Henderson	1970-1972
R.K. Appleton*	1971
J.W. Townley-Smith	1971-1975
C.F. Greene	1973-1976
K.G. Buchan	1974-1975
V.I.W. Mann*	1975-77, 81
F.W. Lynch*	1976-1977
V.B.H. Pellegrin*	1979
F.R. Edwards	1979-1981
G.M. Spurrll	1981
J.R. Brown*	1982
B.M. Barnett	1984

## A Letter from The Reverend Peter Niblock

Editor's Note: This letter was received at the beginning of October and was inspired by Rev. Niblock's reading of St. George's web page. Rev. Niblock was the rector of St. George's from 1961 until 1965, so it was 50 years ago that he was inducted by Archdeacon Gartrell. After his time at St. George's, he served in Calgary, Vancouver and White Rock; he retired eighteen years ago. Unfortunately, space does not permit quoting his entire letter here; what follows are some fascinating stories about St. George's.

St. George's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary: “. . . I was quite involved in helping the parish celebrate its first 50 years which we celebrated on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> . . . . Winter anniversaries are always fraught with uncertainty vis a vis the weather and thus had to brave a heavy snowfall the night before. I remember contacting former rectors including the second rector, the Rev. J.H. Thomas who was living in retirement in San Mateo, California who wrote a welcome letter in return . . . .”

“It was somewhat daunting in '61 to be following Canon Conlin and his long ministry with you. As he said to me, ‘When I started marrying the babies I had baptized I knew it was time to retire.’ My four years were four momentous years of growth. Transcona, with its CNR shops, was made part of metro Winnipeg that first summer and more and more became a dormitory suburb of Winnipeg. One member of the congregation was involved with Welcome Wagon which among other helps directed new families to the local church of their denomination with the result that I averaged 20 new families per month whose visits after hospitals had top priority and posed for my visiting ministry a tremendous outlay of time and energy. The growing congregation soon filled the church Sunday by Sunday such that early '65 had us contemplating a second parish in the north-west of the city which, of course, never came to pass.

“The old rectory next door to the church on what was then Crescent Road, soon to become Kern Drive, was built as a rectory with my office just inside the front door. It was only in my last year that we had a secretary on Friday mornings only who ran off the Sunday leaflet in the office area to the right of the chancel; the choir room was off to the left. Other members of the congregation put out a

newsletter. Some may still remember that January Sunday in '62 when I was preaching a missionary sermon and had a flip chart set up beside the pulpit with a map of Africa. As I reached to point out a country on the far side the whole pulpit tipped and fell onto the front pews which fortunately were not occupied. The renovations undertaken in the church before my arrival accounted for the pulpit never being rescrewed to the floor. The sermon continued from the centre-aisle where I normally preached at the evening service. But it was my ministry with the youth that was particularly enjoyed. We used to have a mid-week breakfast together in the parish hall supplied by a roster of mothers and week by week I would take a carload to school on a rotation schedule. But it was our all-night walks in the Spring and Fall, four in all in my last two years, that most will remember, when on a Friday night we boarded the last bus into Winnipeg and disembarked at the city's extreme west end and proceeded to walk home. We usually got to Main Street about 4 am and arrived back at the church at sun up for communion followed by breakfast downstairs, again courtesy of the mothers, and so home to bed, That the number of participants grew with each walk attested to its success.

“In later years I was heartened to learn of the number of parishioners who went on themselves to ordination as priests or vocational deacons, one of whom was a 12 year old in my first confirmation class. To those in the present congregation who joined their ministries with mine 50 years ago, I send you heartfelt greetings in bridging this past half century and to all my prayers and best wishes for the years to come.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Peter A. Niblock

*We thank Rev. Niblock for his good wishes and for his fascinating memories.*

**Pat Allan remembers . . .**

I have fond memories of St. George's Youth Group and those walks which were quite unusual events! One time I recall walking down the centre median of Provencher about 4:00 am and having the police pull up and ask what we were doing out wandering at that hour. I'm not sure they believed our reply as we told them that our minister could be found in the group just ahead of us – they just sped off and turned around! I also remember the Sunday evening youth oriented services . . . one in particular when we had no other musician, so Rev. Niblock played his accordion!



**The W.A./A.C.W. in St. George's**

Our own branch of the W.A. was formed in August 1911, with five ladies at the first meeting. The group grew quickly, and immediately began contributing, through their fund raising efforts, to the needs of the parish. These gifts included a carpet for the chancel and

necessary altar linens. Later came the baptismal font and a brass cross for the altar.

During the early years, they also contributed to the upkeep and regular expenses of the church, including coal for the furnace and the minister's stipend. There were many fundraising methods employed, among them, teas and bazaars, catering, rummage sales, etc. Many bales of clothing were sent to the missions, and during the war years, many socks, scarves and hats were sent overseas to the troops.

Other groups began meeting, as the years progressed, under the leadership of the W.A. There were the Little Helpers, the Daughters of St. George (later to be known as the Girls' Auxiliary) and the Junior Branch of the W.A. An altar guild was formed, and an evening branch of the W.A. began meeting in 1946. The Boys' Church League was also established.

The women of the afternoon and evening branches, adhering to the motto of the W.A., "With Good Will Doing Service," continued meeting, fund raising and contributing to the needs of the parish, at the same time practising outreach and nurturing their own spiritual growth.

In 1967, the Women's Auxiliary ceased to exist and became the Anglican Church Women. This recognized the work being done by all church women, not just the W.A. Much of the work that was done by the W.A. in the past is now done by others.

During the W.A. years, thirteen of the members were awarded Diocesan Life Memberships, given in appreciation of faithful and devoted service. A picture of these women is hanging in the church near the font.

Since the demise of the W.A., the award is no longer given.

Our small group, numbering eighteen, continues to meet and follow the format of the W.A. meetings of the past. We have several members over ninety years of age, three of whom are regular attendees. Three of our members are in nursing homes. Over the years, we have continued to support church activities, as we are able, and outreach, such as the Thelma Wynne Project. A major undertaking of the W.A. was to raise funds to build a well for our sister parish of Kibibi in Central Buganda. We raised enough to purchase a water reservoir to collect water during the rainy season, to carry through the dry months.

On September 18<sup>th</sup>, the work of the W.A. and the A.C.W. was recognized at our regular Sunday service. We sang the hymn, "The Love of Christ Constaineth (empowers) Us," the picture of the life members was dedicated, and a short presentation was made about the work of the two organizations over the past one hundred years. The Book of Remembrance was on display, in which are recorded the names of deceased W.A. members. A display of photos and other memorabilia was available for people to look at. Tea and dainties were served after the service, and we were pleased to see visitors who had come in response to our invitations to the families of the women who were being honoured.



## **Greeting and Blessings from St. George's, Transcona**

The year 2011 is momentous in the history of St. George's. We celebrate our 100<sup>th</sup> year in the community of Transcona. From our humble beginnings on Kern Drive, to our many years of worshipping at Blessed Sacrament to our current home on Pandora Avenue, St. George's has been a part of the history of Transcona.

Over 100 years of existence St. George's has been through the gamut . . . from Sundays when there were not enough seats for all the parishioners to Sundays when only two or three were gathered. We have managed to maintain our Christian presence in Transcona, sometimes in spite of ourselves. God's grace and mercy have surely followed us on our 100 year journey. We remember the people who were the pioneers of our church, and we thank them for their perseverance.

For our centennial we were challenged to do 100 things. Many have risen to the challenge. In January we gathered to enjoy all that winter brings us and then feasted on a spaghetti dinner. A "Love Your Neighbour" social took place in February with half the proceeds donated to the Transcona Food Bank and half to outreach projects. The Transcona Food Bank has never had such a large one time donation. April was our Easter Celebration with a breakfast served between the two services. In May Confirmation was celebrated with the Bishop. Our third stained glass window was also dedicated at this time. This window is a celebration of 100 years of our Church and Transcona. It was made possible by a donation from the late Marjory Bilinski.

June was celebrated with our annual picnic. The end of another successful plant stand was enjoyed. July and August were a time for rest and relaxation.

There is a lot of buzz as we start our fall activities. We have a beautiful Christmas tree decorated with warm mitts, hats and scarves for the less fortunate. We are hoping to fill it with more than 100 articles. We have a Centennial Cookbook, thanks to Dorian and Vera Sherman's hard work. Christmas Carols and Lessons will be on December 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am. The Children's Christmas Service will be on December 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am.

On November 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am, the Bishop will be present to lead us in our Centennial celebration. Immediately after the service there will be a reception. There will be good food, good friends and a lot of reminiscing with everyone who has attended and who now attend St. George's.

We invite you to join us in giving thanks for all that St. George's has given to us and to the community of Transcona.

## Childhood Memories

We thank Mrs. Edwina Cheales, née Bucknell, for sharing her memories of growing up at St. George's. She recalls being a member of the Junior Women's Auxiliary when she was six and seven. There she acquired some sewing and embroidery skills and sewed quilting squares which were assembled by the leaders into quilts for the missions. She remembers travelling to the city by train for an awards ceremony at Holy Trinity.

When she was twelve she became a Daughter of St. George's and learned to knit. The Daughters also made quilts for missions in the north. At Christmas, they made mincemeat which was a very successful venture. In her later teen years, she was a member of the AYP. She recalls peeling potatoes for fall suppers at the Masonic Lodge and enjoyed attending the annual church fair in August where corn on the cob was sold for five cents each or three cobs for ten cents!

