

ST. JOHN'S



CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

LENT AND EASTER 1990

It has been a very exciting year so far for us at St. John's. Vestry was well worth the work that was put into it. It is always a great pleasure to see us take responsibility for our parish life and community. I am very grateful to last year's Wardens, Joan Devitt and Kathy Gower for their hard work on your behalf and of their support to me and William. Looking ahead, and I think I speak for everyone, it is going to be another good year. Certainly we have capable leaders in our new Wardens, Dennis Richardson and Evelyn Butler and their Deputies, Yvonne Johns and John Gower.

Looking back, I don't think I have experienced two more lovely and truly satisfying liturgies than the two we had to celebrate Christmas. Both Christmas Eve with its pre-eucharist collation, bells, and concert, and the informality of the Christmas Day liturgy, caught in a very comprehensive way the essence of that wonderful Christian festival.

February has been an especially wonderful month. Beginning with the visit from The Rt. Rev. Caleb Lawrence and his wife Maureen on the month's first Sunday, our series of Sunday liturgies on our Baptismal Ministries proved a deeply moving journey in faith. I am especially grateful to the Liturgy Committee for their work in planning and working on these Sunday liturgies. The concluding liturgy in the parish hall on Sunday, February 18, was one of the great spiritual experiences of my life.

I hope everyone was pleasantly surprised to come into a full nave on February 25th when we hosted our Scouting and Guiding groups. The kids were wonderful and William outdid himself in delivering a homily so well matched to the day's setting, congregation, and theme. Hopefully, his plea for ecumenical dialogue in our neighbourhood will be picked up and developed in a way beneficial to healing the painful wounds of our Christian division. Feedback from some of the adults visiting the parish was very favourable.

A Blessed Lent to each.

Robert Hagler O.H.C.

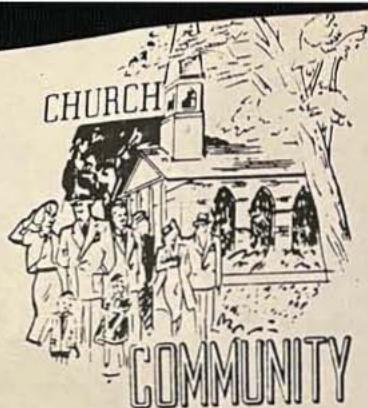
Sayings of the Saints

Do not imagine that prayer consists only in words. It is a leap to God, an inexpressible love that is not of man's making. St. John Chrysostom



prayer · fasting · almsgiving

He who surrenders himself to God in love is the most free of all men living. He lives without care, for God cannot lose that which is his. John Ruysbroeck



How does a community gather?

How does a community come together?

If the recent liturgy around baptismal ministries in the parish hall is any reflection, it would seem not without its own measure of fear and trepidation. Oh yes, and perhaps some creative excitement as well.

As I moved towards the table for a sandwich, provided as part of a lunch after the service, Nan Weston asked me if I would write something for the upcoming issue of the parish newsletter. In the flurry of excitement and without much thinking, I said "Sure." However, in thinking about it, I wonder if any one person's words can adequately capture all that needs to be said about the event.

One woman said she hadn't seen so much excitement at St. John's in thirty years. Her comment confirmed what I personally thought to be good about the event, but it also alerted me to the limitation of my own perspectives, having been a member of St. John's for only two years.

As I mused about what I might say here about the event, I wondered what words others might have...if we might put our words together...share a fuller picture of what the experience meant for all of us...and how all of this might look from the perspective of our various ministries and places around the table.

I wonder what it meant for some of the younger people, for some of the children who sat in the centre, who assisted their parents with the "shared sermon" and contributed so richly to the music of the offertory.

I wonder what it meant for some of the people who weren't directly involved in putting together the service and what it meant to people whose idea of church and worship isn't necessarily coincident with assembling in the parish hall.

If you would like to add a few words, paragraph or page to what we shared on the 18th, please jot down something on the page provided and place it in the servers' slot in the message box outside Robert's office.

I'll attempt to piece our words together as an appendix to this month's newsletter and as part of a broader commentary on the liturgy in the parish hall.

Having said that, I will continue my notes on the 18th with unbridled subjectivity, confident that my bias will be modified by the biases of others - after all, didn't someone once say something about human subjectivity being the focus of divine presence?

David Holmes



CAN YOU HEAR ME?

I am dancing from pew, to kneeler, to aisle and back again in joyful reverie.

I am seeing the flowers, the flags, the fans, the colours of Jesus' windows and the flickering candles for the first time again every week.

I am looking for my friends in church and calling out their names when I spot them and sometimes they call back to me.

I am looking to see who carries the candles today.

I ask if I am going to church on Saturday morning.

I want to sing when I hear Jennifer playing the organ.

I want to speak like Father Robert saying a prayer.

I want to look in all the books I can get from the pews.

I know that Christmas was Jesus' birthday and I got to help blow out the candles.

During the past year I have learned to:

- speak instead of crying when I am in need.
- to go through the service without a bottle of milk.
- to begin to listen and watch what is going on with others
- to balance on the pew without falling off
- come to be independent enough not to need to be held all the time in Mummy's or Daddy's arms.

I am a young child in our St. John's community. I am learning to express myself in many ways, not all of which are appropriate at this time during the church service. Please give me your grace to be who I am while I am growing into who I will be. I am part of the present and future of St. John's.

Submitted by Marion Barker on behalf of Kristopher and other young children of this parish.





The Real Purpose of Sunday Morning and Parish Life

The real purpose of Sunday morning and Parish life is to turn us away from ourselves and turn us toward our brothers and sisters and to our God. We read the Hebrew and Christian stories in the scriptures, we proclaim the Word, we greet one another, we re-call salvation history and call upon us and on bread and wine the Holy Spirit that united to Christ in his "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving" we may be in communion with Him and with each other as the Body of Christ.

Christian Education, Liturgy, Outreach, Finance, Pastoral Care, Property Maintenance, Anglican Church Women, Logos, Lenten Programmes, Suppers, Socials, Vestry, Advisory, Wardens, Clergy, Staff are not ends in themselves but rather important means towards ends. Parish life exists for the building up of the Body of Christ that we may be effective ministers and stewards in the redemption of creation.

The Christian faith is Incarnational - God became human and built the church upon the prophets and apostles. The Christian faith at St. John's is incarnational - it is built and extends itself as the faith of the baptised, only a few of which are called to the work of presbyterate or episcopate. Our Day Care, Special Needs, Scouting and Guides groups and Sunday Liturgy are signs of this incarnational baptismal faith.

The real purpose of Sunday morning and Parish life is the call to renewal, transformation, holiness, and action in the work of Christ in the world. The call to this renewal, transformation, holiness, and action is both corporate and individual. I see this taking place in our parish church as evidenced in the five homilies shared by lay people at the Liturgy on Baptismal Ministry Sunday we had on February 18th., in the Logos programme on "God's Gift of Sexuality", and in the coming Lenten programme on "Community and Growth". I saw this in Robert's ministry to Edna Thompson dying in the hospital over in Port Hope as well as in parish administration. I saw this in our Vestry meeting in the way we dealt with diocesan outreach. I look forward to seeing this in the Easter Vigil at the possible baptism of Angie and John.

William, O.H.C.

Overheard in the vestry

Server 1 I get mixed up in the inclinations
 Server 2 You mean the absolutions
 Server 3 Of course not! He means the obsessions.

Rector: What are you doing today, John?
 John: I guess I'm the crucifier.
 Rector: Aren't we all?

Server at the preparation: I have sinned excitingly in thought, word and deed.



LENTEN SCHEDULE

Sundays

A special Lenten air will mark the Sunday observance of the eucharist throughout this season. Our seminarians, Gary Vandermere and Jim Lever, will preach on March 11 and 25 respectively.

Thursday Eucharists 7:15 p.m.

I am testing the waters to see if there is a need for a mid-week eucharist in the parish. Perhaps a daytime might be better than an evening, if so, please let me know. The Thursday Lenten eucharist will be said and hopefully will assist you in your Lenten discipline.



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PROGRAMMES

Wednesdays - LOGOS "God's Gift of Sexuality" led by Jim and Sheila Crumney at 7:30 p.m.

The turn out for this course has been gratifying; over 20 people have signed up. The course will not meet on Ash Wednesday or Wednesday, March 14.

- Choir Practice at 8:00 p.m.

Anyone who would like to offer their gift of song and music during Lent and/or Eastertide, please come and sing or play.

Thursdays - "Community and Growth" at 8:00 p.m.

Our Lenten programme is based on the writings and thoughts of one of Canada's foremost articulators of the Christian Faith, Jean Vanier. We will meet in the Church, and the course will end at 9:30.



GIFTS

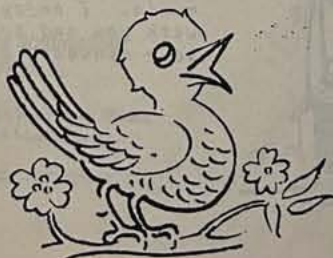
Do not ask to have your life's load lightened, but for courage to endure.

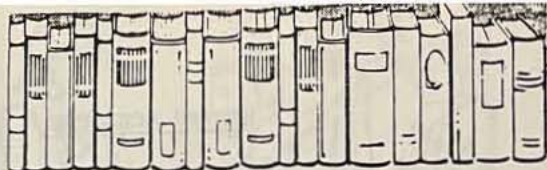
Do not ask for perfection in all you do, but for the wisdom not to repeat mistakes.

Do not ask for fulfillment in all your life, but for patience to accept frustration.

And finally, do not ask for more, before saying "Thank You" for what you have already received.

- Brenda Sloat





What Language Shall I Borrow?

a review by
William Sibley, O.H.C.

What Language Shall I Borrow? God-Talk in Worship: A Male Response to Feminist Theology; by Brian Wren; Crossroad, New York; 1989

Does it matter that God is customarily addressed as "he", and portrayed in all-male terms as King, Father, Lord, and Master, exercising Almighty power and control? The book argues that it does matter, because language powerfully slants and shapes our thinking and action. In a male-dominated society, the image of God as a controlling male figure is an idol bolstering the sin of male dominance, and hindering our encounter with divine love revealed in Jesus Christ.

This book looks at the realities of male dominance, as perceived by a man becoming aware of it himself, and in church and society. It investigates the power of language, arguing that though language doesn't control what we think, our customary uses of it strongly shape and slant our thinking and action. It shows that the language of Christian worship sees God exclusively through a metaphorical system of male kingship: the King - God - Almighty - Father - Protector (KINGAFAP for short).

The maleness of God-talk (theology) is a serious problem for the Christian faith, because it permeates the language of the Bible, hymnody, liturgies, and creeds. This book, therefore, looks for a "re-imagining" of God, based on the Bible's reticence and freedom in God-naming, the liberating direction of divine love culminating in Jesus, the character of the God Jesus called "Father", and the experience of God's threesomeness which led to the classic doctrine of God as Trinity.

Since the author is both a poet and theologian, the book includes theological work in hymnic form, in which God is encountered and named anew, in continuity within classic Christianity.

The author, Brian Wren, is a minister in the United Reform Church in England and works freelance as a hymn writer, practical theologian, and worship consultant.

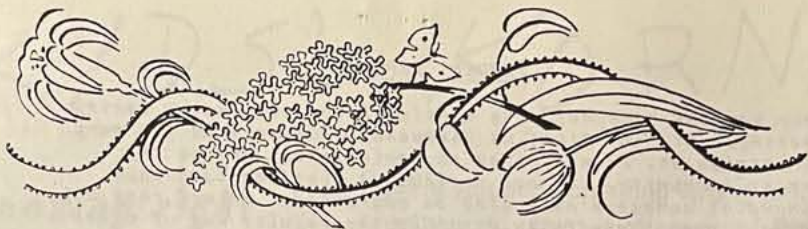
I'll be glad to lend my copy of What Language Shall I Borrow? to anyone in the parish who is interested. I commend it especially to the Liturgy Committee, the lectors, and the choir.



TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHOIR:

Thank you for your open invitation in Advent for others to join you in the preparation of the special Christmas music. I enjoyed the opportunity to sing with you and to appreciate even more fully your ministry at St. John's.

Georgia Helleiner



BEATITUDES for friends of the handicapped

BLESSED are you who take time to listen to difficult speech, for you help us to know that if we persevere, we can be understood.

Blessed are you who walk with us in public places and ignore the stares of

strangers, for in your companionship we find havens of relaxation.

Blessed are you who never bid us to "hurry up," and, more blessed, you who do not snatch our tasks from us, for often we need time rather than help.

Blessed are you who stand beside us when we enter new and untried ventures, for our failures will be outweighed by the times when we surprise ourselves and you.

Blessed are you who ask for our help, for our greatest need is to be needed.

Blessed are you who help us with the graciousness of Christ, who did not bruise the reed and quench the flax, for often we need the help we cannot ask for.

Blessed are you when, by all these things, you assure us that the thing that makes us individuals is not in our peculiar muscles, nor in our wounded nervous systems, but in the God-given self that no infirmity can confine.

Rejoice and be exceeding glad, and know that you give us reassurances that could never be spoken in words, for you deal with us as God has dealt with all His children.

— from *On Your Marc*
(Massachusetts Association
for Retarded Children)



*Hope means to keep living
amid desperation
and to keep humming
in the darkness*
*Hoping is knowing that there is love,
it is trust in tomorrow
it is falling asleep
and waking again
when the sun rises.*
*In the midst of a gale at sea,
it is to discover land.
In the eyes of another
it is to see that you are understood.*

*As long as there is still hope
There will also be prayer.*

*And God will be holding you
in God's hands.*

(From Henri Nouwen's *With Open Hands*,
Copyright © Ave Maria Press)



WARDENS REPORT

Your Wardens have held one meeting since the Annual Vestry Meeting. At that time, we discussed and reviewed the many ministries St. John's gives to parishioners and to the larger community. In our review, we also realized that financial concerns must also be addressed. We ask that all parishioners prayerfully consider the regular use of their envelopes.

At our meeting we also discussed our hopes for the coming year. One of the activities we are particularly looking forward to is our Parish Conference in May.

Your Wardens ask your prayers in all that we consider for our parish during the coming months.

Dennis M. Richardson
Evelyn Butler
Yvonne Johns
John Gower

- Rector's Warden
- People's Warden
- Deputy Warden
- Deputy Warden



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
by Maggie Muldoon-Burr

Sunday School Curriculum Update

Over the past few months the children have been studying the stories of the Hebrew Scriptures. In November we started at the beginning, with the story of Creation. This along with the story of Noah, became our Christmas Pageant.

After Christmas we began the story of Abraham and Sarah. We learned about God's promises to them, and about how they trusted God, taking all of their possessions to another land and how God gave them a son in their old age. We learn about Hagar and Ishmael, and used the story about Hagar and Ishmael's thirst in the desert to talk about the world water shortage problems. Then we studied Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob's conflict with his brother Esau, Jacob's wives Leah and Rachel, and finally Joseph and his brothers. (That was the Sunday all of the children paraded into church wearing their "many coloured coats"!.) We also used the part of the Joseph story where Jacob and his sons were victims of a famine, to study world food distribution. Finally, we are spending two weeks on Moses, before taking a big jump to the life of Jesus.

In the unit on Jesus, we will study various aspects of life in Jesus' day, along with several of the key New Testament stories. After Easter we will focus on the early church, and then finish the year by showing how some of the saints lived out the message that Jesus taught.

The children are very knowledgeable about the stories of the bible, and it's often hard to keep up with them. It is encouraging to see how much they enjoy these stories.

Survey on Children and the Eucharist

As a part of a paper I am writing, I am trying to gather some information on children's participation in the Eucharist, from the children's and parent's perspective as well as other adults in the community. I have prepared a survey, which I would like as many as possible to answer. If you haven't already completed one, and are willing to do so, I'd appreciate it if you would contact me. Call me at 767-0687, or talk to me at church as soon as possible. Some very interesting answers are coming in from the children.

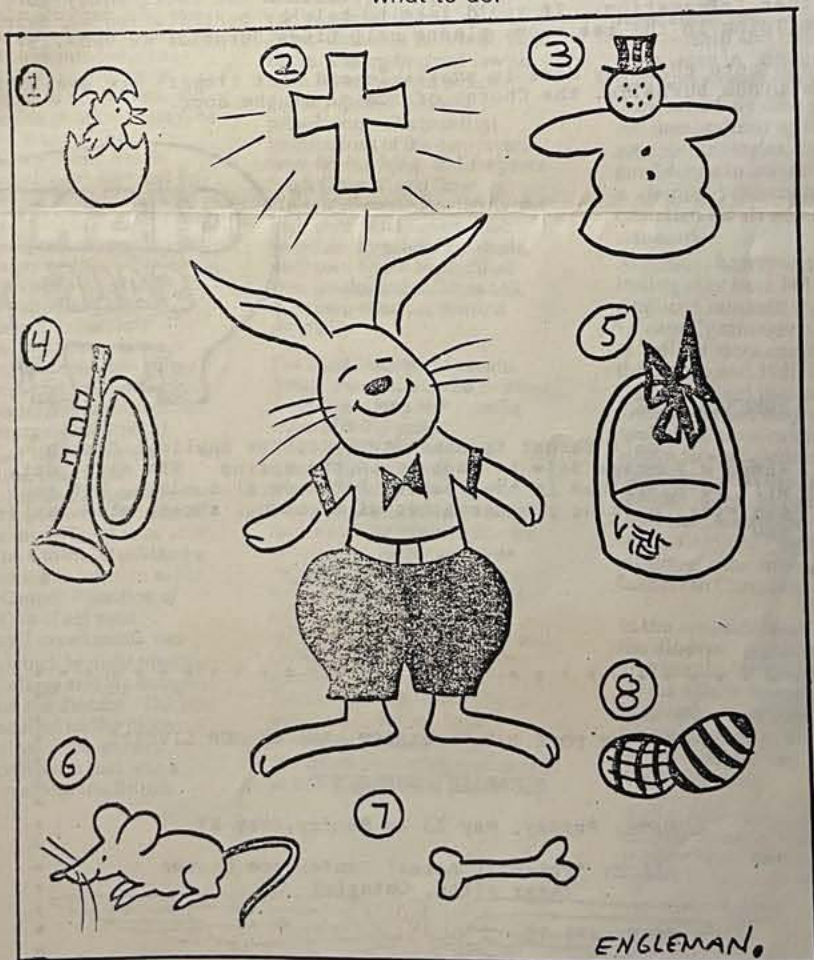
KIDS' KORNER

choosing right or wrong

Matthew 4.10

Have you done anything wrong today? What did you do about it afterwards? Did you say anything to anyone? We can *choose* to do right, or to do wrong.

Jesus knows what it is like to have to choose between right and wrong things. Satan tried to make Jesus do wrong things. Satan tried first one thing, and then another. Each time Jesus said, 'No.' In the end Jesus said, 'Go away, Satan!' . . . So the Devil left Him. Jesus can help us to say 'No' to Satan. We are not always strong enough to say 'No' to Satan on our own. But if we ask Jesus to help us to do the right things, He will help us and show us what to do.



Draw a line from the rabbit to the things that go with Easter.



FRIDAY AT HOME

You are invited ANY FRIDAY, 6:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. to
371 Sunnyside Ave., Apt. #2
Evelyn Butler and Phyllis Joy
will have
soup, bread, tea and coffee.
So please come and join us.

FESTIVAL OF WOMENS' GIFTS

On Saturday, March 24th from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at St. Andrew's United Church (117 Bloor St., East) there will be a Festival of Womens' Gifts.

Join us for workshops, films, art, refreshments and a worship service. See the bulletin board (downstairs across from the choir room) for further information. If you'd like to help by contributing sandwiches or helping in the tea room, please call Linda Burnside at 760-7357.

Please note that Day Care is available and that tickets are available from Linda Burnside, the Church office or at the door.



RUMMAGE SALE

Don't forget to save items for the Anglican Church Women's Rummage Sale to be held in the spring. The exact date will be published in the leaflet for several Sundays, but you can start putting your articles of clothing, shoes, etc., aside now.

*
* "WHAT EFFECT DOES THE EUCHARIST HAVE ON OUR LIVES?" *
* * * * *

A PARISH CONFERENCE

DATE: Friday, May 25 to Sunday, May 27

PLACE: "Friendly Acres" Conference Centre
(near Alton, Ontario)

COST: \$75.00

A Brief History of the Diocese of Toronto

The Anglican story in Ontario begins when Loyalist refugees from the American Revolution, many of them members of the Church of England, settled along what is now the route of Highway 401. Clergy were few, and for years Anglicans depended heavily on lay patrons, lay readers, and lay evangelists. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), an English missionary society, sponsored most of the clergy and wielded considerable influence. The area came under the jurisdiction of the bishop of London until 1787, and was part of the diocese of Nova Scotia from 1787 to 1793, of Québec from 1793 to 1837, and of Montréal from 1837 to 1839.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the dominant figure in the Church and, some say, in the entire province, was the Rev'd John Strachan, who was posted to tiny York (Toronto) in 1812. Tough-minded, canny and resilient, an inveterate enemy both of Methodism and of American political theory, he imparted many of the institutional ideals which remain with us today: zeal for education, concern for good order, excellence in religious journalism and a powerful but practical episcopate. However, his vision of an Anglican Church supported by the government, lucratively endowed with real estate, relatively independent of lay influence, and influential in the social order, collapsed before such emerging realities of Canadian life as religious pluralism, pragmatic secularism and a taste for democracy. Strachan became first bishop of Toronto in 1839, when the Crown established a new diocese in reaction to the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1837. One of his most successful experiments was Synod, which brought together bishop, clergy and lay delegates to govern the diocese. The idea was modelled on the diocesan convention of American Episcopalianism, but was a great novelty in the British empire.



Bishop John Strachan

Strachan died in 1867, and throughout the following decade the diocese was racked by theological controversy. Were all Christians equally members of a royal priesthood, as evangelicals claimed, or did ordained clergy receive distinctive gifts of the Spirit and special authority, as Anglo-Catholics believed? Sam Blake, a sharp-tongued lawyer, led a lay movement which quickly gained national prominence. The practical implications of the controversy were far-reaching, and for years "high Church" and "low Church" Toronto Anglicans had their own newspapers, their own Sunday school curricula, their own hymn books, their own theological colleges and their own overseas mission societies.

The third bishop of Toronto, Arthur Sweatman, who oversaw the diocese for a few months short of thirty years (1879-1909), ministered a substantial degree of reconciliation. Not only that, but in an administrative sense he created the modern diocese of Toronto. Anglicans were recognizing that theirs was a voluntary, not an established, religious community, accountable to its members, and called to heal its world rather than to control it. As the city of Toronto grew dramatically in population, wealth, and national importance, the diocese grew correspondingly in influence within the Church.

Sweatman also began to develop an ambitious vision for diocesan programming, a hallmark of the diocese today.

The period from the First to the Second World War was the golden age of the Anglican social conscience. Focussing on Christ's proclamation of the Kingdom, Anglicans set about with others to "Christianize the social order." The diocese became a model of social service, and it was passionate in its critique of the inhumanity of the commercial and social *status quo*.

Christian social activism subsided considerably after 1945, in a new age of government social programs and Cold War anxieties. The demands of Church extension dominated the 1950s, a decade of spectacular growth for Toronto.

After about 1962, Anglican membership and Sunday attendance in Toronto began a long and sometimes sharp decline. Many clergy and laity felt demoralized by the rise of secular theologies, increasing confidence in science, and the widespread debunking of Christian ideals and moral standards.

Arguably, however, this time of testing may have left an Anglican remnant that was spiritually stronger and tougher as well as more committed. In the 1970's and 1980's more people offered themselves for ordination and they were evaluated more carefully; *per capita* financial contributions rose, baptismal discipline became more rigorous; and Christian education focussed increasingly on "baptismal ministry" - the calling of all the faithful to Christian service.

In the sesquicentennial year of the diocese, Anglicans pause to give thanks for the witness of all the saints, to seek forgiveness and new direction where necessary, and to pray for fresh vision and energy in their ministries.

Author Alan Hayes, Professor of Church History at Wycliffe College, is editor of the new diocesan history By Grace Co-workers.



A Brief History of the Diocese of Toronto



William Jarvis, Bishop

The Diocese of Toronto was created in 1827, when the Province of Upper Canada was divided into two dioceses. The Diocese of Toronto was named after the city of Toronto, which was then the capital of the province. The first Bishop of Toronto was William Jarvis, who served from 1827 to 1841. During his tenure, the Diocese of Toronto grew significantly, and many churches were built. The Diocese of Toronto was a part of the Anglican Church in Canada, and it played a major role in the development of the province. The Diocese of Toronto was a part of the Anglican Church in Canada, and it played a major role in the development of the province. The Diocese of Toronto was a part of the Anglican Church in Canada, and it played a major role in the development of the province.



St. John's Church, West Toronto
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Church 763-2393

Mr. & Mrs. C. Weston
19 Hillside Ave.
Toronto
M6P 1J4

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