

St. John's Stewarttown Celebrates 185 years of Ministry

This year the people of St. John's Anglican Church are excited about celebrating 185 years of 'presence and ministry' in the Stewarttown community! St. John's Anglican Church is one of the oldest parishes in Halton Region. Although a church building did not appear until 1880, the parish was officially established in 1834.

The first immigrants to Halton Hills (or Esquesing Township as it was known back in the 1800's) began arriving from England, Scotland and Ireland in the early 1800's. On May 5, 1819, the first Anglican settlers opened a cemetery on land donated by James Randall. At that time, Anglicans were few and people met in homes and were visited by missionary priests, who travelled when weather permitted. The early settlers did hope to build a church beside the cemetery, but that never seemed to happen. Instead, a church building was purchased from the Wesleyan Methodists in 1880 and moved to St. John's current location at 10996 Trafalgar Road (corner of Trafalgar Rd and 15 Side Road).

Reverend Adam Elliot was the first missionary priest assigned to St. John's. In a journal entry, dated January 1834, Reverend Elliot writes, "On Sunday the 19th I performed divine service and preached twice at the house of Mr. Thompson, to a very numerous and attentive assemblage of people. Five children were baptized and 27 persons received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." Lay people carried out worship services using Prayer Books in the absence of clergy. The first confirmation ceremony for area settlers was not held until July 25, 1846 when Archbishop Strachan travelled from York to perform the ceremony at nearby St. Stephen's Anglican Church in Hornby.

St. John's has seen many changes over the years and it has managed to maintain and continue its ministry in the Stewarttown community. The little white church at the top of the hill remains a beacon of hope for all who pass by.

On Sunday, June 23, 2019 St. John's will be celebrating its impressive history with a special worship service at 10:30 a.m. led by The Right Reverend Susan Bell, Bishop of Niagara. Following the service, people will be invited to stay for refreshments as they browse memory boards and share stories of their time in the Stewarttown community. We look forward to celebrating this occasion with parishioners and invited guests. A special invitation goes out to those who share a history with St. John's as former members or clergy.