

In 1960 and 1961 it was arranged that the Student Christian Movement would hold a summer work camp in Winnipeg, using Augustine as a residence and headquarters. This meant that plumbing, showers, and beds had to be provided, as well as meals.

In 1961 the two women's organizations—the Women's Missionary Society and the Women's Auxiliary—were united under the new name of United Church Women. Mrs. Margaret Russell became the first president of this organization in our church.

When Dr. Clifford decided to leave Augustine, Rev. Titus was called to take his place. He and his wife Molly were popular hosts in the manse. It was during Rev. Titus' time of service that a bequest of \$1000 was received from Miss Loretta Reid. This was used for a new and larger communion table. A friend of Rev. Titus designed and made the present table. The legs of the former table were used and the table top made and finished as we see it now. When Rev. Titus received a call to Rothesay, N.B., he accepted. He was originally from New Brunswick and was pleased to have the opportunity to return there as a minister.

In 1966 Rev. Jim Strachan became our minister. At the same time Mrs. Dorothy Lawson became the organist and choir master. There were many changes taking place in the community. An ecumenical ministry was created to help the new people in the districts of three churches, Crescent Fort Rouge United, St. Luke's Anglican, and Augustine. A Resource Centre was set up at 511 Stradbrook, run by volunteers who supplied information to newcomers, to people needing assistance from social agencies, and to many others. In addition, a lunch after school program for children of working mothers was started in Crescent Fort Rouge and a coffee house program in St. Luke's for alienated youth. Augustine had the group for seniors.

During the lifetime of the Community Ecumenical Ministry Rev. Tim Sale (Anglican) and Rev. K.R. Murdoch (United) were appointed by the three churches to carry out its work. It is interesting to note that the "ministry" existed in community projects and not in joint worship services, as had been originally envisioned.

Because of the number of young people who were hitchhiking around Canada and had very little money, a "feed-in" was

organized. It was sponsored by the Community Welfare Planning Council. Meals, subsidized by the city, were served in Augustine each evening for two summer months. This was a controversial undertaking, not just within the congregation but also in the neighborhood. It was continued for three summers, however. The first summer there were many difficulties, particularly with the health authorities: the management of the kitchen was criticized. The second year two expert Greek cooks took over the kitchen and from then on things went well.

In 1968 Rev. Strachan included this in his message to the congregation: "Augustine Church continues to live successfully in a 'state of flux.' Within the boards and committees of the church discussion continues regarding how we can best meet the challenge of a changing and uncertain future. All of us know the days of crucial decision are very near, if not already upon us. I feel that our 'decision-makers' are equal to the task of guiding Augustine's future along a course that is both practical and in line with God's will as we perceive it in the circumstances." There was a suggestion of possible amalgamation with Crescent Fort Rouge United Church. Preliminary discussions took place, but that is as far as it went.

This was the time when the new hymnary was introduced. Many new tunes and words were offered. With the help of our choir and the organ, they eventually became familiar, in spite of our love of the traditional hymns. Another change in this period was the restructuring of the administration of the church. The Stewards and the Session were joined and made into one board with committees reporting to it. It took time to get used to the new system, but it was felt that it involved more people from the congregation.

The new structure has spread the duties over a larger number of our members. Provided the members "pull their weight," the result should be a better understanding of the problems of our church, better communication between committees, and a more effective ministry by the Church in the Fort Rouge area and beyond. (Notice in the Annual Report)

As well as these changes, the Experimental Creed was introduced and accepted. After church coffee was introduced at this time, with Muriel Gibbons providing leadership.

During all these changes the women of the congregation carried on the work of the United Church Women. Because so many of the younger women were working, it became very



difficult to find women to take office in the U.C.W. The units carried on, however, and help, financial and otherwise, was always given. The Sunday School was very small, but it was still active. Church membership decreased from 516 to 471. The greatest number of our parishioners were over 65 or under 30 years of age. This was one cause for concern.

In 1969 Rev. Strachan asked for a year's leave of absence to study in the United States. This was granted and a returned missionary, Rev. David Stiven, came to take his place for a year. David and his family were very popular with the congregation, but they left for Victoria when the year was up. Rev. Strachan returned and took up his duties, only to be offered the position of head chaplain in a large hospital here. Reluctantly it was agreed that he should accept.

Rev. Ron McIntosh was his replacement. His was a new approach to worship and fellowship. Inserted into the morning service was a short ministry of conversation, for greeting one's neighbor, and also the spoken intercessions. The evening service had been discontinued for some time, but Ron and Maureen McIntosh welcomed the young people for discussion and prayer at the manse on Sunday evenings.

"Get Together Augustine," an annual congregational event for several years, was held on a Saturday morning and afternoon. Members of the church gathered for devotions and then dispersed to different parts of the church to discuss a wide range of topics such as human sexuality, loneliness, and the future plans of the church. These annual get togethers were well attended and enjoyed. One special event was "Ta-Da!", a general concert and fun time for everyone.

We had break-ins in the office several times, but the most alarming event was a fire! An arsonist threw a flaming torch into the southwest window of the sanctuary, setting fire to the carpet, the door, and the wall. Fortunately Rev. McIntosh was in the office upstairs and called the fire department. Much water damage occurred in the sanctuary and the Guild Hall. We required lots of fresh paint, some new carpet, and a new door into the Guild Hall. A number of us sat around in the office late one evening discussing the fire, thankful that we had insurance coverage. Providentially the fire insurance had been increased a month or so before the fire. We were more fortunate than Elim Chapel, for later that winter it was also set on fire and entirely destroyed.

For a number of years there had been talk of senior citizens' housing in the district. The three churches, St. Luke's, Crescent Fort Rouge, and Augustine had been seriously considering the possibility of such a building in our area. Bill McCracken was the one who pushed the idea ahead into reality. Fourt Rouge Ecumenical Apartments, at 400 Stradbrook, were opened in 1973, to be run by a board consisting of representatives from four churches: Crescent Fort Rouge, St. Luke's, Trinity Baptist, and Augustine. Many activities were scheduled for seniors, both residents and visitors. It continues to provide comfortable and central housing for many senior folk.

River Avenue Day Care Nursery was set up in the basement of the church. This was a very successful operation and continued for many years. Now it is in its own building on Mayfair Ave.

Activities in the church continued—U.C.W., Boys' Club, Business Girls' Group—but the Sunday School had a difficult time finding leaders. For some time there had been concern for the future of the church. The members were aging, many were on fixed incomes. Although there were some new members, they were younger and were not able to support the church financially. The Board was forced to withdraw money from the Reserve Fund to balance the budget and there seemed to be no way out for a church in the core area. Representatives from Elim Chapel came to inspect Augustine with the idea of buying it to replace their burnt out building, but that idea was not popular with either church.

About this time the Planning Committee, which had been set up during Jim Strachan's ministry, was enlarged and re-activated. Rev. Houston Hodges from the Presbytery Research and Planning Council and other Presbytery staff members gave invaluable assistance and support to the committee members as they agonized over Augustine's future plans. In due time they presented several alternatives to the congregation: to join another congregation, sell and build a smaller church, disperse, or carry on at Augustine. After much soul searching and many prayers for guidance the congregation decided to continue at Augustine. This turned out to be a momentous decision.

When Rev. McIntosh resigned in 1977, Presbytery placed its Interim Minister, Rev. Don Hilton, at Augustine for one



year. During his ministry the Pastoral Relations Committee had sufficient time to consider our future ministry in depth. Finally the decision was made: a team ministry with two young ministers, Jim Uhrich and Ian Macdonald. The joyous mood of the congregation at this time is reflected in Keith Black's poem:

"Induction: September '79"

Like Janus, looking out both ways at once,  
We sit among our memories,  
a few with hurt attached  
a row of portraits up the stairs  
and slides of silliness at Ta Da.  
A feeling like the first day back at school:  
a lot of work ahead, new friends,  
new books, new ways to think,  
new teachers . . .

Change.

We've come a way, this little band  
within this battered, drafty place.  
We've seen the formal garb on Sundays  
when communion jammed the balcony too.  
We've seen the smoke smeared walls,  
the shattered dreams of vitality's strength,  
sapped and drawn away from hope . . .  
We've heard the prayers, the voices—  
God, the voices of our lives within this place,  
and now the voices whispering, growing louder,  
"No, not yet."

We're here to sing again the hope  
the Village Church,  
hope  
within the drafty walls; to show our face,  
our grin,  
our place.

Our place to be is here and now  
to prove the eyebrows raised  
around the city wrong,  
to join with our new dreamers, join  
again, for the first time, old and young,  
both days at once, like Janus,  
in September.

Thus began the phenomenal renewal of Augustine in 1979. But this renewal was only possible because of the faith of the members of the congregation who decided that Augustine must continue to exist. It took the strongest faith and dedication to face the future in this troubled church. Prayers were answered, interest and excitement developed, means

were found—and lo!—Augustine came forth to share its concern and love with the whole community and to function as an open welcoming church, inspired by the enthusiasm of the new team. Thus God's plan for this church on River Ave. was unfolding.

The two young ministers, Ian Macdonald and Jim Uhrich, brought a fresh approach to the ministry. It involved everyone of the members and the adherents and the community. The first event was "St. Grubby's Day." People were invited to come and work after church, cleaning and clearing the crypt and painting the radiators in the sanctuary, having lunch and fun doing it. From then on we were challenged by many new ideas and activities.

Financial help was solicited, grants were received from various sources, pledges were increased. Help came from unexpected quarters. The Phoenix was rising!

In order to be more accessible to the public and visitors, the church office was moved downstairs to the north end of the church, where it was easier to greet visitors and people needing help. Offices were built there for both of the ministers as well as for the secretary, leaving the central area for small meetings and visits. From then on the church became the "Village Church," in keeping with the designation of "Osborne Village" for the newly redeveloped area south of River Ave. on Osborne St.

When the office was moved there was another co-operative day, the Great Moving Day. After church a constant procession of people carrying books and records came from the upper office to the new location. All was moved in one afternoon. The new office was called the Phoenix Room and the old oak table from the former Board Room was placed in the centre.

The church building was in use, the Contemporary Dancers took over all of the upper level of the Guild Hall and eventually some of the main floor. The Fort Rouge Day Care Centre occupied the lower club room and kitchen and the gym. Alcoholics Anonymous held its weekly meetings in the lounge as before.

All these activities involved people and created interest in our unique situation as a core area Village Church. Bible study groups were started in the church and at 64 Nassau St., an apartment block for seniors. The Faith Forum was organized in conjunction with the neighboring churches, the



"Muppets" (an actual puppet show) were used each Sunday to present a cryptic comment on the Lessons. Immigrant families were sponsored and settled. The choir flourished, winning a trophy in the music festival and an award from MacLean Hunter's for one of the best small volunteer choirs in Canada. Overall there was a joyous reaction, a lifting of spirit and renewed dedication to the religious life of the church. Many of the readers will remember other events that brought us into the neighborhood: walks for peace, Good Friday walks to other churches, Mardi Gras, Lemonade and Listening (a lemonade stand in front of the church), sales, and even an art show.

So many new ideas were introduced in the first years of the team ministry that a time came of "settling in," letting the novelties become the usual. In 1982 the team ministry wrote in the annual report:

We confirm again that the continuing faithfulness of Augustine Church is tied to our willingness to love the city around us the way God loves the city: to care for and work at the issues of justice, poverty, loneliness, fear, and community with which the city confronts us, to continue to provide hospitality, worship and sanctuary in ways that are faithful to the Gospel of Christ who died to make all things new again.

Jim Uhrich, Ian Macdonald, and Joan Hibbert

There were plans under way to make Augustine more useful to the community: the development of the crypt and the installation of a ramp and an elevator from the crypt to the sanctuary, to facilitate entrance to the church by the aged and handicapped people. These needed study and money! Investigation proceeded.

After six years with the "team," having witnessed the resurgence of Augustine and having contributed to that renewal in many ways, Jim Uhrich decided to move to further challenges. He left when many ideas were just becoming realities: the crypt was completely finished and opened on October 27, 1985. It became the Augustine Family Resource Centre with three tenants: Child and Family Services, the Manitoba Child Care Association, and the Huntington's Disease Resource Centre. The ramp and the elevator joined the new Resource Centre to the sanctuary.

Augustine was one of the founding mothers of Riverborne, which was formed in 1980 as a neighborhood organization "to allow the ideas and the plans that people had for this area to

take new shape within the context of the newly announced Core Area Initiative." In our particular area it was involved in low cost housing on Wardlaw Ave, a new River Avenue Day Nursery on Mayfair Ave., the improvements to the crypt, and the provision of work for unemployed glassworkers, which resulted for us in the cleaning, restoration, and buttressing of our beautiful stained glass windows.

Many activities in which Jim had a part are now growing in importance at Augustine. There is the Seven Ministries, composed of the clergy and members of seven congregations of different denominations in the area surrounding River Ave. and Osborne St. Bible study groups have sprung up. We continue to support refugee families and help them adjust to their situation. Together with Riverborne, the Church and Society Committee sponsored a series of discussions on safety and crime prevention. The Peace Walk has become a yearly activity for those who are able to take part. "Networking for Needs," an interdenominational conference that searches for solutions to unemployment, crime, domestic violence, racism, and substance abuse as well as the problems faced by Native Canadians and the mentally handicapped, continues to function.

To find a replacement for Jim Uhrich the Pastoral Relations Committee was reconstituted. They engaged David Ringer half-time for 1985-1986. After many meetings a clergy couple, Karen Toole-Mitchell and Peter Mitchell, were invited to come to Augustine to continue our "team style" ministry. The Mitchells arrived at Augustine in 1986 and have been busy getting acquainted with the congregation. The congregation is enjoying their outgoing style.

So as we arrive at our 100th anniversary in November 1987 we look back over the 100 years of Augustine. It has been a century of growth and change. With the assistance of Presbytery and many devoted ministers and laypeople, Augustine has changed to a downtown church with many concerns for the neighborhood—the Village—the fostering of our Christian beliefs. We have tried over these years to put into action God's will for His church on River Ave. Whatever develops in the next 100 years is in His hands. Our place in the community has become important and vital. We must make sure that we keep our hearts and doors open to the needs of our area and send God's message of love and caring and comfort to those who need it!



## PERSONAL MEMORIES OF AUGUSTINE: DO YOU REMEMBER . . . ?

**THE VERY BEGINNINGS:** In the beginning our Uncle Norman (a theological student) was responsible for holding a summer mission festival on McMillan Ave. on property that later became the Augustine tennis courts. The group at this festival decided to start a church and named it Augustine. As the need for a larger church became necessary, my father John H.G. Russell, an architect, was asked to draw up plans and the present edifice was started in 1903.

We had great fun playing badminton at the church and we also had a delightful drama club, started by Amy Auld, to which most of us belonged. Amy had a great talent for pageants and we put on many of these for special occasions. We also produced plays to make a little money. Norman was often the stage manager, which resulted in much of the Russell household rugs and furniture being moved down to the church, sometimes to my father's slight chagrin.

Ruth Russell Walker

**DR. LESLIE PIDGEON:** He led us into union but at the time I was 14 years old and thought it was very dull. Dr. Pidgeon was an avid golfer. Legend had it that he practised in his study chipping balls into a basket. In those days ministers made one formal call a year to every family. My mother, linen convenor for the W.A. at the time, told her friends not to worry about his visit. "Just give him a wee cup of tea and ask him about his golf and sit back and play his last 18 holes with him."

Jim Anderson

My father, E. Leslie Pidgeon, came to Winnipeg from Vancouver in January, 1916. We had, for years, a photo of our arrival at the C.P.R. station with my father holding a large bundle alleged to contain my brother Arthur (then about six months old). On the back of the photograph was written "-42 degrees F." My father had left the natural glories of Vancouver to obtain the freedom of thought which he hoped he would find in Winnipeg. In this he was successful. He became a leader in the formation of the United Church, the first non-American president of the International Rotary, and achieved many other triumphs.

I was astonished by the present church letterhead, "The Village Church." How things must have changed! We never

would have considered that part of Winnipeg to be a village. The monstrous street cars used to lumber down River Ave. assuring us that we were part of a great city.

Dr. Lloyd Pidgeon

**THE RADIO BROADCASTS:** Long before I became a member of Augustine I enjoyed its ministry by radio. When Rev. A.E. Kerr was pastor, the morning service was broadcast every week on CKY. We had service in the school house in a rural community at 2 p.m., so we were able to enjoy the Augustine service with a clear conscience that we were not neglecting our duty. It was especially helpful for elderly folk who were unable to get out, to have such a fine service each Sabbath day.

Isabelle Coltart

**THE GYMNASIUM:** By the basket on the north side there was a pillar just left of the board. If we were losing, a few passes to the left of the pillar usually resulted in a few baskets.

Jim Anderson

**THE JUNIOR CHOIR:** We were fortunate to have a junior choir, which practised Thursdays before the senior choir met. We were trained over the years by three notable musicians, Mr. Coulson, Wilfred Layton, and Filmer Hubble. They showed varying degrees of patience and forbearance with us, whose only qualification for joining the choir was a desire to sing. We even entered the Manitoba Music Festival on several occasions, losing often to Mrs. Musgrove's carefully chosen and trained choir. Once, however, we won: we walked on air. On Sunday mornings we would sit in the first two rows of the right balcony above the senior choir. One Sunday we watched in fascination as a small child opposite played with a hymn book on the railing. Of course it went over with a resounding thwack, fortunately missing the people below. Consternation reigned in the faces of parents and child. The young ladies (?) in the junior choir lost their cool and succumbed to irrepressible giggling.

Dorothy Webster McKibbin

**THE FLOOD OF 1950:** During the flood Augustine was a refuge for many people. My household of five were there for four weeks. Our sleeping quarters were the west end of the Red Cross Room. Divider doors were lowered, one door leading



to the Guild Hall and one to the Red Cross Room. Bunk beds were brought in and we four gals used them. The Badminton and Club Rooms were used by the men. We'd give them breakfast and they would go off to work. They'd come back for supper (100 or so) and go off to work on the dikes until maybe 11 p.m. On the third week planks had to be laid the length of the kitchen floor. Pumps kept running in the dining room, manned by young men of the church. There was a small radio kept on in the kitchen. I believe it was noon one day when we heard the good news, "The river is going down."

Lucy Pickup

I was almost 30 when the flood took place in the spring of 1950. It began on the 29th of April and it got worse because of the fall of heavy wet snow in the early morning hours of Sunday, April 30. Rev. George R. Service was the minister of Augustine then, and he made arrangements for the families who lived in the houses close to Main St. and on Bell Ave., when it was announced on the radio that they had to vacate their homes to the still rising waters of the Red River. They took up temporary residence at Augustine, because the church building was on higher ground. I can't recall now just how many families were affected by the evacuation order by the military authorities around May 7-10, when the waters of the Red River broke through the sandbagged dikes around the Norwood Bridge. It was certainly a most anxious time for all concerned.

Herb Reynolds

**THE BOYS' CLUBS:** There were two "competing" groups of boys of high school age during those years, the one at Augustine, known as the Augustine Young Men's Club, and the other at St. Luke's, known as St. Luke's Boys' Club. Each met on Sunday afternoons for an hour or an hour and a half in the respective churches. The meetings were primarily secular in nature, aimed at giving the members some rudimentary training in the conduct of meetings and in group organization.

I was president of the Young Men's Club one year and one of the obligations of my office was to sell advertising for the program that was produced for the annual revue. I remember going along Osborne St. approaching merchants with considerable hesitancy and with no success, until I called on Ormiston, the florist. I quite easily made my first sale, because one of the Ormiston brothers was receptive and sympathetic.

J. Allyn Taylor

**BAPTISMS:** The Cameron children had no idea why we'd not been baptized as babies instead of being "led to the slaughter" when eleven, nine and seven years of age.

Although we'd fought it for months, the appointed Sunday saw Maxwell decked out in knickers tucked into knee-high socks, with a tweed jacket topping a white shirt and a blue tie. He was tall, thin and gawky. He gave Mother and Father daggered sideglances throughout the whole service.

Sister Marjorie, in a navy serge sailor dress and leghorn hat, looked sullenly from beneath her heavily lidded dark brown eyes and scuffed the toes of her patent leather slippers as she approached the baptismal font.

Who's to say how I viewed the occasion. I can't recall that I was as upset as the others, perhaps because I was too young to be self-conscious.

Dorothy C. Lynch

**WORSHIP DURING THE WAR YEARS:** Rev. Russell McGillivray was our minister when I became a member but left not long afterward to accept a charge in the Ottawa Valley. While he was with us Mable and I attended our first Easter service in 1943, and although we arrived in good time, we were the last two people to be seated in the sanctuary, our first experience to sit in the gallery.

Rev. George Service of Zion United in Hamilton, Ontario accepted our call. He began his ministry by involving increasing numbers of our congregation in the activities of our Church. This has continued much the same ever since. Many will recall the large numbers of prospective members who responded to his efforts, but unfortunately not too many remained with our Church permanently.

In those days there were two Sunday services and communion was observed four times a year. The Committee of Stewards was responsible for the finances and maintenance of our Church. The Session, comprising approximately thirty Elders, contacted our members by visitation prior to each communion service. The results of these visits were reported at the regular meetings of the Session, which made us aware of any illness or hardship that might be prevalent.

Art Bragge

My daughter Rosemary and I were greeted at the front door of Augustine Church by Rev. McGillivray after a meaningful service of worship, one Sunday in July, 1943. Harry



Godard, Superintendent of the Sunday School, invited us to the weekly social evening for servicemen and friends, downstairs. We met Filmer Hubble, conductor of the choir. His first reponse was, "When can you start?"

Pauline Henderson

REMEMBRANCE DAY: I was a young adult during the Second World War and there were services to honour those lost in the First World War.

Then, we made sure we stood at attention, as did the adults, during the sounding of the Last Post, which sent shudders right through our whole being. After the soldier bugle player had taken his seat, a member of the Session read out the names of those Augustinians who had given their lives for their country. Small as we were, we sensed the sadness as sobs and whispered prayers surrounded us.

Dorothy C. Lynch

REV. COCHRANE: Although but a child, I remember Mother and Father talking of Rev. Cochrane (affectionately referred to as "Bobby") being a real Bible thumper, and I asked Father to explain what he meant. It took adulthood to realize Father was making light of the expression when he said in reply: "Well. As you know, the sermons are very long, but the minister has a wonderful way of seeing that people stay awake and hear the message. If he sees Mr. McEachern or Percy Bull starting to nod off, he just bangs on the pulpit with his fist, pretending he's doing it as emphasis to what he is saying."

Often in subsequent years at our Sunday dinner table, we'd tell Father it was too bad the present minister wasn't a Bible thumper, for there seemed to be a lot of people around us who were sleeping through the sermon.

Dorothy C. Lynch

DOROTHY POLSON: I am one of the "old timers" who remembers when the Guild Hall was dedicated in 1910. I remember attending Sunday School and Mission Band when the original church was used as a meeting room. I recall taking part in a Mission Band play with Mr. Howe as director, when I was 10 years old. It was "Beauty and the Beast," and I was the Beast. Later I starred as the Good Fairy in another Mission Band play, "Cinderella."

David Baird and my brother Frank used to help out in the Sunday School Library by distributing books. Not all of them were profound. "Anne of Green Gables" sticks out most prominently in my memory.

I was active in Augustine all my life. I was secretary of a young ladies' group and I sang in the choir. In fact I was soloist at the time of the 50th anniversary in 1937, when I sang "Sing Ye Joyful" by Dvořák. Later I was secretary of the Board and president of the U.C.W.

I am now a patient in the Central Park Lodge (Poseidon). I was born in 1900 and I have rich memories of my church.

Dorothy

MRS. J.S. MILLER: Jessie Miller has the distinction of being the oldest living member of Augustine. Jessie was born in 1884 and will be 103 years old on May 18th. She and Joe were married in 1907 and they joined Augustine in 1921. Both were active in the church. Later Joe was a member of the Session.

Jessie was interested in the women's organizations. For 14 years she was treasurer of the W.A. and then of the U.C.W. She remembers helping with annual church dinners when Mrs. Malcom was convenor and then when Mrs. Henry Wood was convenor. One particular memory is of "dozens of baking-powder biscuits" that were supplied for some special function.

Jessie was also treasurer for the Auxiliary of United College for many years. Her meticulous bookkeeping kept everything in order.

Edith McCracken

To reminisce is a delightful experience, especially when you go back to your childhood days,

When—ladies wore hats to church

- everyone had a Sunday outfit
- the Board of Managers of Augustine read like the Board of Directors of the C.P.R.
- there were three services at Augustine on Sunday
- there was a Women's Association and a W.M.S.
- among other things these ladies on Easter Sunday provided all of the children of the Sunday School with a bouquet of a green leaf with paper violets to be worn for the day



- the Sunday School attendance of 600 to 700 was recorded each Sunday on the blackboard on the second floor
- on Mother's Day each Sunday School scholar received a white or a red carnation which indicated whether one's Mother was living or had passed away
- there was a Sunday School picnic to Winnipeg Beach by train and the entire family joined in
- on New Year's Day there was a Sunday School rally at Grace Church downtown when the children of all the churches came together for a Service, a spot in the church being allotted to the individual church. That was a great day as each church vied with the other for the greatest attendance. Augustine was always close to the top, competing with Knox and Westminister. When the winner was announced the noise was deafening.

And then we grew up—times and customs changed—but those were happy days.

Margaret MacDonald

## AUGUSTINE'S WINDOWS

The stained glass windows on the east, west, and north sides of the sanctuary are one of the several aesthetic highlights of the church building. Most of the original windows, which were designed by W.T. Lyon of Toronto in 1904, have had to be replaced. Only the small oval one depicting St. Augustine remains. Originally the east window contained a roundel of Christ's head, painted from Hoffman's "Christ in the Temple." In addition, the east window depicted the symbols of the dove of the Holy Spirit and the lamp of divine knowledge. The west window had the open Bible of truth and the burning bush of the revelation of God.

The present east and west windows, which depict the Last Supper and scenes from the Life of Christ respectively, were designed by M. McCausland of Toronto in 1928. The east window is in loving memory of John D. McArthur and was presented by his wife, Mary McArthur. The five panels of the west window were presented by different people. The first panel was presented by Mrs. A.D. Mitchell in loving memory of Mr. A.D. Mitchell in recognition of Christian leadership

given to the youth of Augustine from 1911 to 1945. The second panel is in loving memory of Mamie and Harry Truscott and was presented by family and friends. The third panel is in loving memory of Lieut. James Arnold David, killed in action in Hong Kong, and was presented by his parents. The fourth panel is in loving memory of the dedicated men and women who contributed to the witness of Augustine Church in this community and beyond. It was presented by friends and members of the congregation. The fifth panel is in loving memory of Elizabeth Acheson and Uncle Charles Nicol and was presented by Mary Acheson.

Four other separate windows were presented by Mrs. Slagsval in memory of her husband. The money for these was left as a bequest in her will. A relative of hers from New York was present at the dedication of these four windows in 1979, which were designed and made by a Winnipeg artist, John Cordner.

## MINISTERS AT AUGUSTINE CHURCH

1887–1891: Dr. Andrew Baird  
 1891–1900: Rev. R.G. McBeth  
 1900–1915: Rev. G.B. Wilson  
 1916–1925: Rev. Leslie Pidgeon  
 1926–1929: Rev. R.B. Cochrane  
 1929–1939: Dr. Alex Kerr  
 1939–1947: Dr. Russell McGillivray  
 1947–1954: Rev. George Service  
 1954: Rev. A.E. Armstrong (Interim)  
 1955–1958: Rev. Rolph Morden  
 1958–1963: Dr. N.K. Clifford  
 1961–1963: Rev. W.D. Titus (Associate Minister)  
 1963–1966: Rev. W.D. Titus (Minister)  
 1966–1969: Rev. Jim Strachan  
 1969–1970: Rev. David Stiven (Interim)  
 1970–1972: Rev. Jim Strachan  
 1972–1978: Rev. Ron McIntosh  
 1977: Rev. Don Hilton (Interim)  
 1979–1985: Rev. Jim Uhrich  
 1979–present: Rev. Ian Macdonald  
 1985–1986: David Ringer (Interim)  
 1986–present: Rev. Karen Toole-Mitchell  
 and Rev. Peter Mitchell



## AUGUSTINE CHOIR

(Edith McCracken)

It seems that right from the very beginning of Augustine Church the congregation wanted to have good church music. In the first small church they had a little reed organ, no doubt pumped by someone behind a screen.

After the new church was dedicated, a pipe organ was purchased for \$4000. With the installation of this new Karn pipe organ Augustine became an important musical centre in Winnipeg. In the years that followed, Augustine witnessed organ recitals by renowned organists from Canada and the United States and performances of some of the famous oratorios. The music was conducted by a succession of prominent Winnipeg musicians whose names we record with pride. There was J.J. Moncrieff, who was choir leader for twenty years, and his successor Victor Scott. There were organists such as Mary Robertson, Mrs. H.M. Drummond, Mr. Fred Gee, and Miss Christine Fraser. Both Mr. Wilfred Coulson and Mr. Wilfred Dayton served as organist and choir master.

As the congregation grew in importance, so did the choir. Mr. Filmer Hubble gave us beautiful varied music with a large choir. He was an outstanding Winnipeg musician, having much to do with the music festival at that time, and his music was always of the very highest standard.

After Mr. Hubble came Mr. Davidson Thomson, who had been choirmaster at Knox church for a number of years. Evelyn Corben was his organist. Mr. Thomson was THE musical character of the city. He was Scottish and most demanding. But to hear his choir sing the Lord's Prayer on Sunday morning was most moving—so quiet—just whispered—beautiful! On Easter Sunday mornings the church was crowded—even the balcony—and when all stood for the Hallelujah Chorus, the risen Saviour was thoroughly welcomed. It was during Mr. Thomson's first years that Jon Vickers sang with us. He was a promising tenor who was working at the Bay moving furniture from one floor to the other in freight elevators, to earn enough money for his lessons. All the girls in the choir were very interested in this blond singer with the pleasant personality. He was presented with the Order of Canada in 1969 and is now one of the world's great tenors.

When Mr. Thomson retired Mr. Eric Adams took his place as organist and choirmaster. It is interesting that another

Augustine singer who made his name in opera was the bass soloist in the choir at this time, Victor Godfrey. He went on to an operatic career in London.

Mrs. Winnifred Frayne took Mr. Adam's place. As she was one of the musical Hubble family, we were assured of good music. Mrs. Trudy Graham was the soprano soloist in the choir then.

When Mrs. Frayne left we had another outstanding musician as conductor and organist: Mr. Sydney Bryans, an Irishman with a fine musical background. He had many outside commitments. One of these was to conduct the Messiah with the Philharmonic Choir and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, with Lois Marshall as soloist. He took time off to travel to the continent to conduct concerts in Greece, Italy, and England. During his term we presented Benjamin Britten's St. Nicholas with Peter Koslowski as tenor soloist.

Mr. Bryans returned to England and in 1966 Mrs. Dorothy Lawson was appointed choir leader and organist. Many of her students sought a place in the choir. There were many fresh voices added. "Dorothy" was a much loved and highly respected leader and organist. We were proud to sing a number of her anthems and introits, many of which are still being used today. One in particular was an arrangement of the hymn "Praise to the Lord the Almighty," which we learned specially for a cross-Canada broadcast on the television program "Meeting Place." At that time Mrs. Lawson was recovering from a heart attack and was unable to conduct, but by means of tapes of our rehearsals and tapes of her comments we were able to present her music almost the way she intended it to be. At each choir rehearsal Mrs. Lawson gave us a lesson in vocal singing, breathing, and voice production. We all loved it and learned.

I must mention in the story of the choir one particular lady, Jean Hayes, who charmed us all with her Irish wit and repartee. She usually "bested" Jim Strachan when he questioned the superiority of Saskatchewan, her home province. Jean was president of the choir for fourteen years. When we had the thrill of new gowns in Mr. Thomson's time, she was the one who demonstrated their new charm. No one felt qualified to take her place as president, until because of poor health she was forced to give up the office. She is well remembered.



During Mrs. Lawson's years as choir leader the new hymn book was introduced. The choir and the congregation learned to use it together, becoming familiar with new tunes and words. We had many exciting undertakings: we presented the Vivaldi Gloria twice, five years apart. We also sang Schubert's Mass in G. We sang in the music festival in 1980, winning the Lord Tweedsmuir trophy for the best choir for churches with fewer than 300 members. This earned us \$400 for music. On a conference Sunday one year we presented a service of psalms, sung and read. As well we sang Poulenc's Gloria in 1981 to an appreciative audience. The choir members were proud to have a part in these presentations—these as well as the usual choir work.

Larry Weckwerth was our assistant organist for some time, but he went back to the United States to continue his studies. Mrs. Lawson discovered Mrs. Lottie Enns-Braun when Lottie came to share organ duties in the summer. Eventually Lottie became the regular organist, leaving Mrs. Lawson in the conductor's role. Lottie was a gifted musician and left to continue her studies in the East. Before she left she gave an outstanding organ recital, which made us realize what a talented lady we had on our musical team.

In 1980 Larry Weckwerth returned to Winnipeg. He replaced Lottie for a few months and then took over the musical responsibilities, when Mrs. Lawson was unable to continue because of her health. Mrs. Lawson was in charge of the choir and church music for fifteen years. She is much loved and respected by her former choristers. While she was at Augustine the choir was considered one of the best in the city.

With Larry Weckwerth in charge we entered a new phase of church music, while continuing the same tradition of excellence. He was bold enough to bring in band instruments for special occasions and special effects. Easter celebrations are most exciting, with handbells, drums, brass, organ, and piano. The Christmas programs, often a Lessons and Carols service, are beautiful, with processions and with antiphonal choirs in the balcony. New and modern music is stimulating for both choristers and congregation.

In order to contribute financially to the cost of organ repairs, which are a large and necessary expense, Larry has promoted Music at Augustine. For the last three years he has organized three or four Sunday afternoon concerts per year. Some are presented by groups of Augustine singers, others are by prominent small groups of brass, wind, or string play-

ers. Esther Klassen, our soprano soloist, gave a beautiful afternoon recital. Richard Hurst also gave two delightful afternoon concerts. The money collected from these Sunday afternoon presentations has helped with the church finances, but Larry has also promoted our church as a musical centre in Fort Rouge. These concerts are interesting and enlightening, enabling us to hear ensembles that we otherwise would not know about or have heard.

This brings us to the present. For 100 years leaders and choristers have given time and talent for music in our church. We can look back on beautiful singing, beautiful organ music—many, many accomplished musicians devoted to church and leader. One can never mention all the names of those dedicated people, but we know that they all derived great satisfaction from their association with the choir. When a group of singers—all individuals, all different—blend minds and voices to produce a musical message, there is a lifting of souls and spirits. It results in such a thrill of satisfaction and joy in fulfillment that it makes all the practice worthwhile. This is why musicians keep doing it, and I expect will continue to produce beautiful music for the next 100 years, and no doubt much longer.

## **HISTORICAL DATES TO BE RECOGNIZED:**

August 7, 1887: 1st Augustine church dedicated  
August 29, 1892: 2nd Augustine church dedicated  
June 23, 1903: cornerstone of present church laid

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS:**

A centennial booklet giving the history of Augustine and reminiscences of its members and friends.

A christmas card featuring a coloured photograph of the west window of the sanctuary.

A special 100th anniversary church T-shirt, with a picture of the church.

A pictorial directory of the congregation families.



**SPECIAL EVENTS OF THE  
CENTENARY YEAR  
November 23, 1986–November 22, 1987**

November 23, 1986:

- 99th anniversary service at 11:00 a.m. with former Augustine minister, Rev. Jim Uhrich, preaching
- vesper service in the evening following a potluck supper

December 13, 1986:

- Christmas shoppers' lunch

December 21, 1986:

- Christmas concert by the choir, 7:30 p.m.

January 18, 1987:

- 11:00 a.m. worship service;  
guest preacher Rev. Ron McIntosh

February 22, 1987:

- 11:00 a.m. worship service; dramatic presentation:  
"100 Years of Women's Work at Augustine"

March 22, 1987:

- 11:00 a.m. worship service;  
guest preacher Rev. Kerry Craig

May 24, 1987:

- 11:00 a.m. worship service;  
guest preacher Rev. Shawn Friday

Sept., 1987:

- 11:00 a.m. worship service;  
guest preacher Rev. Jim Strachan

Sept. 25-27, 1987:

- anniversary congregational retreat

October 25, 1987:

- 11:00 a.m. worship service: "Celebration of Art"

November 20, 1987:

- 100th anniversary dinner and dance at the  
Masonic Temple

November 22, 1987:

- 100th anniversary service; guest preacher Dr. Bruce  
McLeod, Metropolitan United Church, Toronto