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Brian Gobbett, Bruce L. Guenther and Robynne Rogers
Healey

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Please Note

The following papers were presented to the Canadian Society of Church History, but were not made available for publication: Eleanor Stebner, “Apologizing for Past Wrongs: A Step Towards Global Citizenship?”; Marguerite Van Die, “‘What God hath joined . . .’: Religious Perspectives on Marriage and Divorce in Late Victorian Canada”; Darren Dochuk, “Hillybilly Preachers, Plain Folk, and ‘Ham and Eggs’: California’s Tumultuous Turn from Depression-era Populism to Post-war Conservatism”; Gary Miedema, “‘A Christian Country’: Religious Broadcasting and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1938-1960”; Sachiyo Takashima, “Women Who Made a Great Bridge Between North America and Japan: Gwen Norman and Haru Matsukata Reischauer, and their Efforts to Create Mutual Understanding”; and Gordon Heath, “‘Forming Sound Public Opinion’: Late Victorian Canadian Protestant Press and Nation-Building.” The conference also included a joint session with the Canadian Theological Society on “A Pilgrimage in Progress: A History of the United Church of Canada.”

Religious Landscapes in Transition: Protestantism, Urban Change, and Social Christianity in Early Twentieth-Century Montreal

ROSALYN TRIGGER
University of Waterloo

As recession gave way to renewed economic prosperity in the early years of the twentieth century, Montrealers watched with interest as the built environment of their city came to life once again. Despite the seeming permanence and solidity of their buildings, Protestant churches were far from immune to the unrelenting economic forces at work around them. Particularly hard hit were the churches in the uptown district of Montreal, home to an important segment of the city's Protestant middle and upper classes.¹ As their previously quiet residential surroundings gave way to hotels, places of entertainment, and department stores from the 1890s onwards, many of Montreal's leading Protestant congregations were faced, some not for the first time, with the difficult decision of whether to remain in place and adapt to a changing environment or whether to sell and rebuild in the new suburban neighbourhoods to which so many of their members were moving.²

During the same period, Protestants were coming under the influence of the social gospel (more often referred to as social Christianity in the British context), leading some to believe that social institutions – including churches – needed to be transformed in order to redeem and perfect Canadian urban society.³ In this paper, I argue that analysis of the debates that took place within Montreal's uptown Protestant congregations concerning their church buildings can shed light on our understanding of the influence of social Christianity at the congregational level.⁴ This

religious movement has more often been studied in Canada through the lens of influential churchmen or national denominational committees and publications, providing vital insights into its theological and philosophical underpinnings. Given the centrality of the congregation within Protestantism, it seems equally important to ask what sort of impact these ideas had on the lives of urban middle-class congregations. Much of this paper seeks to explore this question by presenting three congregational case studies drawn from the period between 1890 and 1914.⁵

While the response to social Christianity varied from congregation to congregation, many struggled with the dilemma of responding effectively to urban as well as theological change while simultaneously satisfying the needs of existing church members. At the heart, then, of my investigation is the tension that exists within all Christian congregations between what Gregory Baum describes as the logic of mission – the essential purpose for which a religious organization exists – and the logic of maintenance – the need to ensure the material well-being and perpetuation of the organization itself.⁶ As we shall see, the decisions made by members of each of the three case study congregations concerning their church buildings was the outcome of a struggle between the desire to integrate elements of social Christianity into their logic of mission and the difficulties that this posed in terms of the logic of maintenance.

A History of Relocation

We must begin, however, by examining the way in which a previous generation of Protestant Montrealers addressed similar issues. Doing so provides a contrast that helps to place early twentieth-century congregational decision making in perspective. As Montreal's original downtown core became increasingly commercial from the 1850s and 1860s onwards, the uptown district developed as the residence of choice for Montreal's growing Anglo-Protestant middle and upper classes.⁷ Fearful of losing members, and anxious to erect more elaborate church buildings, nearly all of Montreal's oldest Protestant congregations – about twelve in all – decided to move “up the hill” from the original downtown core in the period between 1850 and 1889. Here they re-established themselves alongside new congregations that were also building churches in the area (see Figure 1). Similar patterns of church relocation have been documented for growing cities across North America, including Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh.⁸

Elsewhere, I have demonstrated that church relocations during this period led to the creation of much more socially exclusive congregations than had previously existed.⁹ Stephen Leacock provides a fictional account of this process in *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich*:

In one respect the rival churches of Plutoria Avenue had had a similar history. Each of them had moved up by successive stages from the lower and poorer parts of the city . . . Thus both the churches, as decade followed decade, made their way up the slope of the City till St. Asaph's was presently gloriously expropriated by the street railway company, and planted its spire in triumph on Plutoria Avenue itself. But St. Osoph's followed . . . As the two churches moved, their congregations, or at least all that was best of them – such members as were sharing in the rising fortunes of the City – moved also.¹⁰

While some ministers and congregation members expressed concern that the location and grandeur of the new uptown churches made them less accessible to “the masses,” priority was usually given to the convenience and wishes of the body of individuals upon whose financial support the church depended. There is little to suggest that the erection of elaborate church buildings and the leaving behind of less wealthy congregation members was viewed as being incompatible with the evangelical project. Instead, uptown church goers actively pursued their charitable and evangelical endeavours in lower parts of the city, such as Griffintown, by establishing missions and supporting working-class churches.¹¹ Evidence suggests that evangelicals and non-evangelicals alike viewed this as an appropriate response to nineteenth-century urban change. As congregations deliberated on whether or not to move once again in the early twentieth century, a very different social and theological context encouraged renewed examination of the relationship between church buildings, their congregations, and the surrounding environment.

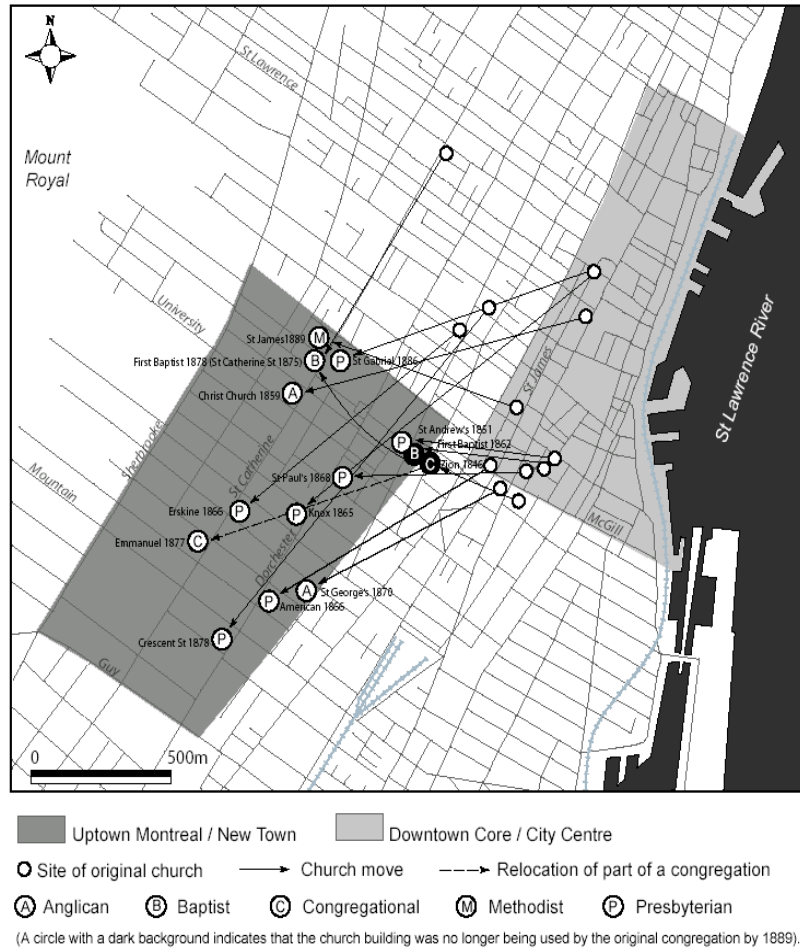


Figure 1: Relocation of Churches into the Uptown District, 1849-1899

Congregational Decision Making in the Early Twentieth Century

Social Christianity held little appeal for social conservatives, who did not believe that the current socio-economic system was in need of reform. Nor did it attract the theologically orthodox, who felt that religion had no business interfering in such matters. It appealed more strongly, however, to laypeople and pastors wishing to respond to the urban-

industrial problems and social tensions that were emerging during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It also was attractive to those anxious to provide their churches with a renewed sense of purpose, commitment, and relevance in a rapidly-changing world.

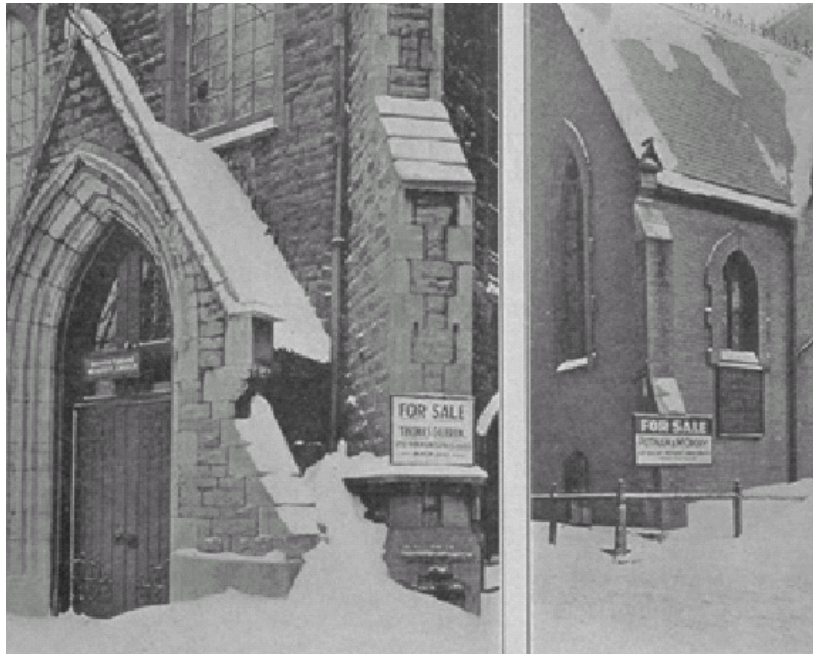


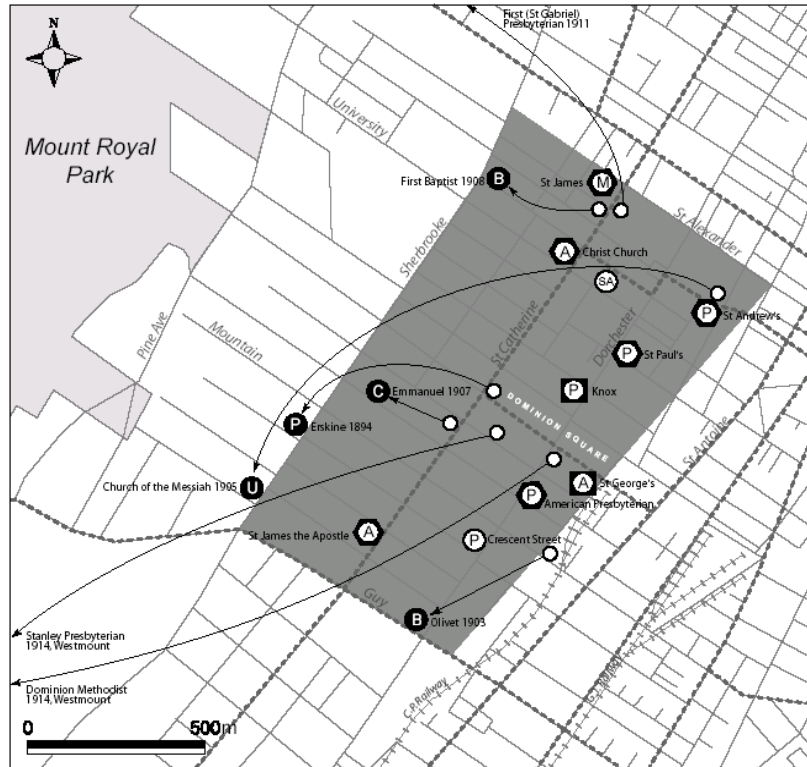
Figure 2: Dominion Square Methodist Church and Stanley Street Presbyterian Church, decorated with “For Sale” Signs (Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec, Massicotte Collection. Original image is from *The Saturday Mirror*, 8 March 1913).

The actual state of the uptown churches in Montreal, as viewed through the pages of the local newspapers, nevertheless seemed to present a stark contrast with social Christianity’s vision of religious institutions that were deeply engaged in the project of redeeming and regenerating urban society. Frequent articles announcing the sale or potential sale of uptown church buildings testified to the willingness of many congregations to part with their old properties at a healthy profit rather than stay on to do battle in an increasingly commercial and diverse neighbourhood.¹² On the streets, “For Sale” signs decorated churches that had already been

sold by their congregations and were now in the hands of property speculators (Figure 2). Meanwhile, dramatic renovations transformed vacated places of worship into commercial spaces.¹³ Other churches were demolished and disappeared entirely from the urban landscape.

Especially damaging to the reputations of the uptown Protestant churches was speculation in the press about the large sums of money involved, reinforcing the impression that the congregations of these socially-exclusive Protestant churches were preoccupied with pecuniary matters. Andrew Macphail, a McGill University professor and man of letters, stated unequivocally that the churches were missing a golden opportunity “to declare to the world that there are other considerations than those which can be reckoned in money.” “The very existence of a church,” he argued, “– the more humble the better – occupying an expensive site in company with buildings which scrape the sky . . . would be a perpetual protest against the practices which go on in those buildings.”¹⁴ The sale of their buildings also associated them with a speculative process that was enabling certain individuals and groups to generate substantial wealth in a fashion that called into question the traditional evangelical emphasis on the connections between morality, hard work, and material reward. Some accounts portrayed the churches as the victims of commercial expansion, powerless in the face of progress, but such an image was equally unflattering because it made religious institutions look weak in relation to economic forces.¹⁵

Examination of a map showing church relocations in the uptown district prior to 1914 suggests, however, that a more complex situation was emerging at this time (Figure 3). While almost all the congregations in the area contemplated selling their buildings, many ultimately chose either to remain in place or else moved relatively short distances within the uptown district. A number of practical reasons for this can be identified, including the ability of churches to draw members from a much greater geographic area than in past as a result of the introduction of electric street cars in the early 1890s.¹⁶ Practical and material considerations nevertheless offer only a partial explanation of what motivated congregations to remain in the uptown district. While a willingness to remain cannot necessarily be interpreted as a decision to engage and transform the surrounding community, many of the decisions that were taken by congregations at this time only make sense when viewed as a response to social Christianity. This will be demonstrated in the case studies that follow.



Note: Churches and church moves outside the Uptown District are not shown on this map.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ■ Uptown Montreal | → Church move | --- Street Railways (as of 1907) |
| ○ Original site of church that had moved by 1914. | ⊗ New site of church that had moved by 1914 (not shown if church moved off the map). | ⊙ Church known to have considered selling by 1914. |
| ⊠ Church that had sold its building by 1914. | Ⓐ Anglican | ⓑ Baptist |
| Ⓐ Anglican | Ⓒ Congregational | Ⓜ Methodist |
| ⓐ Presbyterian | Ⓢ Salvation Army Citadel | Ⓤ Unitarian |

Figure 3: Uptown Montreal, 1914: A Protestant Landscape in Transition

Emmanuel Congregational Church: Training for Social Service

Emmanuel Congregational Church was one of only a few congregations that not only sold their original uptown church buildings, but also built new places of worship in the period prior to 1914. Rather than leaving the uptown district, however, the members of Emmanuel chose to

rebuild only a few blocks away. Although the plan initially arose out of dissatisfaction with the acoustics and ventilation of their old building, it seems that a desire to support their new minister's social gospel-inspired vision of the church's future may have helped them to arrive at this decision.

Emmanuel Church was a descendent of Zion Congregational Church, which had traditionally been one of Montreal's most militantly Protestant and evangelical congregations. Ministers such as J.B. Silcox and Hugh Pedley, both advocates of the social gospel, helped to steer the congregation towards an embrace of social Christianity.¹⁷ According to the church secretary, A.K. Grafton, the Reverend Hugh Pedley wished to see his church transformed into "a real, living power in the community – above all a Church where the Spirit of Christ may be manifested in its membership, ever ready to lend a hand where help is needed and to endeavour to right the wrongs that ought not to be."¹⁸ The church board embraced this vision as its own, and in 1903 expressed the opinion that Emmanuel Church had the material, the organization, and the means to do "more aggressive and progressive work than ever before."¹⁹

Though not essential, a new church building with improved facilities came to be seen as offering possibilities in terms of implementing this programme. The trustees received an acceptable offer for their St. Catherine Street building in 1905 and plans were soon underway for the erection of a new church.²⁰ There was no question of moving very far from the original location. Instead, it was hoped that relocation to a more residential street would enable them to purchase a less expensive site and rebuild free of debt. At the same time, the trustees expressed a strong desire to select the site that would be "best suited to effective Christian work" and asked church members, when expressing their personal choice of "locality" in response to a congregational circular, to answer the question, "Where will the church do its best and highest service?"²¹ The wording of this question reflected a very different type of thinking than that which had motivated the original uptown church relocations. The focus had previously been on a practical desire to choose the site that would be most convenient for the majority of church members. Increasingly church members were being asked to determine which location would place the church in the best position to reach out and serve the needs of the surrounding community.

The decision to abandon Gothic architecture in favour of something considered to be less overtly religious and more in keeping with the

modern age also reflected this intent.²² A commentary in the *Canadian Architect and Builder* suggested that the design “gets over the objection to Gothic . . . that it is out of keeping with our time and the buildings in which we live our daily life.”²³ Similar views were expressed at this time by advocates of the “socialized” church in the United States, who criticized traditional church buildings for being “separated from the everyday life of the people” and standing “only as the representative of spiritual and eternal interests.” It was argued that “the church ought to suggest, not an ‘absentee God’ and a future heaven, but the kingdom of God here and now and coming daily in every community.”²⁴

Congregation members seem to have had no qualms about leaving the old place of worship to its commercial fate (Figure 4).²⁵ Instead, funds from the sale of the old building were seen as enabling the church to become a more effective agent of community service. Once in their new building, the congregation embarked on the ambitious goal of enlisting every church member in some form of practical social service and transformed the church into a scene of constant daily activity. A church pamphlet produced in 1915 emphasized that while church after church had fled from the downtown district, it was Emmanuel’s role to “take the better part of remaining on the firing line and finding the new mode of attack that shall capture the enemy’s trenches.” Only by doing so would Emmanuel be able “not simply hold her own in the changed community, but work out for herself a glorious future of service.”²⁶

As a small denomination in Montreal, the Congregationalists had always been heavily involved in interdenominational church movements, so to some extent the emphasis on training members for social service in the broader community represented continuity with past interests. At the same time, the focus on social service shifted the congregation away from its traditional emphasis on the conversion of individuals and led it to place greater importance on the need to work towards a more harmonious social order.

St. George’s Anglican Church: Solving Social Problems

The decisions made by St. George’s Church also reflected the influence of social Christianity. In a 1909 sermon entitled “A New Montreal,” the rector of St. George’s pleaded for “a broader, grander ideal for the Church” in which “individual religion” would reach “its crown and



Figure 4: The Original Emmanuel Congregational Church Being Transformed into Shops, 1911 (Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec, Massicotte Collection. The original source of this image is unknown. A similar photograph appears in the *Montreal Witness*, 16 March 1912).

blossom in social religion.” While acknowledging that many in his congregation were too practical to share this vision, he nevertheless went on to admonish them for their pessimism in light of evidence that the new

century was – as he described it – “palpitating with great social enthusiasms of many kinds.”²⁷

As an Anglican Church, St. George’s had distinct parish boundaries that happened to include both a small uptown area as well as a very poor downtown district, with the church perched on the edge of the hill between the two. The extensive mission and charitable work traditionally carried out by St. George’s in the lower reaches of its parish was made possible by the wealth and resources of uptown congregation members. By the early years of the twentieth century, only a very small percentage of seatholders continued to live within the parish boundaries. In light of the growing commercialization of the neighbourhood, and continued threats by the Canadian Pacific Railway to expropriate part of their church building, this group became increasingly anxious to find a new location for the church. Countering accusations of worldliness, they emphasized that they had no plans to desert the downtown portion of their parish, but instead hoped to use the substantial proceeds from the sale of the old church to benefit this constituency.²⁸ By June 1914 plans for a magnificent new church were on display. The proposed location, which was just a few blocks to the west of the existing church, ensured that the church remained well if not better placed to deal with the problems existing in the downtown district. The new church was designed to suggest a parish that was well-equipped and ready “to help on the Kingdom of God,”²⁹ and it was pointed out that ample room remained on the property to build settlement houses or carry out other community-oriented schemes.³⁰

These plans came to an abrupt halt when the company that had bought the old church found itself unable to come up with the money to do so.³¹ The failure of new funds and facilities to materialize meant in essence that St. George’s work in the downtown district continued very much as before. Rather than taking on more pro-active measures to ameliorate social problems such as crowded tenements, unemployment, and unsanitary living conditions, this led to a continued emphasis on “charity.” Although impossible to verify, it seems likely that such an outcome that may well have suited the more socially conservative element within the congregation.

St. James Methodist Church: Inspired by the Institutional Church Model

Compared with Emmanuel and St. George's, there was far less unanimity within the church leadership concerning the fate of St. James Methodist Church. Ever since moving uptown to their cathedral-style building in 1889, the trustees at St. James had been plagued by financial concerns and had only been saved from having to sell their building in the early years of the twentieth century as a result of the generosity of Methodists from across Canada.³² By 1910, rumours were once again rife concerning the sale of the church. Profound changes had taken place in the surrounding neighbourhood and it was observed that St. James was becoming more than ever a "People's Church," although it still retained a large family contingent.³³

Those in favour of the sale argued that the church building could be sold for a very large sum – estimated initially at one and a quarter million dollars – and a new place of worship erected in a more residential part of the uptown district. The property, they maintained, was now "too valuable . . . to be held by the Church, in the absence of a sufficient endowment to enable it to do the larger, aggressive work which ought to be done in the neighbourhood."³⁴ Others were utterly opposed to the sale and believed that removal to a new location would result in the loss of St. James' distinctive character.³⁵ There was also concern that the Methodists from across Canada who had helped to save the church only a few years earlier might see the sale as a betrayal of their trust. While the leaders of St. James shared many of the aspirations of leaders at Emmanuel and St. George's, the symbolic weight of their "cathedral of Methodism" was such that it initially tipped the balance in favour of retaining the church building. Then, in October 1911, a two million dollar offer for the property caused them to reconsider their previous decision.³⁶

At the same time, a vision had begun to emerge of taking advantage of St. James's central location and creating what was known at the time as an institutional church. The services offered by institutional churches varied depending on their locales, but emphasis was often placed on serving the recreational, as well as the religious, social, and intellectual, needs of the surrounding community.³⁷ Those at St. James envisaged providing facilities such as a gym, swimming bath, and reading rooms, but recognized that greater revenues would be required to carry out this type of work.³⁸ This left decision makers at St. James torn between their desire to keep their building and the need to raise funds to carry out more

ambitious church work. The inability to resolve this dilemma ultimately led to inaction, and a renewed focus on finding alternate ways to clear the church's debt.

Although they differed from their counterparts at Emmanuel and St. George's in terms of their decision to retain the old church building, leaders at St. James likewise saw their resolution to remain in the heart of the uptown district as an integral part of their sense of mission. It is, however, unclear to what extent this represented a departure from tradition for a church that had always been at the centre of evangelical revivalism in Montreal. On the one hand, institutional church work could be seen as an attempt to prevent young men and women from getting involved in the types of amusements, such as drink and dancing, that evangelical Methodists had traditionally associated with immorality and alienation from Christian life. On the other, the promotion of recreational activities in the churches could be seen as a contribution to the social redemption of Canadian urban society. There is no evidence to suggest that such matters were ever thought through or debated very clearly at a congregational level, perhaps because the avoidance of explicit discussion made it possible to satisfy congregation members who retained more individualistic evangelical beliefs, while at the same time offering hope to social gospellers.

Conclusion

While the decisions that were made by each congregation as to whether or not to remain in the uptown district were heavily influenced by financial and practical considerations, scrutiny of the records of Montreal's leading churches reveals that their choices also reflected the varied responses of individual congregations to the message of social Christianity.

Whereas traditional evangelical Christianity, with its emphasis on the conversion of the individual, had provided little incentive for churches to remain in the original city centre in the 1860s and 1870s, the renewed aspiration to place Christian religion at the heart of urban society's political and economic life made the positioning of a church in the centre of the city much more meaningful in the early years of the twentieth century. For the three churches discussed above, remaining in the uptown district reflected a desire to make decisions that embodied a commitment to social Christianity. Each church worked with a slightly different vision

that was inspired in some way by traditional congregational interests. While these choices reflected a new-found commitment to reforming social conditions through the application of Christ's teaching, their compatibility with congregational traditions – and with a continued emphasis on the need for personal conversion – meant that they did not represent a decisive break with the past.

The desire to retain uptown sites, combined with the simultaneous desire to raise funds for new socially-oriented endeavours, nevertheless posed a dilemma. Of the three congregations, Emmanuel was the most successful at negotiating this quandary. Failure to sell their original uptown churches meant that both St. George's and St. James never acquired either the financial resources or the facilities that they had hoped would enable them to respond more effectively to the social needs of the surrounding community. It is difficult to determine whether this represented a lack of will on the part of congregation members, or simply the fact that the enormous investment in religious infrastructure that had occurred in the previous generation made it difficult for congregations to manoeuvre within a new social and theological context: in other words, a prevailing of the logic of maintenance over the logic of mission. With no interest in responding to more radical calls for societal transformation being made by social gossellers such as J.S. Woodsworth,³⁹ Montreal's elite uptown churches struggled in the period leading up to World War I to embody the commitment to the social reform that many of their members believed was necessary. This allowed the image of churches eager to sell their properties for large sums of money to prevail, perhaps giving credence to the warning that it was only by firmly standing their ground on the city's most valuable and prominent sites that the churches could demonstrate the power of the sacred over and against the secular commercial world.

Endnotes

1. The district referred to as the "uptown" district in this paper roughly corresponds with the central business district of the modern city.
2. Protestant churches in other cities faced a similar dilemma. A contemporary, J.S. Woodsworth, drew attention to the removal of churches from densely populated areas of Canadian cities during this period in *My Neighbour: A Study of City Conditions. A Plea for Social Service* (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, 1911), 162-65. The issue is also discussed

regarding Toronto in Brian J. Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, 1988), 79-80 and 91-92. Jon Caulfield links cycles of church building in Toronto with stages of Canadian urban development in his study of church abandonment during the twentieth century ("The Growth of the Industrial City and Inner Toronto's Vanished Church Buildings," *Urban History Review* 23, no. 2 [1995]: 3-19). The impact of suburbanization on British churches during this period is discussed in Callum G. Brown, "The Mechanism of Religious Growth in Urban Societies: British Cities Since the Eighteenth Century," in *European Religion in the Age of Great Cities, 1830-1930*, ed. Hugh McLeod (London: Routledge, 1995), 255-56.

3. For discussion of the definition of the term "social gospel," see Phyllis D. Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 104; Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 17; Brian Clarke, "English-Speaking Canada from 1854," in *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, eds. Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 324-25; Fraser, *The Social Uplifters*, xi-xii; Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Volume II: 1870-1914* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 238-39. Allen and Fraser describe the different wings (conservative, progressive, and radical) that emerged within the social gospel movement, with differences becoming more pronounced over time. According to Airhart, historian William R. Hutchison has argued that it was the elevation of social salvation over individual salvation, both temporally and in importance, "that made the social gospel a distinctive movement" (104). This very narrow definition of the social gospel would exclude almost all of what I will refer to as the "social gospel" or "social Christianity" in the following discussion. It should be noted that the term "social gospel" was not in current use in Montreal in the pre-1914 period. The term "social Christianity" appears in the *St. George's Monthly* (Vol.1, no.5 [February 1908], 32), where it is used in reference "to the flood of recent publications which advocate the solution of social problems by the application of the principles of Christ's teaching." This definition is more in keeping with what I mean when using the terms "social gospel" and "social Christianity."
4. In doing so, I am drawing on the inspiration of work within cultural-historical geography that explores the ways in which social and economic tensions, as well as ideologies and discourses, become physically and symbolically inscribed in the built environment. See, for example, Mona Domosh, "A Method for Interpreting Landscape: A Case Study of the New York World

- Building,” *Area 21*, no. 4 (1989): 347-55.
5. The discussion presented here forms part of a more comprehensive argument regarding the transformation of the Protestant religious landscape of Montreal between 1850 and 1914. This can be found in Rosalyn Trigger, “God’s Mobile Mansions: Protestant Church Relocation and Extension in Montreal, 1850-1914” (Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 2004).
 6. Gregory Baum, *Theology and Society* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 234-35.
 7. David B. Hanna, “The New Town of Montreal: Creation of An Upper Middle Class Suburb On The Slope of Mount Royal In the Mid-Nineteenth Century” (M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1977); and Roderick MacLeod, “Salubrious Settings and Fortunate Families: The Making of Montreal’s Golden Square Mile, 1840-1895” (Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1997).
 8. Aaron Ignatius Abell, *The Urban Impact on American Protestantism 1865-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1943), 6; Craig E. Colten, “Shaping Sacred Space in Urban Ohio: 1788-1860,” *Ohio Geographers* 13 (1985): 77-78; Daniel Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991); Charles D. Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home: Life in British and American Reformed Congregations, 1830-1915* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 237-38; and Michael S. Franch, “The Congregational Community in the Changing City, 1840-70,” *Maryland Historical Magazine* 71, no. 3 (1976): 367-80.
 9. This was done by linking church membership lists to the City of Montreal’s rental tax assessment rolls. It was also demonstrated cartographically. See Trigger, “God’s Mobile Mansions,” 141-88.
 10. Stephen Leacock, *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 134. This book was originally published in 1914.
 11. Rosalyn Trigger, “Protestant Restructuring in the Canadian City: Church and Mission in the Industrial Working-Class District of Griffintown, Montreal,” *Urban History Review / Revue d’histoire urbaine* 31, no. 1 (Fall 2002): 5-18.
 12. See, for example, “Knox Church Sold to Sun Life,” *Montreal Witness*, 13 June 1911; “Stanley Street Presbyterian Church Sold,” *Montreal Witness*, 15 March 1912; and “Church Which May Be Sold: St. Andrew’s Church of Scotland,” *Montreal Witness*, 26 March 1912.

13. Images of Dominion Square Methodist Church and Stanley Street Presbyterian Church with "For Sale" signs can be found in "One Reason Why Civic Conditions in Montreal are Bad," *The Saturday Mirror*, 8 March 1913. For a photo of Dominion Square Methodist Church being transformed into commercial space, see "Dominion Square Methodist Church as it Now Looks," *Montreal Standard*, 22 November 1913.
14. Andrew Macphail, "Unto the Church," *The University Magazine* 12 (April 1913): 362. It should be emphasized that Macphail was not an advocate of the social gospel and actively resisted the trend towards higher levels of church involvement in politics, legislation, and the resolution of social problems. Instead, he believed that churches should be first and foremost places of worship in which people could experience "the sheer pleasure of losing themselves in the infinite." Simply by their presence, he argued, churches could serve as "a witness to the world that the spirit of religion is not yet vanished, and that some humanity remains."
15. See, for example, the discussion in "Must Picturesque Dominion Square Lose Its Charm to March of Modern Business?" *Montreal Standard*, 15 November 1913.
16. Maps showing the geographic distribution of uptown congregation members during this period confirm that uptown churches were drawing their congregations from a much wider geographic area than in the past (see Trigger, "God's Mobile Mansions," 292-93).
17. For a description of J.B. Silcox's views, see Mélanie Méthot, "Fame Does Not Necessarily Bring Immortality: The Reverend J.B. Silcox, a True Social Gospeller (1847-1933)," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society*, 45, no. 1 (2003): 31-64. Hugh Pedley's *Looking Forward: The Strange Experience of the Rev. Fergus McCheyne* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1913), a didactic novel set predominantly in Montreal and designed to promote church union, provides an intriguing introduction to his thinking.
18. 21 January 1901, Report of the Church Board, EMM/1/7/3 Minutes of the Monthly Congregational Meetings including Committee Reports 1899-1902, Contenant 155, P603 S2 SS13 Emmanuel Congregational Church, Fonds United Church of Canada, Montreal and Ottawa Conference Archives (hereafter UCCM), Archives Nationales du Québec, dépôt de Montréal (hereafter ANQ).
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21. Insert dated 16 October 1905, Copy of a circular sent to church members and subscribers on behalf of the Board of Trustees, EMM/1/2/1 Board of Trustee Minutes 1905-1919, Contenant 153, P603 S2 SS13 Emmanuel Congregational Church, UCCM, ANQ.
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27. "St. George's Monthly Pulpit," *St. George's Monthly* 3, no.2 (November 1909): 3-9. Copies of this church magazine were accessed in St. George's Anglican Church Archives, Montreal.
28. See, for example, "The Removal of the Church," *St. George's Monthly* 6, no.9 (June 1913): 2; and *The Montreal Churchman* 1, no.3 (January 1913): 8.
29. *St. George's Monthly* 6, no.3 (December 1912): 11.
30. *The Montreal Churchman* 2, no.8 (June 1914): 6.
31. A.P. Gower Rees, *Historical Sketch of St. George's Church, Montreal and its Constitution* (Granby, QC: Simms Printing Co., 1952), 35-36.
32. Nathan Mair, *The People of St. James Montreal 1803-1984* (Montreal: St. James United Church, 1984).

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37. For further discussion of institutional churches, see *Social Service Congress, Ottawa 1914: Report of Addresses and Proceedings* (Toronto: Social Service Council of Canada, 1914), 130-31.
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“For Now We See Through a Glass But Dimly”: The First Synod of the Diocese of Calgary and the State of Post-Vatican II English-Canadian Roman Catholicism

NORMAN KNOWLES
St. Mary's University College

Between 6-9 April 1994 the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary held its first diocesan synod. The synod, convoked in December 1990 by the Most Rev. Paul O'Byrne, involved three and half years of extensive planning and consultation. The bishop hoped that such a gathering of clergy and laity would provide an opportunity to reinvigorate the diocese, overcome division, reach out to the alienated, engage the laity in the life of the Church, and breathe new life into the directions of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Like many dioceses in the Canadian church, the Diocese of Calgary experienced declining lay participation, dwindling numbers of priests and religious, inadequate financial resources, and growing disunity between liberals and conservatives in the decades that followed Vatican II. A close examination of this diocesan synod thus provides a unique lens through which to explore the issues and developments that have shaped and defined English-Canadian Roman Catholicism since the Second Vatican Council. The resolutions and deliberations of the synod are especially important for the insights they provide into the concerns and priorities of the laity. The exclusion of many of the resolutions approved by the synod from the bishop's promulgation and the frustration and disappointment experienced by many delegates sheds considerable light on the continuing tensions that exist within the Canadian church.

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Although diocesan synods have a long history in the Roman Catholic Church, such synods have not been a common occurrence in the life of the Canadian church. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) in fact required that a diocesan synod be held once a year. According to Trent, bishops were to summon the vicar-general, the members of the cathedral chapter, holders of benefices, and all others who have care of souls. Lay persons could be invited to attend but had no right to be summoned. Although the decrees of Trent have never been revoked, the custom of holding annual diocesan synods had fallen into abeyance in many areas by the eighteenth century. Diocesan synods were rarely held in Canada. With the Second Vatican Council's commitment to collegiality and shared responsibility among bishops and priests and the new emphasis on lay involvement in the life and ministry of the Church, diocesan synods became more common in some areas. During the pontificate of John Paul II, however, officials in Rome became increasingly concerned that diocesan synods threatened to erode the authority of the bishop and the *magisterium* of the Church, encouraged competition between different interests in the Church, and created false expectations of change among the laity. In 1983 a new Code of Canon Law set out the juridical norms that were to govern diocesan synods. The Code and a subsequent set of instructions prepared by the Congregation for Bishops and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples reasserted episcopal authority, clearly defined the purpose and composition of diocesan synods, and demarcated the nature of lay participation in such assemblies.¹

The period following the Second Vatican Council was one of dramatic and sometimes unsettling change in the Diocese of Calgary. The number of priests and religious in the diocese failed to keep pace with the growth of the Roman Catholic population of southern Alberta. Between 1968 and 1990 the Catholic population in the diocese more than doubled but the number of priests declined from 150 to 95. Not only were there fewer clergy, but the average age of priests had climbed to sixty. The declining health and imminent retirement of many priests and the widening generation gap between clergy and laity presented serious challenges to the diocese as did the dwindling number of vocations. In 1968 the diocese reported seventeen seminarians; by 1990 there were only seven men from the diocese training for the priesthood. The ranks of the clergy were further thinned by the laicization of a significant number of clergy who left the priesthood to marry or out of frustration with the lack of reform in the Church. The demands placed upon the clergy increased

dramatically during this period. In 1968 there was one priest for every 757 persons in the diocese; by 1990 the ratio had increased to one priest for every 3,266 persons. Such trends threatened to diminish the priestly role to the simple dispensation of sacraments to people whose daily pastoral care was increasingly entrusted to others. At the same time, the image of the clergy was seriously damaged by revelations of past abuses by priests and religious employed in orphanages, reform schools and Native residential schools. These pressures contributed to an increase in stress, burnout and poor morale among a clergy already caught up in a crisis of change. In the wake of Vatican II, many new priests were often unsure of what was expected of them and many older clergy frequently found it difficult to adjust to the Church's new ways.² The lack of vocations forced the diocese to look farther afield to recruit priests from Poland, Vietnam and the Philippines. By 1990 nearly a third of all the priests in the diocese were foreign-born. The importation of clergy from overseas was often followed by a difficult period of adjustment for both priest and parishioners. The religious orders that had historically sustained many of the Church's schools, hospitals, and social service agencies also suffered from dwindling numbers. In 1968 there were 243 sisters and more than twenty novices from thirteen different orders. By 1990 several orders had ceased operation in the diocese, the number of sisters had declined by 44 per cent and there were only two novices. Decreasing numbers forced several orders to consolidate, reduce or abandon much of their former work in the diocese and longstanding Catholic institutions such as the Holy Cross Hospital were secularized.³

As the number of clergy and religious declined, the diocese increasingly looked to the laity to become more involved in the ministry of the Church. The Second Vatican Council's affirmation of the Church as the whole people of God and its emphasis on the equality of all Christians in baptism promised to temper the hierarchical, authoritarian and clerical structures of the past with a more open and inclusive church that recognized and encouraged the participation of the laity in all aspects of church life.⁴ Innovations, such as the establishment of parish councils, however, often led to tension rather than a shared sense of mission. Some clergy, used to running their parishes as they saw fit and unaccustomed to lay input, were uncomfortable with the new spirit of inclusion and consultation and resisted the formation of pastoral councils in their parishes or refused to support their work. For many within the laity, the creation of the new pastoral councils was a sign of the Church's democra-

tization and recognition of their right to be consulted in parish affairs. Not surprisingly, conflict often resulted as clergy confronted determined parishioners empowered and emboldened by the Vatican Council's emphasis on equality and lay inclusion.⁵

Ironically, as opportunities for lay involvement in the life of the Church increased, active participation in the Church began to decline. In 1968 nearly 70 per cent of all Roman Catholics in southern Alberta were considered active within the Church. By 1988 only 44 per cent were classified as active. Sunday Mass attendance experienced an equally dramatic decline from nearly 40 per cent of the total Catholic population in 1970 to less than twenty per cent in 1988. Even though the total Roman Catholic population increased significantly during this period, the numbers of persons baptized and confirmed each year remained stable.⁶ If the Second Vatican Council sought to engage the Church in the modern world through the active participation of the laity, the results in the Diocese of Calgary were disappointing as increasingly large segments of the Roman Catholic population became inactive in the Church. Decreased attendance had a direct impact on diocesan and parish finances. Annual deficits forced the diocese to cut back on programs and staff. While the diocese succeeded in balancing its books, several parishes came uncomfortably close to defaulting on building loans and rural depopulation and the shortage of priests resulted in the consolidation and closure of some missions and parishes.⁷ Continuing financial difficulties limited the ability of the Diocese to introduce new initiatives or to respond to population growth and changing demographics.

The diocese was further beset by intensifying divisions between liberals and conservatives within the church. Liberal Catholics, inspired by the Second Vatican Council's spirit of openness to the modern world and tolerance of diversity, challenged the Church to further reform especially on matters of discipline and moral teaching. Some liberals urged the Church to reconsider its teachings on contraception and divorce, to expand the ministry of women and to abolish compulsory priestly celibacy. To conservative Catholics such ideas represented a dangerous challenge to Church tradition and moral teaching. Conservatives critics charged that in trying to be modern and relevant, liberals threatened to erode Catholicism's distinctive identity and the Church's traditional claim to moral authority. Questioning the consequences of the liberal agenda of openness and tolerance, conservative Catholics called for a return to ethical absolutes reflecting traditional teachings concerning family,

sexuality and moral discipline. Conservatives sought to redefine the Second Vatican Council on their own terms and to return the Church to its “orthodox” roots through movements such as *Opus Dei*, the Legionnaires of Christ and *Regnum Christi*. While conservatives tended to look to the past, liberals challenged the Church to address present realities. For many liberals, this meant putting the cause of social justice at the heart of the Church’s mission.⁸

The arrival of the charismatic movement further added to the Church’s diversity in southern Alberta. By the mid-1970s, charismatic renewal constituted a powerful and sometimes divisive influence in many parishes. While some parishes were reinvigorated by the charismatic movement and the experience of tongues, prophecy and healing, others were deeply divided. Some Catholics were suspicious of the demonstrative style of charismatic prayer and its intense emotionalism. Others charged that the movement threatened traditional ecclesiastical authority and doctrine and that its preoccupation with individual experience detracted from the Church’s call to social action and community. Still others criticized the movement’s fundamentalism and tendency to proclaim the superiority of charismatic piety over all other forms of prayer and worship. Despite these objections, the movement attracted a large following in the diocese, especially among those disturbed by the forces of secularization in society and liberalization in the church.⁹

The Diocese of Calgary was shepherded through this period of dramatic and sometimes unsettling change by Paul J. O’Byrne. O’Byrne was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Carroll on 22 February 1948. As a parish priest, Paul O’Byrne displayed a “lively wit, enthusiasm and spontaneous warmth for people” and demonstrated a keen interest in “relating the gospel to the daily life of his people and their communities.”¹⁰ Wherever he served, Fr. O’Byrne displayed an avid interest in youth and social action. His involvement with youth and work in the community made him deeply aware of the need for the Church to come to terms with contemporary realities. Convinced of the need for change and innovation, Paul O’Byrne welcomed the winds of renewal that began to blow through the Church with Vatican II and which was then being implemented in the Diocese of Calgary by Bishop Klein. He was concerned, however, by how the spirit of reform would be practically applied at the local level. Paul O’Byrne’s reputation as an effective parish priest and a thoughtful advocate of reform resulted in his election in 1968 as chair of the Priests’ Senate, a new body recommended by the Second Vatican Council and

instituted by Bishop Klein. It was hoped that the Priests' Senate would help to move the Church away from the hierarchical and authoritarian church structures of the past towards a more collegial and consultative model of church life.

Bishop Klein died on 3 February 1968 only nine months after his installation as the fifth Bishop of Calgary. Following the death of Bishop Klein, the Diocesan Consultors chose Fr. Paul O'Byrne to be administrator of the diocese until a new bishop was appointed. The appointment was a recognition of O'Byrne's energy and abilities and a sign of the high regard in which he was held in the diocese.¹¹

The manner by which Bishops were to be chosen had been a subject of discussion both during and following the Second Vatican Council. Some believed that the process needed to be opened up and made more democratic. It was in this spirit that the clergy of the Diocese submitted a brief to the Apostolic Delegate to Canada requesting that they be consulted in the selection of the new bishop. The Apostolic Delegate responded favourably to the request and agreed to meet with the clergy of the diocese. During the meeting, the clergy made it clear that they wanted their new bishop to be a native of the diocese, or at least to be from western Canada and familiar with its ways and culture. There was also a strong desire that the new bishop be pastorally minded and accessible to the clergy and people of the diocese. At the end of the proceedings, the Apostolic Delegate invited the clergy to write to him with the names of individuals they felt were suited to the position and promised that he would forward the names to the Vatican. Throughout the proceedings, one name kept recurring – Paul O'Byrne who was named Bishop of Calgary on 21 June 1968. It was one of the first times that a bishop had been appointed after such open consultation with the diocesan clergy.¹²

In many respects, Paul O'Byrne was a new kind of bishop. Determined to remove any barriers that might separate him from the people he was called to serve, Bishop O'Byrne eschewed the pomp and trappings that had surrounded the office in the past. He dressed in priestly black and abandoned the Bishop's residence in Rosedale for a modest apartment not far from the Diocesan Pastoral Centre. His office was simple and unimposing. From the beginning, Bishop O'Byrne resolved that he would emphasize the pastoral dimension of his new office. He genuinely enjoyed meeting people and made a point of visiting parishes and meeting with the clergy as often as possible. Paul O'Byrne's "post-Vatican II style" certainly differentiated him from his predecessors and generated consider-

able expectations of change and renewal in the diocese.¹³ Beneath this optimism and enthusiasm, however, lay serious problems which were not long in rising to the surface. By the 1980s the Church in southern Alberta had to cope with the reality of decline, dissent and diversity. Bishop O'Byrne recognized the need for reconciliation and renewal in the diocese and in 1988 he approached his advisors with the idea of holding a diocesan synod. The bishop hoped that such a gathering would provide an opportunity for a renewed sense of vision, increased involvement in the mission and ministry of the church, and a heightened sense of communion and solidarity. After consultation with the Priests' Council, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and other groups, the bishop named Sr. Maria Nakagawa as Synod Coordinator in July 1990. In the autumn, a coordinating committee was struck with representatives from the Social Affairs and Religious Education Councils of the diocese, the universities and colleges, the separate school boards, youth, religious and each deanery. The bishop formally convoked the diocese's first synod in December 1990.¹⁴

Three and half years of careful planning and preparation preceded the meeting of the synod. To focus planning and discussion, organizers chose "Our Place in God's Family" as the synod theme. Organizers recognized from the start that the success of the synod depended on involving as many persons as possible in the process. To facilitate communication with the parishes and generate interest in the local church, a synod coordinator was selected in every parish. A preliminary survey was conducted to identify issues and concerns. Further input was received from small dialogue groups, led by trained facilitators, formed in the parishes and from open deanery meetings. All individuals in the diocese were invited to write to the synod coordinator to express their concerns, opinions and recommendations. In the end, more than 3,000 parishioners, including some 600 youth, participated in the process.¹⁵ On the basis of this feedback, organizers established seven commissions dealing with personal faith, the family, the parish, the diocese, the universal Church, education and youth. Each of the commissions reviewed the input received, identified key issues and produced a draft report with recommendations. In November 1993, the draft reports were circulated to all clergy and parish synod coordinators for their responses. Parishioners throughout the diocese were invited to respond to the commissions' recommendations by completing a survey. A series of resolutions was prepared for the synod based on the responses received from the clergy, parish coordinators and the 925 completed surveys. Delegate selection occurred in January 1994

and pre-synod workshops held in each deanery during February and March. The formal synod took place between 6-9 April 1994 and was attended by 132 voting delegates. Delegates passed 112 of the 113 recommendations brought before the synod. To ensure broad consensus, a 70 per cent approval rate was required for all resolutions.

Diocesan Administration

The resolutions adopted by the diocesan synod provide considerable insight into the concerns and priorities of active Roman Catholics in southern Alberta at the end of the twentieth century. These resolutions revealed a strong desire for reform of diocesan structures and procedures. During the discussions that preceded the synod, many participants expressed a wish for more “consistent direction and planning” from the diocesan administration and greater lay participation in diocesan decision-making. The Diocesan Pastoral Council, established in 1974, was to have provided a means for long term planning and lay input into administration of the diocese. The information gathered prior to the synod indicated that the “general faithful” appeared “to know relatively little about the role of the Diocesan Pastoral Council” and that the Council, while active, had “not communicated its work to the parishes” effectively. Delegates to the synod stressed the importance of gathering “input from the faithful” whenever the diocese considered major issues or changes of policy, if bitterness, resentment and misunderstanding were to be avoided. This was particularly critical before the Diocese made “any major changes” involving parish closings or amalgamations. Pre-synod consultations revealed that rural Catholics felt especially isolated from the diocese. Rural parishioners often complained that they were excluded from important decisions and that diocesan services were not easily accessed by country parishes. The resolutions approved by the synod expressed a strong desire for a more inclusive, effective, visible and accessible diocesan administration with a clear sense of direction and purpose.¹⁶

Pastoral Leadership and the Laity

Many participants in the pre-synod consultations indicated they felt that a new style of pastoral leadership was needed to carry parishes into the twenty-first century. To achieve this objective, the synod recommended that the seminary training of priests be updated and that the clergy

be provided with opportunities to develop their gifts throughout their active ministry. The synod encouraged all seminaries “to provide seminarians with leadership training” particularly in the areas of “listening skills, facilitating skills and conflict resolution.” Another motion urged seminaries and the diocese to provide training “to improve the standard of preparing and presenting homilies offered in the parishes.” This resolution reflected the increased importance that the laity attached to preaching and teaching. The faithful expected more from their priest than simply presiding at the liturgy and administering the sacraments. These changing expectations of the clergy resulted in a desire for greater lay input into the selection and appointment of priests. The synod requested lay representation on the Diocesan Vocation Formation Committee examining candidates for the priesthood and stressed the need to involve parish communities in the selection and appointment of their pastor. Of the 113 resolutions brought to synod, only the resolution advocating a voice for parishioners in the appointment of parish priests fell short of the 70 per cent support needed for adoption. Although the synod did not vote according to lay and clerical houses, it was clear that opposition to this resolution came primarily from the clergy. The isolation and increasing demands placed upon the clergy disturbed synod delegates. Although delegates expressed concern for the many pressures placed upon the clergy, especially by the shortage of priests, the resolutions also indicated a desire for a different type of pastoral leadership. During the extensive consultations that preceded the synod, many participants in the process identified priestly celibacy, and some the exclusion of women from priestly orders, as issues that the synod should address in light of the urgent need for more priests. Both issues lay beyond the authority of the bishop and the diocese and were not discussed during the synod although delegates did urge the bishop to consider calling single and married men to the diaconate to relieve some of the burden carried by priests.¹⁷

The Second Vatican Council encouraged lay involvement in all aspects of parish life. The feedback received prior to the synod indicated, however, that many persons in the diocese felt a need for greater collaboration and co-operation between the clergy and the laity in the parishes. It was noted that considerable confusion existed about the role and authority of the pastoral councils established in most parishes. Some questioned the representativeness of the councils and expressed frustration with their inability to function effectively. To address these concerns, the synod resolved that the nomination and selection of members for parish pastoral

councils should come from the parish community. In many parishes, the parish priest appointed the pastoral council. The synod further recommended that members of the pastoral council be “in touch” with their parish community and serve staggered terms to ensure a measure of continuity. Delegates stressed the important role that the pastoral council, working in collaboration with the clergy, should play in providing leadership and direction for the parish.

During the pre-synod consultations it became clear that many parishioners felt that the liturgy did not reflect the needs of the parish community. To ensure that worship reflected the needs and diversity of the whole community and utilized the gifts of the people, the synod encouraged more “collaborative decision-making” by parish liturgy committees. The synod also called upon the parish community to “take responsibility for the administrative and secretarial functions of the parish” in order to provide priests with more time to carry out their pastoral and sacramental duties. With more participatory decision-making, the potential for conflict increased. Delegates to the synod recognized this possibility and appealed to the diocese to establish a conflict resolution committee to help mediate disputes.¹⁸

Education and Formation

The input received prior to the synod clearly indicated that the people of the diocese wished to play a more active role in the life of the Church. Many participants also indicated, however, that they felt ill-equipped to give witness to their faith and to exercise their baptismal ministry. The synod challenged parishes to become effective learning and formation centres that transformed their members into mature Christians equipped to live out the Gospel. To achieve this, parishes were to identify the educational needs of their parishioners and then establish programs of spiritual formation and provide opportunities for adult education. Pre-synod discussions revealed that many faithful were unclear about the Church’s teaching on important theological, social and moral issues. For the sake of clarity and unity, the synod stressed that all educational materials used in the parishes should be approved by the bishop. To provide effective support and training to the parishes, the synod recommended that the diocesan Religious Education Office be expanded and that the diocese “find the ways and means of training clergy, religious and laity to be spiritual directors.” Delegates to the synod attached tremendous

importance to the family as a primary centre of spiritual development. The information gathered before the synod indicated that the reality of family life in the diocese often differed from the ideal of the family upheld by the Church. Since the 1960s, the traditional nuclear family had been eroded by rising rates of divorce, remarriage and single parenthood. Marriage to non-Catholics had become much more common. During this period, social and economic factors compounded the stress experienced by the family unit. To increase awareness of family issues, the synod invited the diocese to implement a family educational program for clergy and laity and to investigate the services that other dioceses provided to families. The synod believed that the creation of healthy and stable family units required that parishes “implement quality marriage preparation courses led by qualified couples” and provide for the “ongoing formation of married couples” through “relevant and meaningful courses.” Delegates further challenged the Church to do more to address the problem of family violence and to provide greater support to families in times of crisis. Because parents played such a critical role in the moral and spiritual development of their children, the synod believed that Catholic families needed to be equipped better to put their Christian faith into practice at home and to counteract negative societal influences. The synod called upon the diocese to make existing resources better known and more accessible to parents, to investigate successful family programs offered elsewhere, and to provide the support needed to implement these programs in the parishes. While the synod called upon the diocese to do more in this area, it also recognized that parents needed to be reminded of their responsibility to “witness their faith in all aspects of their lives” and to participate actively in the spiritual formation of their children.¹⁹

Youth

The motions adopted by the synod revealed considerable concern for the place of youth in the Church. Some 600 young people participated in pre-synod discussions. At these meetings, many youth voiced the isolation and frustration they experienced in the Church. Youth frequently complained that the Church seemed to recognize only the gifts of adults and that their abilities and ideas were often ignored or overlooked. Young Catholics lamented that the Church’s teachings were not communicated in a relevant or meaningful manner and that the Church’s worship often failed to reflect the needs and experience of youth. To respond to these

concerns, the synod advocated the creation of a diocesan Youth Ministry Office and the appointment of youth coordinators in each deanery. The synod urged parishes and deaneries to encourage and support youth groups and organizations, to develop and promote youth leadership workshops and volunteer programs and to provide opportunities for youth to worship and celebrate their faith. If youth were to feel included in and valued by the Church, it was essential that young people be invited to contribute to all aspects of parish life. The synod resolved that youth should be represented on the parish council and other committees and provided with the opportunity to participate in Church ministries. Delegates directed pastors to dialogue with the young people of their parishes and to take more seriously the perspectives and insights that youth had to share with the church. Closely connected to the question of youth in the Church was the issue of Catholic education. The synod consultation process revealed a perception among many parents that the religious education programs offered in the Catholic schools did not adequately teach Catholic doctrine and that teachers were not sufficiently qualified to teach religion. In response to these concerns, the synod recommended that only religious education programs approved by the bishop be adopted in the Catholic schools of the diocese and that the diocese work with the Catholic school boards and St. Mary's College to develop programs to equip teachers of religious education better. The synod hoped that together these measures would ensure that the faith was handed on to the next generation.²⁰

Social Justice and Ecumenism

Two other priorities for the Church became evident in the synod's deliberations: social justice and ecumenism. In its report to the synod, the Commission on the Universal Church Family asserted that social justice was "an integral part of Jesus' teaching and example." It was thus imperative that the church be a leader in social justice and do more to address the problems that afflicted society both at home and abroad. To achieve this objective, the synod urged the diocese to re-establish a Social Action Office. As part of its effort to economize, the diocese had dismantled its Social Justice Office in 1991. With the closure of this office, many in the diocese felt that they lacked the resources, awareness and direction necessary to apply gospel values and the social teachings of the Church to current social issues. The synod hoped that a new Social Action Office could correct this situation by providing information,

facilitating workshops, public forums, courses and retreats, networking with other organizations and drawing attention to social justice issues through the media. To be effective, however, these efforts needed to be supported by active commitment at the parish level. The synod thus advised parish pastoral councils to form a social action committee whose purpose was to make the parish aware of injustices in their community and the world, to reflect on a Christian response to those needs and to support appropriate action.²¹ Whenever possible, the synod felt that the diocese and parishes should work with other Christian denominations to address the problems that afflicted our society. This recommendation reflected the broad support for ecumenism that was evident in pre-synod discussions. Participants in the consultation process often expressed a desire to work more closely with other churches but were unclear about their own church's views on ecumenism. The synod challenged parish pastoral councils to make ecumenical issues and activities a priority and urged the diocese to consider constructing joint-use facilities whenever new developments were planned.²²

Implementation and Impact

Anxious that the synod's recommendations were acted upon, delegates called upon the bishop to appoint a Synod Implementation Coordinator. The synod challenged all persons and bodies named in the adopted resolutions to take immediate steps to develop an implementation plan and to report back to the Synod Implementation Coordinator by 31 October 1994.²³ Most delegates left the synod confident that the Church in southern Alberta would emerge strengthened and renewed by the collective efforts of the past three and half years. Robert Schulz, chair of the Synod Coordinating Committee, observed that the synod "has given people a sense of taking ownership for their part of the church." He predicted that parishioners and priests would come to work more closely together as a result of the synod and that lay persons would "recognize that they have a lot more they can do, a lot more that they want to do, rather than just relying on the priest."²⁴ To many delegates, the synod was a "wonderful experience of Church as the Body of Christ journeying together" that promised to reinvigorate the life of the diocese. Beneath this optimism and enthusiasm, however, lay some potential pitfalls that threatened to impede the implementation of the reforms approved by the synod. When asked to evaluate the overall synod process, many delegates

commented how difficult it was “trying to get people involved” and “to convince them of the importance and value of the process.” The “apathy” and “lack of response” at the parish level was compounded by the “lack of enthusiasm of many priests.”²⁵ Such indifference jeopardized the model of participatory decision-making and collaborative ministry envisioned by the synod. If the laity was not activated and if the clergy did not buy into change, the overall impact of the synod would be quite limited. To some, these fears seemed to be confirmed in the bishop’s official promulgation of the resolutions of the synod in October. Notably absent from the official promulgation was any mention of the resolutions passed by the synod calling for greater lay participation in diocesan decision-making and reform of the Diocesan Pastoral Council.²⁶ The Synod Implementation Committee nonetheless strove to keep the spirit of the synod alive and worked closely with diocesan agencies and parishes to develop action plans. The committee reported considerable progress at the diocesan level at a day-long celebration and conference held on 17 June 1995 to mark the first anniversary of the synod. To implement synod resolutions, the diocese established several new agencies including a Family Resource Centre, a Youth Commission, an office of Adult Religious Education, a Social Action Office and a spiritual direction committee. Significant steps were also taken to improve the diocese’s communications capacity and access to diocesan resources. In response to a key recommendation of the synod, the diocesan administration announced the creation of a task force to develop a diocesan mission statement, review policies and establish both short- and long-term goals for the diocese.²⁷ Progress at the parish level was more mixed. A survey of parishes conducted by the Synod Implementation Committee revealed that 42 parishes had not done anything to enact synod resolutions. While some of these parishes had simply not completed the survey by the due date, the results nonetheless indicated considerable indifference to the whole synod process. Participants in the anniversary conference held in June 1995 attributed this disengagement to a lack of time, resources and leadership, different parish priorities, opposition from the parish priest, changes in clergy, and theological division within the parish community. Although some parishes appeared to be untouched by the synod, others displayed signs of renewed life and vigor as they endeavoured to implement synod resolutions.²⁸

What was the legacy of the 1994 diocesan synod? This is a difficult question to answer. There is no doubt that the synod contributed to a renewal of the diocesan administration based upon the priorities identified

during the whole synod process. The diocese expanded its activities and improved its effectiveness in many areas. The impact at the parish level is less clear. In some parishes, the range of parish activities and opportunities for lay participation expanded significantly. In other parishes, little had changed from before. The success of the synod depended on high levels of both lay and clerical participation. The relatively low rates of lay involvement in the pre-synod consultations indicated widespread disinterest among the laity. It was equally clear that some among the clergy distrusted the process and refused to support it. This detachment limited the synod's overall impact. Bishop O'Byrne hoped that the synod would help to heal the divisions between liberals and conservatives in the Church and help to restore a common sense of purpose and mission to the Diocese. There is no doubt that the synod provided an opportunity for different interests within the Church to listen to one another and to have their concerns heard. The good will that this generated proved to be temporary, however. By 1997, rival liberal and conservative groups were circulating petitions throughout the diocese. Catholics of Vision, a reform group based in Ottawa, began a national petition calling for a return to the "spirit of Vatican II." Conservatives within Human Life International responded by circulating a "real Catholic" petition to counter what it described as the "dissenters" within the Church. Bishop O'Byrne urged Catholics to ignore the petition campaigns and to make peace with one another in a pastoral letter circulated throughout the Diocese.²⁹ Another primary objective of the synod was to restore those alienated or inactive in the Church. There is little evidence to suggest that this occurred. The number of active Catholics and Sunday Mass attendance continued to decline in the years following the synod. This should not be a surprise. Almost all of the participants in the synod process were already committed to the Church and active in some way. The voices of the inactive Catholic majority were simply not heard at the synod. Consequently, the synod offered little insight into the reasons behind the decline of the Church in southern Alberta. The synod experience generated considerable expectations among those who took part. For many, the diocesan synod represented a step towards a more inclusive, collegial and collaborative Church and a fulfillment of the vision of the Second Vatican Council. As is often the case, these expectations often exceeded results and contributed to disillusionment and frustration among those who hoped for more. Despite Paul O'Byrne's intentions, the first synod of the Diocese of Calgary did not succeed in reversing the church's fortunes in southern Alberta.

Endnotes

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11. M.B. Venini Byrne, *From the Buffalo to the Cross: A History of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary* (Calgary: Calgary Archives and Historical Publishers, 1973), 139.
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21. Calgary Diocesan Synod, *Delegate's Manual*, 41-42, RCDCA.

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China's Decolonization and Missionaries: Québec's Cold War

SERGE GRANGER
Université de Sherbrooke

When Mao declared the People's Republic of China in 1949, he triggered a reassessment in all sectors of Chinese society, including religion. This form of decolonization can be explained by a desire of the new communist regime to control all forms of thought and activity. The Chinese Communist Party (hereafter CCP) implemented laws that would eventually create the Chinese Patriotic Church, an institution still not recognized by the Roman Catholic Church. Hundreds of Québec missionaries were present in China at the time and were among the last missionaries to leave the country. This departure coloured Québec's Cold War.

This paper explores how China's decolonization affected Québec missionaries and how it generated much more than a religious controversy.¹ China became Québec's Cold War in politics and culture because missionaries, having been involved in China for fifty years, were strongly opposed to Chinese communism. They were well-organized and utilized different media (film, periodicals, and classrooms) in an effort to publicize their opposition to the recognition of the communist regime and the Chinese Patriotic Church.

An initial brief outline of the CCP's policy toward religion provides some background to the new rules that were aimed at regaining total control over the Christian clergy in China. It also sets the historical context in which forces Québec missionaries were forced out of China. The second part of the paper details how Québec missionaries, especially the Catholics, experienced China's drive to decolonization by introducing its

own Christian church. Finally, the last part suggests that the exile of missionaries embodied Québec's Cold War rhetoric and culture. Literature, arts and politics in Québec presented China, not the USSR, as the main communist threat.

China's Policy on Religion

The CCP's decision to nationalize its clergy reflected the decision of past Chinese governments to subordinate religious affairs to the state. The division between the state and religion in China has always been difficult to determine. Therefore, clergy were always suspected and persecuted in order to ensure a secular government. A major component of the Chinese modern revival was its ability to regain control over the clergy in China. The arrival of communism permitted full control over the religious apparatus, and Chinese dynastic governments often used the historical pattern of meddling in religion to obtain wealth and power. In this sense, the CCP reproduced the traditional pattern of gaining control over religious bodies.

The heritage of legalism and the humanist political philosophy of Confucianism permitted such defence against the religious power over or within the state. The Confucian examination system established a literate elite educated outside of the religious circles. Those who followed Han Feizi's (280-234 BC) advice on how to run government shared the view that clerics were not "productive" and religious beliefs should be controlled or ignored by the state. The CCP's decision to supervise "the religious" operated in a legal and moral tradition that permitted the intervention of the state into all domains of society, including that of the clergy.²

The CCP embarked upon a process of decolonization that sought to exclude foreigners from modern China. To do so, nationalization in all domains of society, including religion, was a pattern that unrolled in new China. The clergy had to become Chinese; no more foreign dignitaries were considered needed in China if the clergy was to survive, and religious freedom would be tolerated only if China vetoed the leader of the concerned church. In the case of Catholicism, the election of the pope was clearly out of the hands of China. CCP uneasiness with a foreign pope can be interpreted as a concern over a society that took orders from outside China. This is why the nationalization of the nomination process of the indigenous church was seen as most important by the Chinese government.

Therefore, the 400 Québec missionaries and the Catholic clergy in China were the most vulnerable to such policy since the power apparatus of the church originated from the Vatican. Among the clergy in China, the Catholic Church remained one of the most foreign-maintained. Once the umbilical cord with the Vatican was cut, Québec Catholic missionaries in China were confronted with a theological problem, having to disagree with the new Chinese government and stay faithful towards the Vatican or accept the nationalization of religion even though it might be schismatic.

Jesuit Léo-Paul Bourassa was the Québec missionary who wrote most extensively about Chinese communist religious policy. Bourassa's book *Tactiques communistes contre l'Église: L'expérience chinoise* (1962) identifies five different steps by which the communists infiltrated the church. First, CCP infiltrators subscribed to the Légion de Marie (an association of Catholic Christians which sought to promote the link with the Vatican); second, they became the most zealous students in order to secure the sympathy of their professor; third, the infiltrators began to demand some reforms (notably more oriented towards the sinicization); fourth, infiltrators indoctrinated domestics at schools and missions; and finally, they devoted their energy to the dismemberment of foreign influence within the Chinese Christian Church. After the infiltration of the Church, the CCP began the second offensive, which consisted of taking control of missions and schools, their preferred target. The CCP also pressured families not to send their children to Catholic schools. Finally, the party issued movement restrictions confining the Québec missionaries to their mission.

One of the most effective schemes to nationalize religion and curtail Québec involvement in China was Triple Autonomy Policy (hereafter TAP). This policy consisted of bringing the Christian church under the control of the Chinese government, more specifically the Religious Affairs Bureau. This bureau was established to control all types of religious activity. The TAP stressed that the church in China had to be self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting in order to be autonomous. The clerics Saint-Viateur, established in Manchuria, published a full account of the TAP indicating that Quebec missionaries were well aware of the plans outlined in the CCP.³ This meant that no more money from the Sainte-Enfance could reach Québec missions in China, Québec missionaries would not be permitted to enter China, and, worst of all, nominations for the Chinese Catholic clergy could be done without the approval of the

Vatican. Naturally, Québec missionaries opposed the new policy. Not surprisingly, Québec Catholic missionaries were prime suspects.

Québec missionary sources facilitate the examination of the implementation of the TAP because most missionaries stayed after the communist take-over and provided interesting testimonies about its execution. Québec missionary sources indicate a great sense of despair when Chinese priests agreed or were forced to agree to the principles espoused by the TAP. However, Québec missionary reaction to the TAP reveals more than just a reaction to CCP policy; it shows how the Chinese state managed to close its doors and sinicize all components of society.

Soon after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Québec missionaries confronted the ideas of Zhou Enlai who sought to promote the creation of a Chinese Catholic Church. In July 1950, Zhou permitted the release of the Manifesto, a brochure outlining the steps to be taken to create a Chinese Church. Campaigns to gather signatures over the principles of the TAP progressed in the Protestant circles while Québec missionaries warned their subjects neither to sign the Manifesto nor to participate in any conferences discussing the TAP. During the Sixty-fifth Session of the State Administrative Council held in December 1950, Zhou, acting as chairman, pushed for the adoption of *Regulations Governing All Organizations Subsidised with Foreign Funds*. All missionary personnel and properties had to be registered, and missions had to issue a monthly report about their finance and activities, and had to comply with the common program of TAP. In January 1951, Zhou met the Catholics leaders of China, stressing that relations with the Vatican could be maintained while pushing towards a complete autonomy of the Chinese Catholic Church. With the Korean War in the background, Zhou issued the regulations of *the Administrative Affairs Yuan on the Method of Controlling Christian Organizations That Have Received Financial Help From America* in April 1951. Furthermore, it became illegal for missions to receive money from America without any governmental acknowledgement. The CCP used the fact that some missionaries working in Québec missions were Franco-Americans to accuse them of siding with the United States during the Korean War. In addition, the CCP named Chinese Catholics to engage in reform committees of the TAP and Beijing went as far to nominating the Bishop of Nanjing.

Québec missionaries who would not recognize the TAP were re-educated, exiled, or confined; some, like Mgr Lapierre, even died during their confinement.⁴ Resistance was strong among Québec and Catholic

missionaries and many were accused of not co-operating with the new Chinese government; it became obvious that stronger measures would need to be implemented. If no accusations of spying, treason, or reactionary activities were to be found, there were always criminal accusations such as the case involving the Missionnaires de l'Immaculée-Conception of Canton in which the mission agency was held responsible for the death of 2,116 orphans.⁵ Québec missionary involvement in China produced a number of martyrs on which Cold War rhetoric could rely by demonstrating the danger of communism.

The TAP divided the Chinese Catholic clergy into two groups pushing Québec missionaries under a “non-patriotic Church.” Those who stayed loyal to the pope were declared illegal while the clergy who recognized this new policy agreed that Chinese Catholics, under the supervision of the Religious Affairs Bureau, would establish the Patriotic Catholic Church. Resisting China’s plan to nationalize religion, Québec missionaries reluctantly left China.

The TAP figures among the numerous arsenals that the CCP took to move China towards autonomy. China’s nationalization of religion muted Québec’s clerical involvement in Chinese affairs. The return of Chinese nationals to the head of schools and universities completed the revival in China. The Chinese nationalization of religion indicated that China was returning to its normal self, including state reassessment of all types of power, including religion.

Québec Missionaries and the People’s Republic of China

The evacuation of Québec missionaries from communist China was a process that took about six years (1949-1955). The CCP acted carefully towards foreign missionaries because they understood that they could be useful during the first days of the PRC. Missionaries would keep students in schools, provide social assistance (medicine and dentistry), and become an important source of information on the CCP’s enemies. Keeping schools open was a priority for the CCP because it provided a compact urban audience receiving propaganda. In addition, by keeping schools opened, it was easier for the “rural CCP” to identify those who had links with the outside world and were, therefore, a source of suspicion. However, since the spring of 1950, schools that were authorized to remain open could not give religion courses. Everything was to be monitored by the CCP network.

Québec missionary contact with the communists gave the impression that the CCP was disciplined, intelligent in its infiltration, and committed to their cause. For the *Missions Saint-Viateur*, communists were out to remake the mind of the Chinese; their revolution was social, ideological, and universal. On the other hand, some Québec missionaries like Jean Ho believed that the Chinese were not communist at heart, although they were secular in mind. The infiltration of the communists was the first step of a long-term policy that consisted of suffocating competing ideologies. Lionel Groulx summarized CCP plans as a program realized with wit, a sustained effort, and a logical inferno.⁶

Québec missionaries reported that the CCP operated on a long-term basis by infiltrating the Christian missions. *Le Brigand*, the Chinese Jesuit journal, informs us that as soon as Mao declared the revolution, missions were being infiltrated.⁷ Students became spies, and/or spies became Christians. After the infiltration of schools, political infiltration and indoctrination followed. After a year in power, the CCP understood more deeply the functioning of the missions and began to meddle in religious affairs. By 1951, Québec missionaries overwhelmingly complained about the compulsory political seminars held by the CCP.⁸ These seminars demonstrated the superiority of science versus religion, and materialism versus metaphysics. By introducing compulsory Marxism courses, students of the Communist Youth League were able to argue that religion would wither away as science became the new truth. Communist students wanted to stamp out religion, which to them was a symbol of feudalism. Active resistance to religious groups by the creation of lay compulsory schools and the standardization of education ended missionary input in Chinese education. Religious schools were seized, Chinese Marxist teachers were appointed, and mission properties were expropriated.

Québec missionaries and the Catholic Church were identified by the Chinese Communists as the main source of resistance of their new regime. They had every reason to believe this was so. The Vatican issued warnings to missionaries not to cooperate with the Chinese Communists, even though they were the ruling government. In addition, the creation of the Légion de Marie was set up to coordinate resistance against Marxism and its damaging effect on Christianity. By activating the Légion de Marie, Québec missionaries were committing the crime of maintaining an association opposed to the regime.

Québec Catholic missionaries experienced a number of the numerous CCP campaigns aimed at isolating foreign missionaries.

Suspicion that some missionaries were working for the United States and the United Nations forces prompted the Chinese government to increase campaigns aimed at identifying scapegoats and those who were opposed to communism.⁹ Compulsory demonstrations of the Resist America Aid Korea campaign forced Québec missionaries to participate in communist activities. These campaigns were not only drafted to uncover reactionaries, but also to prompt Chinese nationalism against western intervention in Korea, and create the new Chinese individual. Campaigns of the three-anti and the five-anti also were directed against missionaries in China. Québec missionaries were compelled to participate in demonstrations denouncing imperialism, the United States, and the Vatican. Considering the accusations some missionaries faced in the 1950s, it is apparent that their refusal to participate in those demonstrations was used against them. Finally, one of the most direct challenges toward Catholic missionaries in China was the new land reform policies. Catholic missions had estates that had been established since the Tianjin Treaty (1858); they were forced to relinquish them.¹⁰

The Vatican played an important role in keeping Québec missionaries in China despite the communist revolution. Since the mid-1930s, the Vatican urged disciples to fight communism and asked all Catholic missionaries to stay in China after the 1949 revolution, advising them not to collaborate with the new regime. By 1952, the Vatican issued an apostolic letter stressing that the establishment of an independent Chinese church would be a heresy.¹¹ The attitude of the Vatican towards Red China did not help the position of Québec missionaries because it had issued statements that were opposed to the TAP and the creation of a Chinese Patriotic Catholic Church.

The pressure exerted by the Chinese Communist Party finally ended Québec missionary activities in China. The Protestants were the first congregations to evacuate China. The retreat of all Protestant missionaries was achieved in late 1952. In September 1952, all the Canadian Presbyterians had left China.¹² In contrast, the Catholic missionaries took more time to evacuate the country. Some Québec missionaries were among those who stayed the longest in China. Most of the Québec missionaries remaining in China felt the pressure exerted by the CCP and were exiled in 1953. The last five Québec missionaries left in mid-1955.¹³ The departure of Québec missionaries from mainland China did not mean the end of Québec's involvement in China. Missionaries who left the mainland

could continue to live in a Chinese world either in Taiwan, Hong Kong, or Macao.

Cold War

The arrival of the communism in China enhanced the effect of the Cold War in Québec. Québec's active participation in the Cold War is quite modest, but when it did become active, China became its ideological and military enemy. The Chinese communist revolution forced the exile of Québec missionaries and diplomatic relations between Canada and China were severed for twenty years. Even so, China represented the communist country with which the people of Québec were most familiar; the fate of four hundred missionaries generated just as much interest in Québec as that of the thousands of soldiers involved in Korea.

In addition, the missionary periodicals provided a channel of mobilization capable of applying political pressure on the fate of those missionaries in China. Some secular organizations also supported the exiled missionaries in Québec's Cold War and helped to delay any recognition of China by the Canadian government. Québec Catholic missionaries were one of the organized groups capable of pressuring Ottawa. Combined with American hesitation, the pressure exerted on the Canadian government lasted until the beginning of the Korean War.

Divisions in the House of Commons also pushed back formal recognition of China. In Parliament, only the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (later the New Democratic Party) pushed for immediate recognition while the Conservatives and the Social Credit were opposed. The Liberals, in power at the time, were also divided. The hesitation to recognize China reflected the American policy of delay. The USA was reshaping its sphere of influence in the Pacific; Canada had very little choice but to see whether the Americans would recognize the new communist regime. In Québec, the government and the Catholic clergy mobilized against the recognition of China.

Québec's premier, Maurice Duplessis (1890-1959), undermined the idea of recognizing China. His relation with the Catholic clergy was obvious and he offered his support in presenting petitions against the new Chinese regime. For Duplessis and the missionary lobby, not only did China become an opponent of the west, but it became also a religious enemy because communism was perceived as contradictory to Christian-

ity. Relations between the religious orders and Duplessis gave missionaries additional influence in their opposition to the recognition of China.

The attitude of the Québec population toward Chinese communism was generally negative even though some newspapers adopted a pragmatic tone and called for normalization of relations with the new Chinese regime. *L'Action Catholique* and *Le Devoir* urged recognition while *The Montréal Star* and *La Presse* supported Pearson's wait-and-see attitude. Gérard Filion, the director of *Le Devoir*, often opposed the Duplessis line and visited China to participate in the Beijing World Peace Conference in 1953. He saw atheistic communism as a "philosophy incompatible with Christianity."¹⁴ His predecessor at *Le Devoir*, Omer Héroux, had signed an article entitled "Sous la coupe communiste" in *Missions-Étrangères du Québec* denouncing the way the communists handled religion in China.¹⁵ This new reality or incompatibility appears more troubling because it triggered MacCarthyism and polarized public opinion in regard to China. Chinese communism was a main concern in the 1950s; even at primary school children knew of it.

The Cold War in Québec was amplified by the Korean War that set China against the West. American troops were too involved in containing communism to permit any rapprochement between China and Canada. Out of 26,791 Canadian soldiers who served in Korea, nearly 30 per cent were French-speaking and about 7,000 came from Québec.¹⁶ This military involvement solidified the portrayal of China as the Cold War enemy in terms of military might and ideological supremacy.

With the victory of communism in China, an array of anti-Communist literature appeared in Québec's bookstores. Most important were missionary periodicals that warned against the emergence of world communism and its subsequent impact on Québec. Missionaries were an organized group and they possessed a number of media which could influence the population. Some periodicals reflected the witch-hunt taking place in the United States where McCarthyism suspected communists of infiltrating sectors of the public administration, including education.

The magazine *Relations* was among the first to denounce Canadian plans to recognize Beijing. The magazine and some Jesuits fought actively against the recognition of the PRC for more than a decade. The magazine *Relations* wrote that communism in China would enhance Soviet ideology aimed at destroying Christianity. Months before the establishment of the People's Republic of China, *Relations* warned Ottawa that the recognition of the PRC would demonstrate that the Canadian government was the

hostage of mercantilists showing no respect for human rights and religious freedom, thus linking them with the survival of western democracy. *Missions Saint-Viateur* also warned the Liberals of the danger of an electoral defeat if they recognized communist China. A few days before the Korean War, *Relations* acknowledged that, unless an international adventure weakened China, nothing much could be done to prevent communism in China. Pressure from the missionary lobby was maintained until news of war in Korea reached Canada. When the war began, it made China stronger and more unified against America. The implication of Canada's participation in the Korean War enhanced Québec's interest in China and intensified the perceived danger of Chinese communism and how it could affect Asia and the world as a whole.

Aside from missionary periodicals, many books appeared in the 1950s aimed at undermining the Chinese communist regime. In 1949, the Ligue anti-communiste de Montréal published Jean Ho's *Que faire en présence de la Chine communiste*. The author warned of the danger of Chinese communism and stated that it was the duty of Canada to resist it: "You, Canadians, are concerned when learning that communist spies are poisoning your country."¹⁷ Following that were *Les Communistes et la formation de la jeunesse: analyse d'un manuel* (1951), originally published in the *China Missionary Bulletin*; *La Résistance de la Chine catholique* (1952); and *Démasquer le communisme: le devoir présent* (1955) at the Éditions Bellarmin. Missionary books offering personal accounts include: Antonio Dragon's *En mission parmi les Rouges* (1946) and *Le Père Bernard* (1948); Jean Ho's second book entitled *Malheureux sont les paysans en Chine communiste* (1951); Antonio Bonin's *Mon témoignage* (1955); Armand S. J. Proulx's *Mon T'ang-li* (1958); and Ferdinand Coiteux's biography *Martyr à Chefoo: Père Didace Arcand, O.F.M., missionnaire en Chine* (1960). Politicians also published books concerned with Chinese communism such as Conservative MP, Samuel Gobeil's *Le péril communiste* (1953), and future mayor of Montréal, Jean Drapeau's *Communisme et Moralité Publique* (1956). Ultimately, Pierre Elliott Trudeau's book *Deux innocents en Chine rouge* (1961) broke the consensus by advocating the recognition of China.

The radio station CKAC hosted missionaries and the Chevaliers de Colomb on radio shows denouncing any move toward the recognition of the PRC.¹⁸ Poet Alain Grandbois explained the political situation in China on Radio-Canada from April to August 1950 in the midst of war. Grandbois took great caution in explaining the multiple facets of the

political situation in China but, nevertheless, declared that Chiang Kai-shek was a great Christian.¹⁹ Radio-Canada's correspondent in Korea, René Lévesque, described the Chinese as determined people protecting their land.²⁰

Pop culture also represented China as the Cold War enemy. Québec's top spy *LXE-13* combatted Chinese communism. With more than one million copies sold, the stories of Paul Saurel's secret agent translated the popularity of China when it came to personify the Cold War. Jacques Godbout would later on put on film *LXE-13* (1970) starring Louise Forestier as Taya, Queen of the Chinese communists!

Conclusion

The arrival of communism dramatically changed Québec-China relations in two ways. First, the Chinese government signaled that missionaries were not needed for the reconstruction of the country. Religious matters, education and hospitals were to be nationalized. Missionaries, Québec's main representative group in China, became obsolete, as most of them were forced into exile. The support of the TAP and the creation of the Chinese Patriotic Church (1957) made any Québec Catholic missionary work in China impossible. Second, with China now in the enemy communist camp, trade and diplomatic recognition posed a problem. Québec's Catholic missionaries pressured Ottawa to ignore recognition of China, seen as a persecutor of the Christian world. This lobby constituted the strongest domestic pressure against the recognition of China. In combination with numerous media to mobilize against recognition, the Catholic clergy in Québec constructed a Cold War enemy.

The abundance of material (arts and literature) in Québec concerning China dramatically outnumbers the studies of other communist countries, including the USSR. The fact that China occupied so much space in Québec's Cold War can be explained by the hundreds of missionaries and thousands of soldiers sent to the front. In fact, Québec missionaries never went to Russia and there was no war against the Soviets. I may conclude that, given the material available, China represented Québec's Cold War, but it would be more appropriate to consider Québec's perception of China in the 1950s as a turning point. In front of Chinese communism and revival, Québec opinion polarized and became more aware of the global change taking shape during the Cold War.

Endnotes

1. See also Serge Granger, *Le lys et le lotus: les relations du Québec avec la Chine de 1650 à 1950* (Montréal: VLB Éditeur, 2005).
2. Chinese Catholic priest, François Houang, maintains that tolerance animated Chinese state intervention in religious affairs. It appears more like a traditional use of the Chinese state to overcome any dual form of power rather than a war against people's beliefs.
3. *Missions Saint-Viateur* 27 (May 1951).
4. *Missions Saint-Viateur* 82 (April 1956). Mgr Lapierre died on 1 December 1952.
5. Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 534.
6. Lionel Groulx, *Le Canada français missionnaire* (Montréal: Fides, 1962), 95. "Programme qui sera réalisé avec un raffinement de ruse et de ténacité, une logique infernale."
7. *Le Brigand* 127 (December 1949).
8. Léo-Paul Bourassa, *Tactiques communistes contre l'Église: l'expérience chinoise* (Montréal: Éditions de l'Heure, 1962), 24.
9. *Missions Saint-Viateur* 64 (June 1954).
10. *Relations* 117 (September 1950): 276.
11. PIUS XII, *Actes Pontificaux no. 48. Aux fidèles de Chine* (Montréal: Institut social populaire, 1952), 6.
12. Richard Bush, *Religion in Communist China* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 46.
13. Jacques Langlais, *Les Jésuites du Québec en Chine, 1918-1955* (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1979), 317-18.
14. See the introduction of Gérard Filion, *Rideau de fer au rideau de préjugés* (Montréal: Le Devoir, 1953).
15. *Missions-Étrangères du Québec* 3-4 (July-August 1947): 7.
16. Pierre Vennat, *Baptiste au pays du matin calme: les militaires canadiens-français en guerre de Corée 1950-1953* (Montréal: Éditions Méridien, 2000), 152.

17. Jean Ho, *Que faire en présence de la Chine communiste* (Montréal: Éditions de la ligue anti-communiste, 1949), 4.
18. Antonio Milot, "Le communisme reste toujours d'actualité," in *Les Chevaliers de Colomb de la Province du Québec et le Communisme* (Montréal: n.p., 1951), 34.
19. Private archives of Alain Grandbois, MSS-204/4/9-13, Quebec National Archives.
20. René Lévesque, *Mémoires* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986), 110-17.

Who Killed Norman Dabbs?

DAVID DONALDSON
McMaster Divinity College

The name Norman Dabbs sparks recognition in only a few circles: members of King St. Baptist Church in Hamilton; students of Bolivian missions; and perhaps students of Canadian Baptist history. The rest of the world probably has not heard of him. He might have been remembered as a significant contributor to the Canadian Baptist mission to Bolivia—as an educator, evangelist and a pastor. Unfortunately, he is remembered as the first Canadian Baptist martyr. His life was cut short by a mob that attacked Dabbs, amongst others, as they held an evangelistic meeting in their community, Melkamaya. His mission work barely lasted nine years after his arrival in Bolivia in 1940;¹ on 8 August 1949 he was killed.

The *Canadian Baptist* described the death of Rev. Norman Dabbs this way:

We do not yet know all the details of Norman Dabbs' martyrdom. Indeed we may never know them all. But of this we can be sure, the admixture of passion, stirred by drunken rioting, and of hateful prejudice, fomented among unlettered natives by unscrupulous agents of class and religion, produced the violence which brought death to Norman Dabbs and a gallant group of Bolivian Christians.²

The Hamilton Spectator added the detail in its obituary that "Norman Dabbs . . . was killed yesterday during an uprising among Communist-led Indian tin mine labourers."³ These various sources suggest factors surrounding Dabbs's death: labour unrest, class, religion and economics. The following essay explores a number of these conditions in which

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Norman Dabbs worked and lived. It will suggest that, historically, these concerns have remained unsettled in Bolivia and form a large part of rural Bolivian life. That is to say that the social fabric of Bolivia itself – with elements of nominal Roman Catholicism, religious syncretism and economic oppression, mixed together by a few fanatical local priests – killed Dabbs.

Before looking at his context, we need to understand a bit about the man himself. In some correspondence, Norman's son, Frank described his father as a student of history. Norman Dabbs's book, *Dawn over the Bolivian Hills*, chronicles the history of Bolivia and specifically the history of Bolivian missions. Norman Dabbs knew the Bolivian social and cultural fabric. Not only a student of history, he was, foremost, a dedicated missionary. His last sermon, preached in his church, The Church of the Risen Lord, in Oruro was based on the text, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."⁴ Dabbs believed this text. He followed Christ first as a pastor, then as a missionary. As a missionary and a student of history, he viewed his place as part of the unfolding of God's history.⁵

His belief that God is in control of history is clearly seen in a sermon, "Can Man's Atomic bomb Destroy God's World?" given at Castlefield Baptist Church in Toronto on 28 January 1946. During that furlough period, with the war fresh on everyone's mind, he taught on the theme that God is in control: "THAT ALL THE FORCES OF DESTRUCTION AND EVIL, HOWEVER TERRIBLE THEY MAY BE, ARE OVERRULED AND CONTROLLED BY GOD" (emphasis in the original). He believed, deeply, that God ruled history, both good and evil. Referring to the Book of Revelation he stated that historical events "cannot transpire until someone takes the book and breaks the seals." Further in the sermon he said, "Let me repeat that all this reveals that all the forces of evil are over-ruled and controlled by Christ." He then goes on to point to weather delays in the events of World War II, suggesting that "we must see God's hand in the month's delay that saved Moscow; and we must see God's had in the fog over Dunkirk."⁶

God not only rules, but "controls all things for a REDEMPTIVE PURPOSE." Referring to chapter seven of Revelation, God's redemptive purpose is the "Gathering out a People for Himself." Similarly, in the same sermon series he preached, "Cosmic Civil War." He understood that all physical violence reveals a deeper drama – that the earthly part is the visible, and suggested that "behind the physical desolations, the destruc-

tion, the wars, the criminality and cruelty of events in this world there are great, powerful spiritual forces . . . There is a Spiritual adversary, his name is the dragon, Satan and the devil. We do battle with him in our souls and the conflict reaches to all corners of the universe.”⁷

And so his battle, his calling, the cross he bore was to bring the Gospel as a weapon against the devil that some of his attackers claimed possessed him He entered the battle very aware of the danger. As his wife wrote in a letter to Canadian Baptist leader Dr. Bingham:

You will recall that at the end of May [1949] two American engineers,⁸ as well as a Bolivian Engineer and a young boy, were killed by local leaders of the syndicate or miners’ union in the syndicate building in Sglo Veinte [one of Bolivia’s largest tin mines of the day] . . . In addition to killing the two Americans, other Americans were beaten up. Afterwards some 600 employees were dismissed because of their affiliation with the syndicate.⁹

Further in the same letter, Lorna Dabbs states that evangelical trips into the region were curtailed for the following months (May until late June). She makes the point to say, “Norman did not run heedlessly into danger.”¹⁰ Norman was committed to do his work in spite of the danger. When a similar incident occurred between “drunken Indians” and missionaries, Norman stated, “Someone may yet have to give his life for this work.”¹¹ He knew the danger. He avoided situations that were especially dangerous, but did not shy away from his work; he headed into Bolivia fully aware of its danger and fully prepared to face it.

The Bolivia he was aware of was deeply and historically a Roman Catholic country. At the turn of the twentieth century, the Bolivian constitution contained a sentence that read, “The State recognizes and supports the Roman Catholic Apostolic Religion, prohibiting the public exercise of any other faith.” In support of that constitutional statement, the country’s Penal Code stated, “Everyone who, directly or through any act, conspires to establish in Bolivian any other religion than that which the Republic professes, namely, that of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church, is a traitor and shall suffer the penalty of death.”¹² In other words, the Catholic faith held not only predominance, but a legal monopoly that dated back to “the Spanish Conquistadors.”¹³

Early Protestant missionaries saw the Catholic faith as their enemy and preached against it to near-disastrous results. A fiery preacher from Ireland named William Payne moved into Cochabamba about the time the

first Baptists were there in 1902. He preached a series of sermons that “mercilessly flayed the Catholic Church.”¹⁴ Payne suffered an attack during which all his possessions were burned and only police intervention prevented him from being burned along with his things. Perhaps in response to Payne’s experience, Baptist missionaries decided to act wisely and carefully within the social system, rather than be aggressive opponents to the existing Catholic Church.¹⁵

The strategy of two early Baptist missionaries, Rev. A.G. Baker and Rev. Robert Routledge, proved to be more effective in both evangelism and in social reform. The former was a scholarly man who lectured frankly, but without aggression or offence about the “principles of democracy, education, social justice, and religious liberty.”¹⁶ Routledge focused his attention on English education. The combined effect of these early missionaries was the garnering of respect from the Bolivian government. This respect led finally in the autumn of 1905 to the constitutional amendment that allowed other religions to exist along side the Roman Catholic faith.

By the time that Dabbs was active in Bolivia, evangelicals (not only Baptists) had made significant impact on the country. The Roman Catholic Church, however, continued to believe in and to seek a religious monopoly in the country. Dabbs stated that “the Roman Church announced its intention of seeking not only a preferential status in Latin America but a monopoly of the religious life.”¹⁷ He pointed out that the Catholic writers assumed that 100 per cent of the nation was still Catholic. The writings he might have been referring to were a series of documents from North American to South American Catholics, calling for peace during World War II:

We send our cordial greetings to our brother Bishops of Latin America. We have been consoled by recent events which gave a sincere promise of a better understanding by our country of the Bishops of Central and South America. Citizens of these countries are bound to us by the closest bonds of religion. They are not merely our neighbors; they are our brothers professing the same faith. Every effort made to rob them of their Catholic religion or to ridicule it or to offer them a substitute for it is deeply resented by the peoples of these countries and by American Catholics. These efforts prove to be a disturbing factor in our international relations. The traditions, the spirit, the background, the culture of these countries are Catholic. We bishops are anxious to foster every worthy movement which will

strengthen our amicable relations with Central and South American. We express the hope that the mistakes of the past which were offensive to the dignity of our southern brothers, their culture, and their religion will not continue. A strong bond uniting in true friendship all the countries of the Western Hemisphere will exercise a most potent influence on a shattered post-war world.¹⁸

This document suggests that Catholics generally considered Bolivia their domain. When *Time Magazine*, for example, reported Dabbs's death, the writer was accurate when he wrote:

The 20 workers of the Canadian Baptist Mission have . . . built schools and hospitals . . . given out free medicines, [and] taught converts to speak Spanish and English . . . Bolivia's Roman Catholic clergy tends to regard such activity as an intrusion into its vineyard. Many an Indian miner has been told that the Protestants are "messengers of the devil"; more sophisticated Bolivians have been warned that the evangelistas are advance agents of Yankee imperialism.¹⁹

In a *La Press* article a few years after Dabbs's death, Catholic priest Father Albert Sanschagrin expressed similar sentiments: that evangelical mission efforts were invasions into Catholic territory. He called for more Catholic missionaries "to fight against the Protestant invasion." And, later in the same article, he suggested that "the presence of militant Protestantism becomes in many instances a provocation which leads to unfortunate incidents."²⁰

However, neither were the evangelicals, Dabbs included, ecumenical in their denominational views. The *Canadian Baptist*, in the article that remembered Dabbs, called for more missionary work since "That darkened land needs the light; that priest-ridden land needs Christ."²¹ The evangelicals' attitude towards the Catholic religion in general was a plague of, in Dabbs's words, "apostasy."²² His words can be used as representative of evangelical thought. In the sermon, "The Devil's Last Fling" that he gave during a furlough sermon series in January and February, 1946, at Castlefield Baptist Church in Toronto clearly states his belief towards the denomination:

His battle was with Babylon (Rev 15-18). "Babylon is THAT SYSTEM THAT ENTHRONES SIN, be it political, be it social, be it religious, or be it all these things put together" . . . It does not

appear to be too difficult to identify the religious system represented in xvii 1-6 . . . And, who is it that is full of the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus? . . . there can only be one answer. It is the Roman Church . . . And, to me there is no apostasy as black, or as complete, or as deceptive to those without spiritual discernment as the apostasy of the roman church. It is the reversal of Christian truth.²³

It must be said that not all Catholic evaluation of Protestant work was unrelentingly negative. Some Catholics themselves observed that Protestant (Baptist and Pentecostal) missionary efforts had been more successful than Roman Catholic in mobilizing laymen for evangelistic work. Therefore, they have proven more effective in spreading the gospel. That is, the pastors are assisted in their evangelistic work by laypeople who are, as Catholic missiologist Roger Aubry observed, “among the people, sharing the same life, speaking the same language, suffering the same scarcities.”²⁴ Further, one Catholic, after visiting the Peniel Hall Farm²⁵ assessed its success in glowing and appreciative terms. Dabbs reported that Markin C. Kyne, a Catholic specialist in economics, stated:

To the Canadian Baptist Missionaries at Huatajata on the shores of Lake Titicaca has fallen the privilege of disproving that the Bolivian Indian of the alitplano is an apathetic suicide, a compound of drunkenness, laziness and dishonesty, a dying introvert, a social embryo and a moral bankrupt. Through their [the Canadian missionaries] program of the regeneration of the Aimara Indian, returning them their self-respect, a new light has flashed on the whole scope of their existence. There at the Huatajata Farm of the Canadian missionaries, they are proving that a system of private ownership on the co-operative basis is a distinct advantage to the Indian and White alike, and – also, that the only foundation of the redemption of the Indian is to be found in moral and spiritual regeneration.²⁶

Roman Catholicism had enjoyed a long and significant history in Bolivia. With the exception, it appears, of some Catholics who admired the evangelicals’ success in spreading the gospel and their social reform, Catholic exclusivity still held sway. However, the practice of the religion itself did not appear to be “orthodox” Catholicism.

Although Roman Catholic by name, Bolivia’s predominant religion had a uniquely syncretistic face in the rural communities. As it relates to the Dabbs case, the days surrounding the killings were “national holidays

in Bolivia.”²⁷ Part of the holiday ceremonies were to appease Tio, the devil in the mine. The native religion into which the evangelicals ventured was a mixture of Roman Catholic and ancient pagan beliefs, both of which led the native population to take devils very seriously. The miners were all aware of and fearful of Tio, and the early August festival was to appease this devil. Miners believed that mine accidents did not just happen, but were caused by Tio and so he must be appeased. The religious syncretism was evident – even self-conscious – in that festival, as seen in this description: “We serve liquor from the bottles each of us brings in. We light the Tio’s cigarette and we say, ‘Tio, help us in our work. Don’t let any accidents happen.’ We do not kneel before him as we would before a saint, because that would be sacrilegious.”²⁸ In the documentation surrounding the deaths, many people are quoted as saying that evangelicals were devils.²⁹ If the people believed that evangelicals had the devil inside, that devil would be Tio, the cause of mine accidents. The syncretism described in the statement above mixed the elements most important to the people to whom Dabbs wanted to minister: Roman Catholicism, pagan superstition and the economic life in the tin mines.

Bolivia was a country in the midst of severe turmoil and unrest – even revolution at times – between the years of 1946-1952. The nation depended on tin for 71 per cent of its exports.³⁰ When tin prices were high, as in times of war, the economy was strong. However when prices were low, living got hard for the miners. A poignant description of the life of a typical mine worker was written in the early 1960s by Barrios de Chungara, the wife of a mineworker. She reported that the conditions she described – eighteen hour days of feeding her family, making food to try to sell in the market, having her children stand in line at the store for staple food items, and still living in abject poverty – existed since the 1940s.³¹ When the labourers revolted and tried to protest their living conditions, they were “brutally repressed . . . even to the extent of [the government] using artillery and aircraft to bomb workers’ districts.”³²

Under these conditions one should expect labour unrest. Part of the problem, as it related to Norman Dabbs’s work, was that evangelicals were seen as agitators, and became targets for attacks. In his thesis, David Phillips quoted from a letter of Gordon R. Turner:

The ring leaders [of labour unrest] have been imprisoned here and those who attend meetings here are relatives and friends visiting prisoners. Because the evangelicals treat them as human beings and

not as animals, and because the Communistic teachings turns them against Rome, they are wrongly connecting Communism with evangelicals and some come to the meetings.³³

What Turner reported as a general belief – that Communism and evangelicalism were associated – was expressed near Melkamaya specifically. In a letter to H.S. Hillyer of the Canadian Baptists, Pastor Sabino Quiroga of Uncia (the larger town near Melkamaya) stated, “The subprefect of Uncia accused us of fomenting an uprising of the Indians and on the basis of this false accusation he arrested four evangelical Indians and detained them in gaol from August 1st to August 10th.” This Bolivian pastor went on to say he was taken prisoner and heard the subprefect say, “‘These evangelists are devils and the sons of devils and to kill them is in no sense a crime’ . . . With this language the subprefect attempted to frighten the evangelical Indians in the presence of the Roman Catholics.”³⁴ As suggested, the riot that resulted in Dabbs’s death was a result of antagonism toward evangelical Christians because they were considered, in part, economic agitators.³⁵ A few Catholic priests took advantage of these suspicions, their own anti-Protestant views and the August festival to spark the riot.

Ten days after the killing, Rev. Earl C. Merrick of the Canadian Baptists visited the site and the officials who were conducting the investigation in an attempt to put together the sequence of events. He learned, through a couple of witnesses,³⁶ that two priests had traveled to the area during the weeks prior to August 1949, warning the people against the heretics of the “Evangelistas,” the implication of which was “in the interpretation of the Church, that they were outside the law.”³⁷ In her letter to Dr. Bingham, Lorna Dabbs reported that one of the dead, Luis Guerrero had been approached “by a priest named Navarro, a week or so before August 8. The priest called Guerrero a fool for becoming an evangelical, told him they’d get him yet and were letting him fatten for the kill.”³⁸ The priests were evidently stirring up the population against evangelical missionaries.

There can be no doubt that tension existed between the evangelical missionaries and the Roman Catholic priests. The tension showed up in both rhetoric and action. That is, there was an attitude of resentment that flowed both ways and there is evidence that the resentment contributed to the activity on 8 August 1949.

It must be pointed out that all Bolivians did not share the resentment and antagonism. Even those who were not evangelical but lived in the urban centre of La Paz were appalled by the killing. In *La Razon*, the leading daily newspaper in La Paz, the journalist reported that the news left him “dumbfounded.” The author continued,

Especially so, because the motive behind the act was the sordid passions of religious hatred. It is a shame, and it cannot be excused. As if the beliefs that a man may have could be purged by an arbitrary decree sponsored by intolerance. Because the Crime of Uncia [nearest town to the scene of martyrdom] was motivated by a totalitarian view of religious faith the more reason why it should be repudiated. It is not enough to be beset by political disturbances but now we have a war of fanaticism to humiliate the liberal conscience of the people. God must be greatly grieved with this act perpetrated in His name.³⁹

There was a voice of moderation in the country, even if it was in the city, far from the rural, mining communities.

Norman Dabbs worked, lived and ultimately died amidst the tension and syncretism of rural Bolivia. I suggest that Dabbs was completely aware of the situation, and dedicated his life to his mission in spite of the danger. Tension and syncretism were not murderous, however, until a couple of rural priests sparked the fire that combusted, resulting in Norman Dabbs’s death.

Who killed Norman Dabbs? He was called to serve during one of Bolivia’s most tumultuous years. Rural Catholic priests, fearful of losing their influence, apparently stirred up native miners to attack the evangelical meeting. They took advantage of the syncretistic religion and accused evangelicals of having the devil, the very devil that the miners feared lived in their mineshafts and caused accidents. In addition to religious superstition and manipulation, the miners were in a state of economic unrest. It appears, then, from the evidence that Norman Dabbs, while not a specific target of their antagonism, was caught in the mob’s anger, and thus suffered a martyr’s death.

Endnotes

1. For a report of his arrival, see Norman Dabbs, “La Paz – Field,” in *Among the Telugus and Bolivians* (Toronto: Canadian Baptist Overseas Mission Board, 1941), 130.

2. "Rev. Norman Dabbs – Christian Martyr," *Canadian Baptist*, 15 September 1949, 3.
3. "Blame Indian in Norman Dabbs' Death," *The Hamilton Spectator*, 9 August 1949.
4. J. Gordon Jones, *Greatness Passing By!* (Toronto: Baptist Federation of Canada, 1967), 77.
5. As described by Norman's son, Frank Dabbs in a personal letter to the author, 18 April 2005.
6. Norman Dabbs, "Can Man's Atomic Bomb Destroy God's World? [sermon]," 28 January 1946, Canadian Baptist Archives, McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton (hereafter CBA).
7. Norman Dabbs, "Cosmic Civil War [sermon]," 29 January 1946, CBA.
8. These engineers were Christians and called "Fellow Workers" (see *The Enterprise* 60 [October 1940]: 1).
9. Lorna Dabbs to Dr. Bingham, 19 September 1949, transcript in CBA.
10. Lorna Dabbs to Dr. Bingham, 19 September 1949, transcript in CBA.
11. "In Memoriam," *Canadian Baptist*, 15 October 1949, 3.
12. Inez J. Bell, *The Kantuta Blooms in Bolivia* (Toronto: Canadian Baptist Overseas Mission Board, 1971), 24.
13. Theo Bus and Matthias Preiserk, "Can Bolivia's Church Understand Itself?" *One World* 87 (1983): 12.
14. Bell, *The Kantuta*, 25.
15. Bell, *The Kantuta*, 25-26.
16. Bell, *The Kantuta*, 26.
17. Norman Dabbs, *Dawn Over the Bolivian Hills* (Toronto: Canadian Baptist Foreign Mission Board, 1952), 194.
18. Myron C. Taylor, "Catholic Appeal for Victory/Peace, 11/14/42." Available from <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/psf/box52/a467bb06.html>; accessed 23 April 2005.
19. "Murder in the Vineyard," *Time Magazine*, 22 August 1949. Available from <http://www.time.com/time/archive/printout/0,23657,800607,00.html>; accessed 20 April 2005.

20. Albert Sanschagrín, "The Influence in Bolivia of Canadian Protestants," *La Press* 4 April 1956. Translation provided by Canadian Catholic Conference, Ottawa; held in CBA.
21. "Rev. Norman Dabbs – Christian Martyr," *Canadian Baptist*, 15 September 1949, 3.
22. Norman Dabbs, "The Devil's Last Fling [sermon]," 31 January 1946, CBA.
23. Dabbs, "The Devil's Last Fling [sermon]."
24. Mgr. Roger Aubry, *La mission: siguiendo a Jesus por los caminos de America Latina* (Buenos Aires: Ed. Guadalupe, 1990), 106-07; quoted in J. Samuel Escobar, "The Bolivian Baptist Story: Context and Meaning in Latin America," in *Bridging Cultures and Hemispheres: The Legacy of Archibald Reekie and Canadian Baptists in Bolivia*, ed. William H. Brackney (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 1997), 120.
25. The Peniel Hall Farm is a Baptist experiment in agrarian and social reform. Natives were given back land to farm in a cooperative setting. See Arturo Nacho L., "Agrarian Reform in Huatajata: The Peniel Hall Experience," in Brackney, *Bridging Cultures*, 55-65.
26. Dabbs, *Dawn Over the Bolivian Hills*, 213.
27. Jones, *Greatness*, 76-77.
28. June Nash, "The Devil in Bolivia's Nationalized Tin Mines," *Science and Society* 36, no. 2 (1972): 226.
29. See Earl C. Merrick, *Bolivia* (Toronto: Canadian Baptist Foreign Mission Board, c. 1959), 72.
30. Harold Osborne, *Bolivia: A Land Divided* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 120.
31. Barrios de Chungara, "Let Me Speak!" *Monthly Review* 30, no. 9 (1979): 42-54.
32. Bert Unseem, "The Workers' Movement and the Bolivian Revolution," *Politics and Society* 9, no. 4, (1980): 454-55.
33. Gordon R. Turner letter from Sucre, Bolivia as reported in *Echoes of service*, LXXVI no. 2139 (March, 1948), 33, in David B. Phillips, "Protestantism in Bolivia to 1952" (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1968), 175-76.
34. Sabino Quiroga to H.S. Hillyer, 31 August 1950, transcript in CBA.
35. See Phillips, "Protestantism," 193ff.

36. In a typewritten report, dated 18 August 1949, Merrick refers to a report of “Toribios and Manuel Choque confirmed the references of the sub-prefect.” The report opens with Merrick telling of his visits with the sub-prefect investigating the crime. The original report is held in CBA.
37. Merrick, *Bolivia*, 71.
38. Lorna Dabbs to Dr. Bingham, 19 September 1949, transcript in CBA.
39. “Intolerance,” *La Razon* as translated by W.F. Chandler and appeared in *The Link and Visitor* (November 1949): 321.

**Exiled Russian Orthodox Leaders in Paris
and the Struggle to Establish a Home
Away from Home (1925-1944)¹**

JONATHAN SEILING
Emmanuel College, Toronto School of Theology

When forces of history move large numbers of religious adherents, new possibilities can open up for communities in exile. Banished from their homeland they move beyond the reach or jurisdiction of their former authority and a new body politic begins to form. The canonical jurisdiction of Orthodox Church communions around the world has received increasing attention due to the current need to restructure what has become its main organizing feature in recent years – the nation-state. When the Russian Orthodox faithful left their country in the early 1920s, they entered western lands in droves and took up residence in what increasingly became an ethnically and religiously pluralistic society; there they faced a new set of dilemmas. The mother church then struggled to retain jurisdiction and a semblance of control over her offspring. Consequently foreign-based believers became estranged from their homeland. They came to recognize that their political and social surroundings could dictate their newfound autonomy and reshape their self-identity.

In 1922-23 when Vladimir I. Lenin exiled a group of some of the most influential political thinkers in Russia, he included a number of prominent religious thinkers, many of whom had advocated political-economic alternatives to Marxist-Leninism prior to the Bolshevik Revolution. They were outspoken in their criticism of what was known as the “intelligentsia,” a group that had largely supported economic socialism and political revolution. Many of these renegade critics of the mainstream

intellectual climate of the day had been Marxists until the Revolution of 1905. Insofar as some of them maintained or discovered a religious worldview, they were largely indebted to the work of the recently deceased religious philosopher, Vladimir Solov'ev (1853-1900). It was he who, like a sort of Russian Schleiermacher, appealed to the intellectual masses to return to the traditional, although slightly modified, faith of the Russian Church. Solov'ev had introduced a concept that would strike a chord in the literary movement called Russian Symbolism, and ignite a spark that would create a blaze in Russian religious philosophy. To the degree that it resonated with the *avant guard*, it was firmly rejected in traditional religious sectors. Beginning in 1876, Solov'ev wrote about a personified notion of Divine Wisdom, called Sophia after the Greek word for wisdom. Although many writers made occasional use of this motif of the Divine Sophia, none developed it like the political economist Sergei Bulgakov. As the founder in 1905 of the Moscow Religious Philosophical Society, Bulgakov urged an assessment of Solov'ev's thought from a variety of disciplines in an attempt to offer an alternative to the materialist and positivist assumptions in Russia that fuelled the popular acceptance of Marxism. This intellectual society that the Bolsheviks dissolved, proved to be fertile ground for these dissenters, many of whom would be exiled. It was arguably the key centre in which a new self-identity was formed in the years before Bolshevism.² It gave these intellectuals at least a loose sense of unity that sustained them throughout the many heated controversies into which they were thrown in the years that followed their exile. Most of those who were exiled in 1922-1923 settled in Paris within a few years.

In the Russian Orthodox diaspora the various efforts to reshape a collective religious identity, as redefined in the 1917-18 All Russian Reforming Council, was the creation of organized intellectual groups, often called "brotherhoods." The largest movement was the pan-European Russian Student Christian Movement, begun in 1924 at the initiative of Bulgakov; it held conferences and published a mostly Russian-language theological journal called "Le Messenger – Вестник. According to the recently published *Orthodox Encyclopedia*, by the Orthodox Patriarchate of Russia, there were two main types of Orthodox brotherhoods. The first type engaged in activities such as publishing literature, charity work, and lay education, while the second was concerned with discussing and addressing the intellectual problems faced by the church and its members in the western context.³ Bulgakov and a young medievalist named

Vladimir Lossky became prominent leaders of separate brotherhoods in Paris; both fit generally into the second type, but incorporated some elements of the first.⁴ Lossky is best known for his 1944 summary of Eastern Orthodox theology in his essay entitled the *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*.

What follows here is a comparative analysis of the aims and activities of these two brotherhoods including their relationship to various ecclesial hierarchies and the respective involvements of their leaders, Bulgakov and Lossky. Of course the complexity of the entire religious scene in the Russian Orthodox circles of post-WWI Paris can not be fully served by an exposition of these two brotherhoods alone, since there were others in existence. Nevertheless, the definitive clash between the two in 1935, in a controversy called the “Sophia affair,” demonstrates how leadership and authority were understood in the exile community in the early years of communist Russia. Vladimir Lossky instigated the controversy by successfully convincing the *locum tenens* of the Patriarch of Russia to summarily condemn Bulgakov’s doctrine of the Divine Sophia.⁵

Bulgakov and Братство Святой Софий

After the dissolution of the Moscow Religious Philosophical Society in 1918, Bulgakov moved south to the Crimea where he taught for two years at the University of Simferopol. From the ashes of the relatively open intellectual forums in the pre-Soviet era, there arose a more covert means for Russian intellectuals to communicate and debate the problems of their fast changing society. According to Vasilii Zenkovskii the Brotherhood of the Divine Sophia – The Wisdom of God (hereafter, Brotherhood of St Sophia) was already conceived in 1919,⁶ although it is uncertain whether any meetings were held until after 1922 when the emigrations began.

The life and activities of the Brotherhood of St Sophia began with Bulgakov’s initiative and concluded at his death. That is not to say that its sole purpose was to rally around or support Bulgakov’s theological project. The brotherhood had already been conceived prior to the emigration of most of its members at a time when crucial changes were being made to the status and relationship of the Church with the new post-Revolution government.⁷ At the time when it was initiated the brotherhood was not centred around discussions of Sophia or sophiology exclusively,

although it was generally concerned with religious philosophy. It allegedly received the official blessing of Patriarch Tikhon, but could not establish itself overtly due to the tense period in which it was conceived.⁸ It may be said that without such an intellectual circle, Bulgakov might otherwise have struggled later on to maintain the degree of collegiality with his fellows that ultimately safeguarded him against further alienation when his theological writings were attacked on several fronts in the mid-1930s.

In 1923, the Brotherhood of St Sophia became a means for a wide variety of exiled professors who had significant religious commitments, mostly in Prague and Paris, to communicate on issues of common purpose. The minutes state that their main concerns included an analysis of the relationship between ecclesiastical and “holy” power, the monarchical consciousness in Orthodoxy, its relationship towards Catholicism, the activity of the Church in everyday life, the position of the Church in Russia as well as the social, cultural and political aspects of the doctrine of sophiology.⁹ Its membership in the early days was indeed diverse, including those who were unsympathetic or eventually hostile to sophiology in general or at least to Bulgakov’s project. Whatever harmony and unity of vision existed at the outset was short lived as potent personalities such as Berdiaev, Struve, and Florovsky led factions that separated from the brotherhood. This resulted in the eventual formation of a smaller and more unified core group by late 1925. This smaller group was seemingly loyal to Bulgakov and in good relations with the local metropolitan, Evlogii.

In the early days when the Paris community was starting to re-establish for itself the necessary institutions to serve the growing needs of the Orthodox community, the Brotherhood of St Sophia continued to debate issues concerning the relationship of the church to the state. The minutes from the meetings of the brotherhood relate some of the arguments that broke out, showing the internal tension between those who continued to advance the reforming spirit of the 1917-18 Council, and those who remained steadfast in their adherence to prior interpretations of canon law. Often the most contentious debates arose from matters that, due to the changed political environment, could not be resolved by applying existing canon law to the status of the Russian ecclesial hierarchy at home and abroad. Here is precisely where the community of exiles became embroiled in the clashes between its various outspoken leaders, whether ordained or self-appointed.

The drastic transitions that the Church had undergone since the 1917-18 Council made the Paris community a tenuous battleground where internal splits were a near certainty as varying interpretations of the lines of authority or leadership for the exiled Church arose out of the uncertain status of the hierarchy in Russia. The minutes of the 21 May 1925¹⁰ meeting of the brotherhood in Prague, for example, discussed the problem of the deposition and death of Patriarch Tikhon and the possibility of legitimate autonomy for the Orthodox community abroad. Members discussed the canonicity of notions like autocephaly, internal and external freedom, and the option of other ecclesial forms.¹¹ In general their discussions were lively and deeply concerned with remaining faithful and loyal to the mother church in Russia. The minutes indicate that the frequency and intensity of the meetings reached a peak in the summer of 1925. Subsequent meetings geared more toward intellectual matters as members settled into their academic pursuits and became occupied with appraising each other's publications. This led to further controversy as they debated whether the group could even consider itself to be a brotherhood when it proceeded in such an unbrotherly fashion.¹²

In the late 1920s the meetings used a different format and, for the core members who were generally sympathetic to Bulgakov, they held theology seminars to explore the ideas of Divine Wisdom. These meetings soon expanded to include numerous participants, including several women, beyond the original core.¹³ They provided an open forum to discuss theological questions where Bulgakov tested and developed his sophiological doctrines in dialogue with others. The notes taken by V.A. Zander offer an excellent source for further study into this highly developmental period of Bulgakov's thought, and provide a means to understand the social context and resonance of his ideas.¹⁴ The fact that these records were made by a laywoman indicates that Bulgakov, who went from being a political economy professor to an ordained priest in 1918, and finally a leading theologian, should not be mistaken as an obscurantist academic.

Throughout its life, the Brotherhood St Sophia waxed and waned and functioned more as an ad-hoc committee or intellectual organ than an established or regulated society. The one constant thread was the leadership of Bulgakov who was widely respected in the budding intellectual Russian Orthodox community in Paris. The relationship of the brotherhood to the local ecclesial hierarchy was very positive in their mutual aim of re-establishing the educational, diaconal and liturgical life

of the Church. Metropolitan Evlogii was wholly supportive of the vision shared by many in the exile community to establish a Russian Orthodox seminary, to be named L'Institut St. Serge, in Paris. However this close relationship between Evlogii and the brotherhood was not without its severe critics such as members of the Yugoslavia-based Karlovtsy Synod, the so-called Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. One cleric even accused Evlogii, in writing, of capitulating to the demands of the Brotherhood of St Sophia.¹⁵

Vladimir Lossky and la Confrérie Saint Photius

Another group of intellectuals and clerics who attempted to establish a collective Orthodox identity viewed the mission and destiny of the Orthodox faith, and Russia's role in its furtherance, rather differently than the Brotherhood of St Sophia. They saw themselves as not so much preserving the flame of their native faith as bearing the torch and fanning it in the West. Whereas Bulgakov and his circle sought to build ecumenical bridges with Anglicans and French Catholics in particular, the group named after St Photius had a more explicit missionary agenda. In short, they sought to save western Christianity by helping it to rediscover the orthodoxy it had long since lost. Their goal was no less than to facilitate the "universal triumph of Orthodoxy."¹⁶

The Brotherhood of St Photius, named after the famously polemical ninth-century patriarch of Constantinople and arch-critic of the western Church, was established in Paris in the mid-1920s sometime between February 1923 and 1928.¹⁷ Whether or not Lossky was a founding member is difficult to determine, but it seems likely that 1925 was the official date of establishing a manifesto for the brotherhood; at that point the young Lossky was already in Paris.¹⁸ Despite the uncertain details of its origin, it is clear that the young Lossky rose quickly as a key leader.

The Brotherhood of St Photius's manifesto was a call for a universalizing movement within Orthodoxy to spread the true faith to every people, while preserving local customs, rites and liturgical languages.¹⁹ It maintained a position of unconditional loyalty toward the institutional hierarchy of its native church and supported its allegiance to the Soviet state; in this way it differed in an essential way from the Brotherhood of St Sophia that repeatedly condemned the Leninist regime. The Photian brethren believed it was actually providential that Russian Orthodox Christians were dispersed and sent away from their homeland

in order that they could witness in other contexts to the truth of the Orthodox Church. They obviously shared little, if any, signs of bitterness about living in Paris after leaving Russia. Their eager adaptation of French further showed where their preferences lay. In the west they viewed “Old Catholics” as the most congenial to their message of the “hidden Orthodoxy” of the west. Rather than transplanting the Russian Orthodox faith into a new context, they wanted to resurrect what they saw as the potential for the Church in the west to discover anew the Orthodoxy it once knew.²⁰

The activities of the brotherhood included founding the “*Domaine saint Irénée*” in 1926, which sought to produce Orthodox liturgical texts in French.²¹ In 1927, Evlogii even gave his blessing to the creation of a French-language parish that was apparently initiated by the Brotherhood of St Photius. Until the late 1920s, the brotherhood was still amenable to working under the authority granted by Evlogii, who continued to assist in the furtherance of French-language Orthodox ministry.

The rupture that occurred in the late 1920s between Metropolitan Evlogii of Paris and Metropolitan Sergei of Moscow also caused a decisive break with the majority of Russian Orthodox leaders in Paris. The basic issue of contention was whether the Church outside Russia could criticize the Soviet state. Vladimir Lossky was among the minority in Paris who transferred their ecclesiastical allegiance to Metropolitan Eleutherios of Vilnius, who was now named Exarch of Western Europe. This transfer of jurisdictional authority occurred after 26 December 1930, when a decree from Sergei in Moscow confirmed a prior decision to canonically dissolve the diocesan administration of Evlogii in Paris.²² After the split in leadership, the community also separated, and many of the earlier French-language efforts taken by the Brotherhood of St Photius remained under the auspices of Evlogii. The minority, who remained loyal to the decree of Sergei, regrouped to celebrate the liturgy in a private apartment while they awaited the consecration of a new canonical parish of the Russian patriarch in Paris, named “*la Communauté des Trois Saints Hiérarques*.” Eleutherios considered the abandonment of their native patriarchal church in its time of persecution to be treasonous.²³ To have supported a church jurisdiction that swore loyalty to the Soviet regime in the period of Stalin’s purges and some of the most devastating blows delivered to any nation or church in history, seemed tantamount to the loyalty offered to the Weimar republic by the *Deutsche Christen* of the same years.

By the mid-1930s this minority group of the Russian diaspora, led by the Brotherhood of St Photius, sought to increase its missionary activity

among the French and was successful in creating a relationship with Monsignor Louis Winnaert, a leader of a movement called l'Eglise catholique-évangélique.²⁴ Sergei of Moscow wrote a declaration in 1936 creating l'Eglise orthodoxe occidentale and specified the various stipulations of its jurisdiction and liturgical activities.²⁵ We see here an attempt to recognize the cultural restraints of an Orthodox tradition in Europe that is nearly inextricable from its Byzantine cultural heritage. The brotherhood saw this development as a product of their efforts and other key factors which Lossky described as a culmination of three different elements: the evangelical-catholic movement, the Brotherhood of St Photius and the patriarch in Moscow. He gave much credit to what he called the "clairvoyance" of Metropolitan Sergei.²⁶ By August of 1939, after Sergei was conferred the title of patriarch, he wrote to Lossky praising the brotherhood's missionary work.²⁷ He hoped that they would continue to "sensitize the westerners to Orthodoxy" and continue to negotiate with other groups that might possibly join the Orthodox Church.

Finally there is one aspect of Lossky's involvement with the Brotherhood of St Photius that contributed more directly to his alienation from the exiled Russian Orthodox community in Paris, namely his written condemnation of Bulgakov's sophiological doctrines. The theological controversy that broke out in the mid-1930s may be approached from various angles. Lossky both provoked the controversy, justified the essence of the condemnation and Sergei of Moscow's right to pronounce such judgment on Bulgakov, even in his absence. To say the least, there were many in the Church, not only in the diaspora, who objected that the metropolitan was acting *ultra vires*, outside of his canonical role. Considering the concomitant struggles between the hierarchy in Paris and Moscow, it is best to consider the doctrinal controversy over Sophia as having direct relevance to the distressful political context in which the local churches were situated. Lossky's authorship of a booklet published by the Brotherhood of St Photius provides a description of his argument against Bulgakov.²⁸ In the opening pages, Lossky claimed that Bulgakov's defense of his writings was more out of obstinacy toward ecclesiastical authority in general than out of an objection to Metropolitan Sergei's action.²⁹ Meanwhile a large percentage of the Russian Orthodox community in Paris had remained under the leadership of Evlogii, who, by the early 1930s, was no longer under the authority of Sergei of Moscow, but the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople in Turkey. To summarize, there were at least two canonical jurisdictions in Paris that were in direct

conflict – one connected to Turkey, the other to Russia through Lithuania. Another one of significance was also based in Serbia (ROCA), and it was equally antithetical toward Bulgakov, but denied the canonical authority of Moscow and then declared itself to be the sole legitimate heir of the pre-Soviet Church.

Two Orthodox Brotherhoods Clash

Members of the Brotherhood of St Photius played an instrumental role in effecting the *Ukaz*, a written declaration, from Metropolitan Sergei. To be fair, there does not seem to be any evidence of an outright conspiracy whereby the entire Brotherhood of St Photius bore collective responsibility for the initial actions taken against Bulgakov. Rather it seems that two of its members, Lossky and a peer named Alexis Stavrovsky, neither of whom had degrees in theology,³⁰ initially acted independently, and were subsequently supported by the brotherhood. The two informants sent a secret communication to Eleutherios in Vilnius who forwarded it to Sergei in Moscow.³¹ It explained that Bulgakov held doctrines that did not conform to the mother church.³² For Lossky the move signaled the start of an enduring rapport with the church hierarchy in Moscow, which greatly aided the aims of the Brotherhood of St Photius. It would even result in an invitation to Lossky from the Moscow patriarch that would allow him to travel to Moscow, Leningrad, Vladimir and Kiev in 1956.

The two young critics of Bulgakov received a reply from Metropolitan Sergei asking for more detailed information about exactly what Bulgakov was teaching. They responded by describing the doctrines as gnostic and that they erased the division between the Creator and creation. On 7 September 1935, Sergei took action to condemn Bulgakov's teaching, producing the first of two decrees against his understanding of the doctrine of the two-natures in Christ and of the unique hypostasis of Christ.³³ It is important to note that Evlogii and the two main founders of the Brotherhood of the Divine Sophia, Bulgakov and A.V. Kartashev, were all instrumental members at the 1917-18 Council, which had decreed various reforms that were viewed by some conservatives as too progressive. Evlogii had organized the diocese in Paris as laid out by the decrees of the Council.

But Lossky insisted – as the Brotherhood of St Photius had always maintained – that the canonical authority of the Church must not be

challenged or ignored, as he saw happening in Paris. Lossky's extreme loyalty to the jurisdiction of Moscow eventually alienated him not only from the majority of the Parisian Russian Orthodox community, but later from Fr Eugraph Kovalevsky, one of the original founders of the Brotherhood of Photius, who also eventually broke with Moscow in 1953.³⁴ It was precisely the politically autonomous posture on the part of the Brotherhood of St Sophia and its attempts to support the local metropolitan in Paris that created a background for the doctrinal controversy between Vladimir Lossky and Bulgakov. Here, clothed beneath a debate over questions of the unknowability of the Godhead and the legitimacy of sophiology, they held opposing views of the current relationship between church and state. In addition to their personal convictions, Bulgakov and Lossky were located on opposing sides of a debate on ecclesial politics and both seemed to enjoy the support of their respective brotherhoods.

Today the Orthodox Church in Russia is working on an assessment of its native traditions, while continuing the encounter with the west begun *de rigueur* in the pre-Soviet days when Russians who emigrated to western Europe and other parts of the world retained their native religious identity while accepting many aspects of the foreign culture. New centres of training and higher education have opened, which will further the efforts of Orthodox scholars and lay persons to re-ignite some of the religious flame that had burned until the Council of 1917-18.

Recently, Aleksandr Men', martyred in 1990, has been honoured as one of the key leaders of renewal of Russian Orthodoxy in the glasnost period, and, although he claims no theological dependence on Bulgakov,³⁵ there exists a connection between the two. While lying on his deathbed in 1944, Bulgakov instructed iconographer Sister Joanna Reitlinger to return to her motherland, take up her cross, and carry it with joy.³⁶ She eventually returned to Tashkent in 1955, and later came into close contact with Fr Aleksander Men'. She considers herself to have been sent to Fr Aleksander by Bulgakov, linking the spiritual mentor of the early part of her adult life to the man who became her mentor and confessor in the latter part of her life. Her depiction of the Divine Sophia in an icon has become one of the famous symbols of the reconnection of the Paris community and the Church in Russia today.

Although many western scholars still read Lossky's *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* and consider it to have widely accepted authority in the Orthodox Church, there is scarcely any recognition of the

context in which he wrote it. Lossky became a French citizen in 1939, and claimed ultimately to be an “occidentaliste.”³⁷ Ironically he claims that his westernism is also a Russian characteristic, that is, “être plus européen que tous les autres Européens.”³⁸ Whether or not Lossky is correct in ascribing such a characteristic to Russians, the new generation of Orthodox believers will surely benefit from a deeper investigation into the lives of both Bulgakov and Lossky. If it is characteristically Russian to revolt against the prior generation, as Turgenev describes in his novel, *Fathers and Sons*, and in so doing to attempt to strip the new age of its “Russianness,” then perhaps Lossky rightly calls himself one who is truly Russian in this rather ironic sense. The new generation may be likewise content to have revolted against him.

Endnotes

1. Dr. T. Allan Smith, University of St Michael’s College, deserves credit for directing me in the following study and providing helpful insight and critique.
2. Kristiane Burchardi, *Die Moskauer “Religiös-Philosophische Vladimir-Solov’ev-Gesellschaft” (1905–1918)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1998), 13.
3. A.V. Zhuravskii, “Bratstva Pravoslavnye,” in *Pravoslavnaia Entsiklopedia* (Moscow: Tserkovno-nauchnyi Tsent, 2003), 6: 209-210.
4. Zhuravskii, “Bratstva Pravoslavnye,” 210. In addition to these two leaders there was also the Brotherhood of Alexander Nevsky (1921) begun by P.E. Kovalevsky, and the Paris Brotherhood of Sergius, started by Ieromonakh Savvoi (Struve).
5. After the completion of this paper a dissertation by Bryn Geffert appeared. It provides rich insights into this period of controversy, especially from the perspective of Anglo-Orthodox relations centering around the Brotherhood of St Alban & St Sergius (“Anglican & Orthodox Between the Wars” [Ph. D. diss., Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2003]; see also Bryn Geffert, “The Charges of Heresy Against Sergii Bulgakov,” *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 49, no. 1-2 [2005]: 47-66; and Alexis Klimoff, “Georges Florovsky and the Sophiological Controversy,” *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 49, no. 1-2 [2005]: 67-100).
6. V.V. Zenkovskii, “O Bratstve Sviatoi Sofii v Emigratsii,” in *Bratstvo Sviatoi Sofii: Materialy i Dokumenty 1923-1939*, comp., N.A. Struve (Paris: YMCA-Press, 2000), 5.

7. Noteworthy is Bulgakov's role at the 1917-18 All-Russia Reform Council concerning the relationship of the church and politics. On 2 June 1917, he presented a paper on the "Church and Democracy," and 15 November a paper entitled, "On the Relationship of the Church to the State." These presentations were daring attempts to make the church more responsive to the people and ensure that it would not capitulate to the demands of the state (Kliment Naumov, *Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Serge Boulgakov* [Paris: Institut d'Études Slaves, 1984], 45; see also Catherine Evtuhov, *The Cross and the Sickle* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997], 189-206).
8. Zenkovskii, "O Bratstve Sviatoi Sofii v Emigratsii," 5.
9. Zhuravskii, "Bratstva Pravoslavnye," 210; see also Struve, *Bratstvo Sviatoi Sofii*, 9-10.
10. Dates provided throughout this study are from the Gregorian calendar.
11. Struve, *Bratstvo Sviatoi Sofii*, 79-86.
12. "Minutes of 25 December 1925," in Struve, *Bratstvo Sviatoi Sofii*.
13. Photograph #12, in Struve, *Bratstvo Sviatoi Sofii*. Among them were Mat' Maria (Skobtsova), Ioanna N. Reitlinger, V.A. Zander, Mat' Evdokia (Meshcheryakova), A.B. Obolienskaya.
14. The notes of these seminars by V.A. Zander, whose husband later wrote, *Bog i Mir*, the first intellectual biography of Bulgakov, have been published in Struve, *Bratstvo Sviatoi Sofii*, 147-65. The seminars that focused on sophiology were from October-December 1928; other topics were developed at subsequent seminars until 1933.
15. Cited by Ludmilla Perepiolkina in *Ecumenism: The Path to Perdition*; available from <http://ecumenizm.tripod.com/ECUMENIZM>; accessed 11 January 2004). See N.D. Talberg, *Dvuglavyi Orel*, No. 4 (Paris: Doloi zlo, 1927), 7-8; and "Vozbuditeli Raskola," 12-13.
16. Vladimir Lossky cited in "La Confrérie Saint Photius"; available from http://e.korsoun.free.fr/fr/textes/fondat_tsh_02.htm; accessed 15 July 2004.
17. See Vincent Bourne, *La divine contradiction: L'avenir catholique orthodoxe de la France*, (Paris: Librairie des Cinq continents, 1975), 80. The date of 1923 is disputed in Maxime Kovalevsky, *Orthodoxie et Occident: Renaissance d'une Église Locale* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1994), who claims that it was not founded until 1925. Vladimir Lossky also states that the Brotherhood was founded in 1925 ("Pour Une Orthodoxie Occidentale"; available from <http://orthodoxie.free.fr/pour%20une%20orthodoxie%20occidentale.htm>; accessed 15 July 2004). To further confuse the matter, the website of l'Institut

Saint-Denys claims that the brotherhood was founded in 1927. The latest date, 1928, is found in Rowan Williams' dissertation on Vladimir Lossky. It was founded by eight men including three brothers: Eugraphe, Maxime and Pierre Kovalevsky, and five others among whom were Nicolas Sakharov, Alexis Stavrowsky, Vsevolod Palachkowsky, Father Sergei Schewitsch and N.A. Poltoratsky.

18. The *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* states in Lossky's necrology that he was one of the founders of the Brotherhood, but this remains uncertain due to conflicting information about its initial inception (Leonid Uspensky, "Professor Vladimir Nikolaievich Lossky [Nekrolog]" *Zhurnal Moskovskii Patriarchii* 4 [1958]: 11).
19. http://e.korsoun.free.fr/fr/textes/fondat_tsh_02.htm; accessed 15 July 2004.
20. http://perso.club-internet.fr/chrysostome/fr/textes/fondation_fr02.html; accessed 15 July 2004. A passionate address delivered by Lossky at the Brotherhood in 1937 summarizes his view of their purpose as: "Face au monde hétérodoxe et à l'incertitude dogmatique de nombreux orthodoxes, [the Church] doit donner une ferme confession de l'Orthodoxie – unique Vérité universelle, dont le patriarcat de Rome s'est détaché . . . L'unité chrétienne ne peut être atteinte qu'en confessant l'Orthodoxie qui doit renaître en Occident . . . [The Brotherhood seeks to] ranimer la conscience ecclésiale des Orthodoxes émigrés et ramener l'Occident à la Tradition Orthodoxe tout en respectant son identité profonde, en un mot, susciter en France une véritable Orthodoxie Occidentale."
21. See detailed examination in Kovalevsky, *Orthodoxie et Occident*, 313-328.
22. http://e.korsoun.free.fr/fr/textes/fondat_tsh_02.htm; accessed 15 July 2004.
23. http://e.korsoun.free.fr/fr/textes/fondat_tsh_02.htm; accessed 15 July 2004.
24. Kovalevsky, *Orthodoxie et Occident*, 55.
25. Kovalevsky, *Orthodoxie et Occident*, 70. For example, using leavened bread, the epiclesis as in the East, utraquist Communion, etc.
26. http://e.korsoun.free.fr/fr/textes/fondat_tsh_02.htm; accessed 15 July 2004.
27. http://e.korsoun.free.fr/fr/textes/fondat_tsh_02.htm; accessed 15 July 2004.
28. Vladimir N. Lossky, *Spor'' o Sofii* (Paris: E.I.R.P, 1936).
29. Lossky, *Spor'' o Sofii*, 9-12.
30. Struve, *Bratstvo Sviatoi Sofii*, 312.

31. Antoine Arjakovsky, "L'Institut de Théologie Orthodoxe Saint Serge à Paris," in *Bogoslov, Filosof, Myslitel'*, N.I. Kateava-Lytkina, Fr Innokentii (Pavlov); and A.I. Velikanova (Moscow: Dom-myzei Mariny Tsetaevoi, 1999), 92.
32. Arjakovsky, "L'Institut de Théologie Orthodoxe Saint Serge à Paris," 93.
33. Arjakovsky, "L'Institut de Théologie Orthodoxe Saint Serge à Paris," 93.
34. Kovalevsky, *Orthodoxie et Occident*, 137-50. Compare Rowan Williams dissertation where he describes Lossky's attitude towards those who challenged Moscow's ecclesiastical authority as follows: "[S]uch a position [as those who believe they are the true heirs and spokesmen of Russian Orthodoxy] was untenable: it represented a cavalier attitude to the 'given' historical situation of the Russian Church, an implicit refusal to recognise that the Church could continue to function authentically in a dechristianized society, and therefore, an implicit belief that the Church was necessarily bound to certain cultural or national structures" ("The Theology of Vladimir Lossky: An Exposition and Critique" [Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford University, 1975], 9-10).
35. Aleksandr Men', *Mirovaia dukhovnaia kultura, Khristianstvo, Tserkov'* (Moscow: Fond imeni Aleksandra Menia, 1997), 530.
36. Elizabeth Roberts, "The Wise Sky – The Letters Between Father Alexander Men (1935-1990) and Sister Joanna (Julia) Reitlinger (1898-1988)," *Theandros* 1, no. 1 (Fall 2003); available from <http://www.theandros.com/wisesky.html>; accessed 10 July 2004.
37. Vladimir Lossky to his father, Nikolai Losskii, c. 1956, in Vladimir Lossky, *Sept Jours sur les Routes de France* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1998), 80.
38. Lossky, *Sept Jours*, 81.

**Emeralds on a Tightrope:
The Political, Religious and Cultural Tensions
Faced by the Irish Baptists in World War II**

JAMES T. ROBERTSON
McMaster Divinity College

During World War II Irish Baptists, who considered themselves as a “comparatively small body of Christians,”¹ became embroiled in events taking place on the world’s stage. Through an examination of *The Irish Baptist* magazine, *The Handbook of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* and other literature from World War II, this paper explores how the Irish Baptists – predominantly located in Northern Ireland – publicly declared loyalty and support to their Protestant king and the Allied nations, while simultaneously struggling to maintain healthy relations with their brothers and sisters in the faith who lived in neutral Southern Ireland. The paper also shows how the Baptist Church in Ireland continually adapted, revised and developed its wartime theology in order to explain adequately to its members what it meant to be a Baptist during such a long and brutal global conflict.

In the early years of the war, *The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* was almost unanimous in declaring its desire not to be engaged in any type of military conflict.² In May 1939, *The Union* was still hopeful that a peaceful resolution could be met between the nations:

We welcome . . . the appeal of the president of the United States . . . and ask our Government to support him in his effort to avoid the disaster of war by securing guarantees of non-aggression and by removal of economic and other hindrances to good relations between

the peoples of the earth through methods of negotiation instead of resort[ing] to violence.³

However, as war became recognizably unavoidable, the Irish Baptists felt compelled not only to offer theological insights regarding the war, but also to address any lingering questions about their loyalty. Compounding this problem was the very public and defiant proclamation from Southern Irish Prime Minister Eamon de Valera that the Irish Republic would remain neutral in the conflict. Although the Baptists had been loyal to the Crown for centuries, they were also aware that many other countries viewed the North and South as one nation regardless of their separate governments. Ireland remained the one big question mark with regards to its loyalty to the British Empire and many speculated as to its future within the imperial federation.

Politically, such questions were put to rest in September 1939 when Lord Craigavon, speaking in Parliament on behalf of the Government of Northern Ireland, stated: "There is no falling off in our determination to place the whole of our resources at the command of the Imperial government . . . they have only just got to let us know."⁴ *The Irish Baptist* followed suit from an ecclesiastical perspective in June of 1940 with this message from the president of the Irish Union to the Crown: "May it please your Majesty to receive from the Baptist Union of Ireland met in Belfast, this humble expression of loyal devotion to your person and throne. We thank God for your Majesty's Call to Prayer in which we humbly unite."⁵ It is worth noting that almost an entire year elapsed between the government proclamation and the Baptist one.

Parliament's early response probably made this time of reflection possible for the Baptists. Had the government not made its policy of loyalty public at this time, the Irish Union may have had to print this remark earlier in order to assuage any critics who would have challenged Baptist allegiance. *The Irish Baptist's* willingness to support the monarchy is evidenced by the fact that the issue in which the aforementioned article was published directly followed the Baptist Union of Great Britain's official sanction of the country's involvement in the war. The resolution read: "The assembly record their deep sorrow that Germany's repeated assaults on the freedom and independence of smaller nations . . . had left our country with no honourable alternative to war."⁶

That *The Irish Baptist* felt compelled to print its statement openly so soon after the (predominantly English) Baptist Union made its resolution

may indicate that Irish Baptists felt pressure to waylay any critics who may have associated them with their neutral neighbours to the south. In this light, the letter can be seen as *The Irish Baptist's* method of unquestionably displaying its position of loyalty to its readers and, perhaps more importantly, to its monarch. This may be due to the fact that while Northern Ireland officially supported the king in the cause of the war, there is plenty of evidence that not all residents of Ireland agreed with this stance.⁷ Hostility towards the Crown was still prevalent in this corner of the empire, and one of the most notable disputes came as a result of the British government's toying with the notion of conscripting Irish soldiers if the need should arise. Even the most loyal of Irish citizens refused this idea because any appearance of the British forcing their agenda unto the Irish people smacked of the imperialism Ireland had violently rebelled against only twenty years earlier. Prime Minister de Valera even cancelled a trip to the United States in order to combat conscription in the North.⁸ In his memoirs he stated, "We claim the whole of Ireland as national territory. The conscription of Irishmen we will regard as an act of aggression."⁹

Despite tensions related to Irish involvement in the war, many of the issues of *The Irish Baptist* published from 1938-1941 have noticeably frequent passages referring to the multitudes of Baptists who have enlisted in "His Majesty's Service."¹⁰ Many articles related information to church members about the state of various congregants at war. The article titled "Not Forgotten" is an example of this as it reads, "All those members and adherents of the Antrim Road Baptist Church who have volunteered for service in His Majesty's Forces, will receive a Christmas parcel . . ."¹¹ In addition to this, *The Irish Baptist* assured its readers that they should be proud for the many young people who had answered the call and were willingly entering into the conflict for king and country. Several articles appeared in 1939 singing the praises of the Baptist young people, "Quite a number of young men in connection with our churches have joined the Armed Forces of the Crown."¹² In similar fashion, many articles appeared in connection with enlistment figures and requests for soldiers' information so that Baptist chaplains could minister to church members while they were at war.¹³ Articles that so boldly favoured the Crown during such a tumultuous time show that Northern Ireland's Baptists took their role in both the earthly and heavenly kingdom seriously. However, there remained a very real threat that their steadfast loyalty would effectively sever their ties with their southern counterparts.

In order to properly understand these tensions one must realize that, at this time, Ireland was actually made up of two countries, and both of them had been born from the blood and ashes of insurgency and civil war which had ended only two decades earlier. The North, known as Ulster, remained under English authority after Michael Collins and others bartered a deal that gave the rest of Ireland the power to rule itself.¹⁴ After this the South, known as Eire (the Gaelic word for the country), became a new republic with its own government and legislature. Those loyal to England, mostly Protestants, remained in the North and the predominantly Catholic, Republican Irish remained in the South.¹⁵ Ulster's subjugation was one of the main reasons why the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and subsequent insurrectionist groups had been formed. Now the separation had been accentuated again as both sides took opposing stances with relation to the war.

The Irish Baptist relocated its head offices from Dublin to Belfast in May 1938, and, over the course of the war, some articles appeared that show distinct differences between Eire and Ulster. Prior to the 1940 Annual Assembly of Irish Baptists in Ulster, a concerned northern Baptist wrote "I have had a visit from some friends in Eire lately who did not understand that we in Northern Ireland are rationed in certain commodities."¹⁶ This was to remind members from the South to bring some of their own food to billet homes since those in the North were being rationed due to the war effort. Constant "black-outs" and restrictions placed on personal freedoms seemed to weigh heavily on Baptists in the North and occasionally there was a slight hint from Ulster to Eire that the Northern family needed a little more support and understanding from the South.

Despite these occasional letters, there was never any direct mention of a conflict between Baptists on opposite sides of the border. In fact, the relationship seemed very cordial and the sharing of ecclesiastical duties seemed to bond the two groups together as evidenced in November 1940, "The President of the Baptist Union of Ireland (located in the North) . . . and the Secretary . . . have just completed a round of visits to centres of Baptist work in Eire."¹⁷ And in early January of 1941, the acting president again visited the South and printed this: "Greetings to all *friends*, both North and South, that I have had the pleasure of meeting recently . . ."¹⁸ The report from the chair of the Southern Baptist Association appeared on page one of the November 1940 issue and *The Irish Baptist* featured a regular column dedicated entirely to details about the Southern churches.

Despite all of this, most of the announcements and upcoming events highlighted in *The Irish Baptist* were from the North and all advertising came from Northern stores. Some might argue that this shunning is evidence in and of itself of the state of relations between Ulster and the Irish Republic, but that seems to be an argument from silence. Throughout the war, book reviews and letters to the editor were still sent to the Dublin office,¹⁹ and in May of 1941, the magazine was printed in Dublin due to the damage Belfast received from German bombers the previous month. During the “Baptism by Fire” as *The Baptist* called the bombing campaign, the writers in the South showed nothing but the deepest concern for the well-being of their northern brethren “. . . our knowledge of details is very meagre, but we have heard enough to enable us to realize something of the horror of the nights through which *our friends* have passed.”²⁰ Considering the amount of charity *The Irish Baptist* extended to Baptist churches in Axis countries, it seems illogical that they would turn on their own Baptist countrymen.²¹ A stronger argument can be made that because there were, on average, thirty-five to forty more Baptist churches in the North,²² they naturally received more attention.

No view of the Baptists in this war is complete without a careful look at how this epic battle impacted their theology and faith. There is insufficient space in this paper to adequately cover all the articles that deal specifically with faith issues, but some prominent themes can be discussed. The war obviously weighed heavily on the minds of the Baptists, and it is interesting to watch their wartime theology develop as the conflict continued to grow.

Early on, it is obvious that the sobering reality of war had not hit home because *The Irish Baptist* functioned as little more than a reporter of wartime inconveniences. The magazine was still full of uplifting stories of courage and poems praising God’s ability to protect the faithful²³ along with little verbal gems designed to ease the mind of the anxious reader: “Worry is like a rocking horse. It keeps on going but gets you nowhere.”²⁴ It is somewhat amusing to read many articles that deal less with the war and more with how church social activities were inconvenienced due to the war, “We would not wish this year to be otherwise, despite the fact that, owing to war economies, we have to omit our customary cup (or more) of tea!”²⁵ Another example of this follows: “Owing to the ‘black-out’ conditions the usual Sunday School Social was divided into two parts this year.”²⁶ But even the ominous “black-outs” were seen as potential evangelistic tools because they afforded the opportunity to preach the

Gospel to a somewhat captive audience. The following quote shows that some young people were attending simply because they had nothing better to do:

I think the young people are enjoying the “black-out.” I stood on the outskirts of a five-deep throng outside Great Victoria Street Church one Saturday night and noticed many standing listening whom I think would not normally stop at an open air meeting.²⁷

However, as the war progressed the questions took a more serious turn and *The Irish Baptist*, though with fewer pages due to wartime restrictions,²⁸ used more of its precious space to act as a theological teacher for its readers. Many articles became more apocalyptic in scope and the most in-depth Bible lesson during the course of the war was, not surprisingly, on the Book of Revelation. This series began in April 1940 and, with the exception of a brief hiatus in late 1941, continued well into 1942!

As early as 1940, *The Irish Baptist* began to feature more writers who used scriptural teaching to alleviate concerns about a just God allowing atrocities such as those reported from the front. In February 1940, one article seemed to summarize the theological struggle this magazine faced for the duration of the war. The article titled, “How Can Such a Horror as a Major European War be Fitted Into the Christian Scheme of Things?” was one anonymous preacher’s battle with this very disturbing question. In it he spells out following four points in an attempt to put the readers at ease:

1) God did predict war: it has a steadying effect to realize that God did predict war; 2) God has explained war: He attributes it to human selfishness; 3) God can overrule war: God uses war to expose and punish sin, to awaken sinners and revive Christians; and 4) God will abolish war: His (Christ’s) return in glory is the world’s hope.²⁹

Most articles published in *The Baptist* during the war were similar in structure and theme. In these articles the reader listened in on one half of a conversation where a pastor or prominent Baptist responded to questions they had been asked regarding the war. They used sin, greed, violence, spiritual conflict, the fallen nature of humanity and various other biblical reasons to explain the war, and most articles are fairly consistent with Baptist teaching in that they have three or four points that usually

start with the same letter and feature Bible verses to support their arguments. Writers usually began by giving voice to the multitudes wondering about the power of God in such a dismal time in human history; by the end of almost every article, the reader was reminded never to give up hope, continue to pray, study the Word of God, and to give all their fears and worries over to Jesus. By the end of 1940, the acting president, Herbert Lockyer, had some final words to give to Irish Baptists throughout the realm who had just come through a dark and violent year. These words seem to be representative of how Irish Baptists were told to deal with their concern: “this article may help those of you who are troubled about the terrible suffering in the world to-day because of the war . . . Cast (your troubles) upon Him, Whose broad shoulders are able to carry all our cares.”³⁰

As the war machine continued to roll with little hope for respite, the future of the conflict began to be viewed as the visible manifestation of unseen spiritual warfare. Articles such as “The Bow in the Clouds” appealed to Romans 8:31 and Genesis 9:14-16 to show that God was in control and was on the side of the Allies. The despair brought on by the war was given spiritual significance and the paper exhorted its readers to find their strength in their faith and in the biblical message of hope: “in the present distress may be the cloud . . . faith can see the bow in (the cloud) painted by God’s own hand.”³¹ By 1941 the message had changed very little, if at all: “But if it is true that the gloom is lingering, it is also true that the dawn has broken ‘We see Jesus crowned.’”³² The author used the Irish climate as a vivid metaphor to communicate the message of hope. Anyone from Northern Ireland knows that gloomy conditions can seem to endure for eternity but, without fail, the sun eventually comes through.

Many articles show a heightened awareness of the cosmic consequences of this earthly battle within the Baptist thinking as seen in this quote from the 1943 *Baptist Union Handbook*:

(The Assembly) acknowledge with gratitude the courage and wisdom of the leadership given to the nation . . . set by their Majesties the King and Queen who, in their words to the people, have laid stress upon the spiritual factors that must determine the quality of both national and home life in war and peace.³³

Despite official records like these, there seems to be little desire by *The Irish Baptist* to become more involved in the political landscape of the empire. It appears that many in the Baptist camp believed that spiritually

weakening the nation through sin or loose morality was akin to bringing destruction and certain failure in the war effort. However, *The Baptist* records only one incident where the community felt the need to petition the Crown out of fear of divine consequences brought on by the nation's actions.³⁴ The incident in question was not over an official government policy, rather it was over the nature of a play. In January 1942, the Baptist Union banded together in order to have the production, *A Man Born to Be King*, banned from the stage because it was believed that portraying Jesus on stage was blasphemous. The Union appealed to the Crown's faith stating that "the suggested play will call down Divine judgment upon our nation."³⁵

The effect of this boycott beyond Baptist borders is unknown. Further on in the article the comment is made that ". . . we would make this appeal to you to have this Play banned, and call the people of the Empire to humble themselves before the Lord."³⁶ This seems to indicate an underlying belief that destruction in the empire from the war may actually be the result of God's wrath. Though this theology was not unique to Irish Baptists, it is interesting in that the idea of national sin being responsible, in some degree, for national disaster never fully developed beyond this veiled comment and the play itself was never mentioned again. Other than this, the vast majority of teachings about sin and the need to use this time of testing to increase spiritual discipline were directed specifically at Baptists and little attention was paid to the spiritual life of the government.

Finally, one of the most profound themes uncovered in *The Irish Baptist* is that of the official attitude towards fellow Baptists living in Axis countries. *The Baptist* condemned any idea that called for retaliation against another country and brought to mind the unity of the body of Christ when it explained its position: "Even if we are citizens of countries at war with one another, we have an abiding fellowship of faith and hope and love . . . we are one in Christ."³⁷ During the course of the war, the Baptists of Ireland espoused the idea that they belonged to a kingdom whose boundaries transcended human ones. In the very month that the air raids began over London, *The Irish Baptist* printed a list of churches in enemy nations with the words, "Let Us Not Fail to Remember Them," underneath.³⁸ Even at the end of the war, there was little published resentment against the Axis countries, and the official stance was one of peace and a desire to heal for ". . . no encouragement should be given to demands for indiscriminate bombing which arise from a spirit of retalia-

tion and vengeance.”³⁹ The global tension was handled with remarkable grace and compassion and is indicative of the Christian theology that Christ transcends all national boundaries and that the Christian’s true battle is with sin and evil and not with fellow human beings.

Baptists remained outspoken and unwavering in their support of their monarch for the duration of the war. Although it is possible that this could have caused tension with Baptists in the neutral Irish Republic, both sides appeared to focus more on their religious similarities than on their political differences. Their tradition kept this small family united through the awkward strain placed on them by their respective governments and there is little evidence to suggest that these congregational churches had anything but the highest respect and love for each other. Their wartime theology evolved from an initial desire to placate worried church members to a real grappling with hard theological issues a catastrophic event like a war can have on a faith group. Through the battles, loss of congregants and even the bombing of Belfast, *The Irish Baptist* consistently reminded its readers to cast their cares upon Jesus and look to Him alone as the hope of this world. As Adolph Keller wrote in 1939, the role of the church in times of war is no different than the one it is called to fulfill in times of peace:

the church will continue to preach her message, pointing out that God is sovereign even over a world which believes in violence and the power of armies. She will continue, not only the helpful preaching of the Word of God, but also that service of love which she can render to suffering humanity.⁴⁰

Endnotes

1. H. Corbett, “A Message From the Editor,” *The Irish Baptist* (December 1938): 1. In County Armagh Baptists are ranked sixth in total populace behind Roman Catholics, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, Methodist and Brethren. All statistics taken from *The Handbook of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland*.
2. “That this Assembly of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, believing that all war is contrary to the spirit and genius of Jesus Christ . . .” (“Public Resolution #10: Participation in the War,” *The Handbook of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* [1939]: 217).
3. “Public Resolution #1: The International Situation,” *The Handbook of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* (May 1939): 213.

4. Lord Craigavon speaking at the Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates (C), vol. 23, 4 September 1939, col. 1902; quoted in Brian Barton, "Northern Ireland: The Impact of the War 1939-45," in *Ireland and the Second World War*, eds., Brian Birvin and Geoffery Roberts (Portland: Four Courts Press, 2000), 47.
5. J.H. Corbett and F. Forbes, "Telegram to the King," *The Irish Baptist* (June 1940): 4.
6. P.W. Evans, "Public Resolutions," *Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* (May 1940): 212. It is interesting to note that the Rev. T.R. King wanted to add the amendment that the Baptists "humbly acknowledged due responsibility for their part in the failure to maintain peace in the world." But that was "overwhelmingly" voted down (*Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* [May 1940]: 212).
7. After all the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had begun a bombing campaign in England during 1939 (see Ed Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA* [Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2002], 37-93, 538).
8. Churchill biographers note that de Valera irked Churchill more than anyone else. He sent him into frequent rages; nowhere is Churchill's disdain for de Valera more evident than during a BBC speech given by Churchill at the end of the war. In it he extols the virtue of Northern Ireland and their bravery while simultaneously condemning the neutral stance of The Irish Republic: ". . . if it had not been for the loyalty and friendship of Northern Ireland we should have been forced to come to close quarters with Mr. de Valera or perish forever from the earth. However, with a restraint and poise to which, I say, history will find few parallels, His Majesty's Government never laid a violent hand upon them . . ." (BBC radio address given by Churchill on 13 May 1945; quoted in Winston Churchill, *The Second World War: Personal Letters* [Great Britain: Estate of Winston Churchill/Pimico, 2002], chapter 17). This address was followed up by de Valera two days later and was also broadcast throughout Ireland, "Mr. Churchill makes it clear that, in certain circumstances, he would have violated our neutrality and that he would justify his action by Britain's necessity. It seems strange to me that Mr. Churchill does not see that this, if accepted, would mean that Britain's necessity would become a moral code and that when this necessity became sufficiently great, other people's rights were not to count" (BBC radio address given by de Valera on 16 May 1945; quoted in Robert Brennan, *Ireland Standing Firm: My Wartime Mission to Washington* [Dublin: University College Press, 2002], 455). No response was ever given by Churchill or England.
9. Excerpt from an insert identified simply as, "1938," in *A Memoir* (Dublin: University Press, 1958).

10. Although The Union did give full consent for its members to refuse to participate in war if they deemed it un-Christian, “[The Union] declares its full readiness to support to the utmost those members of the Baptist Church who decide to stand by the Christian faith and refuse to take any part in the preparation for or the prosecution of war” (“Public Resolution #10: Participation in War,” *The Handbook of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* [1939]: 217).
11. “Not Forgotten,” *The Irish Baptist* (January 1940): 9.
12. “Our Sailors,” *The Irish Baptist* (December 1939): 12.
13. In the December 1939 issue there is a request that *The Irish Baptist* forward personal information to the appropriate chaplain. It is of note that the title of this appeal is “To the Pastors of our Northern Churches,” which highlights the separation between the Baptists of the Loyalist North and the Neutral South.
14. This is a gross-oversimplification of what transpired in Ireland at this time. Even a cursory view of the political and social climate of Ireland in the early 1920s would require more space than this paper can afford. For an indepth view of the events surrounding Home Rule and the subsequent Civil War, assassination of Collins and the political maneuvering that saw de Valera go from traitor to prime minister, consult: Eamon de Valera, *Memoirs*; Ulick O’Connor, *Michael Collins and the Troubles* (London: WW Norton & Company, 1996); Ernie O’Malley and Cormac O’Malley, *Prisoners: The Civil War Letters of Ernie O’Malley* (Dublin: Poolbeg, 1991); Meda Ryan, *The Day Michael Collins was Shot* (Dublin: Poolbeg, 1989); and Bernard Share, *The Emergency* (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1978).
15. Once again, this is an oversimplification of the multi-faceted and incredibly complex socio-political issues at play in the country at this time, but will have to suffice for the scope of this paper.
16. “Letters to the Editor,” *The Irish Baptist* (May 1940): 8.
17. “Reports,” *The Irish Baptist* (November 1940): 11.
18. H. Corbett, “New Year’s Messages,” *The Irish Baptist* (January 1941): 1.
19. Pastor L.E. Deens, The Manse, 9 Clareville Road, Kenilworth Park, Dublin.
20. “Notes from the Editor,” *The Irish Baptist* (May 1941): 1. Emphasis added.
21. The same can be said for the Irish people in general. After the “Blitz” in May, President de Valera sent fire trucks and equipment to the aid of his countrymen in the north. This act was a direct violation of the South’s neutral stance in the war. Most people agree that the 31 May bombing of North Strand in

Dublin was a German “reminder” to de Valera not to get involved. Though he understood why the Germans targeted Belfast, he still felt it was his duty to come to the assistance of his countrymen (see Robert Brennan, *Ireland Standing Firm: My Wartime Mission to Washington* [Dublin: University Press, 2002], 173-175).

22. All statistics are from *The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland*. While the South had older churches, the North definitely had more of them. This is not surprising considering that the North was the Protestant-friendly zone and the South became occupied mostly by Catholics. In March 1940 the population of Ireland was recorded at 4,279,753 of which approximately only 4,000 were Baptists!
23. “Do not be downhearted, God is on the Throne. And tho’ war is raging He’ll protect His own” (John A. Thom, *The Irish Baptist* [November 1939]: 1).
24. *The Irish Baptist* (November 1939): 6.
25. “Belfast and District Council,” *The Irish Baptist* (February 1941): 6.
26. E.B. O’Reilly, “Items of Interest from the Churches: Belfast-Great Victoria Street,” *The Irish Baptist* (January 1940): 10.
27. Hugh Burrows, “Gleanings from Rover,” *The Irish Baptist* (October 1939): 16.
28. In June of 1940 the magazine was compelled to reduce its size and, in the previous month, the popular column titled “Gleanings by Rover” (also known as Hugh Burrows) had its final run before being sacrificed due to scarcity of space.
29. “Notes and Comments: How Can Such a Horror as a Major European War be Fitted into the Christian Scheme of Things?” *The Irish Baptist* (February 1940): 2.
30. Herbert Lockyer, “A God Who Cares,” *The Irish Baptist* (December 1940): 4.
31. “The Bow in the Cloud,” *The Irish Baptist* (May 1940): 5.
32. L.E.D. [possibly L.E. Deens], “Watchman-What of the Night?” *The Irish Baptist* (March 1941): 1.
33. “Public resolution #1,” *The Handbook of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* (May 1943): 169.

34. This is worth noting because the Assembly rebuked the government on several occasions, most notably for their lack of character displayed in the early stages of the war. The following quote highlights some of the problems the Union had with their government, “But this Assembly cannot but recognize that our own government has its full share of responsibility for the weakening of the League of Nations”(“Public Resolution #9: International Affairs,” *The Handbook of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* [1939]: 217).
35. George Weir, Edward Combe, and Frank Forbes, “The Baptist Union of Ireland,” *The Irish Baptist* (January 1942): 3.
36. Weir, Combe, and Forbes, “The Baptist Union of Ireland,” 3.
37. J.H. Rushbrooke, et al., “In Time of War,” *The Irish Baptist* (December 1939): 2.
38. “Our Brotherhood,” *The Irish Baptist* (August 1940): 2.
39. “Resolution #3,” *The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* (April 1943).
40. Adolf Keller, “The Church in Europe and in War,” *The Irish Baptist* (December 1939): 12-13.

Trends in Church Hopping / Church Shopping in America: A Case Study in Upstate New York

MIKA ROINILA
SUNY New Paltz

Church shopping and church hopping are two different, yet related activities that have received research interest. As a member of many congregations and churches as a result of personal relocations across Canada and the United States, I have become interested in this growing phenomenon that occurs across the country and among the general public. There are reasons other than relocation that must explain this behaviour. Indeed, church shopping is a behaviour that tends to happen in the fall, as residents return to their regular activities, begin school, and have relocated to a new area. The tendency of shopping for a church may also occur at other times, especially among people who cannot find a church they remain happy with; this in turn can become church hopping. This refers to the behaviour where people attend several churches at the same time without the desire to remain loyal to one congregation. According to Amanda Phifer, “Numbers from the Barna Research Group support that theory: Each year fourteen, or one out of every seven, adults changes churches. And seventeen per cent, or one out of every six, adults attends a carefully chosen handful of churches on a rotating basis.”¹ This paper looks at this process in two congregations in upstate New York – the New Paltz Church of the Nazarene and Grace Community Free Evangelical Free Church of Lake Katrine – and reports on the findings of this survey.

Methodology

With the aid of an online survey instrument – zoomerang.com – I was able to establish an online questionnaire with a total of seventeen multiple choice and open-ended questions, aimed at finding out how common church shopping/church hopping is in some Upstate New York congregations. I initially contacted the pastors of five churches – the New Paltz Church of the Nazarene, Grace Community Evangelical Free Church in Lake Katrine, St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Rosendale, as well as Catholic churches in Albany, NY and Rochester, NY. Two evangelical congregations allowed participation after church elders and pastors met to discuss the project. It may also have helped to have rapport with the pastors as a result of personal association with both churches. Unfortunately, all three Catholic churches declined to participate. A response from the St. Peter’s Catholic Church simply stated that “We do not keep that information [e-mail addresses]. Even if we did, I would not give that information out without their [parishioners] permission.”²

After obtaining church membership lists and contacting each available e-mail address, I asked members of the congregation to visit an online questionnaire and complete the survey. The survey was begun 17 March and was completed or closed on 20 April 2005. During the five-week period, a total of 28 members of the Church of the Nazarene were contacted, which resulted in ten responses for a 36 per cent response rate. A total of 100 contacts were made with members of Grace Community Church, from which a total of 24 individuals participated for a response rate of 22 per cent. An earlier pilot questionnaire, which involved only twelve questions was also sent to members of Grace Community Church between 8 February and 8 March 2005 and received a higher response rate with a total of 42 completed questionnaires representing a 38 per cent return rate. However, for comparison, I will only analyze briefly the findings obtained from the longer questionnaire that received responses from the two evangelical churches. Before analyzing the findings, it is important to understand a little about the location and history of these two congregations.

The Church of the Nazarene (CN)

New Paltz, NY was founded in 1677 by French Huguenots who sought refuge in America. The town of New Paltz is well known for its

Dutch history, and many of the seventeenth-century stone buildings still stand today and have been designated as National Historical landmarks. Many of the historic Dutch homes are still inhabited by descendants of the early Dutch settlers.³ New Paltz is located along the Wallkill River that flows northward parallel to the Hudson River, some ninety miles north of New York City, roughly between New York City and Albany.

The Church of the Nazarene takes its name from Jesus who was known as “the Nazarene” (Matthew 2:23). Nazarenes hold to the orthodox Christian beliefs expressed in the Apostles' Creed. Nazarenes also value the Protestant expression of the Christian faith, especially as formulated and preached by John Wesley. The Church of the Nazarene is an evangelical denomination of over 13,000 churches and over one million members with churches and missions in 146 world areas.⁴

The New Paltz Church of the Nazarene was organized and dedicated in 1963. During the tenure of Pastor David Trauffer, who has led the congregation since 1972, the congregation has fluctuated in size. Today, the congregation is diverse ethnically, educationally and economically. Significant ministries of the church today include: a mission to renew the Church of the Nazarene in Kingston, NY; a ladies fellowship; a prison ministry; a nursing home ministry; a nursery school ministry; and a food ministry. During the past thirty-three years, there have been several major building projects that have enlarged the sanctuary and fellowship hall, provided office space, developed handicapped accessible facilities, and expanded church parking.⁵ The New Paltz Church of the Nazarene is composed of about 60 families, and average Sunday attendance involves some ninety people.⁶

Grace Community Evangelical Free Church (GCC)

Lake Katrine is actually a neighborhood that was founded as a result of the 1879 establishment of the Town of Ulster.⁷ Lake Katrine borders the first state capital of Kingston, NY to the south, and is located 105 miles north of New York City along the Esopus Creek.

Grace Community Church was founded in 1958 when a total of twenty-eight members initially gathered as a Sunday school meeting and later incorporated themselves as a church. In 1978, the church became affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America, which was formed in 1950 by the merger of two church bodies: the Swedish Evangelical Free Church and the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Free Church Association.

Both groups had been birthed in the revival movements of the late nineteenth century.⁸

According to the church's website, "Grace Community Church has always held firmly to the evangelical faith, as expressed in its Statement of Faith. We remain thoroughly committed to the authority of the inspired Word of God, as found in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. We believe that salvation from sin and death is found only through personal faith in Jesus Christ."⁹ The congregation has more adherents than official members. There are approximately 500 active attendees, 130 active members, and a Sunday morning worship attendance of about 350 in three services. This places the church in an extreme minority of churches, as 75 per cent of America's churches have fewer than seventy-five attendees on a given Sunday. In fact, 95 per cent of churches in America average 200 attendees or less each week. Only 5 per cent of churches in America have over 200 attendees, and less than 1 per cent have more than 1000.¹⁰ According to Pastor Sam Rodenhizer, the church has the largest attendance in the Kingston area.¹¹ As a result of the growing numbers, the church is constructing a new sanctuary near the present site to accommodate the large congregation.

Table 1: Respondent Age

Age	Nazarene #	Nazarene %	Grace CC #	Grace CC %
18-30	0	0	1	4
31-40	0	0	4	17
41-50	4	40	15	63
51-60	2	20	2	8
61-70	2	20	2	8
71-80	2	20	0	0
Over 80	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	10	100%	24	100%

Findings

In comparing the demographics of the responses of the two congregations, responses by women dominated the questionnaires. Women made up 60 per cent of the CN respondents and 63 per cent of the GCC respondents, while men made up 40 per cent of the CN and 38 per cent of the GCC respondents. In terms of age, 63 per cent of the respondents in the Grace Community Church were between the ages 41-50, while 40 per

cent of the respondents in the CN were in the same age category. More elderly respondents are found in the Church of the Nazarene (Table 1). Every respondent in both congregations was Caucasian. The dominant ethnic ancestry in both congregations involves European roots. Nazarene respondents drew from English (4), German (3), Dutch (2), Irish, Hungarian, Swedish, Austrian, French, Lithuanian, Swiss, and American Indian roots. Grace Community Church included Irish (9), German (6), Dutch (5), English (4), Italian (3), Scottish (2), Austrian, Scots-Irish, Welsh, Russian, French Canadian, Lithuanian, and Seneca ancestry.

In terms of education, a total of 40 per cent of the Nazarene respondents had achieved post-graduate education, while 33 per cent of those who attended Grace Community Church had achieved a similar educational standard (Table 2). The occupational background provides some interesting results. In the Church of the Nazarene, four respondents were retired (40 per cent), two were involved in education as a university professor and a teacher, another two were employed in the health care services, and two were in managerial positions. A total of five teachers were encountered in Grace Community Church, representing 21 per cent of all responses. The presence of teachers in the congregation is indeed striking. I can say this as a result of personal observation and knowledge of the congregants. Of the several other occupations noted, respondents listed themselves as homemakers (4), engineers (3), clerks and sales (3), nurses (2), computer programmers (2), along with an attorney, entrepreneur, secretary, and graphic artist.

Table 2: What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

Education level	Nazarene #	Nazarene %	Grace CC #	Grace CC %
High School	3	30	3	13
College	1	10	7	29
University	2	20	8	33
Post-grad studies	4	40	6	25
TOTAL	10	100%	24	100%

With the required demographic and descriptive analysis out of the way, I begin to look at church attendance and loyalty. Respondents in both congregations report high numbers with 50 per cent of respondents being loyal members who have attended the “present” church home for over ten

years. Within the Church of the Nazarene, one respondent has attended less than one year and two respondents have attended between one and five years at the New Paltz location. At Grace Community Church, one member has attended less than one year, while eight have attended between one and five years. The data suggests that attendance in the Grace Community Church involves a good proportion of congregants who joined the church fairly recently (Table 3).

Table 3: How long have you attended your present “church home”?

Attended for:	Nazarene #	Nazarene %	Grace CC #	Grace CC %
Less than 1 year	1	10	1	4
Between 1-5 yrs	2	20	8	33
Between 5-10 yrs	2	20	3	13
More than 10 yrs	5	50	12	50
TOTAL	10	100%	24	100%

In terms of travel to the current church and the distance respondents are willing to commute, the Church of the Nazarene shows that 60 per cent of the respondents live between one and five miles from the church, while twenty per cent travel from distances between five and ten miles. The Grace Community Church draws people from further afield. A total of thirteen per cent of all respondents live within one mile of the church, 25 per cent live between one and five miles away, 46 per cent live between five and ten miles away, and thirteen per cent travel from distances between ten and fifteen miles away from the church. While not reported in the survey, perhaps the furthest distance of all for attendance at the Grace Community Church is by a member from a distance of thirty-five miles, which takes some 45-50 minutes to travel!

In asking what church the respondent attended prior to the current “church home,” only nine responses were received. Three respondents in the Church of the Nazarene had attended another Nazarene church. In this case, the source was the Nazarene Church in Kingston, NY which had closed but is being reopened with the guidance and leadership of Pastor Trauffer. Other respondents arrived from a Mennonite church (2), while

others came from a Christian Missionary Alliance church, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and a Roman Catholic church. Finally, one respondent did not attend any other church prior to joining the Church of the Nazarene in New Paltz.

With the Grace Community Church, only nineteen individuals out of the sample of twenty-four respondents responded to the question of prior church attendance. The churches represented included "community" churches across the county (5), Baptist (4), Reformed churches (3), Methodist (2), Roman Catholic, Congregationalist, and the Salvation Army. Two respondents simply stated "none."

It appears that both congregations seem to attract people from other evangelical churches as well as from some of the mainline Protestant churches. Churches that are part of this mainline category include the United Church of Christ (historically known as the Congregationalists), the American Baptist Church (northern Baptists), the Presbyterian Church, the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and Disciples of Christ. These mainline Protestant denominations are characterized by a generally progressive theology and openness both to other churches and, at times, even other religions. They have concerned themselves with not simply their own religious beliefs, but also American society as a whole. In recent decades their membership has dwindled, apparently due to their lack of attention to fundamental and doctrinal matters. In their place, fundamentalist churches have sprung up and become very popular.¹²

It is also possible, that some members of these mainline Protestant churches have also found evangelical congregations appealing as well. In a study comparing evangelical and mainline denominations, the following denominations were defined as evangelical: Assemblies of God, Southern Baptists, Independent Baptists, Black Protestants, African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Church of Christ, Churches of God in Christ, Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, National Baptist Church, National Progressive Baptist Church, Pentecostal, and the Presbyterian Church in America.¹³ Many theologians would include the conservative members of such mainline denominations as the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church, and the United Methodist Church.¹⁴

Questions can also be raised about the loss of Catholic parishioners who have joined evangelical churches. Traditionally Catholics hold to their own parishioners very well and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church is generally high with few who leave. Why some leave this

traditionally strong church is a question that begs an answer. Does dissatisfaction with the Church cause departure? Is this another example of church shopping or church hopping? Geographic regionalism is also a key consideration, as stronger Catholic regions retain or lose their memberships. An example of this might involve the francophones of Quebec. Catholicism would thus remain strongest in the hearth areas where the Church has maintained a strong influence. Nevertheless, the movement of Catholics away from their faith should also be studied and needs to be understood.

One of the more relevant questions to examine church shopping/hopping is the number of churches the respondents may have attended regularly in the last ten years. For the Church of the Nazarene, it was noted that 80 per cent of the respondents had attended the current church, with only two respondents attending two churches. For the respondents in Grace Community Church, 50 per cent of the respondents have attended the current church regularly. Thirty-three per cent of the respondents had attended two churches, and 13 per cent had attended three churches. Only one respondent (4 per cent) had attended more than five churches in the past ten years. The result suggests that the membership of the Church of the Nazarene has remained loyal for a longer period of time, in comparison to the respondents of the Grace Community Church. To understand these patterns, a cross-tabulation with church attendance and years of residence provides some insights (Tables 4 and 5). In the case of the Nazarene Church, it is seen that the respondents who have attended two churches have also lived in more than one city. One respondent has lived in a total of two cities while the second respondent has lived in three cities over the past ten years (Table 4). Relocation for these individuals may thus be the prime reason for changing churches.

The experience of Grace Community Church indicates that while 50 per cent of respondents have attended the current church, eleven have lived in the same city (Table 5). One respondent indicated that s/he lived in more than five cities but has attended only one church regularly – perhaps a new member of the current church who had never attended a church before? It is also noted that three (13 per cent) of all respondents have lived in the same city but have attended two churches regularly, while two (8 per cent) of respondents have attended three churches while living in the same city. These individuals may fit the pattern of a church hopper, as defined earlier in the paper. Five (21 per cent) of all respondents have lived in two cities and have attended two churches, which

indicates stability and loyalty between residence and church affiliation. Still, there is one respondent who has lived in two cities and during the past ten years attended three churches. Finally, only one respondent indicated that s/he lived in more than five cities and attended more than five churches.

Table 4: Church loyalty and residence over past 10 years (CN)

In past 10 years: number of cities lived in	In the past 10 years, how many different churches have you attended regularly?						
	1	2	3	4	5	More than 5	Total
1	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
More than 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	8	2	0	0	0	0	10

Table 5: Church loyalty and residence over past 10 years (GCC)

In past 10 years: number of cities lived in	In the past 10 years, how many different churches have you attended regularly?						
	1	2	3	4	5	More than 5	Total
1	11	3	2	0	0	0	24
2	0	5	1	0	0	0	16
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
More than 5	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	12	8	3	0	0	1	24

Another question that relates to “church hopping” asked whether the respondent had ever attended more than one church at the same time. Responses from the Church of the Nazarene indicated that only one (10 per cent) had ever attended more than one church at the same time. At

Grace Community Church, a total of eight (35 per cent) respondents had attended more than one church at the same time. Some of the reasons given for this included discontent in one church and no evening service; worship style; “Grace has no evening service so we often attend elsewhere then”; “Music more engaging in one than the other”; “My husband preferred his home church. I needed to be spiritual fed with more of a bible based contemporary worship style”; and “I was not pleased with the Pastors [sic] character and teaching of the church at that time but still was committed to my serving at my home church.” These statistics seem to support the data noted at the beginning of this paper and presented by the Barna Research Group regarding changing churches.

In trying to identify the factors that cause respondents to leave a church, it is not surprising to find that preaching and the lack of friendship shown by congregants were noted as the highest reasons for members leaving a congregation. Within the Church of the Nazarene, the top three reasons that respondents left included dissatisfaction due to the lack of friendship among members of the congregation (67 per cent), dissatisfaction with preaching (33 per cent), and dissatisfaction with their own spiritual growth (33 per cent). Within the Church of the Nazarene, the most dominant reason attracting respondents to a “church home” included preaching (90 per cent), friendship shown by congregants (90 per cent), and a desire for own spiritual growth (80 per cent). With Grace Community Church, similar reasons are encountered. Dissatisfaction with preaching dominated explanations for departing a church (61 per cent), and was followed by dissatisfaction with one’s own spiritual growth (39 per cent), and dissatisfaction with the lack of friendship among members of the congregation (35 per cent). The dominant reason that attracted the GCC respondent to a “home church” included preaching (92 per cent), a desire for one’s own spiritual growth (83 per cent), and the friendship shown by members of the congregation (71 per cent) (Tables 6 and 7). With the larger sample of forty-two respondents that was administered to GCC earlier in the Spring, similar results were found. From this earlier questionnaire, dissatisfaction with preaching dominated (60 per cent), followed by “other reasons” – such as lack of spiritual growth within the church itself, preference of “not shopping (remaining loyal to your church)” (43 per cent), and dissatisfaction with youth programming (35 per cent).

The final question asked about the loyalty to the current church home directly. The question “Do you see yourself moving away from your

current ‘church home’ in the future” received a fairly solid “no.” Eight (80 per cent) of the respondents at the Church of the Nazarene will remain loyal, with only one indicating that s/he will be moving on, and one respondent who declined to answer the question. With Grace Community Church, nineteen (70 per cent) respondents indicated that they will not move, while five (25 per cent) did not know. With a larger sample, the basic results may only be slightly different. This was seen in the earlier version of the questionnaire that was sent to GCC members and was responded to by a total of forty-two individuals.

Table 6: What reasons push you away from a “church home”?

Reason	NC #	NC %	GCC #	GCC %	Total
Dissatisfied with preaching	3	33	14	61	17 - 50%
Dissatisfied with music programming	2	22	5	22	7 - 21%
Dissatisfied with youth programming	1	11	7	30	8 - 24%
Dissatisfied with Sunday School	1	11	5	22	6 - 18%
Dissatisfied with Adult ministries	1	11	7	30	8 - 24%
Dissatisfied with out-reach ministries	1	11	4	17	5 - 15%
Dissatisfied with recreational programs	1	11	1	4	2 - 6%
Dissatisfied with lack of friendship	6	67	8	35	14 - 41%
Dissatisfied with size of the church	2	22	5	22	7 - 21%
Dissatisfied with own spiritual growth	3	33	9	39	12 - 35%
Personal reasons	2	22	6	26	8 - 24%
Other	3	33	5	22	8 - 24%

The responses in this earlier questionnaire indicated that 71 per cent would remain loyal, with two (5 per cent) who would definitely move away, and

nine (21 per cent) who did not know and one who declined to answer the question.

Table 7: What reasons pull you towards a “church home”?

Reason	NC #	NC %	GCC #	GCC %	Total
Preaching	9	90	22	92	31 - 91%
Music programming	6	60	15	63	21 - 62%
Youth programming	2	20	16	67	18 - 53%
Sunday School	3	30	14	58	17 - 50%
Adult ministries	2	20	13	54	15 - 44%
Outreach ministries	2	20	13	54	15 - 44%
Recreational programs	0	0	4	17	4 - 12%
Friendship shown	9	90	17	71	26 - 76%
Size of the church	3	30	5	21	8 - 24%
Desire for own spiritual growth	8	80	20	83	28 - 82%
Personal reasons	1	10	4	17	5 - 15%
Other	3	30	3	13	6 - 18%

Critique

There are several drawbacks to this study that must be addressed here. Firstly, the size of the samples could be better. Participation by members of the Grace Community Church may be statistically quite good, but the number of respondents from the Church of the Nazarene is very small. If additional congregations from the same denominations were included in this study, there would be more statistical significance to these findings. Secondly, as the questionnaire was anonymous, there was no way to contact individuals, especially the few that have attended several churches at the same time, or have attended several churches over the years for qualitative material. It is extremely important to gather information from personal interviews to fully understand the behaviour of church shopping and church hopping. Thirdly, the questionnaire could be improved and made much more detailed. However, this may affect the participation rate, and was the reason why the current survey asked only seventeen questions. Indeed, the original pilot questionnaire contained only twelve questions. Fourthly, not every church member has an e-mail address or a computer. This can obviously skew the results and show bias

against many respondents who might otherwise have been interested in participating in this survey. However, the aim was to contact congregants quickly and easily. With this in mind, the online questionnaire proved successful. Still, more needs to be done. Contact with other mainline Protestant churches, as well as the Catholic Church would present interesting comparative material that may show trends not available for examination at this time.

Conclusion

This is a very brief empirical study of certain behaviour patterns among members of two evangelical churches. The fact that some studies indicate a distinct trend in the behaviour of church-goers is something that needs further study. The commodification of religion into a product that can be “shopped for,” is a trend that is a modern age phenomenon. Loyalty to churches used to be more common, and it is not surprising that the older members of both churches under study have remained more loyal to their home churches when compared to many of the younger members. In fact, of the seven over sixty-year olds in the two congregations, five (71 per cent) have attended only the current church regularly during the past ten years. Among the ten respondents who were under the age of forty, a total of seven (70 per cent) have attended more than one church over the past ten years. With more time and with more detailed analysis – both qualitative and quantitative – I hope to continue this work and bring more statistical detail to the findings.

Endnotes

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CSCH Presidential Address 2005

**Consulting the Amateurs: What Academic Church
Historians can Learn from Congregational Historians**

PETER BUSH

Knox Presbyterian Church, Mitchell, ON

I must begin with a word of thanks to the Canadian Society of Church History for the honour of being the Society's President for the last year. I am humbled by your willingness to think outside the box and name as your president someone who is not a member of the academy, but is rather a parish pastor. In this address I want bring together my role as a parish pastor (teaching elder) and the study of church history. I admit that during this address the line between historian and preacher may become blurred; I hope you will forgive my inability to keep the two domains separate.

Over a decade ago Richard Mouw, the president of Fuller Theological Seminary, wrote a slim volume entitled *Consulting the Faithful: What Christian Intellectuals Can Learn from Popular Religion*.¹ Mouw posited that among the people in the pews a remarkably deep and sophisticated theology is at work, a theology that the scholarly community needs not only to be aware of, but one from which it can also learn. I want to raise a parallel challenge, namely that the amateur congregational historians who write and publish congregational histories have things to teach the academic historical community. Before going further I need to do some confessing. A number of years ago I reviewed two congregational histories written by amateurs for one of the publications of The Presbyterian Church

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in Canada. A friend of mine, a lay person with a background in geology, had read the reviews and commented over coffee, “You really didn’t like those two books, did you?” I admitted I didn’t. My academic training found the lists of names tedious, the lack of connection to larger denominational events and national events frustrating, and the use of clergy’s tenures as an organizing principle in the histories maddening. Despite those concerns, over the last ten years I have had a gradual conversion. In telling the stories of local congregations, these histories call the academic church historical community in Canada to confront an important reality. There are about 30,000 congregations of the various Christian denominations in Canada of which approximately 20,000 are Protestant. Thirty thousand organizations dedicated to worship, religious education, mission, stewardship, and fellowship – 30,000 groups of people (some as small as five or six, others with over 1,000 attendees) who meet together regularly (usually weekly) to engage one another and God. Such engagement forms people – people who are members of the broader community who make economic, social, and political decisions. Regular face-to-face contact, a hallmark of congregational life, creates an emotional connection that goes beyond shared interests or a commitment to a common cause. Congregations are complex organizations in which, as R. Stephen Warner writes, “amateurs spend disproportionate time on activities that are hard to define.”² These collections of amateurs are the local face of the church. It is congregations that engage in the life of the wider community. No matter what the influence of the denomination, it is not the denomination that exists in the local community; rather, it is the congregation that has that responsibility and privilege. At times the implied argument is that all congregations are basically the same, or at least congregations of the same size function in very similar ways; therefore, to have studied one congregation is to have studied many congregations. To have told the tale of one congregation is to have told the tale of many similar congregations. This, in fact, is not true. While there are parallels in the histories of various congregations, each congregation has found unique ways to respond to its calling as the people of God in a particular time and place. If the case can be made for Canadian distinctiveness on the political front, the same can be made on the church front. If the case can be made for Maritime exceptionalism in economic development, the same can be said for religious life in the Maritimes. If the case can be made for differences between townships on cultural grounds, the same can be said of the

congregations in those townships. All of this is to say that Canada's congregations deserve far more attention than they have received to date.

American academic historians of religion have a renewed interest in studying congregations,³ but there has been little work done on Canadian congregations by professional historians. Scanning the various on-line references reveals a growing collection of work on the architectural history of church buildings, while simultaneously revealing the paucity of material on the life of the communities that gather in those buildings to worship, pray, learn, and share fellowship. A few academic historians, such as John Moir and Geoff Johnston, upon retiring from teaching, have taken up writing congregational histories, but it is a vast collection of amateurs (using the word in its original meaning – “lovers”) who have recorded the history of local congregations. To their work we now turn.

Purpose and Method in the Writing of Congregational Histories

Congregations become interested in having a history written as they approach a significant chronological milestone. In Ontario, for example, a plethora of congregational histories appeared in the 1940s as congregations reached their centennial year, and many of these same congregations produced histories in the 1990's to mark their sesquicentennials. Some congregations used the turn of the millennium as the catalyst to record their congregational story.

Congregational histories are often written with an agenda. Sometimes the goal is to remember the past along with the sacrifice and commitment of those who have gone before. The writing team from Madoc, Ontario expressed their hope, “If *Pilgrimage of Faith* deepens your awareness of the Christian experience of preceding generations, then our purpose in writing this book has been fulfilled.”⁴ In these histories the past is a vocal participant in congregational life. The past speaks to the present. As Sandra Arlein, a church historian at Knox Church, Listowel, Ontario notes, “I am aware of the importance of the roots which our predecessors nourished and made strong.”⁵ These roots impact the present, becoming points of reference for any discussion about the church and its purpose. For other writers, the past challenges the future. Jack Hayter of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Stratford made this point clearly: “we hope that this record of the past will give future members a challenge to carry on St. Andrew's noble tradition.”⁶ Thus any move into the future will necessitate a conversation about the past, and the nature of the “noble

tradition” that is to be carried on. The past, the present and the future can not be neatly separated from one another. Janet Muirhead reasons this way in her history of Knox Church, Agincourt:

As we celebrate our sesquicentennial let us remember those who have preceded us in this place. Let us be thankful for those who are today carrying on the Presbyterian tradition. But let us also look to the future with a determination that the Presbyterian Church will continue and the gospel of Christ will be proclaimed.⁷

Congregational histories are written with a purpose, and their authors express those purposes clearly. Some, in telling the story of their congregation, express their purpose in clear theological language. The not-so-subtle subtitle of the history of Essa Road Church in Barrie reveals a great deal: “The dealings of God with the people of Allandeale/Essa Road Presbyterian Church, Barrie, Ontario, and their responses to Him.”⁸ Similarly, a clear theological statement of purpose is made by the History Book Committee from First Church, Chatham, who note that “Our purpose in compiling the material for this congregational record is, above all else, to acknowledge that all history is HIS-STORY, the story of God, revealed in Christ, and ever calling to men, women and youth to be His servants and His witnesses.”⁹ While the reference to history as “His-story” may seem trite, in the hands of congregational historians it carries power and significance. It gives a deeper meaning to the actions recorded, for they fit into a larger story the story of God’s redemptive work in the world. Many congregational historians, not shy about their faith, write with a clear purpose in mind.

Researching and writing congregational histories tends to be a group process since this reflects the corporate nature of congregational life. Much historical research focuses on the actions and reactions of individuals or explores the thought and writing of a single individual. But congregations do not function that way. While there may be key leaders within a given congregation, the decisions and direction of congregational life are corporately set and followed. Even in selecting the writing process, congregations highlight the corporate nature of their life.

There are three group approaches in the writing of congregational histories. The first is the committee research approach.¹⁰ Committee members do research on the various areas of congregational life, bringing their findings to committee meetings and together deciding what prominence to give each item. Then a single hand writes the entire book using

the outline derived from the committee's work. The resulting book often has a central theme, since the writer can shape the telling of the history. It is worth noting that the single hand rarely identifies itself as the author of the history, but rather as its editor or compiler.

The second method divides the congregation's life into sections (which often become chapters) and individual committee members are assigned to write various sections of the book. These sections are then placed together to form a single historical narrative. If little editorial work has been done to bring about a consistent writing style, this can produce a stylistically choppy book since as many as ten different authors may have been involved. The strength of this approach is the way in which it reveals the diverse, patchwork-quilt nature of even the smallest congregation.

The third method is "the witness of the saints."¹¹ With this approach the author uses the work of previous congregational historians, simply adding to what has gone before, sometimes making small changes or adding editorial comments on the previously published and now re-published material. This provides the reader with layers of history, which can be compared and contrasted, giving insight into how the meaning of past events has changed.

Many of the writing teams, whatever approach they use, are changed by their experience of researching and writing their congregational history. The History Committee at Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Chilliwack, put it this way:

The whole process has been one of fascinating discovery of the rich heritage of a congregation of God's people, and a far deeper appreciation has been gained for the faith, commitment and sacrifice made by earlier generations on behalf of their church. Being able to collect and share this story with all the congregation has been a privilege.¹²

The deep appreciation for the past and a genuine humility about the present is often reflected in the work of the congregational history committees. The communal nature of the church is reflected not just in the respect and care shared by members of the writing group, but also across time as past congregants (even if long-dead) are shown respect and honour.

Place

The material covered in congregational histories can be defined around three axes – place, people, and the practice of the faith – creating a full-orbed view of the church. Place is a multi-faceted reality for congregational historians who are conscious of their place in time, their place in the community physically and socially, and their place spiritually. This latter reality is a powerful undercurrent writers have trouble expressing but sense is important. It helps them to appreciate the motivation that caused the decorators of Knox Church’s sanctuary in Mitchell in the 1930s to paint “This is the House of God, this is the Gate of Heaven” above the organ. The experience of meeting God in the place called “church,” is summed up simply by an unnamed parishioner from Metropolitan United Church, London who said, “This is where I found Christ.”¹³

Most congregational histories spend a great deal of time telling the early history of the congregation, locating the congregation’s origins. William Sherwood Fox uses eleven pages of his eighty-five page history recording events prior to the arrival of the first minister at Talbot Street Baptist Church, London. In the history of Grantham United Church, the focus on the early history is overwhelming; fully one-third of the text tells the history of the churches amalgamated in 1879 to form the congregation.¹⁴ Rudy Platiel and Helen Goggin take fifty-two pages telling the story of the first thirty years of Knox Presbyterian Church in Oakville, and eighty-seven relating the next one hundred and twenty years.¹⁵

Why the extended focus on the early years of a congregation? In his history of Talbot St. Church William Sherwood Fox wrote:

The first task of anyone who undertakes to write the history of any local institution is to ascertain its beginning and then to set them forth clearly. The vital importance of the narrative that results lies in the fact that, generally, in the origin and early stages of an institution one may plainly see the reason for the distinctive character of its later history.¹⁶

This is an important insight with which any historian would agree for the past shapes the present in significant ways. Such awareness, however, does not completely explain the extraordinary interest in a congregation’s early years. The deeper truth is that the authors implicitly understand that the Church, not just universal but also local, is called into

being by the Holy Spirit. Exploring the early history of the local congregation gives writers and readers a glimpse of the work of the Holy Spirit, that most illusive member of the Trinity. The early history of the congregation is most clearly seen as having been formed by God out of nothing. It is to this theological truth that the telling of the early history of congregations point time and again.

These early stories are often told with wonder and awe. Wonder and awe not only at the drawing together of the congregation, but also at the conditions under which congregational members lived and worked at that time. In the strange world of the past, people worshipped God, celebrated the saving act of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, and exercised the Spirit's gifts in their communities. While the past is foreign terrain, these congregational histories remind readers that the present worship life of the congregation, no matter how different it seems, is in continuity with the worship of the past. At times this view of past worship practices feels nostalgic. More often there is a clear-eyed recognition that the actual practices of the past can not be transported unchanged into the future, but their deep meaning and purpose remains constant.

Place is not just spiritual, but also physical. Worship is an embodied activity; the God who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth is also the God who became incarnate in flesh and blood. The concrete reality of congregational life is evident in the titles of the congregational histories such as *This Place of Worship; Pillars, Pulpits and Pews;* and *Gargoyles and Gentlemen*.¹⁷ Sometimes titles carry double meanings, blending physical and spiritual place as in *Building in Faith* and *Beyond the Builder's Plan*.¹⁸ Congregations become identified with a particular building located on a particular piece of property. Members speak of going to church, not as going to worship or going to be with the people of God, but rather going to a building. The building is clearly understood to be like no other building that the people of the congregation frequent. This building, this place is holy ground. Even for congregations with unadorned sanctuaries and for authors of low church persuasion, there remains a sense that there is something sacred about the building – a sacredness beyond the architectural lay out, and the symbolism of the stained glass windows and other artwork. In writing about the plainest of sanctuaries, authors express the belief that this place, geographical as it is, is where people come to meet God. The conflicts which arise concerning changes to the church building, are not therefore conflicts about bricks and mortar, they are

conflicts about the sacred meaning of the space and how the changes will change the experience of meeting with God.¹⁹

Congregations expend an extraordinary amount of energy and resources on their buildings, and the work involved in raising the funds necessary to maintain and enhance the place of worship is often a dominant part of congregational histories. When the church building is understood as holy ground, the work of raising funds for its maintenance is not mere fund-raising, it is holy work. To such work the Levites were called in the Old Testament and to similar work the many people who organize and participate in congregational fund-raisers and work bees are also called. Money becomes a holy object for its end use is holy. Sustaining the financial operation of the local congregation is a sacred task.

A third aspect of place impacting congregations' histories are the communities in which they are located. How congregations understand this sense of place affects the way ministry is lived out. Metropolitan United Church in London entitled its history, *On this corner*.²⁰ This choice of title is overlaid with history. The building burned in the late nineteenth century and, within two days of seeing their church building destroyed, the leadership had decided to rebuild on the same corner in downtown London, even though there were other viable options open to them. In putting together the history of Ratho Presbyterian Church, the committee recognized there was no way to separate the history of the church from the history of the community.²¹ The two flowed into one another so seamlessly the reader is at times uncertain which, church or community, is the focus. Congregational life is lived out in a particular location, the connections and the impacts go both ways. The congregation grows out of a location, and the soil in which it is planted affects its development. At the same time, the congregation will, hopefully, impact the community, bringing about the transformation of the community out of which it grows.

Appreciating this multi-dimensional nature of place can be a helpful matrix through which to approach the question of congregational life. The ways in which a spiritual and physical place forms people of faith, and the interplay between geographical location and the life of the congregation in that geographical location are both worthy of further study.²²

People

There is a children's finger game that says, "Here is the church and here is the steeple, open the doors and see all the people." If congrega-

tional histories are about place, they are also about people – ordained and lay, young and old, well-known and obscure.

Many congregational histories give significant space to their ministers. Often these histories use ministers' tenures as a way of organizing the material; they tell us what happened when Rev. Smith was there, and follow that with a chapter recording the events of Rev. Park's ministry, and so on.²³ There are significant challenges inherent in this approach. It substantially downplays any sense of the congregation having a culture and purpose independent of the ministers who serve it. By focusing on clergy, it becomes easy for the congregation's history to be an account of the community of faith adjusting course this way and that by the differing interests of successive ministers. Congregations, in fact, are far less malleable than some congregational historians indicate. In the history of Presbyterian worship in Perth, Ontario, J.R. Ernest Miller, the compiler, breaks the story up into sections using the length of ministry of each successive minister.²⁴ Each section opens with a brief paragraph outlining the arrival and departure of each minister. The rest of the section makes virtually no mention of the minister, giving the impression that the congregation had a life that the minister was invited to join, but was little changed by his or her action or inaction. While Miller's approach may leave the reader wanting more, it does highlight the transient nature of the clergy in the face of 175 years of congregational history.

Two things stand out in the descriptions of clergy in virtually every congregational history – where they came from and where they went following their time in a given congregation. The congregation sees itself being imprinted on the life of the minister. The history of Knox Church in Listowel, Ontario, proudly notes that the Rev. A. Gordon Macpherson went from Listowel to Toronto to serve "faithfully his city charge (of Riverdale Church, Toronto) for twenty-seven years."²⁵ This vignette reveals how congregations influence clergy. A great deal of work has been done exploring how theological colleges and pre-theology courses have functioned in the formation of Canadian clergy. But an equally important formative role is played by the congregations a minister serves, particularly those early in a minister's career. There needs to be far greater attention paid to the significant role that congregations play in the development of clergy.

In congregational histories clergy are evaluated on their personality, their ability to provide pastoral care, and their administrative and leadership skills in initiating new projects. The Rev. Bruce Miles was

lauded for “His Christian compassion and understanding enabled him to be a solace to those whose loss was so great.”²⁶ The Rev. Dr. Charles H. MacDonald was described as “a friendly warm hearted and sincere Christian minister . . . willing and able to walk and talk with his people.”²⁷ On the other hand, the Rev. W.R. Bell is noted for having “guided the congregation towards the erection of a new sanctuary.”²⁸ In contrast to these interests, there is little recorded about preaching or worship leading, especially when the history was written primarily by lay people.

Why is so little attention is paid to worship leading and preaching, tasks that dominate clergy thinking and time? While pastoral care and administration/leadership play have a prominent place in congregational histories, these are tasks that many clergy downplay. Congregational histories are usually written by people on the inside of the congregation. They are well-known or they would not have been chosen to serve on the history committee of their church. They are most likely people for whom attending church is a habit and the preaching and worship are so much part of their lives they have become routine. Only anniversary services or those commemorating other significant events are considered worthy of note (just as banquets and dinner parties are). On the other hand, pastoral care is most evident at moments of crisis, when all of life is heightened and support is especially noticed. Further, since congregational life is primarily relational or expressive, it is difficult to record; therefore moments when things happen – when programs or buildings are launched – are unusual and gain notice. The functional components of congregational life can be told much more easily than the relational components. Constructing a building is much more understandable than discipling people in the faith.

While clergy play a prominent role in any congregation’s telling of its story, conflicts or difficulties involving clergy do not get much coverage. Congregations avoid difficult stories, like the suicide of ministers²⁹ or internal conflicts when the protagonists are still alive and present in the congregation. It would be easy to accuse congregations that do this of painting a false picture or of writing boring history, without the friction and conflict which are the drama academic historians relish. However, in portraying a relatively peaceful picture of congregational life, the writers remind readers that many people within congregations are largely unaware of its conflicts. Maintaining solid relationships is more important than detailing the opposing sides in a conflict. The quarrels, which are the flash points of interest in stories and movies, are not of interest to the congregational historian who knows a deeper truth: the

conflicts are but points on a time-line covering often more than a century. The storms of the past were weathered, so there is no need to recount the storm. They also know every story has another side, and any attempt to tell the story will create yet another round of revisionist congregational history.

Clergy are not the only people whose names appear in congregational histories. Many other names are scattered throughout the narrative: men and women, committee members, Sunday school teachers, elders, organists, choristers, leaders of the Mission Band, Boy's Brigade, or Canadian Girls in Training. These are names that readers outside the congregation don't know, names that are often unidentified in any way, names that many within the congregation only barely recognize. What is the point? Clearly for congregations their story is not just history, it is a memorial. It is the pile of stones to which they and their children and grand-children can come and ask, what do these stones mean? The point is not that readers know everyone on those lists; the point is that readers know who one or two of those people are, and are able to say, "I knew them, I remember them." Suddenly the life of the church is not just about here and now, it is filled with a great company of witnesses who watch and cheer on the present congregation. The names say that ordinary people met here to worship the Triune God, and the present generation is invited to keep faith with them.

The names say the congregation has a flesh and blood reality in this place; the faith was incarnate here in the lives of people. In a world where faith is often perceived to be a matter of the mind or of the spirit, the names say faith is about an embodied life. The named had a flesh and blood reality in this place, living their faith through their bodies. The names challenge those who tell the story of the church to move outside the narrow confines of the world of the mind, or the world of the spirit, to write about a fully embodied faith, a faith where the names matter. As J. Stanley Sharples wrote in his history of St. Paul's Church, Clinton, Ontario: "For us it is a prelude to our own continuity and responsibility . . . to mobilize our emotions and enlarge our imaginations as worthy successors of those whose names and activities, individually and corporately, are record in this booklet."³⁰ The names bear witness to the fact that ordinary people matter to God. The story of the local congregation will include few whose names will appear in the pages of the denominational reports, but in the congregational history is evidence that their faithful

lives mattered. They are examples to be followed, challenges to be remembered, sacrifices to be emulated.

A great deal of demographic work has been done linking faith commitment with occupation and household living patterns.³¹ What is needed now is to try to merge that work with the names of people who served as Sunday school teachers and in church choirs and so on. One wonders how did the Sunday go-to-meeting faith change the Monday go-to-work life? And how did the work-a-day rough and tumble of life impact what happened in the Sunday school class and the worship life of the congregation? Creating fleshed-out sketches of these “ordinary” individuals will require painstaking work. As demographers and congregational historians work together in this way, they will bring to life the names recorded in the congregational histories.

Practices of the Faith

The people of God live out their faith in a variety of practices. These practices include, but are not limited to, worship, fellowship, mission, community engagement, study, and prayer. Two important questions must be prominent in the minds of congregational historians: How do the dimensions of place and people impinge on the congregation’s practice of the faith? And conversely, how do the practices of the faith bring about the transformation of the people who engage in these practices and the place in which they practice their faith?³² These are vast questions far beyond the scope of this paper. Instead I want to use the constructs of technology and denomination as windows to look at congregational practice.

The authors of congregational histories are aware of the impact of technology on the life of the congregation. Technological changes impact congregational practice.³³ The introduction of the automobile is an obvious example, as Sherwood Fox wrote,

The advent of this quick, cheap and easy means of transportation has affected all churches progressively to a degree that has altered their composition, their activities and their attitudes. It has introduced a serious problem . . . One who reads the annals of any church during this modern period without making allowance for the impact of the common use of the automobile as an explanation of many recorded figures and events, fails to catch the whole story.³⁴

The car has obviously had an enormous impact on the life of all congregations, but so ubiquitous is that impact, it is virtually impossible for modern researchers to imagine a world before cars. Less than a ten minute drive from my home is a congregation which has maintained its driving shed, built more than 100 years ago to house the horses and carriages of parishioners coming to church. The maintenance and cleaning of that shed were tasks the congregation needed to ensure took place.

Technological changes have occurred that have directly impacted worship. The congregation I serve used to pay a young man to operate the organ bellows each Sunday. The introduction of electricity not only changed the way the building was lighted, but ended one person's part-time employment.

In June 1905 "some ladies of the congregation" of Knox Presbyterian Church, Walkerton, offered to donate trays of individual communion cups to replace the use of the common cup at the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The basis of their argument was hygiene. The elders (all men) buried the matter for nearly a year, until they received a letter from the Women's Association that stated:

Since pathological science has discovered that the microbes of consumption, and other diseases, can be carried from one person to another by drinking from the same cup, our society [the Women's Association] feels that there is added reason why individual cups should be substituted for the present practice.³⁵

The letter went on to say that the women were distracted from a proper meditation on the meaning of communion due to worrying, "Are any of the persons around me afflicted with disease or unclean?" Not only should there be no common cup, but also "for hygienic reasons, the bread be cut into small cubes."³⁶ Needless to say, the women won, leaving an intriguing record of change in worship practice driven by increased scientific knowledge.

Congregations are often accused of being unwilling to change their practices. Yet congregational histories suggest otherwise. Congregations appear remarkably adaptable to changes in technology and scientific understanding. Certainly they do not rush into new things, but they are willing to explore the incorporation of technological advances. Further work on the ways in which technology has changed the practices of congregations might yield interesting results. Some areas that would be interesting to explore include: the introduction of ditto and gestetner

machines; the addition of sound systems; and the construction of elevators and wheelchair ramps.

While congregational historians are interested in the impact of technology on congregational life, they are not interested in exploring a congregation's connection with the denomination's pronouncements and policy shifts. Only major changes at the national or international level filter down into the life of the congregation. Changes in the wake of Vatican II appear in the histories of Catholic parishes, but with little reference to the events of Vatican II itself; the focus instead is on the local changes. The decision to ordain women within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, similarly receives little attention except to note that the General Assembly's decision opened the door for the congregation to ordain women to the eldership; the names of those women then follow. Retired professors of history who have taken up the task of recording their church's story, on the other hand, give significant space to denominational shifts. John Moir's histories of Alexandra Presbyterian Church in Brantford and of St. Andrew's, Ottawa move beyond the local to place the congregations in a bigger matrix.³⁷ It would be easy to assume this disinterest is rooted in a lack of knowledge and that congregational historians are simply unaware of denominational actions. But a scan back through the sources used in the writing of these congregational histories produces a different analysis. Most congregational historians lean heavily on local congregational records. For Presbyterians a major source is the session minutes. Denominational policy statements do not appear to have been widely discussed by most sessions, unless there was a clear directive that brought changes to the life of the congregation. This raises significant questions about how much influence the words and actions of denominational leaders have on the life of congregations. This link, or lack thereof, requires more careful study for it raises profound questions about the importance of denominations in the history of the Canadian church.

Postlude

Throughout this paper I have noted potential research areas suggested by reading congregational histories. One further area desperately needs attention: the remarkable growth and stability of many non-European Christian congregations in Canada over the last fifty years. The challenge of dealing with sources in a variety of languages and the fact that these congregational beginnings are very recent creates problems for

any researcher. Historians of Christianity in Canada need to do further work on the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual reality that is the church in Canada.

Amateur congregational historians can teach academic church historians three things. First, the amateurs, by definition, love their subject. Making no claim of objectivity, they wear their faith in their congregation and in the God who called their congregation into being on their sleeves. When the congregation they love does well, they are pleased; when the congregation they love fails, they are disappointed. While the lack of analytical rigor can be frustrating, the passion these writers have for their subject is attractive. The sense of wonder and awe provides a powerful antidote to jaded researchers who may have forgotten the first love that brought them to this vocation in the first place. The amateurs remind us all to have fun in serving the discipline we call history.

Second, most congregational historians have never engaged in sustained historical research and writing prior to working on their congregation's history. The sheer accessibility of history is a strength that must not be lost. In an increasingly professionalized world, where specialized knowledge is a prerequisite for entering into serious conversation, history in general, and congregational history in particular, remains a field open to all. It is incumbent upon those tempted to close the doors, to limit access, to resist such a temptation. It is remarkably winsome to enter an archive's reading room and recognize at the tables academic researchers with numerous books and articles to their credit and at those same tables researchers from a local congregation making their first foray into the world of history.

Third, many congregational historians have learned to tell the story of their congregation in a way that gives meaning to the present day life of the congregation. In so doing they have made a powerful connection between the past and the present, a connection that is often difficult to make. All historians cross the bridge from now to the strange world of the past. That trip, while difficult at times, is very enjoyable for there are wonderfully exotic things to explore. The difficulty arises in trying to return from the past. Sometimes it is easier to let the past remain in the past and not seek ways to have it speak to the present. Congregational historians remind us that the past does speak to the present and the stories we tell about the past have a meaning now. With care we must think through the meaning of the past to our time and place.

Amateur congregational historians should be invited to sit at table with the professional historians of Christianity in Canada. The history of Christianity is not just the story of individuals and of national organizations and movements; it is also the story of groups of people gathered together in congregations scattered throughout Canada. The stories amateur congregational historians bring to the conversation must inform the work of academic church historians, just as the research of the academics must inform the work of the amateurs, the “lovers” of history.

Endnotes

1. Richard J. Mouw, *Consulting the Faithful: What Christian Intellectuals Can Learn from Popular Religion* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1994).
2. R. Stephen Warner, “The Place of the Congregation in the Contemporary American Religious Community,” in *American Congregations: Volume 2: New Perspectives in the Study of Congregations*, eds. James R. Wind and James W. Lewis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 61.
3. See, for example, Wind and Lewis, *American Congregations* (2 vols), (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1994); N.J. Demerath III, Peter Dobkin Hall, Terry Schmitt, Rhys H. Williams, *Sacred Companies: Organizational Aspects of Religion and Religious Aspects of Organizations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); and Charles D. Cashdollar, “The Recent Turn to Congregational Studies among Church Historians: A Review Essay,” *Journal of Presbyterian History* 77, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 107-118.
4. Alma Blackburn, Blanche Sandford, and Alma Moorcroft, *Pilgrimage of Faith: 150 Years of History of the Churches in Madoc Township and Village, 1824-1974* (Madoc, 1974).
5. *Knox Presbyterian Church, Listowel, Ontario, 1857-1982* (Listowel: Knox Presbyterian Church, 1982), 2.
6. *Ever Forward: An Adventure in Faith – A History of St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, Stratford, Ontario, 1838-1988* (Stratford, ON: St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, 1988), 7.
7. Janet Muirhead, *The Changing Scene: 150 Years of Faith and Witness: Knox Presbyterian Church, Agincourt, 1848-1998* (Scarborough, ON: Knox Presbyterian Church, 1998), ix.

8. Keith McGown, *The Church at the Junction: A History of Essa Road Presbyterian Church, Barrie, Ontario, 1892-1992* (Barrie, ON: Essa Road Presbyterian Church, 1990), iii.
9. *First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ontario: A History* (Chatham, ON: First Presbyterian Church, 2000), xvii.
10. See, for example, *The Faith is Strong: Knox Presbyterian Church, Embro, 1832-1982* (Embro, ON: Knox Presbyterian Church, 1982).
11. See, for example, *Lucknow Presbyterian Church, Centennial 1873-1973* (Lucknow: Lucknow Presbyterian Church, 1973); and *We Must Tell the Stories: The Presbyterian Churches of Bradford, West Gwillimbury* (Bradford, ON: St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2001).
12. *A Century of Faith: The Story of Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Chilliwack, B.C.* (Chilliwack, BC: Cooke's Presbyterian Church, 1988), 6.
13. S. Gail Browne, "On this corner . . ." *1896-1996: A History of Metropolitan United Church, London, Ontario* (London, ON: Metropolitan United Church, 1996), 34.
14. "Our Story in His Story": *Grantham United Church, 1879-1979* (415 Linwell Road, St. Catharines) (St. Catharines, ON: Grantham United Church, 1979).
15. Rudy Platiel and Helen Goggin, *A Goodly Heritage: A History of Knox Presbyterian Church, Oakville, 1833-1983* (Oakville, ON: Knox Presbyterian Church, Oakville, 1984).
16. William Sherwood Fox, *A Century of Service: A History of the Talbot Street Baptist Church, 1845-1945* (London, ON: Talbot Street Baptist Church, 1945), 1.
17. Pat Hamilton Ingraham, *This Place of Worship: One Hundred and Fifty years in the history of Central Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, Canada, 1841-1991* (Hamilton, ON: Central Presbyterian Church, 1990); Thomas Melville Bailey, *Pillars, Pulpits and Pews: A History of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, 1794-1994* (Hamilton, ON: Eagle Press, 1994); and Orlo Miller, *Gargoyles and Gentlemen: A History of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario, 1834-1964* (Toronto, ON: Ryerson Press, 1966).
18. *Building in Faith: Tolmie Memorial Presbyterian Church, Port Elgin, Ontario, 1926-1996* (Port Elgin, ON: Tolmie Memorial Historical Committee, 1996); and *Beyond the Builder's Plan: Centennial History: Knox Presbyterian Church, Flos, Ontario, 1878-1978* (Flos, ON: Knox Presbyterian Church, 1978).

19. See, for example, *History of the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, Wallaceburg, Ontario, 1878-1978* (Wallaceburg, ON: Standard Press, 1978), 106: “. . . the initial changes in the Sanctuary [were made] following the 1964 Liturgical Reform.” These modifications would have greatly changed the way in which people experienced worship.
20. Browne, “*On this corner . . .*” 1896-1996.
21. *Ratho Presbyterian Church and Community, 1852-2002* (Ratho, ON: Ratho Presbyterian Church, 2002).
22. My thinking about place in relationship to congregations has been influenced the church historian Dorothy Bass who is doing some important thinking about the spiritual dimensions of place.
23. J.S.S. Armour, *Saints, Sinners and Scots: A History of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal, 1803-2003* (Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, 2003); and Ingraham, *This Place of Worship*.
24. J.R. Ernest Miller, *175 Years of Presbyterian History: First Presbyterian Church and St. Andrew’s Church, Perth* (Perth, ON: St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, 1982).
25. *Knox Presbyterian Church, Listowel, Ontario, 1857-1982* (Listowel, ON, Knox Presbyterian Church, 1982), 11.
26. *Knox Presbyterian Church, Listowel, Ontario, 1857-1982*, 16.
27. *Lucknow Presbyterian Church*, 30. It is worth noting that congregational histories in which clergy have had an influential hand are more likely to talk about the preaching style, worship preferences, and theological outlook of the ministers who served the congregation.
28. *A Century of Faith: The Story of Cooke’s Presbyterian Church, Chilliwack, B.C.* (Chilliwack, BC: Cooke’s Church, 1988), 60.
29. See, for example, John Moir, *Sowing the Good Seed: St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church, Simcoe, Ontario, 1793-1993* (Simcoe, ON: St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church, 1993), 66. Moir deals sensitively with the suicide death of The Rev. J.S. Wright in 1954, but is clearly treading very carefully. And *Westmount Presbyterian Church, 521 Village Green Ave, London, Ontario: 1968-1993* (London, Westmount Church, 1993). The Rev. John Fox committed suicide while serving the congregation, the only mention that appears in the history is to Rev. Fox’s “sudden death.”
30. J. Stanley Sharples, *St. Paul’s (Anglican) Church, Clinton, Ontario: 1835-1975* (Clinton, ON: St. Paul’s (Anglican) Church, 1975), 5.

31. See, for example, Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-1928* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1973); Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); and Nancy Christie, ed., *Households of Faith: Family, Gender, and Community in Canada, 1760-1969* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).
32. As an opening discussion of these important questions, readers are encouraged to delve into Dorothy Bass, ed., *Practising Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997). While *Practising Our Faith* does explore corporate practices of faith, more could and should be done on understanding how corporate practices work in spiritual formation and communal transformation.
33. See Michel Lagree, "The impact of technology on Catholicism in France (1850-1950)," in *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe, 1750-2000*, eds. Hugh McLeod and Werner Ustorf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 163-183.
34. Fox, *A Century of Service: Talbot St. Baptist*, 73.
35. Frederick Neill, compiler, *A History of Knox Church, Walkerton, Ontario, 1886-1986* (Walkerton, ON: Knox Presbyterian Church, 1996), 27.
36. Neill, *Walkerton*, 27. A question that remains unanswered, where did the women get this information from? Is this an example of knowledge acquired at Women's Institutes meetings having a broader societal impact?
37. John Moir, *Unto The Hills Around: A History of St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa: In Celebration of 175 Years of Christian Witness* (Ottawa, St. Andrew's Church, 2003); and John Moir, *The Labour Not in Vain: A History of Alexandra Presbyterian Church, Brantford, Ontario, 1845-1995* (Brantford, ON: Alexandra Presbyterian Church, 1994).