

Nov 7, 1963. Speaking of the challenges of Urban Churches. Change itself is a constant, always with us and at work for us to grow and adapt!

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The Ottawa Citizen

## Downtown churches meet challenge of suburban boom

By J. A. Hume  
Ottawa staff writer

Ottawa's downtown churches are winning their battle of survival.

High-rise apartment buildings are bringing hundreds of new worshippers into the churches to replace those who joined the great trek to the suburbs.

In a series of interviews, several of the clergymen concerned affirmed their confidence that the downtown churches will continue in years to come to perform their special functions in the Capital.

Several downtown churches are co-operating in an early inter-denominational survey of

respective communities. Amalgamations have reduced by three the number of United Churches in the downtown area in recent years. They concern: McLeod-Stewart Church, Dominion-Chalmers Church, and West-Ottawa West Church.

The Church Army, through its representative, Captain Ronald Dicks, performs a special work with those unfortunate enough to be involved in city and juvenile courts, in close co-operation with downtown churches.

"It is important that every city should have central churches to fly the Christian flag—not just the denominational flag," declared Rev. Stuart Ivison, pastor of First Baptist Church since 1952. "Suburban churches serve a particular community with members from the same social stratum. Downtown churches have a city-wide ministry to perform."

"Our Bible in downtown churches is the little red book—the Directory of Social Services in Ottawa," emphasized Rev. Patrick Playfair of St. George's Anglican Church. "Our church is always open and invariably there is someone in it. We help as many as 70 transients per week; we never turn anyone away without referral or direct help."

"Downtown clergy have a great deal of interviewing these days due to the growing tendency of mental disturbance," commented Rev. T. H. O'Driscoll of St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church. "Our chief function is not to be amateur psychiatrists, but to know at least enough to direct such persons to seek professional help."

"The hundreds of dwellers in downtown high-rise apartments constitute a tremendous potential for area churches," emphasized Rev. Douglas Stewart of Knox Presbyterian Church. "Interest in the church these days crosses denominational lines. People like to go where they enjoy the preaching and the music."

The downtown churches, with the big organs and good choirs, have more appeal for many church-goers than have the suburban churches.

**Dominion-Chalmers**  
Dominion-Chalmers United Church now has 2,228 members, including about 700 from

the former Dominion Church, under Rev. Dr. A. Frank MacLean as minister and Rev. Douglas Lapp as assistant minister. After Chalmers' fire on Easter Sunday, April 10, 1955, that church spent about \$800,000 on a building expansion program and \$60,000 to buy a nearby property for a parking lot. Dominion Church brought \$75,221 to the amalgamated congregation nearly two years ago. Of this sum, \$430,000 remains for possible future expansion. Recently the congregation spent \$164,000 to acquire nearby property on Lisgar and Cooper Streets.

**Recent successful innovations**  
Knox Church is the highest it has ever been," stated Rev. Douglas Stewart. "Our total gifts last year were \$30,000 including \$5,500 for missions. We have given \$3,500 annually for church extension work for the past eight years."

Knox Church has no debt. Its present \$30,000 stone church was built in 1955. The congregation this year secured Miss Ruth Botoh as deaconess to organize a full-scale Christian education program.

Knox Church has a Sunday morning nursery, a growing Sunday School of 120 children, and a Couples Club. St. Theresa's Roman Catholic Church was opened in August, 1959, in what was then described as "the heart of the residential district."

Today, the church is bursting at the seams with about 1,000 families (a single person being counted as a family) so that seven masses are held every Sunday from 7 a.m. to 12:35 noon.

The church has been trying unsuccessfully for some years to undertake a building expansion program by securing a strip of city-owned property occupied by a Royal Canadian Legion branch next door, or, alternatively, to purchase the whole property.

St. Theresa's boundaries run from Wellington Street to Catherine Street and from the Rideau Canal on the east

about \$25,000 in recent years on redecorating and a new heating system.

First Baptist Church activities embrace: Church Family Night for parents and children on Wednesdays from 6 to 8:30 p.m. and a luncheon and club meeting on Wednesday for Senior Handicapped Citizens.

"Our church has poured a lot of life and aid into Ottawa's suburbs, but that has not threatened our own existence," Mr. Ivison declared. The problem of church-detached apartment dwellers must be attacked. I am confident that downtown churches, with flexible programs designed to meet modern needs, will carry on. We at First Baptist intend to stay!"

**Knox Presbyterian**  
"Our membership of 725 at Knox Church is the highest it has ever been," stated Rev. Douglas Stewart. "Our total gifts last year were \$30,000 including \$5,500 for missions. We have given \$3,500 annually for church extension work for the past eight years."

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St. Theresa's boundaries run from Wellington Street to Catherine Street and from the Rideau Canal on the east

to Bank Street on the west with a jog across Somerset Street to O'Connor Street. The area now includes many single girls who work in the government, and there are several new apartment blocks in the district.

The parish under Rev. George J. D. Larose and Rev. Edward Lumley, embraces the following organizations: Holy Name Society, Guild of the Little Flower, Parent-Teacher Association concerning the nearby St. Theresa's Separate School, Brownies, Cubs and Scouts, and the Catholic Youth Organization.

**St. Peter's Lutheran**  
Church built its present \$300,000 stone edifice in 1954 at Sparks and Bay Streets where Rev. Arthur F. Conrad has been the pastor since 1947.

The church borrowed money to pay for the present church in 1948. The congregation now has its debt down to \$23,000 and, as Mr. Conrad remarked, "A church has to be alive to do that."

The church now has 1,000 members including 600 adults. It has two Sunday morning services at 9:30 and 11 a.m. and two flourishing Sunday schools with programs for adults and children from 11 years of age up.

The congregation's annual budget is \$43,000 including \$10,000 for the wider work of the church and \$10,000 for debt reduction and improvements to the church property. Within the past 18 months, the congregation has contrib-

uted \$8,200 to Waterloo Lutheran Seminary. In 1960, the congregation bought an apartment property at 400 Queen St. for \$43,000 with the prospect of providing a parking lot there for the church.

**St. John's Anglican**  
St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church has 1,000 families covering about 1,700 persons under Rev. T. H. O'Driscoll, Rev. Arthur Brewer, and Rev. Canon A. E. E. Legge as honorary assistant. St. John's subscribed \$75,000 to the Ottawa Diocese Jubilee Fund for Church Extension in 1957 and has paid \$48,000 on that commitment. The annual budget is \$30,000 including \$11,000 for the missionary work of the Anglican Church and \$5,000 for the extension fund.

Mr. O'Driscoll has launched a series of public lectures in the field of adult education. The rector has started displaying posters in a new display case under St. John's showing the wider work of the church, not just the Anglican Church.

St. John's Church has had a radio ministry over CKOY through broadcasts of its 11 a.m. Sunday service for about 15 years past. The church shows suitable movies for children on Saturday mornings during the fall and winter months.

St. George's Anglican Church's Anglican under Rev. R. Patrick Playfair as rector, and Rev. R. C.

Corbell as honorary curate, ministers to 70 families and about 170 persons.

"After some difficult years," Mr. Playfair affirmed, "the parish is over the hump. Former slums in the area of the parish are being replaced by high rise apartments."

**First United**  
First United Church was Ottawa's only Congregational Church before the United Church of Canada was formed in 1925.

In 1957, First United pledged \$58,000 to the Ottawa United Church Presbytery church extension fund and completed its payments thereon in full last year. The church, under Rev. J. T. H. Adamson as minister, has an annual budget for its 250 families of \$25,000, of which \$7,000 is for United Church missions.

**St. George's Anglican**  
St. George's has an annual budget of \$27,000, including \$6,200 for Anglican missions. The choir of 23 under Mrs. A. T. Carson as organist, is "completely integrated." The choir and other church groups embrace members from Nigeria, Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad, British Guiana, and Ghana. Shortly, Mr. Playfair hopes to introduce a juvenile Rock 'N' Roll Band into the morning service. Rev. Edward Winckley of

South Africa will conduct a spiritual healing mission at St. George's Nov. 27-28.

**Red Door**  
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GLENN COCHRAN  
at the organ  
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Rev. H. D. Stewart  
Knox Presbyterian



Rev. Stuart Ivison  
First Baptist



Rev. A. F. MacLean  
Dominion-Chalmers



Rev. R. Patrick Playfair  
St. George's Anglican

### WHAT DO YOU DO WITH A BORED CHILD?

What do you do when your child complains of having "nothing to do"? Should you leave him alone, or keep him busy with games and chores? November Reader's Digest discusses the problem of "boredom" in children...with some answers that may surprise many parents! Get your Reader's Digest, now on sale!

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