

## **THE STORY OF METROPOLITAN UNITED CHURCH**

*Methodism came to Upper Canada (Ontario) following the American Revolution. In 1786 Major George Neal, a cavalry officer in the British Service during the Revolution, migrated to the Niagara Peninsula where he taught school and preached. A number of such lay people laid the foundations for the Methodist Church in Upper Canada.*

*The first regular Methodist preacher to appear in this area (London) was William Losee, a member of the New York Conference which continued to foster and care for the little Canadian church until 1810 when the Genessee Conference in New York State was formed, and as a part of this, the Canadian church remained until the formation of a Canadian Conference in 1824. The American Methodists did not send preachers to Canada, but allowed volunteers to come.*

*It was under the auspices of the Genessee Conference that the circuit riders began their work in Western Ontario. **The first Methodist pastor appointed to the London area was the Rev. George Washington who began his ministrations in 1819.** Such circuit riders covered wide areas and one of them reported that he and his assistant usually preached fifty times in 22 places in a four-week period! There being few churches, services were often held in homes, barns or open spaces.*

*In 1823 London Township was constituted a circuit of the Methodist Church and **it is from this year that Metropolitan Church has dated its beginnings.** Actually, there was no London at the time, as Governor Simcoe had reserved the area at the Forks of the Thames as a possible capital for Upper Canada and the first building was not erected until 1826, though the occasional squatter may have appeared. However, settlers were moving into the immediate neighbourhood and many new members were being attracted to Methodism.*

***The Rev. Robert Corson was the minister in charge of the new circuit.** The settlements were SO sparse, the distances SO great, and the ministers SO few that a Methodist clergyman was not assigned to a church but rather to an area which he covered on horseback visiting scattered families and small settlements, preaching and ministering in any way possible, and completing his circuit every three or four weeks. This mobility contributed to the rapid growth of early Methodism. Robert Corson was an outstanding leader in those early days and reference to a list of ministers who have served in the area will reveal that many of the really great leaders of Methodism were associated with one or other of the churches that were the forerunners of Metropolitan.*

***In 1833 when the Rev. John Beattie was pastor of the London circuit, the first building to be used continuously as a church was built.** It was situated on the west side of Ridout Street at the corner of Carling. This was a small rough cast structure about 18' x 24' and was in the centre of the growing town. The lot upon which the small chapel stood became valuable, while the congregation became too large for the building. **In 1839, when the Rev. Adam Townley was pastor, the little church was sold to the Bank of Montreal and a new structure was erected at the southeast corner of King and Talbot Streets.** James O' Dell and Captain John Smythe were the chief promoters and there was erected a neat frame chapel 30' x 40'. It is recorded that the first piece of ornamental plastering done in London was incorporated in this building.*

*The number of Methodists in London and vicinity by this time had grown so the circuit was divided and the Church in London became the centre of a circuit embracing the territory for about ten miles around the town. In 1842, the congregation decided to sell their church and secure a location where a larger building could be erected. The site chosen was on the west side of Richmond Street between Dundas and King Streets, across from the south end of the former Simpson's store. An edifice measuring 40'x60' was constructed and called **Wesley Chapel**. The new church was used for ten years during which time Methodism grew rapidly. An outstanding minister of the period was the **Rev. John Carroll**, whose name was a household word among the Methodists of London for many years.*

*The **Rev. Dr. Evans** succeeded the Rev. Mr. Carroll as pastor and his work was largely responsible for the extension of Methodism, which again made necessary the building of a larger church. In 1852, the church on Richmond Street was sold, and under the pastorage of the **Rev. William Pollard** the historic North Street Church came into existence. This church was two years in building and was opened for worship early in **July, 1854**. The building was 120' x 66' with a tower and steeple, and was at that time acknowledged to be one of the finest Methodist churches west of the great St. James Methodist Church in Montreal. It held more people than any other building in London and was the scene of many large and important mass meetings including the memorial to the memory of the martyred Abraham Lincoln. The members of the first board of trustees were: Messrs. Samuel Glass, George Tyas, John Elson, S. Peters, S. McBride, and S. Screamon.*

*North Street Church was so named because it was situated on the south-west corner of North Street (now Queen's Avenue) and Park Avenue (now Clarence Street). This church is frequently referred to as the "parent Methodist Church in London". It received this designation because it aided in the formation of many mission churches which have since become strong self-supporting causes.*

*According to the record book, in 1854, the North Street pews were rented by auction to the highest bidders and Samuel McBride received the important position of pew steward and collector of rents. If occupants fell six months in arrears in their rental payment, the pews were repossessed and re-rented.*

*Loyal members of North Street undertook the planting of Methodism in all parts of London. In 1873 these dedicated Methodists, along with thirteen residents of New Brighton (now South London) built a church in that place. This now is Wesley-Knox United Church of London. The same group also encouraged and assisted in the building of Hamilton Road (now Hyatt Avenue), Centennial, Colborne Street, and Wellington Street Churches.*

*In 1872, the congregation decided to build a school room in the rear of the church. This building was called Wesley Hall, after which our Wesley Hall is named, and cost \$13,000.00. About the end of 1880, the church was redecorated and a \$9,000.00 organ installed.*

*The period between the years 1883 and 1893 witnessed a great change in the personnel of the trustee board. Several of the original members having died, the following young and active men were added: Messrs. John Green, George Gibbons, Dr. F. R. Eccles, W. R. Hobbs, S. W. Abbott, W. M. Spencer, George T. Mann, D. C. Hanna, L. Ingrams, S. Glass, J. H. Chapman, Chas. H. Ivey, D. S. Perrin, and Dr. Nelles. These men carried on the work that had been so ably inaugurated by their predecessors and for many years carried a heavy burden for the sake of the Methodist Church in*

London. During the pastorate of the Rev. George Boyd, who was a very energetic and a successful pastor, this church enjoyed a period of great prosperity. Mr. Boyd was instrumental in founding three missions, one on Richmond Street (now Robinson Memorial Church) and two in West London (since closed).

In the two decades since the building of this first chapel in London, many changes had taken place in the young denomination. The tenure of the itinerants was generally longer than in the early days, suggesting men with better qualifications. The occasional academic degree was noted, indicating better training educationally to add to evangelistic zeal. **In 1836, the church established Upper Canada Academy at Cobourg, which in time became Victoria College.** Any student of good moral character was accepted, making entrance requirements more generous than in government schools. Generally the social standing of Methodists was improving. Originally such evangelicals as Baptists and Methodists were debarred from holding land for churches and burial grounds and their clergy might not perform marriages, but these disabilities were removed. As early as 1829 the Rev. Egerton Ryerson with the help of the young church, established the Christian Guardian which in time became the most influential journal in the province. The aggressiveness of the itinerants in carrying their message to the lonely settlers added to the numbers of Methodists and made them a church body to be considered.

Music proved to be important in the young church as Methodists were a singing people and fortunately they had the unforgettable hymns of the Wesley's. They also drew on British and American sources that were more vocal, thus giving outlet to the more emotional members. The officials of North Street Church imposed some restrictions. In vestry and during practice hours there must be no "lightness nor trifling". They also decided that the bass viola then in use in the choir should be dispensed with as soon as there was a sufficient number of bass singers.

Tragically the church that had done so much to found or help other churches in the growing town, met disaster. In the early morning of **Sunday, February 2, 1895, fire broke out and when some members of the church came to the morning service, they found only a gutted and smoke-stained building.** The church officials acted with their usual vigour and arranged to use the Opera House as the temporary place for public worship and the City Hall as meeting place for the Sunday School.

The Trustees and Dr. Daniel, the pastor, decided to sell the old lot and purchase the present site on the corner of Dufferin Avenue and Wellington Street. **The laying of the cornerstone of the present building took place on July 30, 1895.** Many of the leading clergy of Methodism were present and addresses were given by Sir John Carling, M.P., J. W. Little, Mayor, and T. S. Hobbs, M.P. The cornerstone was laid by Samuel McBride. The great new church, which today is valued at between one and two million dollars, cost at that time, between \$45,000.00 and \$50,000.00. The name was changed from Queen's Avenue to First Methodist Church, and the loyal congregation made great sacrifices in order that they might have a church worthy of being the leading Methodist Church in London. The original subscription list shows that \$38,249.00 was subscribed at that time. Dr. Daniel remained as pastor for two years, and was succeeded by the Rev. J. V. Smith, DD., who was pastor until 1901.

In 1905, **Dr. John Graham**, whose father had been a previous minister of North Street, came to London as pastor of this growing and prosperous church. Dr. Graham had attended the Collegiate Institute in London and was well and favourably known by the younger businessmen of the City.

*Though still a comparatively young man, he was an outstanding preacher, and drew capacity crowds to hear him every Sunday. His work among the young men was most evident. In 1907 he was made general secretary of education for the Methodist Church and moved to Toronto.*

*In 1909, the Rev. Richard Whiting began his ministry of four years. Dr. Whiting was outstanding both as a minister and as a pastor, and under his ministry the church grew rapidly. He was succeeded in 1913 by the Rev. Dr. Flanders. The four years of his ministry were years that are still remembered by some of the congregation as he was an exceptional preacher and a man with an artistic temperament and deep spiritual insight. It is to be noted that the pastorates of the above two continued for four years, contrary to the old three year limit setting a new pattern. A new name-Mr. J. E. Boomer was added to the Board of Trustees. Since then, the following men have served as trustees: Messrs. J. S. Barnard, G. F. Brickenden, W. M. Manning, W. E. Saunders, T. A. Stevens, R. I. Watson, W. G. Young, J. C. Snell, George McBroom, S. W. Abbott, C. Glass, J. E. Magee, A. Sreaton, Dr. S. W. Kennedy, Israel Taylor, W. P. Young, T. W. McFarland, and A. A. Langford.*

*The position of Recording Steward, which is the chief executive office of the church, was most efficiently filled by Mr. J. H. Chapman from 1909 to 1929 and his long years of service are commemorated by a tablet on the east wall of the sanctuary. At his death he was succeeded by Mr. W.N. Manning, a prominent manufacturer who in turn was followed by Dr. S. M. Kennedy, whose dignity and dedication to his church are affectionately recalled.*

*In 1923, a century of Methodism in the London area was recognized by Metropolitan (First Methodist) Church, although the first place of worship was built only ninety years before, the other ten years were covered by the itinerants. In 1923 ours was the senior Methodist Church in the Conference with a membership of twelve hundred. Not only had it aided in church extension in the city but was represented in distant Japan and China by the Rev. T. A. Wilkinson and Dr. Wallace Crawford.*

*Musically, the church was a leader in the city with an outstanding choir under the direction of Mr. A. D. Jordan who regularly led them in the presentation of great oratorios and other church music. The church was also equipped with a magnificent organ valued at \$40,000.00.*

*The Sunday School with six hundred and fifty enrolled (1924) was a lively factor in the religious education of the young of the congregation and it commanded the services of some of the outstanding laymen in the church.*

*In 1923, Major The Rev. J. Bruce Hunter, M.C., D.D., L.L.D., began his ministry, and during his eleven years of tenure he established himself in the community in a unique way. On increasingly numerous occasions, he became the voice not only of his own church or denomination but of organized religion, at civic and patriotic junctions, a position previously filled by the Bishops of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches.*

*During his ministry a major structural change was made in Wesley Hall, the Sunday School or religious education building. After the entire structure was underpinned, the foundations were extended downward for six feet making the present gymnasium possible. A steel frame just inside the walls was then erected from the basement to the roof which it now supported. The classrooms, opening on a gallery, were removed and a fireproof steel and concrete floor constructed, giving the hall two levels.*

*Classrooms were set up on both levels, as was also an excellent auditorium on the upper floor. The ladies were provided with an attractive parlour, a gymnasium which also functioned as a dining hall added to the utility of the building; particularly as good kitchen facilities were also added. Due to the skill of Mr. Gordon Bridgman, a life-long member of the church, as architect and engineer, this major alteration was achieved without the slightest damage to the massive brickwork and other structural portions of the building and a task that would probably have cost a quarter of a million dollars was achieved for less than forty percent of that amount.*

*The period of the depression and the Second World War inhibited further building that would entail heavy expenditures so that the pastorates of **Dr. J. E. Hughson** and **Dr. W. E. McNiven** saw few structural changes. **Dr. George Goth**, who came to the church in **1948**, had been the minister for nine years when, under his lively leadership, the urge to modernize reasserted itself*

*In 1957 **Metropolitan Hall** was completely renovated and took its present form. The solid classroom walls were removed and portable walls were substituted to add to the elasticity of arrangements. The stage was rearranged and reconstructed and a handsome boardroom was created on the west side of the building.*

*Another major enterprise developed in 1951, when critical looks were turned upon the sanctuary, the organ, the choir loft, the pulpit arrangements, etc. that had followed the Methodist style of the 19th century in which the pulpit was at a central point and the emphasis was on the preaching. After diligent committee work under the chairmanship of Mr. Armand Manness, the organ pipes were recessed, the choir loft lowered and the organ pipes masked behind a wooden screen dominated by a massive cross. The former graceful stairs leading from the galleries to the ground floor disappeared, leaving space for screens, lectern and pulpit. Pews were readjusted to create a centre aisle in the sanctuary and the dark mahogany of the woodwork yielded to light limed tones. A mighty transformation had been wrought and Metropolitan joined the ranks of the twentieth century without losing the dignity and beauty that were visualized in 1895. Again, the expenditure was great, particularly with the addition of handsome carpet, but the congregation felt that a sum in excess of \$80,000.00 was well spent.*

*Another highly significant development in church facilities was seen in 1963. At the time of the construction of Metropolitan Church, the basement was not fully excavated and the foundations did not extend to a sufficient depth to make the area usable, yet the expanding Sunday School was urgently in need of additional space. As in the case of Metropolitan Hall there came the laborious task of underpinning, then the insertion of great steel beams to carry the pillars supporting the gallery, the deepening of the foundations, the excavating and ultimately the construction of a very fine Christian Education Centre with the requisite auditorium, lounge, classrooms, kitchen, etc. It is difficult to imagine facilities necessary for effective church work that are not now included in the present Metropolitan plan. Happily, the term "**Wesley Hall**" that was borne so worthily by the original Sunday School building has been transferred to the new centre, and a name that links the church with its origins and traditions has been preserved.*

*The one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of Metropolitan was celebrated in 1948, dating from the establishment of the London Township circuit in 1823.*

*Mere statistics do not supply a complete record but the figures for 1948 (Dr. Goth's first year) are of interest. Church membership was 1450 with 262 of these non-resident. The total givings were approximately \$47,000.000. Three years later, in 1951, the total givings were \$86,500.00. By 1954, the total reached \$97,312.00 and has continued to grow ever since. Membership has increased appreciably.*

*The years succeeding the modernization of the church were busy and demanding. The congregation grew. There were urgent suggestions in some quarters for the amalgamation of the two women's organizations. The Women's Missionary Society and the United Church Women. This was finally accomplished.*

*In 1960 there was a movement to build a United Church residence and Student Centre near the campus of the University of Western Ontario and thus supply a church contact with students who were leaving home and church in increasing numbers. Others were considering church extension in growing cities like London, church camps, etc. As a result, a Capital Funds Campaign was established and proved to be popular throughout the London Conference. Metropolitan raised \$125,000.00. Thus it had a part in the construction of Westminster College, in the extension programme of Alma College, in the development of Camp Kee-Mo-Kee, in church extension in London and in religious broadcasting.*

*The choir today remains a most important factor in the church life and holds an enviable place among similar organizations of the city. For thirty years it was directed by **Mr. T. C. Chattoe** who retired in 1959, to be succeeded by **Mr. H. Alex Clark**. The choir's loyalty is attested by their remarkable attendance record and by the fact that a large choir loft is filled. The organ is maintained as one of the best and under the direction of Mr. Clark the congregation and community enjoy unusual church music and some special presentations of sacred works.*

*While a large and active church may seem to be quite self-sufficient, Metropolitan has been sensitive to denominational needs. Dr. Goth was made the president of London Conference in 1961, and Dr. Anne Langford in 1966. Each had also been chairman of Presbytery. The two ministers formed an unusually effective team as each complimented the other. Dr. Goth was particularly effective in the pulpit. Traditionalism was discarded and the preaching was directed to the modern mind and conscience. A letter referring to Dr. Langford speaks of her dedicated leadership and her deep spiritual and personal commitment." Hers has been a multi-faceted ministry"*

*Dr. Goth resigned and retired in 1975 - after a ministry of 27 years in London. Dr. Langford retired 2 years later after twenty years of dedicated service to Metropolitan Church in addition to a period as the Minister of Rowntree Church. Their portraits, along with those of Mr. Chattoe and the Rev. Cully Pentland, who served as Minister of Visitation until 1975, now hang in the church Heritage Room.*

*A Pastoral Relations Committee was appointed to find a Senior Minister. This was achieved at the time of the first ballot. In the long years of Metropolitan's existence, there has been a tradition of great preaching which **Dr. Boyd** has maintained with his Celtic eloquence, flashes of humour and deep spiritual insight. The church is in a very healthy and vigorous condition and promises to continue to contribute to the religious life of our city. This was explained to the writer by a clergyman of another denomination as the work of the Holy Spirit.*

*In 1977, the Rev. Frances Clarke, who had previously worked with Dr. Boyd in Sarnia, joined our ministerial staff and in both the pulpit and in the face of the innumerable demands of a large congregation, she is effectively contributing her services. **The Rev. Ralph King arrived in 1979**, but his ministry with us was cut short because of poor health. Meanwhile, our minister of visitation, **The Rev. Edwin Morrow** had retired. A new Pastoral Relations Committee made a careful study of leadership needs and a thorough search for two ministers with the particular gifts and qualities required to serve this growing congregation. They did an excellent job! During the summer of **1981, the Rev. Morley Clarke joined our staff as full-time Assistant and the Rev. Dr. Reid Vipond arrived from Winnipeg to become our part-time Minister of Visitation.***

*In 1985 a new surge of energy and enthusiasm, through our " Keeping Faith" Stewardship Program directed by Resource Services and chaired by Dr. James Guest, greatly enhanced every area Metropolitan life and work.*

*The **Rev. Morley Clarke**, then president-elect of London Conference, retired at the end of June 1986. He continues to serve both Metropolitan and the wider church as consultant for the Kerygma Bible Study program and, along with his wife Trudie, Marriage Preparation and Enrichment events.*

*The **Rev. Ken Taylor** came to us in **1987** from Richard's Landing in Algoma, bringing his own gifts of quiet caring and behind-the-scenes helpfulness and support, especially among young adults and new and out-of-town members.*

*In **1988, Dr. Boyd** accepted a call to Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City, and began his ministry there the first Sunday in May. On the recommendation of a very hardworking and dedicated Pastoral Relations Committee, Metropolitan extended a call to the **Rev. Gervis Beecher Black** of Ottawa. The six months of transition between our farewell to Dr. Boyd and the arrival of Mr. Black in late October enabled the congregation to enter this new period of our history with a sense of hope and eager anticipation - in spite of the turmoil throughout the whole United Church over the 32nd General Council's controversial statement on Membership, Ministry and Human Sexuality.*

***Dr. Reid Vipond**, dearly loved Minister of Visitation for eight years, retired in mid-June, **1989**.*

*The **Rev. Doug Story** of Grimsby (formerly of Byron United Church), accepted our call to be full time Minister of Visitation starting in September. Meanwhile, the new position of Staff Associate for Youth Ministries was undertaken by **Mr. Dwight Ozard** in July of 1989. Under his leadership our work with teens and young adults was greatly strengthened as he built on the foundation already put in place by the Sunday School through the years.*

***Dr. George Goth**, who after his retirement in 1975, continued his happy association with Metropolitan as Minister-Emeritus, died in August, 1990. Shortly before his death, Wesley Centre was renamed George Goth Hall to commemorate his long and distinguished ministry. A Service of Dedication, conducted by Dr. James Guest and attended by Dr. Goth's sons Lynn and Fred, was included in the Annual Congregational Meeting February 6, 1991.*

*Early in **1991**, the congregation honoured **Kay Kreitner** for a whole decade of devoted service to Metropolitan as Director of the Sunday School. Anne was followed by **Anne Jeffery**, and then by **Mrs. Janet Fleet**, who taught and supervised the program until our current director of Christian Education,*

*Mr. Liam Maharaj, took over the reins in 2012, we anticipate continuing growth in our ministry to and with the children of the church.*

*During the summer of 1990, while our own Sanctuary was closed for extensive repairs and renovation, the congregation enjoyed the hospitality of First-Si.Andrew's, sharing in worship, fellowship and leadership.*

*In 1991, Metropolitan took decisive steps to revitalize its mission and to reform its organization. This undertaking began by holding a consultation with the entire congregation. Every member and adherent was given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire, prepared by an external consultant, and to discuss their hopes and expectations for Metropolitan at a series of small group meetings organized by the members of Session. Once the responses were tabulated, they were reviewed in detail by a Forward Planning Committee appointed by the Official Board.*

*Beginning in the fall of 1991 and working steadily for the next twelve months, the Committee proceeded to formulate a one-page Mission Statement and a detailed Forward Plan. In November 1992 both the Mission Statement and the Forward Plan were approved by the congregation. The Forward Plan consists of five major commitments, each with numerous goals, objectives and strategies:*

- 1. To worship God with reverence and joy and be renewed by His Grace through congregational worship.*
- 2. To nurture people of all ages into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ through scriptural study, prayer and fellowship.*
- 3. To practise faithful stewardship of time, talents and possessions recognizing that all are gifts from God.*
- 4. To serve and care for all within our congregational family and minister with love and compassion to those in need in the wider community.*
- 5. Organization, Leadership, Communications and Administration.*

*From an organizational point of view, the Executive of the Official Board (now under lay chairmanship) was enlarged and strengthened to reflect more fully the numerous groups and committees within the congregation. The committee structure of Session and the Committee of Stewards was revamped. Finally, the Forward Plan gave a mandate to the Executive of the Official Board to review the existing organizational structure annually to ensure that they are functioning in an effective and responsive manner.*

*1991 also saw the retirement of **H. Alex Clark**, our Director of Music for more than thirty years. At a special service of praise on May 5, the Choir sang a number of anthems and the congregation expressed appreciation and best wishes to Alex.*

*While the Music Search Committee completed its work, Assistant Organist **Jim Hill** gave excellent leadership. In February **1992**, we welcomed **Brent Hylton** as our new Director of Music, with his wife **Marilyn** joining him as Assistant in September*

*In August 1992, **Neil McGillivray** joined us as Staff Associate for Youth and Young Adults, building on the foundation established by **Dwight Ozard** who moved on to work and study at Eastern Baptist Theological College in Philadelphia. After 3 years of dedicated leadership here Neil moved to Cambridge to serve as Youth Pastor at Forward Baptist Church.*

The year 1993 brought major changes and announcements of changes in the congregation's ministerial staff. The **Rev. Frances M. Clarke** retired from active Ministry. The **Rev. Kenneth N. Taylor** resigned as an Assistant Minister to accept a call to Ailsa Craig. At the beginning of December, the **Rev. Gervis Black** announced that he would be retiring and leaving Metropolitan on October 23, 1994, exactly six years to the day that he began his ministry with our congregation in 1988.

The **Rev. Robert C. Ripley from Dunlop United Church**, Sarnia, joined the ministerial staff in July 1994, working with Mr. Black until October, then assuming his new role as Metropolitan's Senior Minister.

Early in 1995, **Miss Margaret Scott, a Diaconal Minister** (also from Sarnia) arrived to serve as Assistant, bringing her own particular gifts to the very demanding and diversified ministry here.

Since 1996 our Youth Ministry has been led by **Mr. John Mitchell, Mrs. Beth Giuliano, Mrs. Julia Morden, Ms. Pam Switzer, Ms. Valerie Young, Mr. Brad Johnson, Ms. Danielle** ; our current Youth leader is **Mr. Steve Greene**.

In April 1999, the **Rev. Farquhar MacKinnon** joined the staff as Minister of Pastoral Care. Following his retirement in 2005 from Robinson Memorial United Church, the **Rev. Herbert Summers** assumed the position of **Minister of Pastoral Care**.

In February 2000, the **Rev. Edward W. Lewis** joined us as **Minister of Outreach**. He left for a congregation in Alberta in April of 2007.

In July of 2001, **Brent and Marilyn Hylton** accepted a position in Scottsdale Arizona completing 9-1/2 years of Music Ministry at Metropolitan. **In September 2001, Gregg Redner** became our new **Director of Music and the Arts**. He was joined by Associate Musician, Rob Cairns in 2012 and our Shipman organ scholar, Andy Cloutier began his studies in 2013.

**Reverend Ripley** retired from the ministry in October 2009 and the **Reverend Doctor Barry Moore** assumed the role of **Interim Minister** until the arrival of the **Reverend Dr. Jeff Crittenden** in **July of 2010**.

The story of Metropolitan continues as children, youth and adults together work and worship, learn and grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*To be continued. (Now **YOU** may be helping make our history!)*

*New York Conference allowed volunteers to preach in Upper Canada. The first regular Methodist preacher to appear in Upper Canada was William Losee, a member of the New York Conference which continued to foster and care for the little Canadian Church until 1810.*

*1810 Genessee Conference in New York State was formed.*

*1819 The Rev. George Washington, Methodist Pastor was appointed to the London area by the Genessee Conference.*

*1823 The Rev. Robert Corson took charge of the London Township circuit of the Methodist Church.*

*1824 Our Canadian Conference was formed.*

*1833 The Rev. John Beattie was pastor of the London circuit. The first building to be used continuously as a church was built on the west side of Ridout Street at the corner of Carting.*

*1839 The Rev. Adam Townley was pastor. The congregation outgrew its building and sold it to the Bank of Montreal. A new church was built at the southeast corner of King and Talbot streets. The first piece of ornamental plastering recorded as being done in London was put in this church.*

*1842 The church was sold by the congregation, and a site on the west side of Richmond Street, between Dundas and King Streets, was purchased. The Wesley Chapel, which was 40' x 60' was erected.*

*The Rev. John Carroll, an outstanding minister of the time was the pastor. He was succeeded by The Rev. Dr. Evans.*

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- 1885 *Dr. Daniel was the pastor. Early on Sunday morning, February 2, fire gutted the North Street Church. A new building was erected at Wellington and Dufferin Streets, and was named First Methodist Church. The Cornerstone was laid on July 30, 1895.*
- 1897 *The Rev. J. V. Smith, D.D. became pastor and remained until 1901.*
- 1901 *The Rev. Dr. George J. Bishop*
- 1905 *Dr. John Graham*
- 1909 *The Rev. Richard Whiting*
- 1913 *The Rev. Dr. Flanders*
- 1917 *The Rev. Dr. G. Peever*
- 1921 *The Rev. William Sparling*
- 1923 *Major The Rev. J. Bruce Hunter (to 1934)*
- 1934 *The Rev. Dr. J. E. Hughson*
- 1938 *The Rev. Dr. W E. MacNiven, Senior Minister (to 1948)*
- 1948 *The Rev. Dr. George W Goth (to 1975)*
- 1949 *The Rev. Dr. Anne P. Langford, Assistant (to 1955)*
- 1963 *The Rev. Dr. Anne P. Langford, Assistant (to 1977)*
- 1962 *The Rev. A.E. Cully Pentland, Minister of Visitation (to 1975)*
- 1975 *The Rev. Dr. K Maurice Boyd, Senior Minister (to 1988)*
- 1976 *The Rev. Edwin G. Morrow, Minister of Visitation (to 1979)*
- 1977 *The Rev. Frances M. Clarke, Assistant (to 1993)*
- 1979 *The Rev. Ralph E. King, Assistant (to 1981)*
- 1981 *The Rev. Morley G. Clarke, Assistant (to 1986)*
- 1981 *The Rev. Dr. Reid E. Vipond, Minister of Visitation (to 1989)*
- 1987 *The Rev. Kenneth N. Taylor, Assistant (to 1993)*
- 1988 *The Rev. Gervis Beecher Black, Senior Minister (to 1994)*
- 1989 *The Rev. Douglas KG. Story, Minister of Visitation (to 1998)*
- 1993 *The Rev. Morley G. Clarke, Interim Assistant (to 1994)*
- 1994 *The Rev. Robert C. Ripley, Senior Minister*
- 1995 *Ms. Margaret K Scott, Diaconal Minister (to 2000)*
- 1999 *The Rev. Farquhar MacKinnon, Minister of Pastoral Care*

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*Revised 09-17-2013*