

# Working-Class Anglicans: Religion and Identity in Victorian and Edwardian Hamilton, Ontario

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*St. Luke's Anglican Church came into being in Hamilton's north-end in the summer of 1882, as Hamilton's working class was entering the second phase of Canadian industrialization. Urban geography, class, and ethnicity were factors in the establishment of the parish in this singularly working-class district of the city, which included a high proportion of immigrants. Into the mix were also thrown differing conceptions of Anglican parishes held by clergy and laity. For the congregation of St. Luke's, a local parish church became important to creating an identity separate from older, more established congregations dominated by elite Canadian Anglicans.*

*L'église anglicane St. Luke a vu le jour dans le secteur nord-est de Hamilton à l'été de 1882, au moment où la classe ouvrière de Hamilton amorçait la deuxième phase de l'industrialisation canadienne. La géographie urbaine, la classe et l'ethnicité ont joué un rôle dans l'établissement de la paroisse dans ce district singulièrement ouvrier et à forte proportion d'immigrants de la ville. Intervenirent également les conceptions différentes du clergé et des laïques de ce qu'est une paroisse anglicane. Il était important pour la congrégation de St. Luke d'avoir une église paroissiale locale afin de se forger une identité distincte de celle des congrégations plus vieilles et mieux établies, dominées par des anglicans canadiens de l'élite.*

THE HISTORICAL study of class seeks to integrate a broader perspective on the construction of identity through studies of the complex inter-relationships of daily life with work, as well as by broadening the definition of work beyond waged labour.<sup>1</sup> Most of this history has studiously avoided the role of

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<sup>1</sup> See especially Bettina Bradbury, "The Home as Workplace", in Paul Craven, ed., *Labouring Lives: Work and Workers in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), pp. 412–479, and *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1993). Studies have concentrated on the working class, and much work remains to be done toward understanding the lives of the middle classes and elites in Canadian society.

religion in the lives of workers.<sup>2</sup> Victorian and Edwardian Canada was a society infused with faith, and historians have begun to incorporate understandings of religion into the building of social identities.<sup>3</sup> This microstudy of an Anglican congregation, St. Luke's Hamilton, located in the working-class "north-end" community, assesses the role played by a specifically Anglican belief system in constructing a working-class identity.

The north-end, somewhat like Winnipeg's more famous (or perhaps infamous) similarly named district, differed from the rest of Hamilton in its singularly working-class population.<sup>4</sup> Fully 75 per cent of the occupations found on the census of 1901 for the north-end fell into a continuum ranging from unskilled to skilled, with the balance taken up by small merchants and

2 Recent exceptions are found in the work of Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), and of Doris Mary O'Dell on small-town class and religion in Belleville, Ontario, "The Class Character of Church Participation in Late Nineteenth-Century Belleville, Ontario" (PhD dissertation, Queen's University, 1990).

3 Perhaps the earliest work to address the sense of a pervasive and underlying religiosity in nineteenth-century Canada was William Westfall's study, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), which, uniquely for Canada, employed the study of architectural forms to understand the Victorian mentality. Lynne Marks in *Revivals and Roller Rinks* has also employed wide-ranging evidence, but argues rather for a modified form of "religion as function" in the context of small-town Ontario in the late nineteenth century. Religion for Marks, especially as it regards class, is presented as a function of social respectability, a social system that leaves the working classes largely on the outside.

4 I assembled the statistical data used to delineate St. Luke's by manually counting the number of Anglicans reported on the nominal census rolls for 1901. This census for the first time provided street addresses for each household indexed to the rolls, allowing a reconstruction of data, aided by the clear definition of the boundaries of St. Luke's parish into a "census" parish. St. Luke's parish consisted of those parts of subdivisions E6, E7, E8, F7, F8, and F9 north of the Grand Trunk main line (beginning at Strachan Street) and all of E9, F10, F11, and F12. Although frozen in time in the spring of 1901, these data provide a useful point of comparison to church records and estimates. Church records for St. Luke's covered a wider period of time, but many of these are now lost. Most useful for my purposes were reports of vestry (church council) meetings in the local press and statistical data gleaned from records of rites of passage, service registers, and financial records. All original vestry minutes prior to World War I are lost, forcing me to rely on reports in the *Hamilton Spectator* and the *Hamilton Times*. These local press reports on the annual meetings of Anglican vestries — held usually the Monday following Easter — were reasonably accurate and often quite detailed, containing direct quotes and some financial figures, as well as listing the officers of the parish for the coming year. I supplemented these data with information contained in Hamilton city directories and assessment rolls. The local newspapers also reported long and lovingly on the intimate doings of local churches, ranging from their political battles to festivals, concerts, and building programmes and even to reprinting long sermons and financial statements. Religious affairs in general were accorded a place in the Hamilton newspapers almost the equal of national and local political events and conflicts. Local church choirs, especially their directors and soloists, were given "pop-star" treatment in two-page spreads. St. Luke's church, as a small parish, did not figure largely in these reports, but was mentioned on occasion over the years, sometimes in great detail, other times with only small notices. Yet it fit easily into the regional pattern of reporting on church events. Mention was usually made of the working-class nature of the parish, but this was not unduly emphasized.

clerks.<sup>5</sup> Wages reported for unskilled workers in the census for St. Luke's parish ranged from as little as \$150 per annum in the case of domestics to as much as \$600 in the case of teamsters. This compared with skilled wages of \$900 for some engineers or \$600 for a glass blower and as little as \$150 for a machinist. While most of those employed were men and while the more highly paid occupations were also male preserves, significant numbers of women were employed principally as domestics or factory labourers, particularly in the textile mills, and as tailoresses.<sup>6</sup> Virtually all the remainder were either clerks or business owners. Most of these were grocers, ice dealers, hotel or saloon owners, and small manufacturers such as whip makers. Their earnings were not reported in the census figures, but it can be assumed that their pursuits afforded them a higher standard of living than that experienced by wage labourers or clerks.

This was an immigrant district, also like Winnipeg's north-end. Unlike that of Winnipeg, however, the population of Hamilton's north-end was composed almost entirely of British immigrants,<sup>7</sup> although they functioned little differently from other non-British immigrant groups in their reaction to the new country.<sup>8</sup> Organizations such as the Sons of England and the St. George Society were active in the city, but appeared to be largely dominated by the middle classes and elites, who saw them as venues to dispense charity to their less fortunate ethnic compatriots, and no doubt reinforce a sense of paternalism.<sup>9</sup>

St. Luke's Anglican Church came into being in Hamilton's north-end in the summer of 1882, as Hamilton's working class was entering the second phase

5 There seems to be no agreement on the sub-classification of working-class occupations. For convenience I have used Peter Goheen's old (1970) divisions developed for Victorian Toronto, simply because they are so detailed and cover a similar period. See Peter Goheen, "Victorian Toronto, 1850-1900: Patterns and Process of Growth" (University of Chicago, Department of Geography, research paper no. 127, 1970).

6 As a point of comparison to middle-class earnings, the growing salaried class reported on the 1901 census earnings in the range of \$1,000 to \$2,000 per annum, though once again caution must be used here as many middle-class persons did not work on a salaried basis, but as either professionals or owners of small businesses.

7 For Hamilton as a whole, only 2% of the population was non-British in 1892, 4% in 1901, and 6% in 1911. The first significant wave of non-British immigration arrived after the turn of the twentieth century, though even then the British comprised two-thirds of all immigrants to the city. See John C. Weaver, *Hamilton: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1982), pp. 92-96, 198.

8 There is not a large literature on the English as an ethnic group. I would argue, however, that the attributes of ethnicity apply to the immigrant English. For example, see David T. Moorman, "Where are the English and the Americans in the Historiography of Upper Canada?", *Ontario History*, vol. 88, no. 1 (March 1996), pp. 65-69; W. G. Smith, *A Study in British Immigration* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1920); Helen I. Cowan, *British Immigration to British North America: The First Hundred Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961); Lloyd G. Reynolds, *The British Immigrant: His Social and Economic Adjustment in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1935).

9 There are no surviving records of memberships in Hamilton. A study of newspaper reports of annual meetings of both organizations throughout this period is redolent of the names of the local elite: mostly business owners and professional men. All began their meetings with prayers led by Anglican clergy. Activities reported usually involved charitable activities for the poor of British descent.

of Canadian industrialization.<sup>10</sup> A number of factors intersected in the establishment of the parish: urban geography, class, and ethnicity. Into this mix were thrown differing conceptions of the nature of Anglican parishes held by clergy and laity. Urban geography served to create a mentality of locality, a sense of community based on location. Hamilton sat (and sits) on the south shore of Burlington Bay, the extreme western end of Lake Ontario. The north-end forms something of a wide peninsula thrusting into the bay, bounded on the north and west by water, and in 1882 cut off from the then empty east by a wide inlet and a railway line. By the time this inlet was filled in over the course of the next two decades, the east was also largely blocked by tracts of land given over to heavy industry. The southern demarcation was the main line of the Great Western Railway, opened in 1851.

The oldest areas of settlement were to the west, near the working docks and nearer the rail yards. The workers who supplied the new industries to the east populated the eastern half. Census figures on birthplace show significantly higher proportions of residents in the eastern section were newcomers compared with those in the older western section. In the west, some 33 per cent of the adult Anglican population gave England as their birthplace; in the newer sections to the east, that proportion averaged 58 per cent, but reached 75 per cent in some areas.<sup>11</sup> According to the 1901 census, 1,162 Anglicans resided in the north-end, roughly one-twelfth of the city's Anglican population.<sup>12</sup> The only representatives of the owning segment of society, the handful of wharf owners, sail makers, ice merchants, and coal dealers, lived by their premises along the bay shore, and the saloon and hotel owners were concentrated on the main north-south streets leading into and out of the area.<sup>13</sup> The vital statistics from parish registers, while incomplete, reinforce census data.<sup>14</sup> The clergy of

10 See, for example, Craig Heron, "Factory Workers" in Craven, ed., *Labouring Lives*, p. 482, and *Working in Steel: The Early Years in Canada, 1883-1935* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1988), pp. 9-12.

11 Overall for St. Luke's parish (using birthplace statistics to give a conservative estimate of ethnicity): 63% of Anglicans had been born in Canada, 29% in England, 4% in Ireland, and 4% other — the latter being mostly other British with a handful of Germans. Calculated using nominal census rolls.

12 There were 12,443 Anglicans in Hamilton in 1901, making it the second largest denomination after the Methodists (13,737). *Fourth Census of Canada 1901*, vol. I (S. E. Dawson, 1902).

13 Most lived at their establishments.

14 For the earlier years of the parish, there are records of some 17 marriages performed from 1896 to 1904 by the first minister, William Massey. Thirteen of the 34 people married in this period had been born in England, one in Ireland, and 17 in Canada. Significantly, only in six marriages were both members of the couple Canadian born. The records are more extensive for the second rector of the parish, E. N. R. Burns. Between 1899 and 1914, the period of Burns's term in the parish, there were 129 marriages performed at St. Luke's. In the case of these marriages individual origins can be placed much more precisely than can be obtained from census data: 136 of the marriage partners had been born in England, the largest number being from Lancashire and Yorkshire. Forty-one were from Lancashire, especially Bolton and Oldham; 15 were from Yorkshire and 34 from various other northern English counties; and only 26 in all from southern counties, London providing the largest number.

the four denominations lived also in the north-end for most of the period before World War I. The managers of the cotton mills and glass works did not live in the neighbourhood.

The origin and establishment of urban Anglican parishes was also a complex dance of clergy and laity involving concepts about the nature and function of the parish that both converged and differed. The clergy saw the parish as a means to mission: a method by which they might extend and fortify the word of God through a permanent establishment in the community. While ambitious clergy did not expect to stay for long periods in one parish, they saw the local church as a means to extend the kingdom of God on earth. From the parish they could have a firm base from which to dispense the sacraments and to teach and preach. For the people of the parishes, motives were more complex. First, they were practical: despite an expanding street car system, the city was still most usually a walking community, not only in practical terms, but conceptually.<sup>15</sup> The earliest calls from the Anglican laity of the north-end for their own church stressed walking distance. It is difficult to know how valid this element was on the face of it. In a time when the entire breadth of the city could be traversed on foot in much less than an hour, these arguments suggest how people then conceptualized distance rather than expressing physical reality. Hamilton's north-end could be walked, either its breadth or length, comfortably in 15 minutes.<sup>16</sup>

Factors of class and ethnicity also provided conceptual divides for the laity of the north-end. While it is clear from the work of both Lynne Marks and Doris O'Dell that the working classes were present and active to a degree in Canadian churches prior to World War I, they played a subsidiary role.<sup>17</sup> Class was not the only factor, however. It seems likely at least that the high proportions of immigrants in this section of the city would find reflected in St. Luke's a sense of identity that separated them from older, more established (and thus Canadian) congregations. Christ's Church Cathedral was not only the nearest Anglican church, but the oldest in the city, and

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Expressed as percentages, 52% were English and 47% Canadian, with 16% from Lancashire as the single largest immigrant group. All of the immigrant English were working class; most came from areas where the strongest Church of England presence was Anglo-Catholic. This is not to suggest that the individuals were necessarily themselves Anglo-Catholic in England or even practising members of the church. What the data do suggest, however, is that at the very least their understanding of Christian belief and practice was more attuned to Anglo-Catholic forms than any other. We cannot be certain, however, that they attended St. Luke's for any reason other than its proximity, the energetic attentions of E. N. R. Burns, or its role as an ethnic or cultural centre of working-class Englishness. See St. Luke's Church, Archives of the Diocese of Niagara, Parish Registers A, B, C, D (marriages 1885–1926).

15 In any case, street cars were still horse-drawn until 1892. By 1902 one line ran into the north-end.

16 Tested by the author on what was fortunately one of the less humid days of the summer of 2002. This is called history in the trenches.

17 See Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*; O'Dell, "The Class Character of Church Participation".

thus was well dominated by elite native Canadian Anglicans.<sup>18</sup> As the local English ethnic organizations were also dominated by native Canadians, a local parish church became more important in preserving and protecting the newcomers' sense of identity.<sup>19</sup>

Elite Anglicans saw the financial support of working-class parishes as a part of their social duty as Christians. Working-class wages did not allow for a level of savings or a certainty of income that would attract mortgage lenders, who were in any case members of the elite (private mortgages being the order of the day). One suspects as well that class feeling played a role here. Certainly elite attitudes and working-class responses are indicative of paternalism in a struggle for "church-place" control, as evidenced by a closer look at the foundation of St. Luke's Church.<sup>20</sup> This is not to suggest, however, that ecclesiastical paternalism and workers' reaction to it were entirely comparable to the situation in the workplace. Practice within the church was perhaps a gentler affair, but did reflect similar attitudes. The elite Anglicans of the city were also the business owners who employed the working-class Anglicans of the north-end. The priesthood remained a middle-class occupation. At the same time, the working-class Anglicans of the north-end were concerned to establish a degree of control over their own religiosity within the larger church, much like "Gompers" style practical unionism.

St. Luke's began as a mission extension of Christ's Church Cathedral. The decade of the 1880s saw the growth of a local perception that the Anglican population north of the tracks was cut off from the church. Oral history sources indicate that Anglicans in the north-end petitioned for their own parish church, citing the distances needed to walk to Christ's Church Cathedral. There is some sense in this, as parts of the district were a good half hour's walk away and not near street car lines, even if such transportation had been affordable. Unfortunately for the historian, the oral evidence is shaky at best as it was not properly documented.<sup>21</sup> The standard documentary evidence,

18 Peter Hanlon, "Moral Order and the Influence of Social Christianity in an Industrial City, 1890–1899: A Social Profile of the Protestant Lay Leaders of Three Hamilton Churches — Centenary Methodist, Central Presbyterian and Christ's Church Cathedral" (MA thesis, McMaster University, 1984). The cathedral dates from the late 1830s and was built just north of the original townsite to take advantage of a central location. By the 1880s, however, it found itself located on the fringes of elite development, north of the commercial heart of the city.

19 See Edward Smith, "The Dialectics of Faith: Laity, Clergy and Church in Three Hamilton Anglican Parishes, 1880–1914" (PhD dissertation, University of Guelph, 2000), chap. 6, "The Church of the Ascension"; chap. 7, "St. Thomas's Church".

20 A useful summary of the complex debate over the nature of workers' goals within and for Canadian society is found in Craig Heron, ed. *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917–1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), especially the introductory and summary essays by Craig Heron. He notes that workers in Canada largely eschewed European-style radicalism in favour of battling within existing social structures. He also notes, however, that the degree of radicalism varied widely across the country and was the direct offshoot of trends in the period covered here.

21 The interviews were conducted by the wife of a former rector of St. Luke's Church in the 1970s, when many of those who were children prior to the First World War were still living. She did not, however,

consisting of church records and newspaper reports, indicates a more usual scenario.<sup>22</sup> Reverend C. M. Mockridge had taken up duties as rector of the cathedral church in 1880. He related that the bishop of the diocese had asked him to find ways of ministering to the growing population of Anglicans north of the rail line — perhaps by establishing a Sunday School or by holding occasional services there. The largest evangelical Anglican church in the city had already done something similar in establishing a mission room for the working class of its parish, although that effort was wholly funded by one wealthy family.<sup>23</sup> Thus, in a talk to the annual meeting of the laity after Easter in 1881, Mockridge had to convince the people to support financially a similar venture.<sup>24</sup> He began by stressing that this was the desire of the bishop, and noted “that if we did not undertake the work his Lordship would have good reason to entrust it to the care of some other parish”.<sup>25</sup> He fol-

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however, record names or dates, nor did she keep records of individual conversations. See Audrey Blackwood, *A History of St. Luke's Church Hamilton, Ontario A.D. 1882-1975* (n.p., ca.1975). Jane Synge conducted good, scholarly interviews with British immigrants in the early 1970s which elicited general information on working-class attitudes, but did not directly address the case of St. Luke's Church. See Jane Synge, “Immigrant Communities — British and Continental European — in Early Twentieth Century Hamilton”, *Oral History*, vol. 4 (1976), pp. 38-51.

- 22 “St. Luke's Church Important Meeting of the Congregation Last Night”, *The Evening Times*, August 6, 1884; “St. Luke's Mission to be a Separate Parish”, *The Evening Times*, September 4, 1884; McMaster University, The William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections, Anglican Diocese of Niagara Archives, *Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton, Ontario*, Parish Register I2, microfilm #53, Vestry Minutes [hereafter Christ's Church Cathedral Vestry Minutes], December 13, 1881; January 14, 1882; January 20, 1883; October 17, 1884.
- 23 The McLaren mission in Hamilton's “Corktown”, the only appreciably poor district of the city to the south. The McLaren mission was fully evangelical, founded by the McLaren family of Hamilton and existing into the 1920s. It consisted of a separate building where some charity was dispensed, for the price of preaching, to women's groups and any men who could be enticed in. The preaching rotated among the rector, the curate (assistant minister), and prominent male lay members of the church. Occasionally, groups of mission attenders would be brought en masse to attend Morning Prayer at the Church of the Ascension, where they were seated in the gallery. In 1995 I spoke to a present-day parishioner of this church whose family had been one of these and who continued to sit in the gallery, now out of habit. See Edward Smith, “The Dialectics of Faith”, chap. 6, “The Church of the Ascension”. This underscores a reality of religion in a society that has rejected the state church model: while the ecclesiastical structure may be hierarchical, and indeed the laity may approve and support such a structure, the “purse-strings” are held by the laity.
- 24 In English Christianity, financial support by the laity of the church is mediaeval in origin. The practice dates from the thirteenth century, when bishops began to require the laity to provide for the upkeep of the fabric of their parish churches. This was probably also the origin of the senior lay offices, the wardens who shouldered the principal responsibility for financial affairs, and of the vestry of the parish who provided the money and work. The term “vestry” originates in the room where the laity met, which was usually that set aside for the priest to don his “vestments” or liturgical robes and paraphernalia prior to celebrating Mass. They probably met there as mediaeval churches were not usually equipped with halls or meeting rooms. See Katherine L. French, *The People of the Parish: Community Life in a Late Medieval English Diocese* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), pp. 27-31.
- 25 Christ's Church Cathedral Vestry Minutes, December 13, 1881.

lowed this by presenting one of the more prominent lay members of his church as having already come to him to request he establish a mission in the north-end. The idea was thus presented in a pincer movement, from above in the person of the bishop of the diocese and from below as expressive of the wishes of important members of the laity. Both were concerned to minister to these “neglected” people, spurred on by Mockridge with the hint of inter-parochial competition for this honour. He then let it be known that he had already started the process, having asked the chairman of the Committee on Management to “open a subscription list” to collect funds to purchase an abandoned Methodist chapel and its lot in the north-end for \$500. The list had opened with \$25 each from the bishop, his wife, a relative, and Mockridge himself. Mockridge noted finally that one of the city’s most prominent Anglicans, Mrs. Edward Martin, was canvassing her “wealthy friends” to support the mission.<sup>26</sup> The assembled vestry responded favourably, even to proposing the name of the new church mission — St. Luke’s. Mockridge’s appeal was successful and the church opened that summer, with a minister assigned from the cathedral to celebrate its services on a regular basis.

Although a church building and regular services (including a Sunday School) were now in place, St. Luke’s was not, properly speaking, a parish. Rather it was a mission church, under canon (church) law a physical extension only of the mother church, subject to the rector, the wardens, and the vestry of Christ’s Church Cathedral for its sustenance and its very existence. From this point onward the local working classes moved to gain control and exercise autonomy over their religious affairs, mirroring struggles, if only through a glass darkly, over workplace control. As AFL unionism sought a place and a voice for workers within the industrial system — a larger piece of the pie — the workers of St. Luke’s parish asked for a place within the local Anglican church which paralleled that held by the city’s middle classes. St. Luke’s congregation set up a “shadow” administration, with two wardens and an annual vestry meeting, the next Easter in 1883.<sup>27</sup> Craig Heron relates “manhood” for skilled workers directly to independent worker control over the labour process in manufactories prior to the 1890s. When St. Luke’s congregation created its parish administration prior to being granted full parish independence, the structure of church-place control was put in place.<sup>28</sup>

St. Luke’s congregation demonstrated clearly by the summer of 1884 that it was contributing regularly and in sufficient sums to support its own inde-

26 Mrs. Martin retained an unusual position at St. Luke’s long after it had achieved full independence and financial viability, her name appearing in mentions of parish activities as late as 1907. “Adjourned Vestry Meeting”, *The Canadian Churchman*, May 19, 1892; “St. Luke’s”, *The Canadian Churchman*, September 22, 1892. There were apparently two Mrs. Martins — the press reports are unclear as to which one was involved at which point.

27 No direct reference remains to this unusual action. The first official vestry meeting and announcement of the wardens in the local press report also refer to them as succeeding the previous year’s wardens.

28 Heron, “Factory Workers”, p. 543.

pendent parish. The phrasing of the petition, however, only hinted at financial motives, placing emphasis instead on the religious benefits of granting freedom of action to the people of the north-end: “such seperation [*sic*] or independence being regarded by us as deedful [*sic*] to ensure for us greater freedom of action, and as being likely to evoke a deeper interest, and to call forth a more substantial support from the members of our Church, resident in this portion of the City”.<sup>29</sup>

Immediately, the people began working towards physical improvements. The structure purchased from the Methodists was a small frame building, and these working people wanted a proper brick church to proclaim in a concrete fashion their position as fully autonomous Anglicans in the city. A mortgage was forthcoming from the same Edward Martin whose wife was involved in the parish. In 1889 a solid brick structure on simplified gothic lines was erected for \$1,800.<sup>30</sup>

Discharging mortgages engaged most of the efforts and contributions of the laity in all denominations and was also an issue of some pride, culminating in a curious ritual known as a service of consecration. This ceremony separated the parish “from all profane and common uses” once it had dispensed with the dirty business of monies owed. It also exacted a promise from the minister, churchwardens, and people that the church would “be set apart for ever for the worship of God”.<sup>31</sup> This made the holy consecration of a church an open declaration of the worldly success of the local parish laity, in which the sacred and the secular met in a conjunction of accounting and sacred ritual.

The people of St. Luke’s parish were to discharge the mortgage on their property by 1910, using the standard techniques of the times: concerts, choir concerts, special collections, and subscription lists.<sup>32</sup> Similarly to other parishes, the most successful fund-raising activities were run by the parish’s women. The subscription list donors are given by name, and women and men are listed separately even if married. Donations from within the parish ranged from a mere 25 cents to \$5 per person per year. Eighteen of the 60 donors were women, and 15 of these were married. A local saloon owner and his

29 “Minutes of a special vestry meeting of St. Luke’s Church, held on Tuesday the 5th day of August 1884 at 8.30 P.M.” (typescript as read and confirmed at Easter vestry April 6, 1885). Also see *The Evening Times*, August 6, 1884.

30 See *The Evening Times*, September 4, 1884; “Church of St. Luke”, *Hamilton Herald*, May 3, 1902; “For Half Century St. Luke’s Has Served Anglicans in North End”, *Hamilton Herald*, June 13, 1931. See Vicki Bennett, *Sacred Space and Structural Style: The Embodiment of Socio-religious Ideology* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1997), for an extended discussion of the importance of ecclesiastical architecture in social terms. See also William Westfall, “Epics in Stone”, in *Two Worlds*, for a clear linking of architectural forms and Protestant Christian belief systems.

31 W. J. Armitage, *The Story of the Canadian Revision of the Prayer Book* (Cambridge: At the University Press; and Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1922), p. 377.

32 Subscription lists survive for the period 1891–1895 only. It is conceivable that these were the only years for which there were such lists, but, given the normalcy of this fund-raising device at the time, unlikely.

wife were the largest donors, he for \$5 and she for \$3. It is not clear what the significance of splitting the recorded donations of husbands and wives might have been, given the context of Victorian and Christian ideals on the nature of marriage. Marriage in Christianity makes the couple “one flesh”, which is to be considered in the eyes of religion (and law) as a single person.<sup>33</sup> Children were also heavily involved, donating as a group through boxes distributed in Sunday School. Clearly, young children (Sunday School students were always those not yet confirmed, that is, usually under the age of 13) did not have their own incomes. Their donations represented the initiation of the young into the Victorian and Edwardian financial world, and working-class St. Luke’s did not differ in this from more prosperous congregations in the city. In 1891 \$20.40 was donated by Sunday School scholars.

Other revenues came from “bowling”, two choir concerts, and a church concert. The name chosen by the women for their club is itself suggestive. Other Anglican parish women used names such as the Ladies Aid Society or the Women’s Auxiliary; working-class St. Luke’s had “Willing Workers”. The Willing Workers were first mentioned in 1893 with a donation of \$41.50. By 1895 they were joined by the Girls’ Friendly Society, an international Anglican support group for young women working in factories, which managed to raise \$50 per year for at least three years running. At the same time, this group contributed to other church funds.<sup>34</sup> These sums and their sources suggest the intermingling of nineteenth-century leisure and work activities with church. The church building itself may not have been used for these events, as St. Luke’s had moved the old frame structure to the back of the lot to be used as a Sunday School and church hall. Yet it is likely that choir concerts occurred within the church building. These sorts of activities were found not only in every other Anglican parish in the city, but in churches of all denominations.<sup>35</sup> The laity of this little north-end church were to do very well indeed in managing their money, paying off their debt quickly relative to wealthier city parishes, despite the small contributions.<sup>36</sup>

St. Luke’s claimed 200 communicants and 225 students in its Sunday

33 Each averaged in the \$1.20 to \$1.70 range, with the men slightly higher. The averages exclude extra-parochial donations.

34 The Girls’ Friendly Society was one of the few parish organizations at St. Luke’s linked to a larger organization. The GFS was founded in 1875 in England by Mary Elizabeth Townsend to operate in Church of England parishes. Its original purpose was to provide support and moral guidance for young girls working in factories. By 1885 the GFS became involved in supporting young women emigrants from Britain to Canada and finding them jobs here. St. Luke’s parish was thus a natural place for a branch of the society.

35 Roman Catholic parishes were more reluctant in this regard, especially avoiding the use of the church building for secular purposes. This reluctance was eased early in the twentieth century, when St. Mary’s Catholic Cathedral staged some choir concerts in the church.

36 St. Thomas’s, for example, was consecrated in 1921 using a degree of financial sleight-of-hand. Since \$5,500 was still owed on the church in that year when its 50th anniversary was planned, the wardens raised a mortgage on its debt-free hall and used the money to pay off the church, allowing it to be consecrated. St. Thomas’s, founded in 1857, was never to be entirely free of debt on its property, despite a middle-class congregation. See Smith, “Dialectics of Faith”, chap. 7, “St. Thomas’s Church”.

**Table 1 Average Attendance, 1891–1895**

| Year               | 8 a.m. | 11 a.m. | 7 p.m. |
|--------------------|--------|---------|--------|
| 1891–1892          | 10*    | 74      | 80     |
| 1892–1893          | 10*    | 66      | 71     |
| 1893–1894          | 11*    | 68      | 85     |
| 1894–1895          | 12*    | 64      | 81     |
| Four-year averages | 11*    | 68      | 79     |

\* Indicates communicants.

Source: McMaster University, Mills Library, Niagara Diocesan Archives, St. Luke's Church Records.

School on the 1901 nominal census roll. Within Anglicanism generally, records of "membership" were not kept. Rather, Anglican parishes operated on an assumption that all Christians within carefully defined territorial bounds came under the "cure" of the local parish. Statistics were kept, however, on the number of people eligible to take Holy Communion, and the number of these communicants is the closest standard for "membership" within an Anglican congregation. Communicants were those usually over the age of 13 who had been confirmed by a bishop. By this standard only 17 per cent of the parish of 1,162 were full members as communicants, which, together with their children enrolled in the school, rendered a rough proportion of some 36 per cent of those identified as Anglican in the census in the area. These figures of 200 and 225 respectively for church and school are difficult, if not impossible, to verify. Assuming they were provided by the rector or the wardens, they were probably based on some sort of parish list or roll, few of which survive for any Anglican church in the city of this period. The *Hamilton Herald* reported in 1902 that St. Luke's had 160 communicants in 1901 and 181 by 1902.<sup>37</sup> These figures, as a close analysis of parish records shows, are open to doubt. Attendance records survive for 1891 to 1895 but only for occasions between 1898 and 1913. Three Sunday services were the norm: prayer services at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. and Holy Communion at 8 a.m.

These numbers from the 1890s do not indicate an active membership approaching the 1901 claim of 200 communicants (see Table 1). It is notable, too, that the 60 names on the building fund subscription list are not that far in number from the average attendees. As the church building was estimated at the time to seat some 250, Sunday services must have seemed empty and provided some worry for a congregation used to the smaller frame building purchased from the Methodists in 1882.<sup>38</sup> It is difficult to estimate how many of

37 "Jaques" [pseud. T. Tinsley], "Church of St. Luke, Prosperous Parish Below the Bridge with Rev. E. N. R. Burns as Rector", *Hamilton Herald*, May 3, 1902, in Hamilton Public Library Special Collections, *St. Luke's Anglican Church Scrapbook*.

38 *Ibid.*

**Table 2** Easter Attendance (surviving statistics)

| Year          | 6 a.m. | 8 a.m. | 11 a.m. | 3 p.m. | 7 p.m. |
|---------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|
| 1901          | 62     | 60     | 194     | 160    | 200    |
| Communicants* | 62     | 60     | 38      |        |        |
| 1903          | 67     | 144    | 165     | 200    | 182    |
| Communicants* | 67     | 144    | 35      |        |        |
| 1913          | 67     | 144    | 111     | 200    | 182    |
| Communicants* | 67     | 144    | 35      |        |        |

\* Indicates those taking communion and thus not repeat attenders.

Source: McMaster University, Mills Library, Niagara Diocesan Archives, St. Luke's Church Records.

the congregants at Evening Prayer at 7 p.m. had also attended Morning Prayer. Figures for collections at these services tend to suggest that there was little duplication, as the amounts donated for the year 1891–1892 were similar at each service. If this can be assumed, and this is a very large “if”, then attendance each Sunday averaged between about 140 to 150 of the 200 claimed. These statistics seem to suggest Anglicanism was not important in the lives of many local Anglicans in this period.

The statistics surviving for the tenure of E. N. R. Burns, who followed the first minister William Massey and remained in charge from 1899 to his death in 1914, suggest something of a renaissance for the parish in terms of participation.<sup>39</sup> This renaissance accompanied massive British immigration to Canada in the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>40</sup> Burns was a much younger man than Massey and thus perhaps of a newer generation of Anglican clergy who adhered more openly to a romantic, mediaevalist corporatism (among other things). Anglicanism generally retained a sense of the idea of “church” as a corporate and organic body connected in a vital fashion with the apostolic age. This corporatist ideology contrasted with the individualist salvationism of evangelical Christianity, but had much in common with the corporatism of craft and even industrial unionism. Certainly Burns stressed this view in his preaching, both at Sunday services and in special sessions to the men's club and the Willing Workers.<sup>41</sup> Table 2 does not detail the many extra services held by Burns on weekdays, saints' days, and other special holidays, but does

39 There was a brief interregnum in 1898. Massey retired that year, and various clergymen filled in at St. Luke's. Burns had not yet been ordained, but appears in the records as leading prayer services. After his ordination in late 1899 he was made rector of St. Luke's.

40 Jane Synge noted also in “Immigrant Communities” that many British immigrants became regular church-goers only after coming to Hamilton prior to the First World War.

41 Diocese of Niagara Archives, Parish Registers J & K, “Services”, 1898–1916. While mostly collections indicating service times and biblical texts of sermons, some entries are enlivened by scribbled notes. Burns in particular noted books on the nature of Anglo Catholicism and its connections to mediaeval and earlier Christianity.

give a statistical peek at the increased activity in the parish in the new century and provide a useful comparison to the earlier data.

How do these figures compare with the increase in Hamilton's population and to the increase in its Anglican population over the same period? In 1891 Hamilton had a population of 47,241, of whom 11,821 were Anglicans. In 1901 the city had increased by 11 per cent to 52,636, while Anglicans had increased by only 5 per cent to 12,443. Attendance at St. Luke's from Easter 1892 to Easter 1901 surpassed these rates. Attendance at Morning Prayer increased by 94 per cent and at Evening Prayer and Holy Communion by 100 per cent. Over the next two years, while attendance at Morning and Evening Prayer remained virtually static, attendance at Holy Communion increased another 54 per cent. While the city's population increased by 46 per cent between 1901 and 1911 and the city's Anglican population by 70 per cent in this decade, most of this increase occurred after 1906. By that year the city's population had increased to 54,956, only 4.4 per cent more than in 1901. Using these benchmarks, St. Luke's participation rate increased exponentially, especially for the service of Holy Communion.

Clearly, then, while the proportions of local Anglicans who participated actively in worship were increasing from the inception of the parish, the greatest growth came during the tenure of the second rector, Burns, even given the rising population of the city. Burns's success was highly suggestive of the influence of his more "catholic" theology, as the greatest increases in participation, both in absolute numbers and in percentages, were for Holy Communion. Working days were still on average much longer than nine hours, often as long as twelve. Sunday was the only clear day off for most working people, and, while a minority of the absolute numbers claiming status as Anglicans attended services, it was a significant minority. Also significant is that the Anglo-Catholic message of the primacy of Holy Communion seemed to be having an impact on these working-class people.

Another factor must also be considered. Callum Brown has argued that, for Britain, attendance statistics are an unreliable index of religiosity for the working classes because Sunday morning was given over to the cultural ritual of the mid-day meal. Middle-class families had servants to prepare this meal, freeing the wife to attend church at 11 a.m. In working-class families, with no servants, the Sunday meal required a full morning's labour by the wife, leaving her no time to attend a morning service. Brown notes that this factor was mitigated in Roman Catholic churches, which provided very early Sunday Masses. He argues further that British Christianity had been feminized to the extent that male participation in divine services was predicated on female attendance.<sup>42</sup> The statistics at St. Luke's suggest that something similar was occurring, with the admixture of the attraction Anglo-Catholic liturgical

42 Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800–2000* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

practices seemed to have for the working classes.<sup>43</sup> William Massey did celebrate an 8 a.m. Holy Communion service, but probably in a liturgically reductionist manner, given his old-fashioned “high and dry” churchmanship. Whatever the reason, few were attracted. The principal service remained the 11 a.m. Morning Prayer. Evening Prayer was hardly better attended, despite its distance from the Sunday meal. Burns, on the other hand, stressed a colourful, ritualistic celebration of Holy Communion and added more early services in the manner of Roman Catholic parishes. If Brown is correct in his contention concerning Roman Catholic Masses in Britain, the same applies at St. Luke’s in Hamilton. The Anglo-Catholic element may have played a greater role in attendance statistics at St. Luke’s than did the hour, however, as even Massey’s 7 p.m. services, which did not conflict with Sunday meal time, were poorly attended, as were his early Holy Communion celebrations.

In terms of gender, St. Luke’s seemed to emulate middle-class city congregations. The literate discourse found in the daily newspapers of the city was wholly masculine. Canadian daily newspapers were themselves indicative of a discourse of a masculine religiosity integrated into culture. The reports dealing with St. Luke’s Church, as for all Anglican parishes, consisted of the business affairs of the church and hierarchical appointments. Mention of women was restricted to thanking “helpers”. Anglican parish churches were presented in the press as religious men’s clubs, a masculine lay religiosity which fit the hierarchical structures of Anglicanism and of Victorian society. Not until well into the twentieth century did the local papers begin to segregate religious reporting from secular. The standard until the First World War was to jumble sermons (usually reported verbatim), reports of vestry meetings, festivals, concerts, choir recitals, and anniversary celebrations with reports on road surfacing, taxes, international news, advertisements, and sports throughout each edition. Aside from serialized romantic novels, these wholly masculine publications — of which three were published daily in Hamilton — catered to a sensibility that apparently expected a mingling of the sacred and the secular which was masculine in outlook, or which perhaps did not separate the two.

While St. Luke’s fits this paradigm, with its business reports sitting alongside those of middle-class parishes, perhaps more revealing is a discourse of the working world. First, and most directly, the range of occupations represented in the parish leadership of St. Luke’s tentatively suggests a broad, intra-class attachment to religiosity — that Anglicans across the spectrum of the working classes were concerned to support their church and to fill positions of leadership.<sup>44</sup> Of course, much more research needs to be done incorporating

43 See Smith, “Dialectics of Faith”, chap. 8, “St. Luke’s Church”.

44 St. Luke’s lay leadership was of particular interest as it was drawn wholly from the workers of this district. I was able to identify the parish leadership for the period under consideration from 1882 up to 1914. Linking specific annual earnings reported on the 1901 census to these leaders proved too difficult, but occupations were found for most over the period using city directories and city assessment rolls and parish records. The range of occupations found mirrored those of the Anglican population of the district, with perhaps a slight weighting towards skilled labour, but not to an overwhelming extent.

studies of other working-class Anglican parishes alongside other Protestant congregations and the city's Catholic parishes.<sup>45</sup> At the highest level of lay authority (the parish wardens), the posts were filled most often by skilled workers, yet even here labourers served as wardens in 1884, 1885, 1891, 1892, and 1895. Just three names appear as wardens for most of Burns's tenure: a carpenter, a "checker" at the Grand Trunk Railway, and a cotton spinner. In one year, 1913, a shirt cutter was appointed as rector's warden.

The second rank of lay officials in Anglican parishes consisted of two auditors elected by vestry each year to certify the parish books, lay delegates to the diocesan synod, and a vestry clerk. The vestry clerk was seldom named, but in the few cases where this individual can be identified the post was filled variously by a labourer (twice), a grocer, a casket maker, a carpenter, a shipper, and a foreman in a cotton mill. The task of auditing the church accounts seemingly required more than mere literacy, but was filled by clerks in only five of the years between 1884 and 1914. Instead, the books were audited by bricklayers, glassblowers, carpenters, night watchmen, cotton spinners, and casket makers. The "lay delegate to synod" position required workers uniquely to represent their parish as equals with their middle-class counterparts from other parishes. A broader and deeper study of diocesan synod minutes would perhaps elicit the degree to which working-class delegates interacted and participated in sessions and committees. The first delegate was St. Luke's only identifiably middle-class officer in the history of the parish, the secretary to the Great Western Provident Society. He had been a lay delegate for the Cathedral church who transferred to St. Luke's in the fall of 1884 and filled this post until the first formal vestry meeting at Easter 1885, when a labourer was voted to replace him. Over the following years carpenters, moulders, grocers, and machinists rubbed shoulders with the clerks, lawyers, and businessmen of the other city parishes, not to mention the Lord Bishop, at synod meetings where the direction, laws, and disputes of the diocese were decided.

What these bare tallies hide, however, was the small pool from which these officers were drawn, especially after 1900. The tantalizing nature of these numbers speaks to the need for further study of a wider range of parishes and denominations to determine whether this was a class phenomenon or something more closely related to the nature of Anglicanism. From the first annual vestry meeting of 1885 until 1914 there were 31 years and thus potentially 62 separate wardens. In fact, ten names appeared as wardens appointed by the rector and twelve elected by the people. The same man was elected people's warden successively from 1901 to 1914; he had only two different partners up until 1912. All but three of the rector's wardens and four of the people's wardens also filled other posts at different periods, sometimes during their tenure as wardens.

<sup>45</sup> All major and some minor Christian churches were represented in the two principal working-class districts of the city — the older north-end and the early twentieth-century east-end.

The usual position in the parish for semi-skilled and unskilled workers, however, was as sidesmen. The principal task of a sidesman was to escort people to their seats and to collect money from the congregation at the appropriate point in the ritual. This position was, in effect, honorary, as it involved no important decision-making. Sidesmen over these years included a copper-smith, a bricklayer, a lamplighter, several labourers, a porter, a railroad labourer, a gardener, a saddler/harness maker, and a dyer. Although those in skilled occupations were also represented as sidesmen, they usually did so in the year after stepping down from more senior positions. It was, however, considered an honour in Victorian and Edwardian Anglicanism to fill this position, as published parish reports always listed the names of the men serving in this capacity each year. Although the occupations of the 139 names I was able to identify in vestry minutes could not all be determined, it is clear that the lay leadership of the parish usually fell to skilled workers, but to the unskilled and semi-skilled on enough occasions to provide some doubt as to a clear divide in this regard.

Women are mentioned by name only rarely. The three officers of the Willing Workers were mentioned in a 1902 *Hamilton Herald* feature on the parish. The report of the 1893 vestry thanked four women by name for fund-raising efforts. All but one of these women were married to parish officials, and that one was a widow whose son served as a sidesman for a number of years. Yet, while these spare mentions suggest a masculine discourse, an occasional glimpse into the inner workings of vestry meetings does hint at a greater role for women. Prior to the vestry meeting in 1899, where debate had centred on a decision to hire a caretaker, women had cleaned the church on a volunteer basis and men had seen to ringing the bell and maintaining the furnace. As the *Spectator* reported that spring:

Some of the officers of the Men's Club pledged that club to raise half of the amount, which caused Mrs. Rich to remark that the men should be ashamed of themselves for only offering to raise \$25 when the Girls' Friendly Society raised \$50 and the Willing Workers \$72 for church purposes. She suggested that some of the men deprive themselves of a few cigars occasionally and contribute the money to the church. It was finally decided by a vote of 8 to 7 to take the other \$25 out of the general funds.<sup>46</sup>

This little exchange tells much and leaves much out. Mrs. Rich's comments hint that most of the extraordinary fund-raising was effected by the women, but that the women were not especially pleased with this situation. The account suggests, too, that some women had a vote in vestry at this time. Certainly they spoke out, which was rare, and spoke out forthrightly, which

<sup>46</sup> "Easter Vestry Meetings", *Hamilton Spectator*, April 4, 1899. The officers of the men's club were all active members, having served variously as wardens, delegates to the synod, and sidesmen.

was virtually unknown. Eleven men were named as being present at that meeting; the women were not mentioned except in this exchange. Although the vote tally was 15, it is difficult to say with any certainty whether there were four women voting or whether not all men present were named and the women were present only as bystanders. The dispute involved families, for Mrs. Rich's husband Charles was appointed a sidesman at this meeting and would likely have been one of the voters. He was also a member of the Men's Club, causing one to wonder how he finally cast his vote, which was not by secret ballot. One wonders, too, whether the remark on cigar smoking referred to a general habit or was a criticism of the usual activities of the Men's Club. The only other reference to this club indicated it had as a purpose "work for the church", but noted that the men were "not ashamed to be found so doing", suggesting that most men would be ashamed to be engaged in fund-raising.<sup>47</sup>

In terms of financial support, the sums given by workers to St. Luke's were small, even risible, compared to donations in elite parishes. For example, the richest Anglican parish in the city, the Church of the Ascension, cost \$18,000 to build in 1851 and a further \$25,000 to rebuild after a fire in 1887, for which it employed the services of the well-known architect, Frederick Cumberland. St. Luke's, by contrast, cost \$1,800 in 1889 for the brick structure which replaced the original frame building and awaited even the plastering of internal walls for some years.<sup>48</sup> Perhaps the most startling account of the relative poverty of St. Luke's parish is found in the 1899 vestry debate over how to raise \$50 annually to pay a caretaker part-time. To the people of St. Luke's, however, this seemed to reflect an internally defined prosperity, for this work had always before been done voluntarily by the laity.

In the same year the people of St. Luke's had contributed \$16.87 to the poor fund, of which \$11.90 had been distributed.<sup>49</sup> There is no indication to whom the money was sent, whether it was restricted to local Anglicans or distributed to any who came to the door of the rectory claiming aid.<sup>50</sup> Other expenses recorded at St. Luke's give some hint as to the concerns of the laity and of the rector. Beyond normal maintenance items such as gas, coal, water, insurance, and wine, the largest amounts at St. Luke's went for music. In 1891, \$38 (roughly 10 per cent of all expenditures) went for the maintenance of the organ and for the purchase of sheet music and other miscellaneous choir expenses. Later, St. Luke's was to commission its choirmaster, Walter

47 "Jaques", "Church of St. Luke".

48 Unfortunately, no records remain of the actual construction of the building. One would suppose that the craftsmen and labourers of the parish had a direct hand in its erection, but the record is silent.

49 Lynne Marks notes similar amounts for the poor funds of the small-town churches she studied. See *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, pp. 58–59.

50 The practice at elite parishes was to maintain lists of local Anglicans needing and deserving aid, with the emphasis as often on the "deserving" aspect as the "needing".

Spencer, to build an organ for the church.<sup>51</sup> By contrast, the parish gave little to missions. Donations for 1893 show \$1 for "Dominion Missions", 50 cents for aged and disabled clergy, and \$3.50 for the Jewish mission. These figures do not, however, reflect the later existence of specifically mission-oriented lay organizations such as the Women's Auxiliary, which formed a branch at St. Luke's in 1907. At the other end of the spectrum, the Church of the Ascension was giving between \$300 and \$400 and between \$600 and \$700 annually in the 1890s for its poor and mission funds respectively.<sup>52</sup>

Stained-glass windows and wall plaques donated by individuals appeared fairly early. These internal decorations were a large and important aspect of Anglican middle-class religiosity in Hamilton.<sup>53</sup> Stained-glass windows displayed well-known biblical scenes and contained script naming the donors. Plaques openly honoured parishioners and deceased family members. Sensibly, the parishioners did not waste the old building in 1889, but converted it to their "school" building. All the elite parishes of the city had a Sunday School building as well as a church proper; St. Luke's would have the same.<sup>54</sup>

The mortgage and the continuing decoration of the interior of the church were supported in the usual financial roller-coaster atmosphere of early capitalism. The latter years of Massey's tenure had suffered under a depression lasting from 1893 to 1897. There were strikes also in that decade. A report in *The Canadian Churchman* of May 1892 noted with surprise the smallness of the financial deficit at St. Luke's despite "the dulness [*sic*] of trade and strikes preventing the people from being as liberal in their offerings as they otherwise would have been".<sup>55</sup> Data from a study of assessment rolls for these same people are more suggestive of the economic climate in which these church supporters functioned. Very few lived in one residence for more than a few years, although most stayed in the north-end. St. Luke's seemed to be an unchanging point of reference for them, a kind of pole star around which their round of residence and employment changes circled.<sup>56</sup>

Support must not be narrowly defined in terms of money or positions filled. The time donated to church activities and to supporting the parish may be more significant. Time, in terms of personal time, was at a premium especially for working people, given the failure of the nine-hours movement, the inability of craft unions to stop adequately the advance of semi-skilled, machine operator positions in local industry, the failure of the Knights of Labor, and in general the inability to effect fundamental change to the capi-

51 Surely a unique instrument, it is still in use today at St. Luke's, a small two-manual "tracker" pipe organ.

52 Hamilton, Church of the Ascension Archives, "Vestry Minutes".

53 Smith, "The Dialectics of Faith", chap. 6, "The Church of Ascension"; chap. 7, "St. Thomas's Church". St. Luke's concern to memorialize parishioners within the context of biblical scenes on the walls and windows of the church building mirrored on a smaller scale that of these two middle-class parishes.

54 Bennett, *Sacred Space*; Westfall, *Two Worlds*.

55 "Adjourned Vestry Meeting", *The Canadian Churchman*, May 19, 1892.

56 Hamilton Public Library, Special Collections Department, Assessment Rolls, City of Hamilton, Wards 5 & 6 (part), microfilmed.

talist environment. It is difficult, if not impossible, to quantify the time donated by workers to religion. The lack of time for personal pursuits other than survival in working-class family units, which has been so well documented over the past few years by historians of labour and of gender, perhaps gives one pause to be amazed at what might be considered a high participation rate given these circumstances.

What did the activities of the workers at St. Luke's reveal in this vein? For a class of people who worked long hours, there was a wide range of activity to fill what spare time they had. The extent to which membership in unions, the Knights of Labor, ethnic clubs, and Masonic lodges or the frequenting of saloons was in competition with church activities is difficult to ascertain. This is complicated by the fact that there is no surviving reliable evidence on union membership, and all records of ethnic club membership in Hamilton for the nineteenth century are lost.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, the Masonic Grand Lodge of Canada is reluctant to undertake so large a project as linking names from St. Luke's parish to its extensive nineteenth-century membership records.<sup>58</sup> Certainly St. Luke's members would have been involved in the craft union movement and perhaps the Knights of Labor. We do know that craft unions in Hamilton were dominated by ethnically British skilled workers of the sort who populated St. Luke's. From newspaper accounts we know that national ethnic societies were dominated by the elites of Anglicanism and were tied to the Church of England. Their important meetings were usually held either in conjunction with church services — usually at the cathedral — or on other church property and had Anglican clergy as their chaplains. It seems likely that St. Luke's people, having been concerned to establish a Church of England parish, would have given some degree of support to these organizations. Yet there is no evidence of branches existing in the north-end which would be peculiarly their own, in the sense St. Luke's church was their own. Rather it seems likely that any putative working-class members of these groups would have played roles similar to those delineated by Doris O'Dell and Lynne Marks for small-town Ontario. The same situation probably also applied for the Masonic Orders. In Hamilton, elite Anglicans were heavily involved in the Masonic movement and were joined there by their clergy.<sup>59</sup> What little we know of Masonic lodges, however, suggests

57 On enquiring of the present-day St. George Society on this issue, I was told that the society had hoped I might be able to help them.

58 A request for information was politely received, but not acted upon. The Masons do not allow outsiders to peruse their records.

59 The Rev. F. E. Howitt, who was assigned to St. Luke's while it was still a mission of the cathedral church, was master of Wentworth Lodge no. 166 AF & AM and a member of Victoria Lodge of the Loyal Orange Order no. 779. He served also as a chaplain for different terms for the Grand Lodge of Canada and the Provincial Grand Lodge. Robert John Renison, who was minister of the Church of the Ascension immediately prior to and during the First World War, joined the Masons and the Rotary Club, seeing membership as being a part of the social circles in which he circulated as rector of a prominent city church. See Robert John Renison, *One Day at a Time: The Autobiography of Robert John Renison*, ed. Margaret Blackstock (Toronto: Kingswood House, 1957), pp. 87, 89, 93.

that only the Orangemen had a significant working-class component, and the male laity of St. Luke's were of specifically English origin, rather than Irish — which was not true, for example, of the Church of the Ascension.<sup>60</sup>

We do know, however, that there were on average eight saloons or hotels in the parish throughout this period (though the number did fluctuate). Anglicanism in Canada was a reluctant supporter of temperance, insisting that temperance in fact meant just that and nothing more.<sup>61</sup> The most consistently generous financial supporter of the parish in this era was the owner of one of these popular drinking spots, located not far from the parish church.<sup>62</sup> The city of Hamilton itself was well supplied with secular entertainments. There were six theatres, one of which could seat 800, presenting a range from drama and opera to vaudeville, where admission could be had for as low as 10 cents. There were several roller rinks and one venue for the “vita-graph” or moving pictures. Organ recitals were a common and popular entertainment in the churches during the week. These, too, could be enjoyed for a fee of 10 cents.<sup>63</sup> The sense supplied by local newspapers and church records was of an integration of sacred and secular entertainment — notices of church concerts, choir concerts, and picnics were not separated by editors into religious ghettos as is the case today. Rather, a report on a local Masonic dinner might share space with an instalment of a serialized novel and a sermon preached the previous day.

Annual harvest thanksgiving services were held at St. Luke's, as well as celebrations of the anniversary of the parish. Most likely, this was a celebration also of St. Luke's day, October 18, translated to the nearest Sunday following, which was the usual date of this “anniversary” celebration. This points to a locally felt need to include celebration as a normal part of the round of parish activities.<sup>64</sup> The *Hamilton Herald* in 1902 gave a long list of clubs and activities. The Girl's Friendly Society and the Willing Workers were still in operation. The parish had its own savings bank, and there was a mother's meeting (in which the Martin family was still involved), a Men's Club, and a Boy's Club. There was also the Sunday School and a choir of men and boys. Working-class St. Luke's did differ from other congregations in its lack of support for missionary activities. Not until 1907 was there a branch of the Women's Auxiliary and not until 1910 was there mention of a

60 Smith, “The Dialectics of Faith”, chap. 6, “The Church of the Ascension”.

61 A national Anglican newspaper, *The Canadian Churchman*, routinely carried advertisements for Labatt's beer, although stressing its “medicinal” properties.

62 Oliver Beatty was proprietor of the Genesee Hotel on James Street North. He lived in quarters at the hotel until sometime after the turn of the century, when he moved into a nearby house. The Genesee is even today in operation in the same location, under the same name — as is St. Luke's church, though the connection has long been broken.

63 See “Jaques”, “The Growing City”, in *Hamilton Herald*, January 18, 1908, pp. 25–29.

64 “St. Luke's”, *The Canadian Churchman*, October 27, 1892. The article refers to services held “last Sunday”, which in 1892 fell on October 23. St. Luke's day, October 18, was the previous Tuesday.

“mission band” or until 1912 a missionary committee in this former mission parish.<sup>65</sup>

Some of St. Luke’s activities were unique. The stated purpose of the Girls’ Friendly Society was to socialize young girls in pursuits proper to their gender; “the knowledge gained at these meetings tends to make good wives, and good wives invariably make good husbands”, the *Herald* reported.<sup>66</sup> This may well have been the official purpose for this organization, but at St. Luke’s young women also learned the womanly art of fund-raising for the parish. The first mention of the Girls’ Friendly Society in the financial records came in 1899. The church’s baptistry, located traditionally by the entrance, was furnished by the society in 1908. In 1910 it had undertaken to finance the re-shingling of the roof. The Willing Workers’ Guild represented the adult section of this fund-raising tradition. The Boy’s Club served to acculturate young men, but apparently avoided work for the church: “athletics are taught, and innocent and healthful recreation encouraged. The boxing gloves are donned now and again, and the youngsters are taught to fight their way through the world.”<sup>67</sup>

Chad Gaffield noted in his presidential address to the Canadian Historical Association in 2001 that “scholars now tend to perceive multiple historical paths rather than single trajectories of historical change, and to emphasize the uneven character of these paths for different groups”.<sup>68</sup> Within St. Luke’s parish in north-end Hamilton, a people who were largely outside the relations of elite power in Victorian and Edwardian Canada displayed a degree of integration into a middle-class world view, as well as some paths not taken and some paths suited to their particular situation.

Fund-raising techniques, enhancement of the church’s internal architecture, the priority given to music, and the range of lay organizations fit easily with the activities of their more prosperous brethren in other city churches and reflected a similar mentality. There were differences, however. The origins of the parish suggest a desire to establish a religious autonomy apart from the churches of the managing and owning classes, which perhaps paralleled similar struggles in the workplace. The spirituality of the parish accommodated the particular work patterns and scheduling of daily life dictated by manual work. Lay leadership within the parish only dimly mirrored middle-class norms. In middle-class parishes, social position in the world of work was closely replicated in parish leadership.<sup>69</sup> While St. Luke’s skilled workers tended to assume leadership positions, they by no means dominated par-

65 Vestry meeting reports, *Hamilton Spectator*, April 2, 1907; March 29, 1910; April 9, 1912, p. 4.

66 *Hamilton Herald*, “Jaques” ca.1905 in *Tinsley Hamilton Scrapbook*, vol. 4, pp.33–34.

67 *Ibid.*

68 Chad Gaffield, “Historical Thinking”, *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, vol. 12 (2001), p. 16.

69 See Hanlon, “Moral Order”.

ish governance. These alternative paths extended to a concern for children and youth which perhaps reflected working-class needs. Where middle-class parishes' attention to youth was limited largely to Sunday Schools, St. Luke's provided additional organizations that trained children along a gender divide. Finally, that great enterprise of late nineteenth-century Protestantism, the missionary impulse, was nearly absent from St. Luke's. This little world of the working-class congregation painted a scene of people who were concerned to find a place within a larger society dominated by the prosperous, but a place attuned to their particular needs. The difficulties in unlocking this world more fully point to a need for further research into discursive sources such as novels, newspapers, music, architecture, and theatre, as suggested in Callum Brown's recent work on Britain. Identity is formed in complex ways touching on work, leisure, and worship, and a small offering such as this can only perhaps raise more questions to be explored.