

# Research and Evaluation Report



(Town of Halton Hills 2023)

## St. Paul's Anglican Church & Parish Hall

12 & 16 Adamson Street South, Norval, Town of Halton Hills

October 2023

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## 1.0 Property Description

12 & 16 Adamson Street South	
<b>Municipality</b>	Town of Halton Hills
<b>County or Region</b>	Region of Halton
<b>Legal Description</b>	PT LT 11, CON 11 ESQ, AS IN EW6464 EXCEPT PART 1 PLAN 20R20844; TOWN OF HALTON HILLS
<b>Construction Date</b>	Church - c.1845; Parish Hall - 1927
<b>Original Use</b>	Church & Parish Hall
<b>Current Use</b>	Church & Parish/Community Hall
<b>Architect/Building/Designer</b>	Unknown at this time
<b>Architectural Style</b>	Gothic Revival
<b>Additions/Alterations</b>	
<b>Heritage Status</b>	Listed on the Town’s Heritage Register
<b>Recorder(s)</b>	Laura Loney
<b>Report Date</b>	October 2023

## 2.0 Background

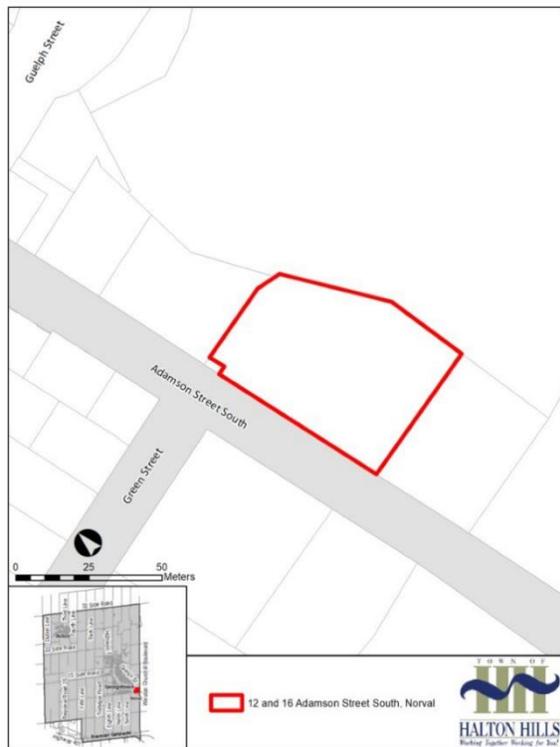


Figure 1: Location Map – 12 & 16 Adamson Street South



Figure 2: Aerial Photograph – 12 & 16 Adamson Street South (2021)

This research and evaluation report describes the history, context, and physical characteristics of the properties at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South in Halton Hills, Ontario (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The report includes an evaluation of the property’s cultural heritage value as prescribed by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

## 2.1 Historical Background

What is now known as Norval was first settled by James McNab in 1820 and was originally known as McNabsville. In 1840, a post office was established in the village, and it was renamed Norval. At that time, many important families in the village were Anglicans, including postmaster William Clay and his family, as well as Norval Mill owner Robert Noble. Colonel Peter Adamson, then the proprietor of the Norval Mills and prominent local figure, donated the property at 12 Adamson Street for the location of the church, as well as the land for the church's cemetery.

The first records for the congregation are from April 14, 1845, although it is believed that services were held in Norval as early as 1830. Reverend Adam Elliott and his successor H.H. O'Neill had travelled for ministry to Esquesing Township in 1834 and 1838, respectively, and the first Anglican congregation in Esquesing was established in Hornby in 1841. The Rector from Streetsville, Robert Jackson Macgeorge, had also helped to establish several congregations in the area.

The vestry met for the first time at the schoolhouse in Norval on April 14, 1845. The decision to construct the church was made at this time with the resolution "that the church now in the course of erection be named St. Paul's Church". By the following year, the congregation was worshiping within the existing wood frame church building. Church records indicate that twenty-six services were held in St. Paul's between March 1846 and April 1847. The church bell, inscribed with its casting date and location ("From Meneelys. West Troy N.Y. 1853") was soon installed in the church. Reverend Macgeorge served as the congregation's first minister between 1845 and 1849. Pews were rented to congregants at that time, costing between £1 and £2 per year.

St. Paul's Anglican Church in Norval has been linked with other Anglican congregations in Halton Hills, including those in Hornby, Stewarttown, and Georgetown. Since 1902, St. Paul's has been linked with both St. Stephen's in Hornby and St. John's Anglican Church in Stewarttown.

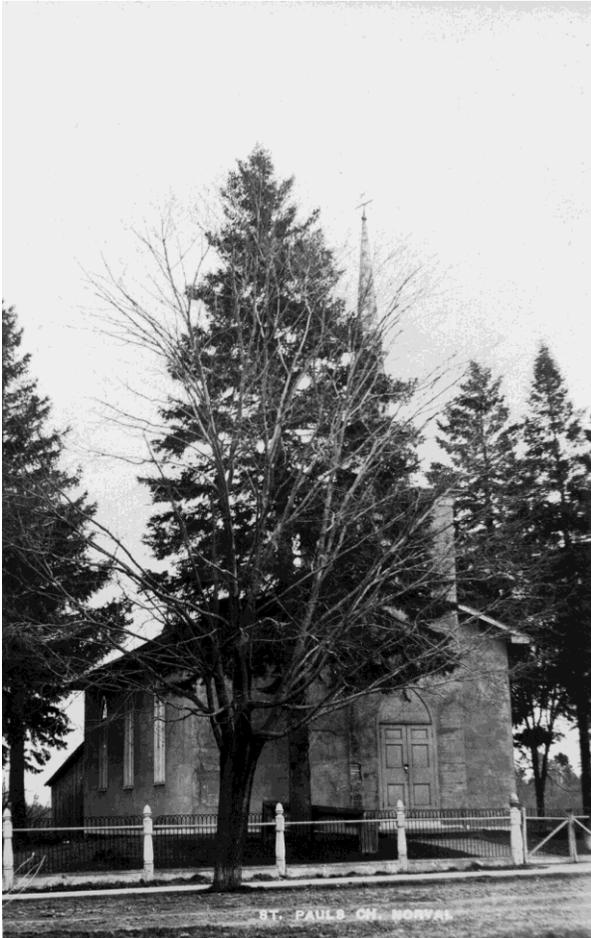


Figure 3: View of St. Paul's Anglican from across the street, c.1908 (EHS00305)



Figure 4: Anglican Rectory in Norval, c. 1928

While early church records highlight the men who helped establish and contribute to the growth of the congregation, women have been a significant part of the evolution of St. Paul's Anglican Church since its beginnings. Accounts from the mid-nineteenth century indicate the establishment of a Sunday School, and by the end of the nineteenth century several women were identified as teachers. Records from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also indicate the creation of female-led groups, including the Ladies' Aid group and Woman's Auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada. These groups were instrumental in fundraising initiatives, local service within the community, and foreign missions.

In 1925, Walter Brain donated the lumber for a new building to serve as an event and workspace for the congregation. In 1927, the Parish Hall was constructed next to the church (16 Adamson Street), primarily by those within the congregation. The Parish Hall was dedicated in January 1928. The hall, opened in February 1928, was used by author Lucy Maud Montgomery for performances, and continues to serve as a community facility within Norval.



Figure 5: The Norval Dramatic Players in costume at St. Paul's Parish Hall. The organizer, Lucy Maud Montgomery sits in a widow's dress front row centre, c.1927 (EHS21811)



Figure 6: St. Paul's Anglican Church, Norval (Lucy Maud Montgomery Images McLaughlin Library, University of Guelph, XZ1 MS A097052)



Figure 7: St. Paul's Parish Hall, c.1928, prior to the introduction of the one-storey vestibule (Lucy Maud Montgomery Images McLaughlin Library, University of Guelph, XZ1 MS A097052)



Figure 8: St. Paul's Anglican Church Hall on Adamson Street, c.1960, showing the addition of the new vestibule on the front elevation (EHS21790)

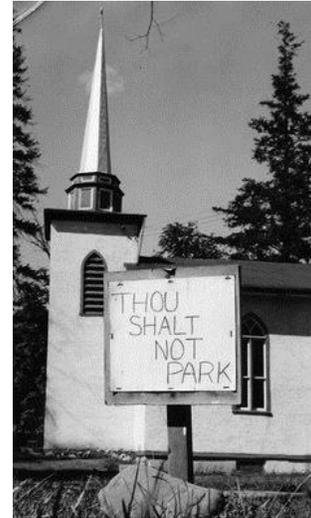


Figure 9: "Thou Shalt Not Park" sign at St. Paul's Anglican Church, c.1966 (EHS02700)

Extensive renovations were made to the church during the 1940s and 1950s, including a basement, furnace, new chimney, stucco renovation, painting on the interior and exterior, lowering the ceiling, relocating the old vestry to the basement, reconstructing the altar rail, installing a new organ, and a cross on the church steeple.

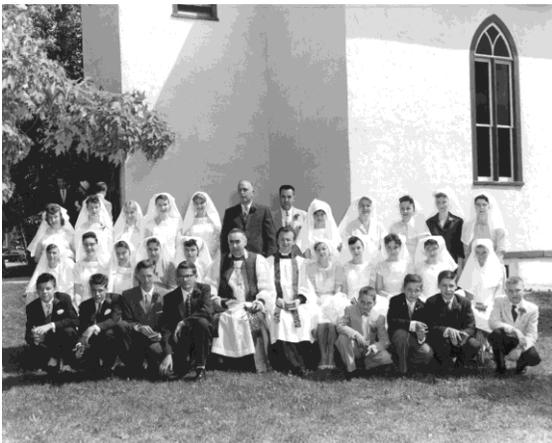


Figure 10: The confirmation class of St. Alban's Anglican Church poses with the Bishop and Rev. R. Stubley on the lawn of St. Paul's Anglican Church, Norval. Photographer: Peter Jones, June 1962 (EHS09298)



Figure 11: St. Paul's Anglican Church, Norval. April 1973 (EHS13500)



Figure 12: 1977 Aerial Photo, showing the existing properties at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South



Figure 13: St. Paul's Anglican Church at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South, July 1986 (EHS17571)



Figure 14: St. Paul's Anglican Church, 12 & 16 Adamson Street South, c.1995 (EHS16845)

In 2002, care of St. Paul's Anglican Church cemetery was transferred to the Town of Halton Hills. The church's cemetery, located within Hillcrest Cemetery, was dedicated by Anglican Bishop Ralph Spence in 2007.

## 2.2 Property & Architectural Description

The property at 12 and 16 Adamson Street South is located along the east side of Adamson Street South in the community of Norval, west of the Credit River. The property includes a one-storey frame church building within the north portion of the property and a one-storey parish hall building within the south portion. A paved parking lot is located between both buildings and mature trees are located along the rear (east) property line; two mature deciduous trees are located on either side of the central entrance to the church building, accessed via a paved walkway from the existing sidewalk along Adamson Street South. A painted wooden sign identifying “St. Paul’s Anglican 1845” is located on the north side of the walkway (Figure 15 through Figure 17).



Figure 15: Looking southeast along Adamson Street in Norval towards 12 & 16 Adamson Street South (Google Streetview 2021)



Figure 16: Front elevation of St. Paul's Anglican Church at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 17: Detail of church steeple at front elevation of St. Paul's Anglican Church (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The front (west) elevation of St. Paul's Anglican Church is dominated by its central tower, including the entrance within a lancet-arched opening, with lancet-arched louvered openings beneath the existing steeple and spire (Figure 16 and Figure 17). The exterior of the church is stuccoed, while the steeple is clad with metal flashing. The bays on either side of the central tower feature blank stuccoed facades with no window or door openings.

The side (north) elevation of the church building (Figure 18) features three symmetrically placed lancet-arched window openings above flat-headed basement window openings. A painted brick chimney extends along the north elevation and above the roofline. The first storey is delineated from the basement level with wooden detailing. The other side (south) elevation (Figure 19 and Figure 20) mirrors the north elevation, however there is no chimney on this elevation.



Figure 18: North elevation of St. Paul's Anglican Church at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 19: South elevation of St. Paul's Anglican Church (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 20: Detail of south elevation of St. Paul's Anglican Church (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The c.1927 Parish Hall (Figure 21 and Figure 22) is located to the south of the existing church building beyond the asphalt parking lot. The existing one-storey frame building has a gable roof and a small gable-roofed vestibule, accessed via a flight of steps extending from a walkway from the existing sidewalk along Adamson Street South. The concrete foundation features rectangular window openings at the basement level (infilled), and five rectangular window openings symmetrically placed along the side elevations. The vestibule entrance (not original to the c.1927 building) features a double door with rectangular window openings on each side elevation.



Figure 21: Looking towards St. Paul's Parish Hall at 16 Adamson Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 22: Southwest corner of St. Paul's Parish Hall at 16 Adamson Street South, showing St. Paul's Anglican Church in the background (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The interiors of the church building and Parish Hall, and the rear elevations of both were not included as part of the evaluation of the existing property for its cultural heritage value.

### 2.3 Architectural Style and Analysis

The steeply pitched gable roof of St. Paul's Anglican Church and central tower with steeple are characteristic of the Gothic Revival style, as are its pointed lancet windows and entrance on the front elevation within the central tower. Thomas McIlwraith notes in *Looking for Old Ontario* that "[t]he pointed gothic window is a universal architectural signal of the Christian church. The revival of Gothicism in the Western world in the 1830s was just one more upswing in the cyclical way styles rise and fall in favour. By chance, it coincided with Upper Canada's first widespread demand for church building" (p. 150).

The existing style could be described as rural Gothic Revival, or Rural Gothic, a style brought to Ontario by early settlers and characterized by its use of wood vs. stone in the construction of church buildings. Similar to the existing St. John's Anglican Church building at 10996 Trafalgar Road, the architectural style of St. Paul's Anglican Church at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South is a simplified, frame interpretation of the stone Gothic Revival churches predominant throughout Ontario at the time, however it is slightly grander in scale than St. John's in Stewarttown, perhaps representative of the wealth of the congregants who established the church in the mid-nineteenth century.

Early photographs (Figure 3) show the existing church building had been stuccoed since its construction in 1845, with later photographs showing the stucco in varying states of repair throughout its existence.

The Parish Hall, a modest, one-storey frame structure with gable roof and simple window openings, can be described as a vernacular building purpose-built for the use of St. Paul’s parishioners. Simple in its design, the Parish Hall and existing church building form an intact ecclesiastical landscape with strong ties to the community of Norval, and further significance as both buildings are associated with Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery.

### 3.0 Description of Heritage Attributes and Evaluation Checklist

The following evaluation checklist applies to Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the *Ontario Heritage Act*: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The criteria are prescribed for municipal designation of Heritage Properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The evaluation tables utilize an ‘X’ to signify applicable criteria and ‘N/A’ to signify criteria that are not applicable for this property.

<b>Design or Physical Value</b>	
Is rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method	<b>X</b>
Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<b>N/A</b>
Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement	<b>N/A</b>

The property at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South has physical and design value as an excellent example of an evolved ecclesiastical landscape featuring a late-nineteenth-century wood-frame rural Gothic Revival church building and an early-twentieth-century parish hall in the community of Norval, within the Town of Halton Hills. The existing c.1845 church building is a representative example of a rural interpretation of the Gothic Revival church style using local wood and materials and has retained those features which are characteristic of the style including its symmetrical form, central tower with steeple, rectangular form with gable roof, and lancet-arched door and window openings. Stucco cladding has been extant on the exterior for over 100 years. The c.1927 Parish Hall, while modest in scale and architectural detail, is representative of an early-twentieth-century, purpose-built structure, with continued use by parishioners and members of the community since its construction. Together, these two structures make up an evolved ecclesiastical landscape that has existed in Norval along Adamson Street South since the church was first constructed in the mid-nineteenth century.

<b>Historical or Associative Value</b>	
Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community.	<b>X</b>
Yields, or has potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	<b>N/A</b>
Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>

St. Paul’s Anglican Church and Parish Hall at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South are significant for their association with the early Protestant Christian communities in Norval and the surrounding area, and with the growth of Anglican congregations within the Township of Esquesing. Located along the west

side of Adamson Street South in Norval, the church and Parish Hall have a long association with the Norval community.

The property is also associated with significant nineteenth century community members in Norval, including Colonel Peter Adamson, then the proprietor of the Norval Mills and prominent local figure, who donated the property at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South for the location of the church, as well as the land for the church’s cemetery; postmaster William Clay and his family; and Norval Mill owner Robert Noble. Additionally, Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery, during the seven years she lived in Norval, held performances and plays within the Parish Hall, and occasionally attended services at the church.

<b>Contextual Value</b>	
Is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of an area	<b>X</b>
Is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings	<b>X</b>
Is a landmark	<b>X</b>

The property at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South has contextual value as a long-standing ecclesiastical landscape along the west side of Adamson Street South in the community of Norval. A landmark along Adamson Street South, the white-stuccoed church with a central tower and steeple has been in this location for almost 180 years, while the modest parish building at the south end of the property has been extant for almost 100 years. While the property has evolved over time, the church and Parish Hall remain physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to their surroundings within Norval, continuing to serve as a place of worship for members of the local community and, in the case of the Parish Hall, as a community centre as well.

#### **4.0 Summary**

Following research and evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South has physical and design, historical and associative, and contextual value and therefore meets Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest.

The heritage attributes of the property at 12 & 16 Adamson Street South are identified as follows:

- The setback, location, and orientation of the existing c.1845 St. Paul’s Anglican Church building and c.1927 Parish Hall at the east side of Adamson Street South in the community of Norval in the Town of Halton Hills;
- For St. Paul’s Anglican Church:
  - o The scale, form, and massing of the one-storey Gothic Revival church building, with gable roof and central tower with steeple;
  - o The central entrance within the tower with lancet-arched opening beneath two louvered lancet-arched openings;
  - o The steeple atop the central tower;
  - o Along the side elevations, the evenly spaced lancet-arched window openings;
  - o On the north elevation, the brick chimney extending above the existing roofline;
- For St. Paul’s Parish Hall:

- The scale, form, and massing of the one-storey, rectangular-form building with gable roof;
- The central entrance, currently located within the one-storey vestibule at the front elevation;
- The evenly spaced rectangular window openings along the side elevations.

The interiors of both buildings, as well as the one-storey vestibule at the front elevation of St. Paul's Parish Hall, and the rear elevations of both buildings, have not been identified as heritage attributes of the subject property.

## 5.0 Sources

### Primary Sources

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