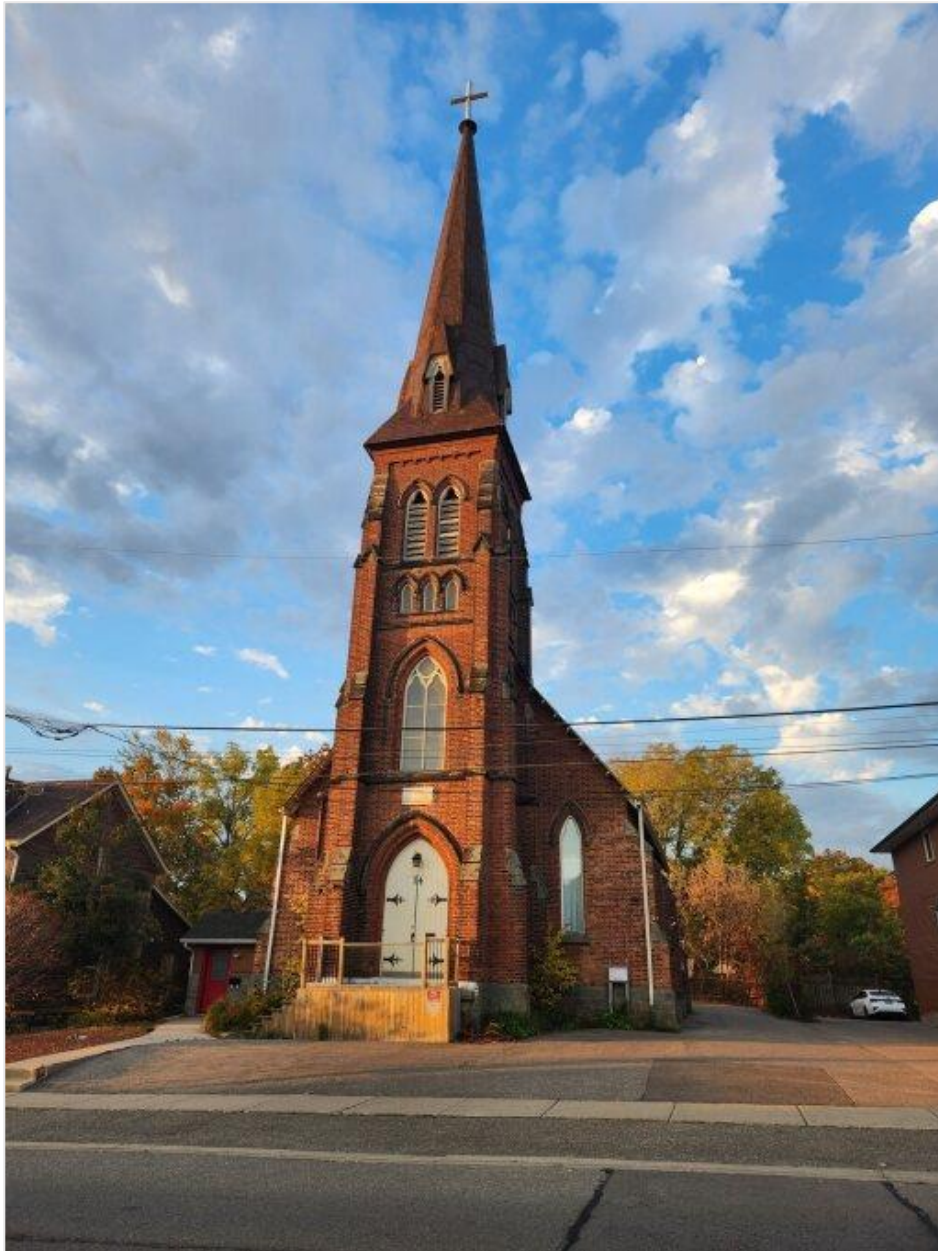


Research and Evaluation Report



(Town of Halton Hills 2023)

First Baptist Church
14 Main Street South, Georgetown, Town of Halton Hills

December 2023

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1.0 Property Description

14 Main Street South	
Municipality	Town of Halton Hills
County or Region	Regional Municipality of Halton
Legal Description	LT 5 & PT LT 16, PL 33, AS IN 596897; HALTON HILLS
Construction Date	c.1869
Original Use	Religious
Current Use	Mixed Use – Commercial/Residential
Architect/Building/Designer	Henry Langley (Architect)
Architectural Style	Gothic Revival
Additions/Alterations	Interior Alterations; One-storey addition on the east elevation
Heritage Status	Listed on the Town’s Heritage Register
Recorder(s)	Laura Loney with Madison Hendricks
Report Date	December 2023

2.0 Background

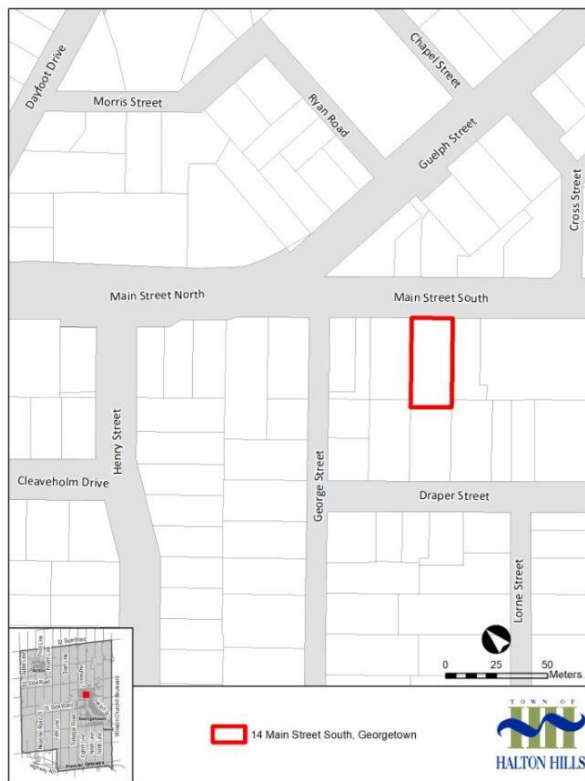


Figure 1: Location Map – 14 Main Street South



Figure 2: Aerial Photograph – 14 Main Street South

This research and evaluation report describes the history, context, and physical characteristics of the property at 14 Main Street South in Georgetown, 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

Indigenous History Background

The enduring history of First Nation Peoples in Halton Hills can be traced back through time immemorial before contact with Europeans in the 1600s. Prior to the arrival of European settlers, the Credit River was central to Indigenous ways of life, supporting settlements, fisheries, horticulture, transportation, and trade. Iroquoian-speaking peoples, ancestors of the Wendat, occupied the Credit River Valley for hundreds of years until approximately the mid-1600s, establishing semi-permanent villages. There are numerous archaeological sites in Halton Hills dating from this period, ranging from village sites to burial grounds, which reveal a rich cultural heritage.

The Wendat were displaced by the Haudenosaunee around 1649-50 amid the conflicts that arose between European colonial powers and their First Nation allies. The Mississaugas (part of the Anishinaabe Nation) arrived in southern Ontario in the 1690s, settling in two groups along the north shore of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. The western group, occupying the area between Toronto and Lake Erie, became known as the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Until the early 19th century, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation followed a seasonal cycle of movement and resource harvesting along the Credit River (Missinnihe, meaning “trusting creek”), and other rivers. In the winter months, extended family groups hunted in the Halton Hills area, travelling south towards the mouth of the river in the spring for the salmon run. The Mississaugas’ fisheries and traditional economies were diminished as a result of increased Euro-colonial settlement, leading to a state of impoverishment and dramatic population decline.

In 1818, the British Crown negotiated the purchase of 648,000 acres of land from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, including present-day Halton Hills, under the Ajetance Treaty (No. 19), named after Chief Ajetance. This left the Mississaugas with three small reserves on the Lake Ontario shoreline. The legitimacy of early land “surrenders” to the Crown is questionable when considering the Mississaugas’ traditional understanding of property ownership. Unlike the British, the Mississaugas understood land in spiritual terms, and did not share the idea that access to land and resources could be given up permanently¹.

Georgetown Baptists

The Georgetown Baptists were first formed in 1847. The first pastor of the congregation was Reverend Dr. Perren. Michael Dayfoot, father of the prominent local shoe entrepreneur J.B. Dayfoot, was the first Deacon of the church at its first meeting in October 1847 at a home in the village. The congregation later met in the Congregational Church in Georgetown (now the Georgetown Library and Cultural Centre). In 1850, the subject property in Plan 33 was transferred by John Kennedy to John Short, who sold the property to John Bessey in 1867. John S. Bessey, Esquire, was a prominent farmer in Georgetown and his farm and residence are pictured in the 1877 *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton*. In 1869,

¹ This brief overview of Pre-Treaty Indigenous Territory within the land now known as Halton Hills is taken from the Town of Halton Hills’ 2023 *Cultural Heritage Strategy*. This document includes additional recommendations relating to Truth and Reconciliation in Heritage Planning as part of the Town’s commitment to advancing Truth and Reconciliation.

the property was transferred from John Bessey and his wife to the Trustees of First Baptist Church, the same year that the church, designed by architect Henry Langley, was finalized at the cost of \$8,000.

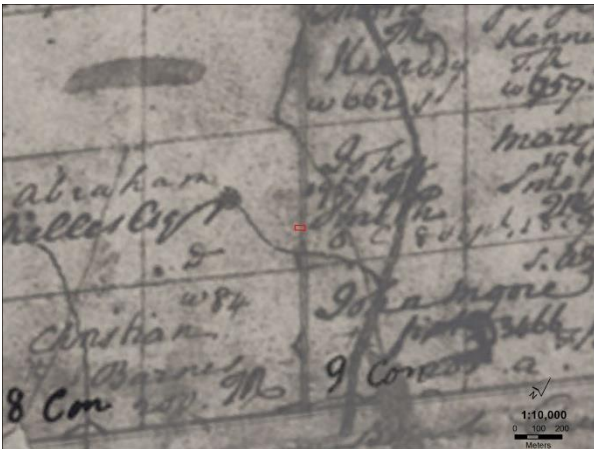


Figure 3: Subject property identified on the 1819 Patent Plan



Figure 4: Subject property identified on Tremaine's Map of the County of Halton, Canada West (1858)

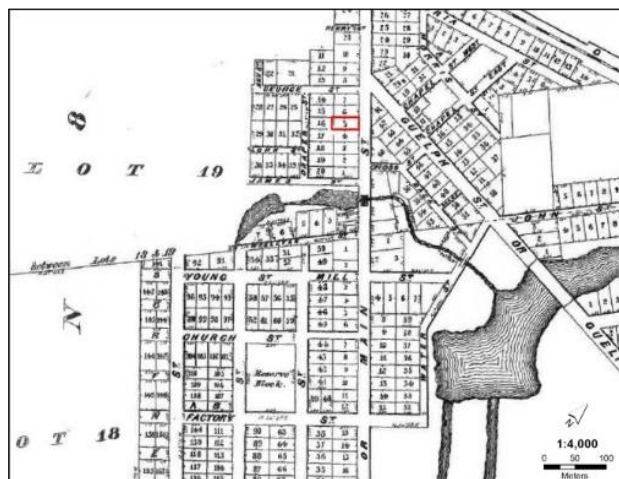


Figure 5: Subject property identified in the 1877 Illustrated Atlas of the County of Halton

Henry Langley

Architect Henry Langley (1836-1907) is described in the *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada* as the “dean of ecclesiastical architecture in Ontario during the last half of the 19th century” and is known as one of the most prolific architects in the province in the nineteenth century. Born in Toronto to Irish immigrant parents, Langley attended the Toronto Academy where he was trained in drawing and was apprenticed with architect William Hay at age seventeen. Langley established himself as an architect in 1860 and worked on his own and with partners throughout his career until his retirement in 1899 when his son Charles took over the firm. Langley is the architect of record for over 70 ecclesiastical buildings in at least 16 communities throughout Ontario, in addition to numerous residential,

commercial, and institutional buildings within the province. Some of Langley's most notable commissions include Oaklands (1860), the former residence of John Macdonald and now De La Salle College, the Bank of British North America (1871), and Government House (1868), the residence of the Lieutenant Governor. Langley also altered and enlarged many more ecclesiastical buildings in Ontario. He trained 15 architects who themselves became prominent in the field and was a founding member of the Royal Canadian Academy and a member of the Ontario Association of Architects.

Candace Iron notes in her dissertation entitled "Henry Langley, a Man Who Built Churches: Religion and Architecture in 19th-Century Ontario" that the projecting central tower of the church was likely inspired by William Hay's 1857 design for St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Guelph, while the overall exterior was likely inspired by Langley's 1868 design of St. John's Anglican Church in Ancaster. Langley's plans for the church can be found at the Archives of Ontario (Figure 7). Iron also notes that the church building "with a soaring spire at the top of a hill . . . demonstrates a large degree of continuity with Langley's older designs".



Figure 6: Portrait of Henry Langley
(*Canadian Architect and Builder*, 1907,
Vol.20, No.1, p.14)

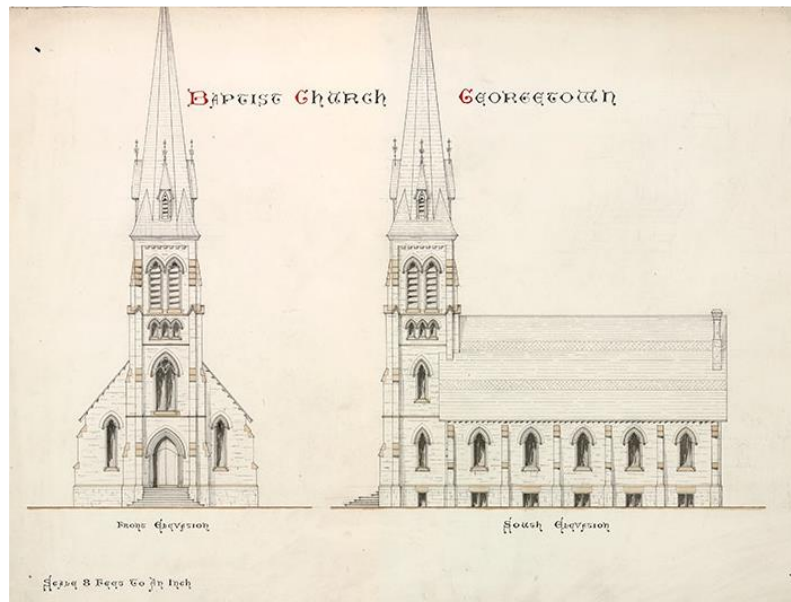


Figure 7: Langley, Henry. Baptist Church Georgetown. Architectural Drawing.
Archives of Ontario.

First Baptist Church

Walter Blackwell and Henry Tost worked on the building of the church, which was primarily financed by the Bessey family, John (J.B.) and George Dayfoot, and several of Dayfoot's employees. The church's steeple was 126 feet high and the stone for the church was quarried at Glen Williams. The church building was dedicated on January 30, 1870. The church has been photographed extensively since its construction and its steeple is visible in many photographs of downtown Georgetown.



Figure 8: Main Street looking north, Baptist Chapel steeple identified in the background, c.1890 (EHS 12241)



Figure 9: Intersection of Main and James Streets, Baptist Chapel identified in the background, c.1908 (EHS 11635)

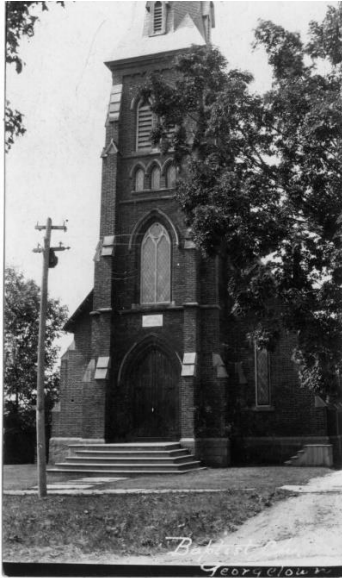


Figure 10: First Baptist Church on Main Street, c.1910 (EHS 21546)



Figure 11: Parade on Main Street, c.1912; First Baptist Church steeple identified in the background (EHS 00625)

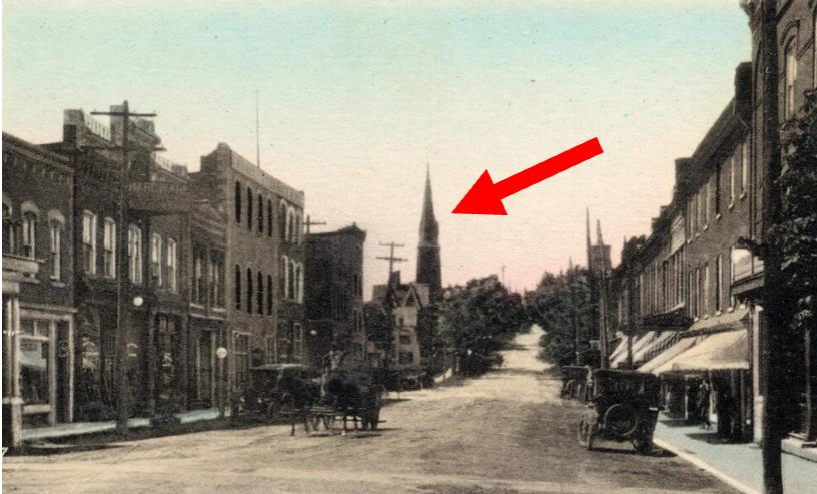


Figure 12: Main Street looking north, Baptist Chapel steeple identified in the background, c.1913 (EHS 12243)



Figure 13: Baptist Chapel, c.1914 (EHS 14403)

Several improvements were made to the building in its early years, including a new wood ceiling and electric chandeliers in 1904, carpeting and pews in 1906, a new entrance into the Sunday School room in 1919, and installation of the organ (purchased from the Stratford Baptist Church for \$600), and memorial windows in 1923. As a centennial project, the First Baptist church congregation rebuilt the steeple of the church.



Figure 14: Subject property identified on the 1934 Fire Insurance Map of Georgetown

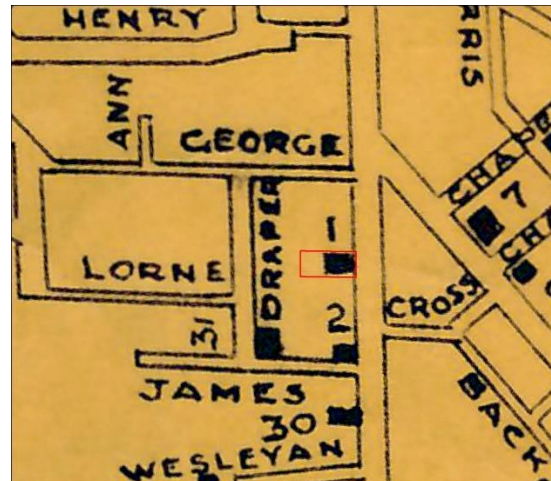


Figure 15: Subject property identified on the 1956 Survey of Georgetown



Figure 16: Main Street looking north towards the Baptist Chapel, c.1933 (Detail) (EHS 26096)



Figure 17: 14 Main Street South, c.1940 (EHS 26114)



Figure 18: Main Street looking south, c.1955 (EHS 13455)

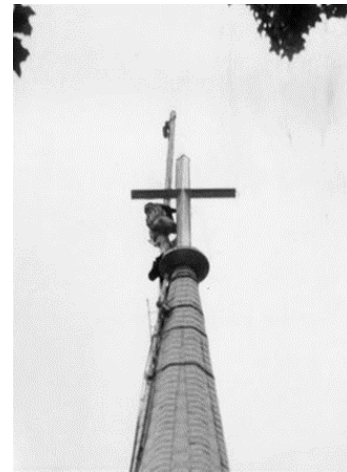


Figure 19: New Hamburg steeplejack Michael Creane secures ten-foot-high gold cross in place atop the First Baptist Church steeple, c. 1961 (EHS 04768)

On September 24, 1970, First Baptist Church was officially closed, and the remaining congregation was consolidated with St. Paul's Baptist Church on Mountainview Road. In 1971, the property was officially transferred from the Trustees of First Baptist Church to the Trustees of Mountainview Baptist Church. The Georgetown Pentecostal Church rented the church building in 1971, and in 1974 the property was transferred to the Christian and Missionary Alliance, Eastern and Central Canadian District. By November 1981, the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church voted to relocate from the former First Baptist Church because of space.

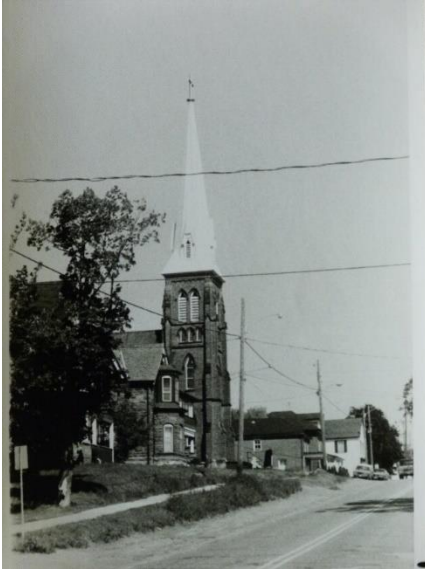


Figure 20: Baptist Church, c.1972 (EHS 20730)



Figure 21: First Baptist Church, c.1973 (EHS 13378)

Adaptive Re-use of First Baptist Church

The property was purchased by Colleen Hanson in 1982 from the church who converted the building into a nursery for students between two-and-a-half to six years old. The church building operated as a nursery school for several years as the Halton Hills Kinder School.



Figure 22: First Baptist Church, c.1980 (EHS 13021)



Figure 23: 14 Main Street South, c.1986 (EHS 18337)

Following a lien on the property in 1990 and a transfer of charge to the Adelaide Capital Corporation, in 1997 the property was transferred to Jay Donald McClennen and Tammy Mark-McClennen.

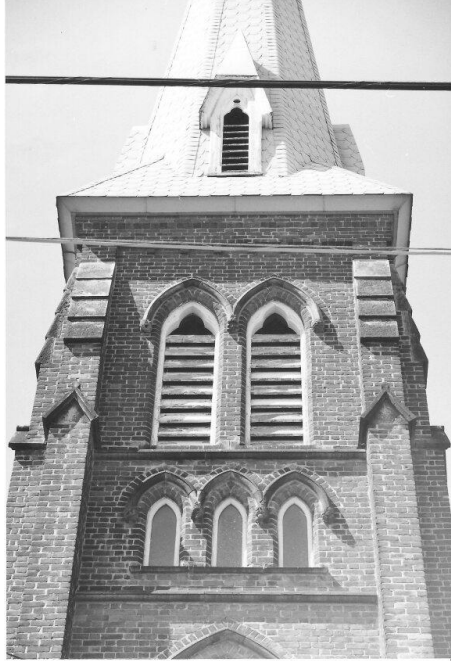


Figure 24: Detail of the bell tower at 14 Main Street South, c.1994 (EHS 11497)



Figure 25: Detail of the front door at 14 Main Street South, c.1994 (EHS 11496)



Figure 26: 14 Main Street South, c.1995. (EHS 10931)

In 2008, the property was sold to numbered company 1753693 Ontario Inc, and in 2021 to SII 5710 Inc., its current owners. The property has been used as a karate dojo and for martial arts and is now currently a private business.

2.2 Property & Architectural Description

The property is a rectangular parcel located at 14 Main Street South along the southwest side of the roadway in Halton Hills and contains a one storey brick church building. The property is legally known as LT 5 & PT LT 16, PL 33, AS IN 596897; HALTON HILLS. The property contains a mid-nineteenth century Gothic Revival Church Building, formerly the First Baptist Church and now a mixed-use property.



Figure 27: Looking northwest towards the subject property along Main Street South (Google Streetview 2022)



Figure 28: Looking southwest towards the subject property along Main Street South (Google Streetview 2022)



Figure 29: Panoramic view of the subject property along Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The front elevation is dominated by the central, red brick tower. The central entrance within the tower is currently accessed from the wooden porch, the floor of which currently meets the intersection of the red brick exterior and carved stone block foundation. The recessed, lancet-arched entrance with stepped brick surround and stone hood mould is prominently featured and flanked by brick buttresses at the tower corners with stone coping. An inset carved stone reading “Baptist Chapel A.D. 1869” is located above the entrance. A stone string course separates the tower storeys, and the front elevation of the tower at the second storey features a large lancet-arched window opening with stone hood mould and stone sill containing a wooden window with tracery. An additional stone course separates this window from a group of three, symmetrically placed, small lancet-arched window openings with continuous

stone sill beneath a continuous stone hood mould with brick voussoirs above. Continuing upwards, a pair of louvered, lancet-arched window openings are located beneath brick detailing along the base of the tower roof which features small gable-roofed dormers beneath the tower spire. The side elevations of the tower are similar to the primary elevation with smaller lancet-arched window openings at the lower storeys and the same window layout beneath the tower roof.

On either side of the tower, the gable roof of the church, featuring wooden brackets and soffit throughout, is visible above single lancet-arched window openings with stone sills wooden window tracery on either side, with stone hood moulds. Shallow pilasters flank the tower on these elevations.

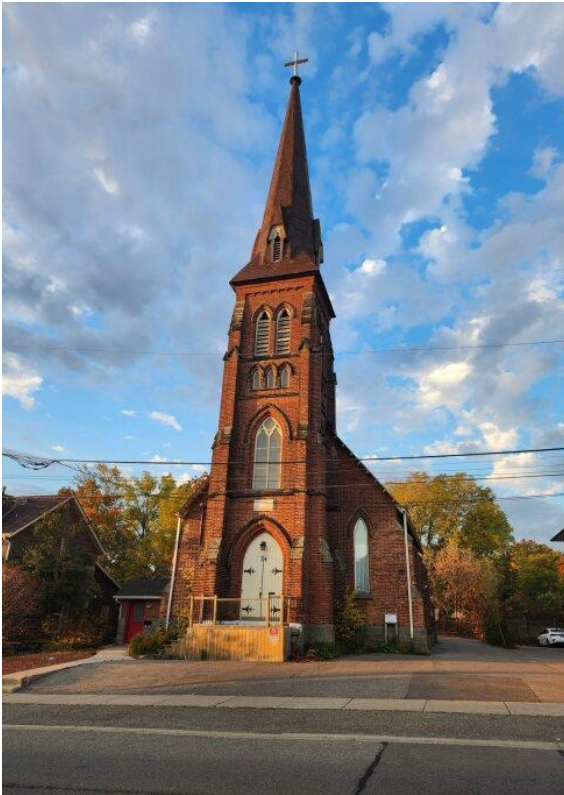


Figure 30: Front (northeast) elevation of First Baptist Church at 14 Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 31: Detail of front (northeast) elevation of First Baptist Church at 14 Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The side (northwest and southwest) elevations feature stepped brick buttresses dividing the walls into bays. Each buttress features stone coping. In each bay, a lancet-arched window opening with stone hood mould and sill is extant on both elevations. The southeast elevation features a one-storey addition towards the front elevation of the church. Flat-headed window openings with stone lintels are extant at the basement level within the stone foundation along each side elevation.



Figure 32: Looking along the northwest elevation of First Baptist Church from the rear (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

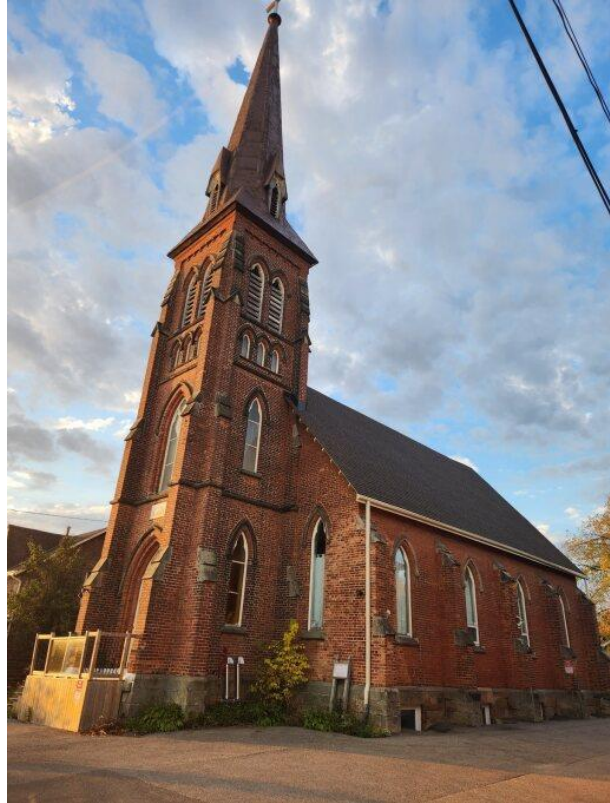


Figure 33: Looking towards the northwest corner of First Baptist Church at 14 Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 34: Partial northwest elevation of First Baptist Church (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

A modest one-storey frame addition with gable roof is extant on the rear elevation of the church building, providing rear access to the former church building. A covered wooden porch extends beyond the one-storey addition and wraps around the south corner of the building. Lancet-arched window openings are extant on either side of the one-storey addition, separated by brick chimneys, one of which

has been removed above the roofline. A circular louvered opening is located above the one-storey addition, beneath a smaller triangular window opening.



Figure 35: Side (southeast) elevation of First Baptist Church at 14 Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

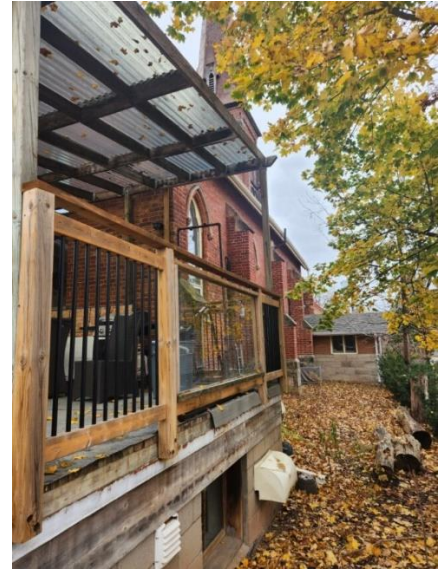


Figure 36: Partial southeast elevation of First Baptist Church at 14 Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 37: Rear elevation of First Baptist Church with one-storey frame addition (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The interiors, which have been significantly modified as part of the long-term adaptive re-use of the former church building, have not been identified as part of this report.

2.3 Architectural Style & Comparative Analysis

Within Ontario there are several examples and variations of Gothic Revival architecture, popular within the province between 1830 and 1900. After 1850, Gothic Revival architecture became influenced by Augustus Pugin and his emphasis on medieval construction. In Gothic Revival church architecture in Ontario, many features help to articulate the style, including those extant within First Baptist Church: lancet, or pointed arch windows; architectural details such as string courses, moulding, and surrounds, steeply pitched roofs, dormers, oversized towers, and elements to emphasize verticality.

There are 8 churches currently identified on the Town of Halton Hills' Heritage Register as being in the Gothic Revival style. Of those churches, one is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (St. John's Anglican Church) and one (Knox Presbyterian Church at 116 Main Street South) is subject to a Notice of Intention to Designate as of the finalization of this report. No other churches in Halton Hills are known to be constructed by prominent ecclesiastical architect Henry Langley at this time.

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.

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

The property at 14 Main Street South has physical and design value as a representative example of a mid-nineteenth century Gothic Revival church building in the community of Georgetown, within the Town of Halton Hills. Indicative of the Gothic Revival style, 14 Main Street South features an oversized projecting central tower with a steeple 126 feet high, a steeply pitched roof, and several pointed arch windows, all of which emphasize the "soaring spire" and the overall verticality of the building. The building, designed by architect Henry Langley, also displays a high degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit. Langley was a prolific Ontario architect, known for his ecclesiastical architectural designs. In particular, he was renowned for his detail-oriented designs, which relied on principal drawings that he adapted to meet the requests of the Georgetown Baptists. The building, with its recessed, lancet-arched entrance, stepped brick surround, brick buttresses, and stone hood mould, reflects this attention to detail and craftsmanship.

Historical or Associative Value	
Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community	X

Historical or Associative Value	
Yields, or has potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	N/A
Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community	X

Known as the First Baptist Church, the property at 14 Main Street South has significant historical and associative value due to its association with early Baptist Christian communities in Georgetown and the surrounding area, and with the growth of Baptist congregations within the Township of Esquesing. As the location of the First Baptist Church, featured prominently on Main Street, the property has a long association with the Georgetown community.

The property is also associated with significant nineteenth-century community members in Georgetown, including the Deacon of the church Michael Dayfoot, who was the father of J.B. Dayfoot, the local shoe entrepreneur who established his famous Bootmaking factory with his brother in 1843.

As well, the property is deeply associated with its designer, architect Henry Langley, a profoundly significant architect in Ontario in the nineteenth-century. Known as the “dean of ecclesiastical architecture in Ontario,” the First Baptist Church is one of seventy ecclesiastical buildings designed by Langley during his career, and one of many which he designed by adapting his famous principal drawings for ecclesiastical buildings.

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

The property at 14 Main Street South has contextual value as a long-standing ecclesiastical landscape along Main Street in the community of Georgetown. A landmark along Main Street, the red brick church with “soaring spire” has been in this location for over 150 years. While the property has evolved over time and is now an example of adapted re-use in the community, the church remains physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings within Georgetown.

4.0 Summary

Following research and evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 14 Main 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 14 Main Street South are identified as follows:

- The setback, location, and orientation of the 19th century Gothic Revival church building along Main Street South in Georgetown within the Town of Halton Hills;
- The scale, form, and massing of the one-storey church building with central tower at the front elevation, including its stone foundation, red brick walls, and stone detailing;

- The materials, including brick exterior; stone foundation, sills, hood moulds, lintels, and detailing; wooden brackets, soffit, and louvres within existing openings;
- The central tower, featuring lancet-arched window and door openings, brick buttresses with stone coping, stone detailing and string courses, brick detailing, tower roof with dormers and spire;
- Lancet-arched window openings with stone sills and hood moulds throughout;
- Stepped brick buttresses delineating bays along the side elevations; and,
- Wooden brackets and soffits beneath the eaves.

The rear elevation, one-storey additions, and interiors have not been identified as part of this report.

5.0 Sources

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Archival Photographs, Esquesing Historical Society Archives and Halton Images (individual citations in-text)

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14 Main Street South | LT 5 & PT LT 16, PL 33, AS IN 596897; HALTON HILLS

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