

# Children's Festival

By Bonnie McNally

Saturday, May 28 was truly a 'beehive of activity' at St. Thomas, Stittsville, as 22 children gathered to celebrate our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Approximately half the young participants attend our church and the remainder joined us from the community. Our theme for the day was "We are Pilgrims on a Journey".

The morning began with greeters in 1860's dress guiding the children to decorate bags for their 'take-home' items and assisting them in sticking 150 paper butterflies around the sanctuary.

Rev. Jane, in 1860's cassock, started the formal part of the day's events with an explanation of how long St. Thomas has been in existence (using the 150 butterflies) and, with the able assistance of Merilee Clarke and some very precocious little puppets, described what life would have been like back in the mid-1800's. Mary Passmore led the children in several action songs.

The children then formed five separate groups and rotated around five different stations. Heather Sullivan, assisted by Matthew Hunt, braved the heat outside and led the children through the process of planting an 1860's garden. With Merilee Clarke they painted birdhouses and

Victoria Pierce assisted in decorating T-shirts. Rev. Jane guided the children through the process of following a labyrinth (with Bear Paws as the prize!) and Judy Dalloway taught them how to make Bannock.

At noon, half-way through the group activities, everyone stopped for our 'mid-day meal', an 1860's lunch consisting of homemade chicken soup, fresh thick-sliced bread with butter, cheese, carrot sticks, berries and apples, and oatmeal cookies.

The day concluded with games from the 1860's (sack races, three-legged races) and a snack of the bannock the children had made earlier in the day dipped in maple syrup.

A big thank you to our workshop leaders (Rev. Jane, Merilee, Victoria, Judy, Heather, and Matthew), to our greeters (Barbara, Sylvie, Michelle), to Penny, Neave and Keara, Audrey and Michelle who shepherded the children from one station to the next, photographer Patrick, and, of course, Jennifer who had our noon-hour meal waiting for us.

It was an amazing time! In the words of one of the parents, the children (and the adults!) "had a blast!" Such a great way to celebrate our anniversary!



PHOTO: PATRICK MCNALLY

*Making bannock during St. Thomas' Children's Festival, May 28, 2016.*