

Matheson, Bob (Rev.)

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Foxboro church welcomes new minister

BY AUDRA KENT

Foxboro – For the new minister at Emmanuel United Church in Foxboro, moving to the Quinte area has been a bit like coming home.

Rev. Bob Matheson was born and raised in Ottawa and knew early in life he wanted to become a minister.

Graduating from Sheridan College in 1971 and Trent University in 1975, the young Matheson went on to receive his Master of Divinity from Queen's Theological College in Kingston and was ordained as a minister in 1977.

All the while, Matheson served in a number of student pastorates across Canada – two in Alberta, one in Algonquin Park and one in the Hudson Bay Pastoral Charge in eastern Saskatchewan. While at Queen's, Matheson also worked as a student assistant at Bells Corners United Church in Nepean.

Rev. Matheson has also served in many areas surrounding the Quinte area including Peterborough, Lindsay, Oshawa, and more recently in Ingleside in the Seaway Valley area.

Throughout, he has remained active in the church community - in camp committees, on education and student committees, at Presbytery and Conference levels and at-large within the communities in which he has lived.

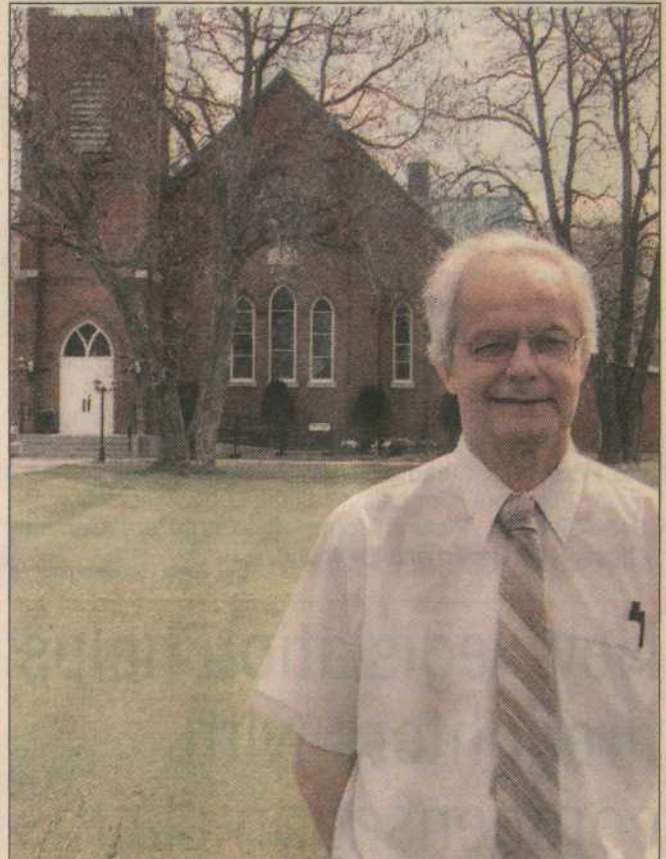
"The role of the clergy is to be a bit of a conscience – a spiritual guide but also someone that challenges the congregation to be out and about in the world," he said.

Rev. Matheson has been working with the congregation at Emmanuel United Church since February. In mid April, he and his wife, Ann, together with their 21-year-old daughter, Jen, moved to Belleville.

"This is the kind of church I've been looking for," said Matheson who said the church is very active in the community.

"My role is to develop leadership among the laity. I suspect it's going to be more fine-tuning then developing from scratch," he said.

On May 6, during a formal Covenanting Service, Rev. Matheson, and the community of the church, made their formal vows to work together as a faith community. Presiding at the



■ Rev. Bob Matheson is the new minister at Emmanuel United Church in Foxboro.

Audra Kent photo

service were Rev. Margaret Goodwin, chair of the Belleville Presbytery, Rev. Tim Milley of Eastminster United and Rev. Ross Lockhart of St. Matthew's United, both in Belleville, and Rev. Cathy Paul of St. Mark's United in Cannifton. Many members of his previous congregation at Ingleside were also present for the special service.

"It was very emotional," said Matheson.

Emmanuel United, located on Ashley Street in Foxboro, was built in 1894 as a Methodist Church.

In 1925, the Methodist, Congregationalist and a large portion of the Presbyterian church combined to create the United Church of Canada which is now the largest protestant denomination in the country.

More than 200 families make Emmanuel United Church their home in faith. Sunday services, which include a children's program, begin at 10:30 a.m.

The church also enjoys the musical ministry of a "good sized choir".