

SAINT JOHN'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PORT PERRY, ONTARIO.

A hundred years is a long time in the accounting of man, and, as we look over the past hundred years, we cannot fail to marvel at all that has transpired. For example, our church was founded when this nation was still Upper and Lower Canada. The County of Ontario had just been incorporated; the population was small and widely scattered.

Sometime in the year 1844, a young minister, Reverend Robert Monteath was serving a parish of the Presbyterian Church at Greenlaw, Scotland. A call went out for missionaries to serve the needs of the young country Canada; Robert Monteath answered the urgent call, and with two others came to Canada that year. He spent about two years going about the country organizing congregations in the newer districts, part of the time in company with Dr. Thornton of Oshawa. In the course of the work he reached Prince Albert where lived a few scattered Presbyterians. These he formed into a congregation in the fall of 1855, and the following spring 1856, 24 members and 15 adherents formally petitioned the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland to be admitted as a congregation, with the Rev. Robert Monteath as minister. The prayer of their petition was granted, and so was laid the foundation of what is now St. John's, Port Perry. Mr. Monteath remained as minister for eight years. No choir or organ existed during his ministry but Mr. T.C. Forman led the service of praise as well as treasurer of the church for more than 40 years.

In addition to his preaching and other pastoral work he was one of the Superintendents of Education for the County. In this capacity he visited schools, examined teachers, and attended meetings of the board, his only means of transportation being by foot or by horse.

In the year 1872 the congregation became part of the Canada Presbyterian Church.

CHURCH BUILDINGS

The first congregation worshipped in the building of the Methodists Prince Albert; when the first Presbyterian church was built is uncertain but we do know that the present church was erected in the year 1870. According to The Toronto Mail of Oct. 2nd, 1866, the church was then known as Burn's Presbyterian. The original building is still serving the needs of the congregation. In 1942 the entire church was renovated and stained glass windows replaced the frosted ones. In 1956 the chancel was completely remodelled and the pipe organ replaced by an electronic organ. The sanctuary was re-seated on a plan in keeping with the new type chancel.

The ministers

1855-1864--Rev. R. Monteath
 1864-1872--no record
 1872-1875--Rev. J. Thom
 1875-1879--Rev. J. Douglas
 1879-1884--Rev. Hugh Crozier
 1884-1891--Rev. J. McMechan
 1891-1899--Rev. R. Whiteman
 1899-1908--Rev. Wm. Cooper
 1908-1910--Rev. W.H. MacInnes
 1910-1912--Rev. A. C. Cameron
 1912-1917--Rev. W.G. West
 1917-1919--Rev. W. H. Black
 1920-1924--Rev. J. T. Hall
 1924-1925--Rev. A. E. Thornley
 1925-1928--Rev. W. L. Atkinson
 1928-1930--Rev. Angus MacIver
 1930-1932--Rev. A. E. Annand
 1932-1937--Rev. D. A. Ferguson
 1937-1941--Rev. R. Simpson

1941-1946--Rev. J.A. MacMillan
 1946-1953--Rev. J. Riddell
 1953-1958--Rev. Dr. B.D. Armstrong
 1959-1962--Wm. Perry as student
 1962-1967--Rev. H.M. Buntain
 1967-1973--Rev. W. Black
 1973- Rev. S. McEntyre