

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH
of
ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH, WHITEFISH, ONTARIO

In July 1957 a group of Christian families in the Whitefish area, interested in the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ in their community, gathered together to worship in the basement of the old school in Whitefish under the leadership of the Rev. Norm Hillyer. Eric Pullam, a student in Theology, served the congregation for the remainder of the summer.

In July 1958, the Rev. John Houston became the minister of the Gatchell Pastoral Charge which consisted of congregations in Gatchell, Naughton, Whitefish, Nairn Centre, and High Falls. On January 11, 1959 the congregation at Whitefish was constituted the congregation of St. John's United Church, Whitefish, by the Chairman of Presbytery at that time, the Rev. Norm Hillyer.

The Charter Roll as of January 11, 1959 was as follows:

Mrs. O. Svensk	Mrs. Helen Grant
Mrs. Earl Rodda	Mr. Oiva Svensk
Mrs. Leger Cyr	Mrs. Eleanor Calford
Miss Gail Rodda	Mr. Keith F. Calford
Miss Marilyn Rodda	*Dulcie Stubbington
Miss Mary Cullen	Miss Ruth Svensk
Miss Barbara Ballantyne	Fern Herman
Mrs. Geo. Ballantyne	Lena McCauley
*Mr. Geo. Ballantyne	Mrs. Helvi Anderson
*Mr. Earl Rodda	Mr. W. Grant
Mr. John Rodda	Miss Mary Svensk
	Mrs. Allie Gemmell
	Mrs. Hilda Cullen

As the work of the congregation progressed, a building committee was elected at a meeting on January 18, 1959 to discuss the possibility of building a church. On April 26, 1959 a motion to build a church was passed by the congregation. In December of that same year land was purchased from Thomas D. Edward for \$2000.00, the present site of this church. Rev. A. Kennard, now minister of Espanola United Church, along with Rev. John Houston turned the first sod on May 22, 1960. The approximate cost was to be \$20,000.00.

Work progressed rapidly on the construction of the building and on February 5, 1961 a Special Service of Dedication was held. The total cost of the building to that date was \$24,383.38

Shortly after the dedication of the new church building, a new minister, the Rev. G. Hault, came to the Pastoral Charge. In 1961 approximately 62 families were associated with St. John's congregation.

With a new church building completed, the congregation now had a debt hanging over its head. Under the leadership of the Rev. G. Hault, 1961-63; the Rev. Fred Sorenson, 1963-67; the Rev. Paul Parkin, 1967-69; and the Rev. John A. May, 1969-71, the congregation continued to work for God's Kingdom, and at paying off the mortgage. With sheer determination, hard work and a deep and earnest concern, the nucleus achieved another momentous occasion in their history when as of December 30, 1971 the final payment was made on the mortgage of the church.

* Deceased