

Interim minister brings his unique talents to local churches

By Eileen Argyris

Rev. Dr. Ken Howlett of Castleton and Grafton United Churches admires the "leadership qualities" he has found in his new



Capital improvements — Castleton Public School is now equipped with new energy-conserving windows, all through the school building, says principal David King. This is part of the Northumberland and Newcastle Board of Education's energy-saving program. The windows make classrooms brighter, as well as keeping the weather outside. This ties in with the school's switch from oil to gas heat last year. As well, there are two new computer work stations, in Mr. Peterson's class and in Mr. Hobson's room. Enrolment at the school, which was slated for closure just over 10 years ago, now stands at 184. Photo by Eileen Argyris

parishioners.

Dr. Howlett is interim minister in the two-point charge, here for "an undertermined length of time" because he is a "specialist in ministry," someone who is bringing his

unique talents to churches that "need a moderator," at the discretion of the United Church Presbytery.

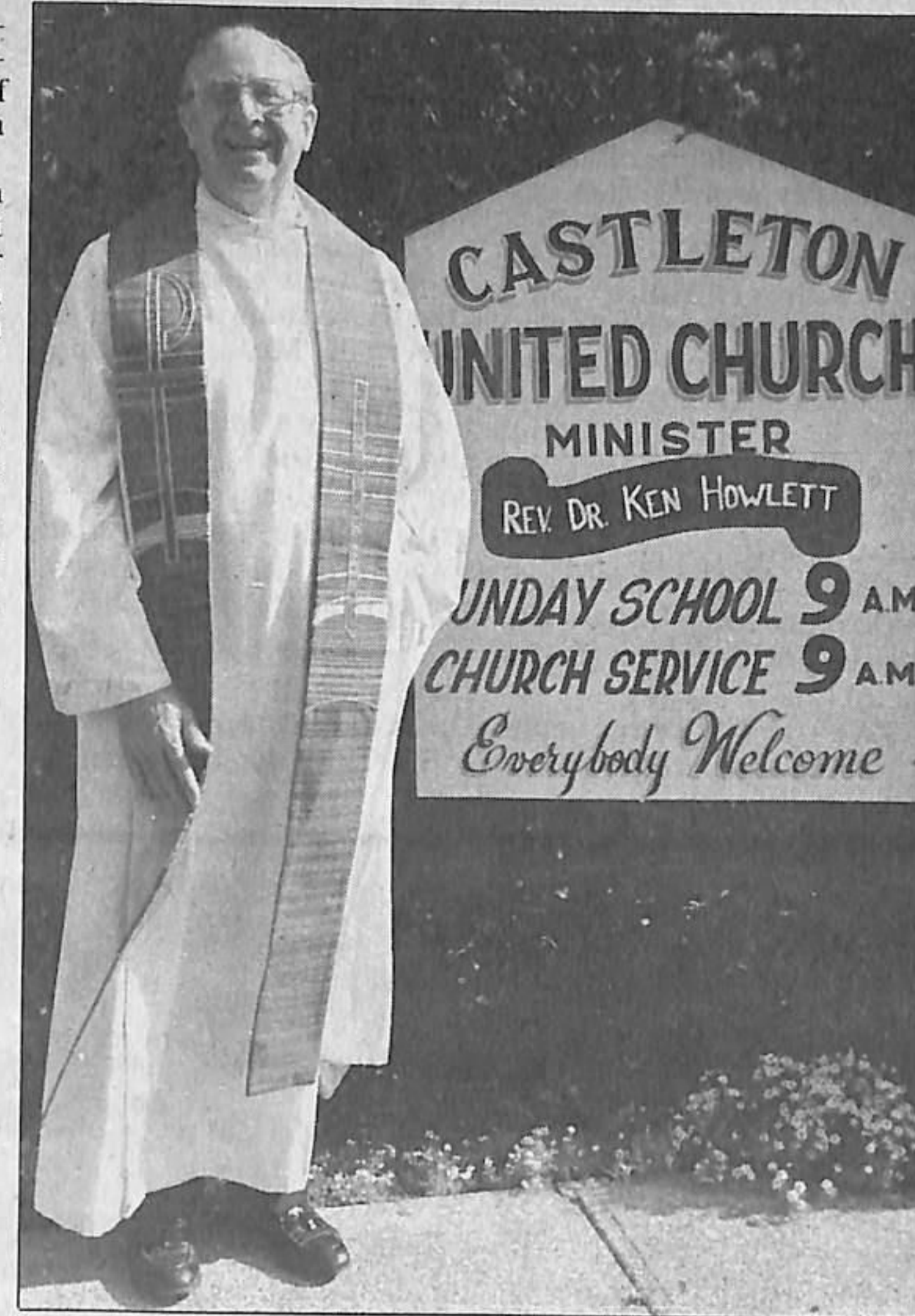
He has spent 27 years in pastoral ministry, his last charge being another interim posting of seven months' duration, in Orono-Kirby.

Dr. Howlett's wife, Rev. Ruth Howlett, is an ordained minister of the United Church, as well. However, she is taking a leave of absence from pastoral ministry to care for the couple's four-month-old baby boy, Daniel. They also have a four-year-old, Reuben, and a nine-year-old, Jonathan.

The couple have been married four years, believing that "together we could grow spiritually and emotionally," said Dr. Howlett. This is a second marriage for both. The family lives in Cobourg.

Dr. Howlett was ordained by the Alberta Conference in 1966. The ministry was not his first career, however. He had been in banking and then in accounting but was "not finding it very useful or helpful for me. It wasn't fulfilling."

Believing he was a "people person," the prairie native sought another career, going back to school at the University of Alberta, four years at Calgary and three years at Edmonton, playing Varsity volleyball in both places.



Interim minister -- Rev. Dr. Ken Howlett is enjoying his pastorate with the congregations of Castleton and Grafton St. Andrew's United Churches. Photo by Eileen Argyris

He later took his doctorate in ministry at San Francisco's San Anselmo Theological Seminary, a famous Presbyterian school.

Since his graduation, he

has held pastorates in Calgary, Alberta; Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Oshawa. His wife previously had an established ministry in Saskatchewan, but more recently was

working for the Canadian Mental Health Association before the birth of their youngest child. She plans to go back to the ministry when the family judges that the time is right.

Although he officially started as minister in this charge on July 1, Dr. Howlett was absent for summer holidays for part of July and August. His Covenanting service, or official installation, will be held at St. Andrew's Church, Grafton, on Sept. 26, at 7:30 p.m.

In his spare time, he likes to write hymns, none of which have been published in any collection — yet. But, he is planning to incorporate them into upcoming services with his new flock.

And, something else his parishioners may not know about him: He once received the Mountbatten Medal for rescuing a small boy from the raging Saskatchewan River in Edmonton in December, 1963.

The boy, who was four at the time and was clinically dead for six to eight minutes, is 34 years old and married now, but he still stays in touch, sending Christmas cards every year.

Dr. Howlett is looking forward to a productive ministry here. He says, "We love this area. It is a joy to work with the people of Castleton and Grafton."