

Report 1: A Meaningful History

***Roslin Thomasburg Pastoral Charge
Comprehensive Review Task Group***

January 27, 2010

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Trinity United Church, Roslin

Factual and Meaningful History

The Process

The Question

“Reflecting upon your entire Trinity United Church Roslin experience, think of a time when you felt the most engaged, alive and motivated. Who was involved? What did you do? How did you feel?”

Committee members invited congregational members to meet and discuss experiences in various formats: “Tea and Talk” on March 20, 2009, “After Church” session on May 3, 2009 “Pot Luck” dinner on May 19, 2009 and many one-on-one interviews.

This document summarizes our findings and includes many of your church memories. The Factual is found in bold print and the Meaningful History is in regular font.

Amalgamation

Trinity United Church Roslin is the result of the coming together of many good and committed communities. **At its core The United Church of Canada is an amalgamation of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist and local Union Churches, as created in 1925.**

Several local “joinings” are remembered as early as 1920 when **the West Plainfield church**, located on Cemetery Road, **was closed and joined the East Plainfield church, located in the Plainfield Village.**

Bethel Church, located on the corner of the 9th Concession (now Bethel Road) and Willet Road **served 15 to 20 families** and no one wanted to lose their church. **Families from the 8th Concession**, (now Zion Road) **went to Zion Church**, which was located on now named Willet Road, and it is said there were some very musical people among these families. **Zion United Church closed in 1951** by mutual decision of the Congregations **and moved to Bethel Church, which became known as Bethel Zion United Church.**

Mount Pleasant Church, located on the 7th Concession (Shannon Road) just east of the Shannonville Road, was heated with wood with each family taking stewardship for a month at a time to do this care taking. It is felt that this plan worked well. **In 1960, a move to amalgamate Mount Pleasant with Plainfield was begun.** It is understood that Plainfield was happy but others may have felt left out. A vote held in Plainfield **in 1961 approved the closing of Mount Pleasant Church and its amalgamation with Plainfield.** However some Mount Pleasant parishioners did not go to Plainfield but instead went to Carmel, which was later closed and joined with Cannifton.

Harold Skelly bought the Mount Pleasant Church for \$100.00 and took the church down a bit at a time. He salvaged the bricks, the windows, the tin, and the pews and sold what he could. The remains were stored in his barn and sold at auction. The corner stone was saved. **Howard Skelly, Harold's son, has donated the Mount Pleasant cornerstone to Trinity United Church Roslin to commemorate our 140th Anniversary.** Harold's granddaughter purchased the lot, which still remains vacant.

The Plainfield Pastoral Charge included Plainfield, Bethel Zion, and Roslin churches. Each amalgamation resulted in some bitterness as parishioners were torn away from their traditional church communities. These sad times only increased when each home church building was torn down. These three individual churches served several families, and no one really wanted to lose their church.

After the amalgamation of Plainfield, Bethel Zion, and Roslin congregations on February 16, 1966, Roslin United Church became known as Trinity United Church Roslin. Mrs. Cecil Ketcheson suggested the naming of our church.

The joining of the three churches of the Plainfield Pastoral Charge to become Trinity United Church Roslin was eased somewhat by the strong leadership of Rev. George Southall. Even though 70% voted in favour of the amalgamation, there is still bitterness in the hearts of a few.

Worship

Trinity United Church Roslin from its beginnings as a part of the Methodist Circuit in the 1850s has been and **is blessed with active and dedicated members.** To quote one former member; *"People know your name and are genuinely happy to see you. You feel you belong and you are missed if you are not there"*. We care about what happens with one another and when that happens within a congregation then you feel 'alive & motivated' in your faith.

Each Minister has tried different Orders of Service, styles and formats to make for interesting and changing concepts, with little discussion or fanfare. Putting scripture to song and adding a guitar, or other musical instruments has been a wonderful and enjoyable learning tool.

For a period of our history, one minister served all five congregations – Bethel, Zion, Mount Pleasant, Roslin, and Plainfield – that now comprise Trinity United Church Roslin. It seems that the Plainfield congregation always met for 7:00 pm services but as Rev. Bob Nicholls recalled *"one hardworking farmer said if church was at midnight he'd be there"*. That kind of commitment made the church strong.

Even with good ministers and interesting worship modalities **membership has continued to decline.** Many of our older faithful church members have died or moved to the City of Belleville. **Over 100 bulletins were required for Sunday**

Service for the two churches and now we are down to 40-50 except on special occasions.

The Minister, the Music, the fellowship, and the social contact are all integral to the Congregation. The Worship Service is an important part of life at Trinity United Church Roslin.

The Sunday School

In the late 1960's to early 1970's the Sunday School had between 70 and 80 children. This was the time just after amalgamation. Families came with their children because Church was a place to socialize. It was felt that once the Curling Club was built in Tweed, the Sunday School started to suffer in numbers, because there were now more organized activities taking place on Sundays. In the 1980's as new families moved into the area, the Sunday School once again became a welcoming tool into the community, as families came and all felt welcome. The Church picnics and play days were highlights of each year. Many remember the three legged and wheelbarrow races. These were held either in the Church parking lot or at Vanderwater Park. It was wonderful to take the Church outside. Teaching Sunday School was also a highlight in many people's lives. Preparing lessons and activities for the children and encouraging the children to live their faith. The Christmas pageants and plays that were put on by the Sunday School were also popular and fondly remembered by the children and members of the congregation.

A decline in attendance started showing in the Sunday School from 1984 to 1987. Large numbers of young people left to go to college & university, or to join the workforce. *"Growing up within the Trinity Roslin Church community offered the opportunity for us to develop a deep faith but even though we as youth moved away, we are still drawn to Trinity as our Home Church."* These young people still wanted to be married and bring their babies to be baptized in their Home Church, which they felt was Trinity United Roslin. Memories of a sense of community and friendliness prevail.

Youth Group

"When I was young the core youth group was central to my life. Since marriage, most of us have moved away, connections are lost and we are no longer close, but I monitor from a distance and have returned to provide support at times when it was needed".

Explorers, C.G.I.T., Church based sports leagues, Confirmation classes and the Youth Group, all served to give our youth a strong basis in their faith and in their Church community. Another quote *"When I was attending confirmation classes and asked my minister about evolution he told me that God never said how he created the world. It was a good answer for me, it helped me to reconcile my faith in God and my belief in science."* Youth groups in our Church have served our young adults in many positive ways over the years. *" I met my life partner while attending HI-C (Young Peoples). At the time it was the social connection for the youth of many local communities."*

In 2006 our Youth Group visited Regent Park in Toronto; this trip marked everyone that attended. We all realized what it was like to do outreach in another community that was so different from our own. We worked in a soup kitchen, toured a men's hostel and a women's shelter. "*It was the highlight of my time in Youth Group.*" As we can see from these quotes our youth have profited in many ways from the Church Youth Groups of the past.

Music

Music has played a large role in the worship of our church. The Minister and the Music are important to our worship. Many good ministers have come to serve our Church and community and they have worked with the **Pianist/Organist/Music Directors. Helen Howes, Marjorie Dilts, Phyllis Lott, Ann Ketcheson, Elaine Dickens, Mary Tummon, Charles Tilbrook, Meribeth Bird, Pierre LaCasse, Marg Farrell** have given their time and talents to make "**a joyful noise**" and enhance our worship. Pierre LaCasse introduced four-part harmony. Marg Farrell's dedication as Minister of Music at both Churches, as well as at weddings and funerals is an inspiration. Marg's versatility in moving from organ to piano is a significant addition to our worship.

Replacing the old organ with the new one in 1990 was a rewarding addition to worship. When the need for a new organ was realized an appeal for funds went out and the church community responded favourably. **The organ was purchased from Mr. Fawcett in Winchester.**

Talented musical guests have performed in our Sanctuary over the years as well. Mary Hobbs was a bonus to assist Marg in directing four Cantatas and other musical performances. The work that went into preparing for regular Sunday services by the choir over the years is commendable and like other meaningful events, it brought fellowship, social contact and was valued by the performers as well as the Congregations. Professional & semi-professional musicians have performed within our Church. Carolyn Gray (nee Latchford) is a wonderful example of one of our youth continuing to help us worship with Music.

UCW (United Church Women)

The activities of the UCW were a common thread noted among the female members of the Congregation. They talked about the cohesiveness of the women, how well they work together, and the great sense of community when there is a need i.e. catering to a post funeral luncheon or at a member's family wedding.

The other things mentioned especially about the UCW were the socializing of the group of women. The camaraderie and the level of speakers and programs that are presented are very satisfying and rewarding. The women provide intelligent, thought provoking and comforting programs month after month and they are very gratifying. One member said "*I was gratified that I was able to give input and*

was encouraged always by the enduring support of the women to the other women in the group”.

Young campers have benefited from the sponsorship provided by the UCW to attend Camp Quin-Mo-Lac.

“The worship and devotions of the UCW meetings are thoughtful, spiritually reflective and inspiring.”

Community/Society, Church Projects and Fundraisers

Potluck suppers, organized for a variety of reasons, are always a success and warmly remembered. The continuity of these events that can be traced back to annual tea meetings and annual Fowl Suppers of the 1940's and 1950's provides a very basic sense of a continuing and welcoming community, pulling together in good times and in bad, through music and celebration, funerals, and tragedies. Our farm background permeates our activities and that brings together families and friends and neighbours during these times.

Church work bees have been and continue to be as much a social gathering as they are a work effort. The Church benefits from both getting a job done and reinforcing the camaraderie of the participants. Many repairs and lots of painting have been true examples of “many hands make light work”.

Many stories of talent shows, plays, and comedy/dinner theaters emphasize the wonderful and varied talents among the members of our congregation. The plays (such as “Please Take a Letter”) were very popular and one cast was even invited to perform again at another venue. The most noted result of these “fund-raising” and social activities is the opportunity to meet and develop friendships among the church family as well as meeting neighbours and having fun.

Providing a food booth at the local Hastings County Plowing Match has been extremely successful, both as a fund-raiser and as an opportunity to engage both churchgoers and extended family and friends in a church related social gathering.

The ongoing events at Stirling Theatre are enjoyable, and foster good community relationships.

Many speak warmly about the community spirit built by the Strawberry Suppers, and working together with a large group of people, spearheaded by the UCW for the good of both the Church and the community.

The Church Hall has been a hub of activity for many community groups. CGIT and HI-C were well attended by the Church youth and many life long friendships were formed during these years. UCW and Church committees continue to meet on a regular basis in our Church Hall. Over the years other community groups kept the hall full every night of the week with Brownies, Guides, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Women's Institute, yoga classes, and Senior's Dinners. The Lord Baden Powell parades were an annual event. WI District Annuals were hosted at the Church Hall. All of this activity made the Church and the Church Hall a hub in Roslin.

Couples Club (remembered by Plainfield families) was a church related group that gathered in various homes for social get-togethers. This was again the familiar theme of getting to know one another in a setting outside of the one-hour a week worship time.

More recently the Dinner and Auction has proved to be both an evening of social connections and a fundraising success.

A joint community Vacation Bible School with the other Roslin churches (Anglican and Presbyterian) and with Thomasburg United has provided an opportunity for up to 130 children to take part in a church sponsored summer activity.

Men's Coffee Tuesdays, initiated and organized by Joan Reid, has introduced a gathering time just for the men of the community and has been a great success for the Church.

Celebrations

The "Church Family" has celebrated special events as any normal family has. **Celebrations of births, marriages, deaths and anniversaries over the years, since beginning worship in this place in the Community, have happened regularly.** It seems the Congregations of the area Churches knew how to celebrate in timely fashion. These occasions "*create connections to The Church that are carried throughout our lives*".

Some memories of celebrations include "sugaring off" parties in early spring at a farm on the 8th concession of Thurlow (Zion Road), having Fowl Suppers in the Church Hall, pot luck dinners for the men at the Mill (Chisholm's), to the elaborate Centennial celebration of Bethel (Zion) Church (1863-1963). On this occasion the men dressed up in suits with fedoras and the women sewed and wore long full bouffant dresses with bonnets to match. They rode a hay wagon around Chapman's Corners and had a party in the Bethel-Zion Church Hall.

The well planned 118th Anniversary of Trinity United Church Roslin in 1987 (started out as 100 years when it was realized it was 118) where Don Miller drove the Moderator, The Rev. Clarke MacDonald and The Rev. Charles Buchanan and their wives in a horse drawn surrey around the Village of Roslin. **Since 1987, Anniversaries have been recognized annually with larger celebrations marking 130 and 135 years respectively and culminating in a large attendance at the Church Service honouring 140 years held the first Sunday in June 2009.** Three former Ministers of the Church joined with members, former members, and friends of the community to help us celebrate. A Banner was presented to recognize the occasion. Guest speaker was The Rev. Ken Norman.

In recent years, the whole community celebrated with the involvement of the four area churches re-enacting the Christmas Story with the Living Nativity with a real baby and Christmas caroling through the village.

Our church members have taken an active role at Quin-Mo-Lac Camp on Moira Lake. This United Church Camp has hosted many of our congregation as campers and as volunteer workers.

When the old Manse on the former King's Highway, at 44 Hoskin Road in Plainfield, was torn down, a new Manse was erected on the same property. Irene Boldrick sewed the curtains for the windows. The furnace in the new Manse burned wood & coal. It would become so hot during some Board meetings that the windows had to be opened. Hilda Denyes recalls taking part to celebrate burning the mortgage of the "new" manse during the 50's. **This Plainfield Manse was disposed of in 1978.**

At Roslin, the addition of the Church Hall happened in 1954-'55. The second addition and a kitchen were added in 1965-66 just prior to amalgamation. Two furnaces were also installed, one in the front of the church just off the vestibule and the second at the back of the hall during the addition. Water was finally available in 1981 when a well was drilled and washroom added.

In 1984 the church steeple blew off the Trinity Roslin Church. Coincidentally, it landed upright beside the church. This repair required a professional contractor to repair and re-install the steeple.

Stained Glass Windows

The first stained glass window was added in 1987 to commemorate the 118th Anniversary, and to commemorate all the people who have served and played a role in the existence of the Church. The Official Dedication was May 1, 1988. Rev. Charles Buchanan was Minister at that time and spearheaded the drive after a monetary donation was received.

The second stained glass window was added in 1994 to commemorate the 125th Anniversary. Bob Smith was Chair of the Board and a committee assisted in getting this accomplished. Rev. Wendy Bulloch-MacIntosh was the Minister. John Mortimore of Bayside designed both windows. Large numbers of interested people attended the dedication. Both windows were fully paid for by the time they were installed.

Reflections

Our Church has been privileged to be part of some community firsts. We put our faith into action and showed our courage in 1969 by hiring the Rev. Les Bigby, a Black Jamaican Minister. We hired one of the first female ministers in this area, the Rev. Wendy Bulloch-MacIntosh, and then employed two additional women as interim ministers. We took a risk by hiring a student intern, Tom Holmes to allow him to complete his education and then had the opportunity to hire him for settlement, after ordination.

The Memorial Committee is an active part of our church and many items have been added to our sanctuary as a visible memorial to past church members. Overall our task group found that our Church members feel most engaged, alive, and motivated when they are most involved in Church Life.

Ministers Serving Our Church 1960-2009

Bob Nicholls	1960-1963
George Southall	1963-1967
G.A. Puttenham	1967-1969
Les Bigby	1969-1973 ***
James Stewart	1973-1978
Charles Buchanan	1978-1990
Wendy Bulloch-MacIntosh	1990-1996
Allen Hobbs	1996-2005
Tom Holmes	2005-present

*** Beginning with Les Bigby, the same ministers served both Trinity Roslin and Thomasburg Congregations

Thomasburg United Church

A Meaningful History

The Process

The Question

“Reflecting upon your entire Thomasburg Church experience, think of a time when you felt the most engaged alive and motivated. Who was involved? What did you do? How did you feel?”

Task Group members met with or talked with specific individuals and discussed their experiences. We attempted to touch base with members/adherents/former members of Thomasburg United Church as well as people of all ages. Our findings were summarized.

An event was held after church in early April 2009, where small groups discussed their experiences and exchanged thoughts and feelings. Findings were summarized.

A pamphlet was prepared requesting written or oral feedback to committee members.

We concluded that the easiest way to report the compilation of our Factual and Meaningful Histories was to do so under several themes that repeatedly came to the surface in the responses to our questioning.

There were some thoughts presented in our discussions that were not so much history, but thoughts definitely worthy of documenting. They will not be found here but will help form the basis for future stages of this review.

Amalgamation

This history of Thomasburg United Church, for purposes of the Comprehensive Review, focuses on only the past fifty years, although its complete history goes back much farther. Traveling Methodist preachers held religious services in homes as early as 1825, and the foundation stone of the first church building was laid in 1856. Further details of this congregation, and of the various Pastoral Charges to which it has belonged, can be found in the following:

Pamphlet prepared for the 150th Anniversary of Thomasburg United Church 1856-2006

Extensive collection of photographs and newspaper clippings, in binder form, prepared by Minne and Sharon Hovinga

Records deposited with the United Church of Canada Archives, dated 1866-1994; a list of items is available in a filing cabinet in each church. For information on accessing the records, see the United Church of Canada website.

From 1947 to 1967, Thomasburg Church was part of a four-point charge: Thomasburg, Moira, West Huntingdon and Eggleton. As part of the Presbytery reorganization in the 1960's, the other three churches were closed. Members of Moira Church were asked to attend Thomasburg Church, and members of the other two points were to go to Stirling. In addition, Bethel Church at Chapman's Corners and Fuller Church closed, and some members came to Thomasburg United Church. The unintended result of this rationalization was that negative feeling arose in most communities about Presbytery. The significant hurt feelings about the closures also led to lost membership. Some families went to other United Churches outside of the Pastoral Charge. Some left the United Church of Canada, and some simply left church altogether.

Worship

Weekly Worship Service

The weekly worship time has been considered vital to the Thomasburg congregation, as confirmed by the completed questionnaires, and by research done in the late 1990's. Even with the increased demands on people's time, the active members of the congregation have kept the Sunday morning time open.

Our congregation has accepted change with relative ease. Over the years, the format of the worship service has changed, reflecting changing times and the preferences of successive ministers, and the preferences of our congregation. Different formats and liturgies have been used for communion services. Drama has been presented periodically in worship, both by the Sunday School and by adults.

During the ministry of Wendy Bulloch-MacIntosh, the use of lay Scripture readers was introduced. This has encouraged people to be involved. The observation has been made that attendance improved with the assignment of scripture reading, offering and greeting responsibilities.

Our congregation has always enjoyed humour. When asked for his outstanding memories of Thomasburg Church, Allen Hobbs said, "Willingness to try something new, and laughter".

Music in the Worship Service

Music has always been an essential part of the services. Under the leadership of Margaret Farrell, there has been an active choir to lead in worship. She has worked closely with the ministers to coordinate the music with the themes of the worship.

Marg played for services at Moira United Church from about 1962, following the lengthy tenures of pianists Lilly Vanderwater and Mina Foster. When she joined Thomasburg United Church in 1967, she became organist. Prior to this, Jessie Morton had served for several years as the Thomasburg organist, assisted by Merle Morton and Mae Wilson.

Music in all its forms (junior choirs, quartets, cantatas, bands, choirs, choruses) has been very attractive and engaging for participants and listeners, and the most common memory among all we interviewed. Those who take part in these activities enjoy meeting with other musicians and participating in something they love to do. Performing is a spiritually enriching and satisfying experience.

For children in the congregation, music has been an integral part of their involvement in church life. During the 80's and 90's, music students from the congregation's families were encouraged to use their talents on trumpet, flute, clarinet, guitar, piano or saxophone to enrich our worship service. Many also sang in the choir, and performed solos, duets etc.

In the early 1990's, Marg became Minister of Music for both congregations of the Pastoral Charge, and amalgamated the two choirs for special cantatas, and for Christmas, Easter, Anniversary and Joint services. At present, the two choirs practice together on a regular basis.

Youth and Children

During the interview process, the members of the congregations present were divided into groups. Each group started with the time they felt the church was most alive, and the overwhelming response was when there were lots of children and youth. The church activities felt more family-oriented.

In years gone by, our congregation supported children, youth and young adult Christian groups such as: CGIT – (intermediate girls), Sigma C (young peoples group), Explorers, and Tyros. All of these groups taught Christian morals and allowed for participation in sports, games, devotions, food and singing. These groups met with varying degrees of success. The consensus by most participants of the discussion was that these groups were successful because they existed before the era of T.V. and organized sports that occurred with increasing frequency during the week and on Sunday mornings.

The Youth Group, which was started in 1967 and was held outside of church hours, gave the church a feeling of life and vibrancy. Lots of youth attended on a regular basis. Activities included, campfires, games, quizzes, dances, trips, movie nights, skating parties, hayrides, picnics, sleigh rides, music and devotions etc. The group continued for several years but interest waned and leaders moved away.

The Sunday School was a significant part of church life with a large number of children and parents attending for an hour either before, or following, the morning church service. Participating families took on jobs as superintendents, teachers, music leaders etc. Some of the Sunday School Superintendents included Jim Seekings, Doug Farrell, Barbara Sararas, Sheila Ellis, and Marie Northey. Adults did a Bible Study while children's classes were held. Everyone felt that Sunday school had a significant affect on the children's formative years. In later years, when the Youth Group and others were waning, the Sunday School continued

the “outside activities” which included Christmas concerts, Halloween parties, skating parties and Sunday School picnics.

Community

Church Community

Historical records indicate that on July 1, 1967, the church membership was 129 members plus 30 non- resident members. In November 2007, there were 69 members on the roll and 14 of these were non- resident. It is clear the membership of church has decreased; however, the local population of the community has increased. Many of the reasons for this are discussed in various places in this report.

The individuals interviewed, felt fulfilled as a result of their participation and met many people and would recommend involvement to others.

Some commented that they felt loved and valued by all the people in the church. There was a sense that most were welcoming to new people joining the church; but not necessarily new ideas presented by the United Church of Canada’s General Council.

Local Community

In 1959-1960 the highway changed from passing through Thomasburg via Clare St. to bypassing the village on a newly constructed Highway 37. This diversion of traffic away from the main street led to the closure of many local businesses and services which further resulted in less day to day contact of people within the Community and within the Congregation as well. The lessening of daily contact weakened the general sense of community.

Outreach

Although Thomasburg Church has not consistently had a formal Outreach programme, members of the congregation have given help as a matter of course, individually or through the UCW, to community families in crisis or in need. For almost twenty years the Congregation has supported the Tweed Food Bank through regular donations. The Session has made the use of the church building available to community organizations.

Outreach to the wider world has been emphasized through promoting the United Church’s Mission and Service fund with a regular “Minute for Mission” each month, and the congregation has reached its set objective each year.

United Church Women

The UCW has been central in facilitating community building for women in Moira and Thomasburg throughout the last 50 years. Small children were welcomed at meetings, which encouraged young mothers to attend. The meetings involved worship and programs. The small group social environment has helped new members become comfortable on a social basis.

Like the Congregation in general, the UCW has also noted a decline in membership. In 1994, it became obvious that the number of members in both the Moira and Thomasburg UCWs were steadily decreasing. A decision was made to amalgamate. Because Fran Wilson was fairly new and not firmly dedicated to either group, she became the first president of the amalgamated group.

As an organization the UCW has been, and continues to be, integral to the health and well being of our Congregation since its members have not only provided food for any and all events but have also assisted at funerals and raised money for the church and other good causes. Some women have preferred the UCW as their only connection to the church. The UCW has offered outreach both locally and in other communities. (e.g. neighbourly support, families in need, cards and food for shut ins).

The UCW has been very active in the regional Presbyterian events such as the World Day of Prayer, Spring Fling, and Fall Rally. It has also been a training ground for leaders; sponsoring women to attend educational events at Five Oaks, for example. It has financially assisted children attending Camp Quin-Mo-Lac.

Fundraising and Church Projects

Generally, church members felt most engaged when they were actively involved in the church, especially with a variety of church or community projects. Projects that were described as meaningful by members include, the front entrance of the church (80's), kitchen renovation (90's), painting of the church (2008) - (which brought in money from the church community)- making the banners, decorating the church for each season and the annual spring-cleaning.

Our church family has taken an active part in these projects. They didn't and don't stand on the sidelines. All members have been encouraged to get involved in all aspects of church life. When the church has had a specific need and projects have been identified (see above examples) the members have been more inclined to donate money and time to make it happen. When the church has had a need, this "family" has pulled together and gotten the job done.

One of the major factors that has enabled us to function has been the overwhelming support of our dedicated volunteers who have done countless jobs such as: arranging church flowers, decorating seasonally, cleaning up areas missed by custodians, grass cutting, yard work and snow shoveling. Others have

contributed considerable time and talent serving in various offices such as our faithful, dependable accounting Steward, Burton Sherry who serves as treasurer of both Thomasburg United Church and the Roslin-Thomasburg Pastoral Charge.

Special events like potluck lunches following a project or church service (or the auction sale of box lunches during Valentine's Day) have all added to the feeling of community and have served in the support of each other in this family-oriented church. All enjoyed many Pancake Brunches, hosted by the men of the congregation.

Our Annual Turkey Supper held in the fall has been a good fundraiser. Even though it demands a lot of work, it has brought people together from both the church and the Thomasburg community. The newest fundraiser, our spring Ham Dinner, will we hope become an annual event and be as successful as the Turkey Supper.

Church Administration

Ministers

At Thomasburg Church, we have been blessed with a high caliber of ministers. A relatively small number of congregational members have had negative experiences with one or another minister, and due to that experience felt devalued. Although these members formerly contributed a lot to the life of the church, they have since stopped participating in leadership roles.

Members of the congregation have appreciated the minister's visiting those in crisis, and those who cannot attend church regularly. The observation was made that having regular office hours, a practice introduced by Tom Holmes, has really helped the minister to connect with the community.

Relationship with Presbytery

Belleville Presbytery did not support the rebuilding of the Thomasburg United Church after the fire of 1963. This decision strained the relationship between the Congregation and Presbytery. This was compounded by the Presbytery reorganization in the 1960's, which is spoken of above.

However, Charles Buchanan encouraged participation in Presbytery, and since the late 1970's Thomasburg Church has had active representatives. They have had very positive feelings and experiences as a result of Presbytery involvement, taking on various positions of responsibility, and attending General Council on several occasions. Presbytery representatives have included Alberta Young, Doris Pearce and Fran Wilson. Doris Pearce also served a two year term as Chair of Belleville Presbytery.

Roslin-Thomasburg Pastoral Charge

Joint History

Trinity United Church, Roslin and Thomasburg United Church became the Roslin-Thomasburg Pastoral Charge in June 1973 under the direction of The Reverend James Stewart. Even prior to this, the same minister served both Trinity Roslin Church and Thomasburg Church. For some time after 1973, each congregation continued to have its own structure. When Charles Buchanan was minister, Session started meeting together instead of separately. Each church had its own Official Board until the 1990's, when Wendy Bulloch-MacIntosh encouraged them to meet together a couple of times a year, and under Allen Hobbs' leadership the process of making one Joint Official Board was completed. At the same time, a Worship Committee was formed within the Session to assist in worship planning.

Having a Joint Board, a combined choir and joint worship services, the number of which has increased since their inception, has helped to unify the two congregations and allowed each congregation to identify more closely with the other. The Christmas events, such as Christmas concerts and White Gift services, have of late been joint endeavours by the Pastoral Charge, with people of all ages taking part. The little ones and the teenagers have added their own flair, making for an alternative type of worship, fellowship and fun. Combined activities for youth have also been supported under various leaders and formats.

Beginning in 1993 the Church Picnic involved both Roslin and Thomasburg. It began with a Worship Service, and continued with potluck lunch, games, and lots of people - kids and adults, and lots of fun. In 1999, it rained and we brought the Service and lunch into Thomasburg Church. By then, the Moira Conservation Authority was charging for the use of the Park and the mosquitoes drove us out. With the decline of the children attending, the enthusiasm fizzled out.

New members were often encouraged by the sense of community seen at events such as church picnics at Vanderwater Park, and social gatherings where everyone knows one another.

In approximately 1998, a joint decision was made to close for the month of August for Staff holidays. Up to this time both churches were inconsistent with Sunday services during the summer months. This was the beginning of joint summer services. Previously we had only joined forces for each other's Anniversary Service.

In 2004, following a suggestion from Emmanuel Foxboro Church, this Pastoral Charge joined in organizing Shared Services with the other area United Churches: St. Mark's Cannifton, Emmanuel Foxboro, Melrose and Front Road. These Services aimed to develop a community of faith among our Congregations and Communities; experience alternate forms of celebrating worship, share our resources and give financial outreach to various charities within our respective geographical community areas. We also hoped to draw new faces. In 2010, we

entered into our 6th year of Shared Services that are now held twice a year and continue to enjoy the liaison, learning and fellowship from worshipping as “we” continue the journey as a Community of Faith with our four neighbouring churches.

The Pastoral Charge has always been supportive of our ministers, as attested to by the length of their stay. The average tenure of a minister here has been approximately eight years. The Pastoral Charge has always emphasized the need for visitation of the community members and adherents. Our experience with ministers has been overwhelmingly positive.

During the tenure of Wendy Bulloch-MacIntosh, she was obliged to go on short-term sick leave. The Pastoral Charge required help to pay for supply ministry, and we were grateful for financial assistance from Belleville Presbytery and Bay of Quinte Conference. When funds became available, we surprised both by paying back the full amount.

Our churches have celebrated with our ministers at Ordination (The Reverend Tom Holmes), and at anniversaries marking years of dedicated service to the United Church of Canada: a 20th (The Reverend Wendy Bulloch-MacIntosh), a 30th (The Reverend Allen Hobbs) and a 50th (The Reverend Morley Hawley). Farewell parties have been held to celebrate the dedication of parting ministers, with gifts to show our appreciation for their service to us. We have participated as a Joint Pastoral Charge in these celebrations, alternating churches, bringing fellowship and social contact, and making memories.