

United Church Histories
in the Antler River Watershed Region
of the
United Church of Canada
On its 100th Anniversary of Formation
1925 - 2025



ARWRC
ANTLER RIVER WATERSHED
REGIONAL COUNCIL
www.arwrucc.ca

**(Comprising the Traditional Lands of the Indigenous Peoples
within the area and the Counties of Elgin, Essex, Kent, Lambton
Middlesex, and Oxford)**

November 2025

Editor's Note: This is a compilation of the " Antler River Watershed Region United Church Histories." Thank you to each individual/group which submitted a brief history.

This is not the Final version as this can be updated as new information is submitted. This as with all previous versions is being distributed electronically. That means that if you'd like a hard copy (printed version) of this resource you can choose to print it at your location. This also keeps costs down.

Please send any additional submissions or corrections to Richard Auckland (rauck27@gmail.com).

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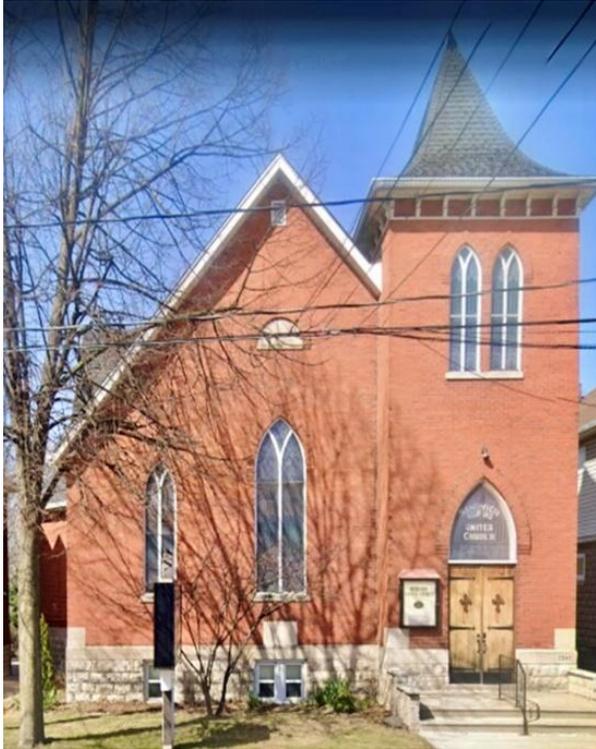


Photo by Judy Infanti

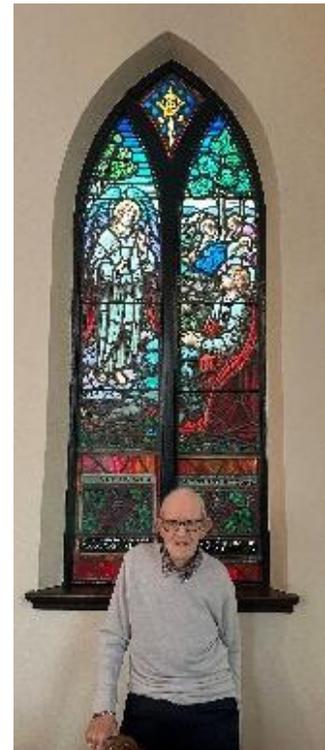
Bedford United Church

(Windsor, Essex)

Bedford United Church is a much quieter church these days, but it was the target of attention back in the 1920s. The Methodists back then, more than any other religious denomination, brought in prohibition. The first saddleback preacher nearly died getting here (Nathan Bangs), a future Prime Minister (Alexander Mackenzie) ran Sunday school, and another (Reverend John Oswald Leslie Spracklin) gained infamy for killing a prohibition bartender.

Bedford United Church can trace that route back to the ministry of Nathan bangs who on **August 18, 1804** preached his first Methodist service in the old courthouse in Mackenzie Hall. In **1838** the first Methodist Church was built on Mill Street and was officially organized as a congregation. In **1906** the current red brick church building was built, at its present address 3340 Sandwich Street, and named Sandwich Methodist Church. Bedford has a very colorful history and some great stories behind the place. **1918-1921** Sandwich Methodist was ministered by the gun toting Methodist minister, the Reverend John Oswald Leslie Spracklin. Notorious as the fighting Parson, who carried his .45 Colt everywhere during prohibition and has been compared to Wyatt Earp. **1992** the congregations of Sandwich and Calvary United joined together and renamed the church Bedford United.

Robert George Stevenson (Bob, 100 years old) is a member of this church and has been since the age of 18; over 83 yrs. The ceremony was in Rev. D.L. Gordon's office in the Manse in 1942.



At present, as part of the history, you can bus tour the era of prohibition with Encore Productions which includes a stop at Bedford United Church. You'll be met by the Women's Temperance Movement and learn about the fighting Parson.

Bedford is now a smaller developing congregation with dedicated members having success in doing Jesus' work.

Submitted by: Judy Infanti Email: judy.infanti@yahoo.com

Trivia Question: Where is the Fighting Parson's photo hanging at Bedford?

Belmont United Church

Belmont, Elgin

Our Church Mission : To be a welcoming community of faith offering support and encouragement

as we celebrate God's love. **Our Motto – “Here For You”**

Our story began August 20, 1853 with the formation of the Belmont Circuit (seven churches, later fourteen). In 1856 Thomas Nugent donated land for a Wesleyan Methodist church and two others. The Methodists built a white-frame church on the present property. This building was



moved three times (now at 14126 Belmont Road). The present building was opened November 24, 1889. Over the years, updates and renovations have been made. In 1980, an addition was dedicated (Fellowship meeting room, office, washroom, nursery and kitchen). Many memorial gifts were received (stained-glass windows, church furnishings, etc.). Our belfry bell came from St. George's Anglican - cast in 1871. We have installed two platform lifts to make our church fully accessible, air-conditioning, and cushioned

pews. In 2024, a memorial garden, providing a pleasant place to meditate and rest, was



created. Many fundraisers (suppers, concerts, pies) are held. We have a benevolent fund for local people in need and we collect food and clothing to give to distributing organizations. The choir has been active since 1889. Women's groups have always been an important support since

1890. Koffee Klatch, a social group, meets weekly. We have a vibrant VBS and Sunday School. We hope to attract more young families and new members to carry on where we leave off. We have hard working people in our congregation and an excellent minister to keep our hopes up as we strive to serve God, our community, and the world.

Submitted by Jim Moore (with acknowledgement to former historians - Evelyn Moore, Betty Lou Robbins, and Peggy Wilson.)

Email: info@belmontunitedchurch.ca Website: www@belmontunitedchurch.ca

Community of Faith: Belmont United Church, 245 College Street, Belmont, ON
(Elgin County, ARWRC - formerly Middlesex Presbytery)

Photo Credits: Donna Draper

Trivia Questions:

What year did the St George's Anglican Church bell get installed at Belmont United?

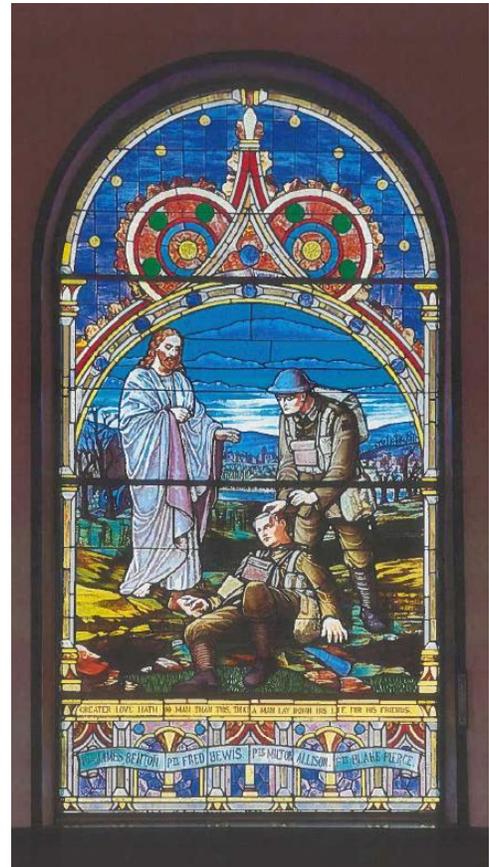
Who does the baptismal font (at the front of the sanctuary) commemorate and what year?

Brinsley United Church - Middlesex



Located in the Hamlet of Brinsley, on Brinsley Road, North of Ailsa Craig, plans for the church were started as early as 1913. The land for the church was donated by John Trevithick. The congregations of Marr's Hill (founded in 1865), Ebenezer (founded in 1860), Eden (founded in 1878) and West Church (founded in 1858) decided to join together. It was these four churches that formed the Brinsley Methodist Congregation opening their

doors for their dedication services on January 22, 1922. There are seven beautiful stained glass windows surrounding the church that were donated by the children of the church, the Ladies Aid, the Young People and in loving memory of some family members. A very special window recognizes that brave souls who answered their country's call and gave the ultimate sacrifice. The church was then known as Brinsley Methodist until 1925 when it became Brinsley United Church, part of "The United Church of Canada." Brinsley was connected with Crediton and Ailsa Craig, but after union, boundaries were aligned with Ailsa Craig and Carlisle until October 12, 2022. The three churches separated at that time and became individual churches. Our congregation had decided to continue with Sunday School every Sunday and Youth Group once a month from September through May. We hire a speaker for special church services about six times per year. The Sunday School has supported a child



through Compassion Canada since 1997. The church supports the Local Food Bank, the VON and the community we live in.

Trivia: Brinsley United Church is very proud of their stained-glass windows, which are in memory of different family members over the years. How many beautiful stained-glass windows are there?

There is a brick indicating the year for which the church was built. Can you find it? What year was it?



Browns United Church

Browns Corner came to the township in the early years of settlement. The Brown Family had few neighbours within a short distance other than the Uren settlement 4 miles away, and Moores Davis; 3 miles away. The Browns built their first shanty in the mid

1820's. They had few vehicles which made it very inconvenient to reach their surroundings, especially their nearest post office in Ingersoll, and nearest sawmill in Putnamville. Due to scarcity of winter feed, keeping animals throughout the winter season proved very difficult, however because of the plentiful wilderness around them, the warm seasons allowed for any quantity of cattle. Sheep however were unable to be kept due to wolves.

Throughout the years the Browns and their neighbours built a Methodist Episcopal Church which later became Browns United Church. A new church was dedicated on October 22, 1905, with three services on the same day: morning, afternoon and evening. This church has been maintained and refurbished throughout the years.

Burgessville United Church – Oxford



Burgessville Methodist Church joined the United Church of Canada in 1925. Formerly it was on a Methodist Circuit that included Zenda, Newark, and New Durham and that became the **Burgessville pastoral charge** in 1904. **Zenda** Methodist Church was established in the late 1800s.

Newark Methodist Church was established 1872. **New Durham** Methodist Church was started in 1853. **Burgessville** Methodist **Church** was established 1885. **Zenda Church** was destroyed by fire in 1975. **New Durham Church** was destroyed by a tornado in 1979. **Newark and Burgessville** celebrated 100 years of working together but separated in 2004 with the permission of Oxford Presbytery. Since 2004 **Burgessville United Church community of faith** has continued to worship with the help of Licensed Lay Worship Leaders and quarterly communion from various retired ministers. We covenanted with Antler River Watershed Region on March 1, 2020. Burgessville United Church is in the centre of the village of Burgessville on highway #59 in Oxford county. The red brick church was built in 1889 and continues to be used by other groups in the community for meetings and bazaars. A Google map often places us in Norwich...wrong... so don't use GPS! **Our Mission**

statement was decided during the weekend pulpit ministry of Rev. Kent Garrett (2010-2015) that we “*desire to minister to the needs of the community and beyond*”.

Dates came from records in Norwich archives and were shared by Blanche Porchak and Janie Shaafsma.

Calvary United Church, London



Calvary United Church began in 1890 as a mission field of Wellington Street Methodist Church in London, Ontario. At that time, houses were starting to be built south of the Thames River—but next to no Methodist churches. The project started in a private home on Emery Street with Sunday meetings for worship, and a Wednesday mission school. After two years the founding church on Wellington Street purchased a lot near the southwest corner of Emery and High Streets, where volunteers from the new congregation built a white frame building called High Street Methodist Mission.

Until 1910 the Mission was led by volunteers and by student ministers. That year the Mission hired its first ordained minister, who oversaw the purchase of a larger lot about 750 metres west. The original frame building was pulled on logs to the new site, and renamed Ridout Street Methodist Church.

The congregation began fundraising to build a larger, more permanent brick church, which opened in September 1914. In 1925 after church union the name changed again, to Calvary United Church. The congregation built and dedicated a Sunday School wing in 1939, and another new Christian Education wing in 1958.

The congregation celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2015, and is still active, serving London's Old South residents and others with ordained leadership, groups for adults, women, youth, and children, and space for a host of religious and other neighbourhood



Calvary Jazz Vespers November 2023

activities, such as monthly Community Breakfasts, a Pollinator Garden, monthly Jazz Vespers, and a community nursery school which operated at Calvary from 1951 to 2024.

Calvary became Affirming in 2024.

Looking to the future, Calvary has joined with 3 other southwest

London United Churches in a 2-year Collaborative Ministry project, 4 churches sharing 3 full-time ministers—the first configuration of its kind in Antler River Watershed Region.

Trivia:

Who was the first ordained minister of what is now known as Calvary United Church?

Calvary is one of probably very few United Churches in Antler River Watershed Region with a stained glass window depicting a canoe ride. Where is this window located?

CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH, ST. THOMAS

Originally founded as a mission church in May 1874 by Rev. A.E. Griffith from the Methodist Episcopal Conference, the first service was held in the Ladies' Waiting Room of the Canada Southern Railway Station. On October 15, 1874, Central Methodist Church, located on the corner of Moore and Wellington Streets, was dedicated. By 1894 there had been two additions so, in 1897, having outgrown the building again, a new building was constructed on the same site driven by a famous team of evangelists, Crossley and Hunter. Designed by the same architect as Massey Hall, Sidney R.

Badgley, the sanctuary is noted for having "amazing acoustics" and beautiful stained-glass windows.



Renamed in 1925, Central United Church improved physical accessibility with a parking lot in the 70's created by purchasing three adjacent lots, ramps in the 80's. and installing a lift to all three levels and two accessible washrooms in '97 (a third was added later). In 2013 monitors installed in the Sanctuary improved visual accessibility. In 2022, a mural depicting diversity and inclusion was added to the west wall of the gym/class/meeting rooms built in the 1950/60.

Home to the *Inn Out of the Cold* from 2010 to 2022, Central United continues to live out its governing value of *Building a Caring Community for all People* every day, including Sundays.

Now, the church is facilitating *Our Place Respite Inc.* becoming an incorporated ministry of the United Church of Canada. Central continues to function as a community and faith center for many groups while raising awareness and funds for organizations both within St. Thomas and beyond.



Submitted by Kathryn Fletcher, fletcherfamily@rogers.com

Community of Faith: Central United Church, St. Thomas, Elgin County

Photo Credits:

Photo One: Central United Celebrates 150 Years October 20, 2024, submitted by Betty Field (Written or email consent obtained from all choir members).

Photo Two: Beginning of Hope by DERKZ submitted by Betty Field

Trivia:

1. What does the largest stained-glass window on the east wall of the sanctuary depict
2. What organization performs a British Style pantomime at Central each fall?

COLBORNE STREET UNITED CHURCH

London



In 1853 London had a population of roughly 10,000 and extended north to Huron Street. Though the district between Piccadilly and Huron Streets was sparsely settled, the members of North Street Church looked to the future and decided to start a mission in

St. George's ward. This marked the beginning of what would eventually become Colborne Street church.

The mission consisted of a single building measuring 30' x 40' located on the north side of St. James Street, a short distance east of Waterloo Street. The lot was donated by John and W. Carling and the cost of the church came in at 210 pounds, not including furnishings.

At first the church was known as St. George's, but records show that the first reference to the church in September 1854 as being St. James Street Church.

On January 4, 1859, during a rowdy political election campaign in London, the church was burned to the ground. Members were granted the use of St. George's School as a place of worship and took up the challenge of raising money for a new Church. Once sufficient funds had been raised, a new site was chosen, and the lot on St. James Street was exchanged for one on the north side of Pall Mall Street near Colborne Street. The



tender of Edward Garratt at \$770.00 was accepted. The building was 30' x 40' and bore the inscription in marble on the front of the church: "Wesleyan Methodist Church, AD 1859."

The building was insured for \$800.00, and it was decided to rent the centre pews for \$3.00 each and the side pews for \$2.00 each. The Chapel Keeper, Mrs. Holland, received a stipend of \$36.00 per annum.

In 1888, due to the rapid growth of the district and of membership in the Pall Mall Church, it was decided to secure a site for a new church. The old site was exchanged with Mr. John Christie for a new location, 100' x 130' on the southwest corner of Colborne and Piccadilly Streets, finally establishing what is known today as Colborne Street United Church.

The church was dedicated on December 15, 1889. The total cost of the building was \$18,174.70. The cost of the furnishings was \$900.00 and was defrayed by the Ladies Aid. The mortgage was burned on November 17, 1913, and in 1925 Colborne Street Methodist Church voted to join the United Church of Canada. Colborne Street United Church enjoys a rich history, but more important, it looks forward to a vibrant, bold, and daring future!

Submitted by: Frank Staples (fwstaples@gmail.com)

Community of Faith: Colborne Street United Church, London, Middlesex County

Trivia:

In what year was the church at the corner of Colborne and Piccadilly Streets dedicated?

From the website: Who is the minister currently serving our church?

College Avenue United Church

Woodstock, Oxford

In the late 1880's, Woodstock was in need of another Methodist church in, what was at that time, the east end of the city. The Norwich Avenue Methodist Mission opened its doors in 1889. The church soon outgrew this building and a new location was needed.

A suitable site on College Avenue was selected but at the last minute, the congregation chose a more

desirable property on a different street.

For some strange reason they retained the name College Avenue.

The present sanctuary was constructed and



Photo by Marilyn Krueger

fully furnished for \$10,000! In 1908, a Warren pipe organ was installed, which is still in use every Sunday. Additions in 1924, 1956 and 1969 have made the church a considerable presence in what is now the centre of Woodstock. The building is in use 7 days per week, not only by the congregation but also by various social services and cultural groups. It is a very exciting time to be part of College Avenue and God has a great plan for the next 136 years!

Submitted by: Kevin Anderson handkanderson@hotmail.com

Community of Faith: College Avenue United Church, Woodstock, Oxford County

Photo credits: Marilyn Krueger

Trivia Questions: On what street is College Avenue located?

What year was the present sanctuary constructed?



Corunna United Church - Corunna, Lambton

While the United Church of Canada is celebrating its wonderful and impressive centennial in 2025, the people of Corunna United also have another reason to celebrate: this year marks our 170th anniversary as a worshiping space within the village that looks out over the St. Clair River, the village that was originally slated to be the capital of Canada in 1823, but was moved inland to Ottawa after the War of 1812 to secure the nation's capital from any potential American attacks out of next-door Michigan.

The first preaching service that developed into our church was held in 1851 by a Wesleyan Methodist, Rev. E. White. A building on downtown Hill Street was completed in 1855, marking the official start of the Corunna congregation. It was changed from its original wooden structure to brick in 1927, two years after the creation of the United Church of Canada. During WWII and soon after, Lambton County experienced phenomenal growth due to the birth of the petro-chemical industry in nearby Sarnia, allowing Corunna United's congregation to swell to such numbers in the Sunday School (from 140 to over 400!) that an expansion to the church building was necessary. At this



time, Corunna United was part of a larger pastoral charge that included the nearby communities of Courtright and Sixth Line, but by 1956 Corunna United became a self-supporting congregation.

Among the other major upgrades to the church were the purchases of a new organ, pulpit, lectern, Communion altar, and Baptismal font. In 1987, a wheelchair-accessible elevator was installed. In 2022, after many years of being a half-time pastoral charge, the congregation felt they could afford to return to full-time ministry, which proved successful as while other churches in Corunna were sadly forced to close down, our weekly attendance numbers steadily grew. A lot of the reason behind that falls on the congregation who joyfully welcome one and all to not only the worship services, but into a vast array of volunteer positions (if they feel comfortable doing so). Food prep for outreach is the biggest draw, and it is nothing to watch 30-35 volunteers (almost all seniors in their 70's and 80's) make and sell 1000 or more fruit, meat, chicken, or turkey



pies in less than three days, between 6-8 times per year in addition to hosting various suppers for community functions! We joke that if you come to Corunna United, you'd better enjoy eating because that's what you'll be doing a lot of! Truly, this is the place to visit!

Corunna United is located at 198 Hill Street, Corunna, Ontario, a 12-minute drive south of Sarnia.

Written by Rev. Bob Mercer:
mercercuc@gmail.com

Corunna United is part of St. Clair Township, in Lambton County.

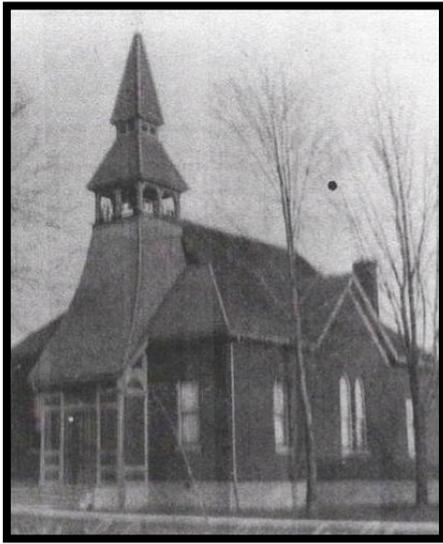
Outside photo of Corunna United is by Penny Parker. Inside sanctuary photo is by Connie Capes-Leslie, DLM. All participants' likenesses have been consented to.

Trivia: We need a good amount of storage space for not only our many pies, but also the ingredients. How many deep freezers do we have on our premises?

In 2024, Jim Randall designed and built a Little Free Library for outside the church, mirroring the look of Corunna United. How long did it take him to complete this project?

Darrel S. Moffat Memorial United Church Tilbury - Chatham Kent

The first Canada Presbyterian Church of Tilbury Centre was built in 1887, and served the congregation until 1924, when the Darrel S Moffat Memorial Church (DSM) was opened that year. When Church Union took place the next June of 1925,



Tilbury Centre Presbyterian Church - 1901

a two point Charge with Quinn United Church (7 kilometers South of Tilbury). In 1884, the Presbyterians built the wood frame building which was used as Quinn Presbyterian and in 1925 Quinn United Church. In 2014, the Quinn congregation disbanded. The

the name was changed to the Darrel S Moffat Memorial United Church. In 1927, the Tilbury Methodists made the move to the DSM UC Building, and the old Methodist Church was moved beside the new church to serve as the Church Hall. The present Church Hall was built in 1950.

The Darrel S Moffat United Church was part of



Darrel S Moffat United Church – winter 2024 front

building was sold to the local farmer who reclaimed the land as farmland.

Today, Darrel S Moffat Memorial United Church is part of a 4 church – 3 Pastoral Charge Ministry Sharing Agreement. We continue to worship every other week with 20 to 30 at worship. Darrel S Moffat serves the wider Tilbury Community, helping the Tilbury Food Bank (financially and with supplies), Monthly Services at the Tilbury Manor Nursing Home, and working with the Tilbury Legion with their Remembrance Day Services. The congregation presently meets in the accessible Church Hall, and leases the Sanctuary to the Christian Congregation of Canada church that meets on Saturday nights. May God continue to bless our ministries.



Spaghetti Supper March 2025

Hall decorated in Italian theme

Submitted by: Andrea Webb Price and Reverend Eric Skillings;

Website: www.Facebook.com/DSMUnitedChurch

Email: dsmunitedchurch@gmail.com

Community of Faith:

Darrel S Moffat Memorial United Church

Tilbury, Chatham Kent, Ontario

Photo Credits: Humphrey Rogers and Eric Skillings

Trivia Questions:

1. When were the LED lights installed in the Church Hall?
2. What year was the present day Darrel S Moffat Memorial Church opened?

Dorchester United Church Middlesex



From its beginnings in 1856 to the present, Dorchester United Church has been an important community of faith in the town of Dorchester. In its early years, many local and immigrant families joined to worship, build, organize, and care for each other and their neighbours as the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Smaller communities would have joined

together initially, first in a one-room schoolhouse, until more permanent buildings were built, or communities grew to begin their own church. In 1889, the current church building was completed and dedicated by October of that year, with an estimated cost of \$5,500.

By 1925, the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in Canada decided to amalgamate as the new United Church of Canada. Both congregations in Dorchester decided in favour of uniting as well, taking two years to merge and choosing the current church building as their location for the new Dorchester United Church. Since then, we have been blessed by the merger of Crumlin United Church (2013) and Dorchester Presbyterian Church (2024) members.

Over the years, many dedicated congregants have come and gone through our church doors, many updates and renovations have occurred to the building (electricity and heating, kitchen and classroom spaces, elevators and screens), and many helping hands have shared the love of God in their community. DUC is known for its care of congregants and community through Sunday worship services, weekly gatherings (coffee and education), community programs (Holy Diner, Immigrant sponsorship, Dorchester Foodbank), and its many fundraising events to bless these programs. May

we continue to be faithful to the Spirit's work in us and our community.



Submitted by: Carol Reid, Grace Van Harten (dorchesteruc.secretary@gmail.com); *Community of Faith:* Dorchester United Church, Dorchester, Middlesex County; *Photo Credits:* Carol Reid

Trivia Questions:

Does Dorchester United Church have an online presence?

How old is the current building where Dorchester United Church worships?

Dundas Street Centre United Church

London, ON - Middlesex



We began in 1846 as a group of British and American Methodists meeting for prayer and worship in a small cottage on Adelaide Street near Bathurst. In 1856 a house was rented for worship on Adelaide Street while plans were being made for construction of a church. By 1860 a frame church, able to accommodate 300 people, had been built on the northeast corner of Adelaide and King Streets. Adelaide Methodist Church, as it was called,

was sold later to the Anglicans and then to the Baptists. Wooded property at the corner of Dundas and Maitland Streets was purchased in 1869. The yellow-brick, Gothic-style Dundas Street Wesleyan Methodist Church was dedicated on April 3, 1870. In 1876 it was named Dundas Street Centre Methodist Church to distinguish it from Dundas Street East Methodist Church built in 1874. Dundas Street Centre Methodist Church burned to the ground on February 13, 1895, but was quickly replaced with the present red-brick building, built in the Romanesque Revival style that was popular during the Victorian



era. The cornerstone was laid July 1, 1895. The Sunday School Auditorium was completed first and dedicated on October 24, 1895; the new Sanctuary was dedicated on May 24, 1896. The pipe organ, a powerful three-manual Casavant, was installed in 1930. In 1962, the church was expanded to include Shambleau Hall, which housed Christian education classrooms and a gym. The unique Sanctuary was given a heritage designation by the city in 1985; it is recognized for its semicircular freestanding balcony, its beautiful Victorian stained glass windows and dome and its wonderful acoustics. In 1991 the narthex and exterior also received a heritage designation. Many changes have occurred over the years. Just recently, Shambleau Hall and the gym were modified to provide rental space for a daycare and the Apostles Continuation Church International. Ours is a mission-oriented church with a long history of reaching out to the community and working in partnership with other non-profit agencies to provide spiritual, mental and physical wellness to those in need.

Submitted by: Diane Cuppels (dcuppels@sympatico.ca), Jim Traquair (jamesatraquair@gmail.com) and Howard Rundle (HRundle@fanshawec.ca)

Photo Credits: Victor Fulcher, Diane Cuppels

Trivia: What is the name of the outreach program which operates out of our basement providing clothing for agencies which are helping the needy in our community?

When Dundas Street Centre United Church purchased (in 1869) the property on which it now sits, what was its formal name at that time?

Emmanuel United Church, Windsor, Essex



Emmanuel United Church began as a small mission church on Ottawa Street in Windsor in 1920, known as Ottawa Street Methodist Church.

A new church was built soon after, at the present site in 1925. This new

church was called Ottawa United Church, one of the first dedicated after formation of the United Church of Canada.

Over the years, our congregation continued to grow, and by the early 1950's a larger sanctuary was needed. In 1956, our warm and inspiring sanctuary was erected and dedicated to the glory of God. Adjoining the sanctuary is a small, intimate chapel that is used for private prayer and worship. To mark this



new beginning, the name of our congregation was officially changed to that of Emmanuel United Church.

In 1997, we welcomed Grace United Church with the amalgamation of our two congregations. “The Good Shepherd” stained glass window from the Grace United building has found a special place above the balcony in our sanctuary. In 2024 Emmanuel and Central United (a congregation with more than 200 years of history in Windsor) successfully amalgamated. We have been much enriched by the coming together of our three churches.

In 2023, Emmanuel United voted to become an affirming congregation, deepening our ongoing to commitment to welcoming all.

From its earliest years, Emmanuel United has sought to respond to the spiritual and community-based needs of those within the congregation and beyond its walls. We continue this tradition today in the name of Christ.

Submitted by Rev. George Bozanich

georgebozanich@gmail.com

Community of Faith: Emmanuel United Church, Windsor, Essex County

Photo Credits: Nick Morvay

Trivia Questions:

What is the date on the cornerstone near our center doors?

Who is our Minister Emeritus?

Epworth United Church 56 Division Street, South, Kingsville, Ontario



Kingsville Pastoral
Charge better known as
Epworth United Church
has a long history in the
town of Kingsville
dating back to 1817
when a small log
Methodist chapel was
built. In 1891, property

was purchased at Epworth's current location. A new brick church was built and completed in 1893. The church was named Epworth Methodist Church in honour of John Wesley's birthplace. In 1925, the name became Epworth United Church. A devastating fire in 1935 destroyed the church. The current structure is the result of a rebuilding effort that began in the same year and was completed in 1936. Epworth is very proud of its Cassavant Organ which was donated by the prominent Conklin family. The unmodified organ is still in use today, and organists love to come to play this fine instrument. Most recently, the congregation decided to upgrade the Audio-Visual capabilities in the Sanctuary. The new system has improved the sound quality for people attending church and has enabled the church to stream services for people to participate from home or while on vacation.

Life at Epworth has always been strong. Over the years the halls have been filled with music, Bible Study groups, Sunday School for all ages, U.C.W. Gatherings, Prayer

Groups, Vacation Bible School programmes, and various FUNd-raising events. Epworth strives to support the Kingsville Community. The local High School and Elementary schools receive financial support for their snack and breakfast programmes. The Coats for Kingsville programme which was started about 10 years ago has supplied warm winter coats for many people. Each year, our church hosts a Spring Ring to highlight the skills of our Handbell Choir and Silver Bells from Windsor. As well, a number of Girl Guide groups and the Kingsville-Essex Band meet in our building. The Kingsville Goodfellows use our hall during their Christmas Hamper Drive. In 2024, Epworth hosted a Korean Youth Group from Toronto for a summer retreat where they shared their faith and talents, along with a Korean supper with the community. This wonderful mix of cultures may become an annual event. After a brief break due to COVID, our church is re-combining with neighbouring United Churches for summer services. Epworth hopes to share God's love with others for a long time to come.

Community of Faith: Epworth United Church, Kingsville, Essex County

Email Address: secretary@epworthkingsville.com

Photo Credits: Leon Barlow

Trivia Questions:

1. Which of God's creatures finds a nesting spot at Epworth United Church?
2. What challenge did the members of Epworth United Church recently undertake to support their community?

Erie Street United Church Ridgetown – Kent County

In 1875, the congregation of Ridgetown Methodist Church was founded. By 1876, they had moved into their wonderful new building on Erie Street South. In 1925, with the formation of The United Church of Canada, the church became Erie Street United Church. For 132 years, generations have enjoyed worship, fellowship, education and music in their grand building. Eventually serious structural issues made it necessary to find a new church home. So in 2008, the congregation paraded down Erie Street to their new location at 7 Erie Street North, site of the former Ridgetown Salvation Army Church and settled into life in their new and fully accessible building. Now, new generations are learning and growing in faith and fellowship together. And there was no need to change the name - Erie Street United Church remains.

ESUC Mission: As a congregation, we welcome everyone to share our joy and fellowship. We celebrate the Good News through ministry and outreach, with special focus on youth.

ESUC Vision: To be a caring, cooperative Christian community





The picture of our congregation shows us all "disguised" as sheep, helping the Sunday School kids tell a bible story.

Trivia Question:

Erie Street United Church loves music! Is there an anthem performed by the choir most Sundays in the church service?

ETONIA UNITED CHURCH – Brant

In 1862 Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Eaton donated land to construct Governor's Road Church. The first trustees : Jacob Hess, John Barker, William Sibbick, Nathaniel Wood organized bees, and a modest church was erected at a cost of \$100.00. The circuit of Princeton and Governor's Road in as set off from the Paris circuit in 1869. In 1870, the Church of as recorded as Etonia Methodist Church. At church union it became Etonia United Church. The 100th Anniversary of the church was celebrated in 1962.



In 1984, Ed & Elsie Brunton donated land adjoining the present site, in order that a new building could be constructed. It was completed under the leadership of the building committee - Brian Ackland, Ed Brunton, Clifford Collard and Vernon Eaton.

All members of the church and many of the greater community assisted. The congregation humbly pays tribute to the pioneers who erected the original house of worship and is equally indebted to all of the local area who continue to contribute so generously with volunteer labour and monetary donations in the maintaining of our present building. Working together has made possible the continuation of this welcoming and vital church. The building is used for worship and for many local events. The people of Etonia look forward to a bright future with faith and hope.

Submitted by: Audrey Hall

audreyjeanhall@gmail.com

Antler River Watershed Region



Editor's Note: On May 4, 2025, Princeton United Church and Etonia United Church came together as Etonia-Princeton United Church.

Trivia Question:

Etonia-Princeton UC is an anomaly in Antler River Watershed. Why is that?

First United Church - St Thomas, Elgin



The congregation that is today First United Church was founded in 1834 on Stanley Street. The original building was destroyed by fire. Land donated by the

Curtis Family was used to build the next version of the Methodist Church at the corner of what would become Curtis and St George Streets. This structure was also destroyed by fire in 1946. The church bell fell from the steeple and made a final clang. As a project to raise funds for the new church, the old bell was melted down and forged into small bells which were then sold to pay off some of the mortgage. Our current Gothic structure was opened on March 5, 1950. In order to generate income, our church has hosted a Christian School since 2021. With the advent of \$10 a day, daycare, the church has decided to become a



daycare facility serving the neighbouring parts of our community. Additionally, an EarlyON Centre (for preschoolers and parents) was moved here in 2024. Congregants actively support the local Food Bank, Christmas Care and other ventures living into our tenants of Kindness, Love, Respect and Fairness. First United promises to be a vibrant part of our community well into the future.

Submitted by: Richard Auckland, rauck27@gmail.com

Community of Faith: First United Church, St. Thomas, Elgin County

Trivia Questions:

What is the date on the cornerstone on the east side of the building?

From the website: Who are the current ministers serving our church?

Forest United Church Forest, Ontario - Lambton



On April 4th, 1926, almost a year after church union in 1925, inaugural services were held in Forest, uniting the congregations of Central Congregation, James Street Methodist and several families from St. James Presbyterian. The three groups came together with a spirit of cooperation and with the understanding that a new place of worship was needed to accommodate the enlarged congregation. After acquiring a lot, hiring an architect and builder, the construction proceeded with the laying of the cornerstone on Sept. 26, 1927. Three Sunday services, with special speakers, were held in January, 1928, when the new church was opened, with 897 registering at the first service. The church was of gothic design and built of red brick with stone facings. The new church had six entrance points, a lower auditorium, a modern kitchen, the sanctuary seated 523, the choir loft 35 and the upper balcony 125. For our 50th Anniversary, our church historian and genealogist, Eleanor Nielson, wrote the story of the church beginnings "Pioneers and Preachers" from which much of this history was obtained. Changes and renovations over the years have altered the building significantly with a new addition and elevator added in 1989. Almost 100 years later, Forest United has welcomed members from churches in the area that

have closed...Arkona, Bethel, North Plympton, Ravenswood, Warwick, and Uttoxeter. Today, we still enjoy an enthusiastic choir, a bustling Sunday School, a warm and friendly UCW, and a faithful, kind and generous congregation. *“Let us be known by the way we love.”*

Connie Clark

connie@clarkmail.ca

Forest United Church

Secretary Debbie MacPherson

funitedoffice@execulink.com

Photo Credit; Ruth Gallant

Trivia:

What are the four symbols on the north and south windows of the church?

Website question: Who are the present minister and music director at Forest United?

Glenwood United Church

1825 Grand Marais Rd W., Windsor, Ontario, Essex County

Seventy years ago, this area had rapid residential growth. Essex Presbytery saw the need for a new United Church and purchased this property in January 1955 – 1 ½ acres with an old greenhouse attached (a symbol of



new growth). On March 6, 1955, Glenwood’s first service of worship was held in the home located at 1657 Grand Marais Road West. Ten people attended – (bringing their own chairs) and 8 children – (sitting on orange crates). The offering was \$20.20.

The cornerstone of the first building of Glenwood United Church is in the lower west area of the north wall of the CE building. This cornerstone holds a glass jar containing the names of the 48 charter members, the 27 children of the Sunday school, a copy of the Observer and the Windsor Star. The first building was built in 1955 followed by two additions – one in 1957 the other in 1966. This building is now known as the Christian Education Building. Until the Sanctuary was completed in 1962 worship services were held in this building.

The shape of the roof of the Sanctuary is the major architectural feature. From Grand Marais Rd it resembles a boat and thus has acquired the name ‘The Ark on the Grand Marais Way’. We have both an organ and a Grand Piano in the Sanctuary – both of which are used on a weekly basis. Stained Glass Windows in the Sanctuary are in memory or honour of families of our congregation and the theme of the windows is “The Life and Teachings of Jesus”.

Outside on the lawn is a 'Peace Pole' inscribed with four languages – Ojibwa/Odawa, French, English and Korean. The Windsor Korean First Presbyterian Church also calls Glenwood their church home and we have shared Christmas Eve and Good Friday services together. At the east end of the Sanctuary is the Anniversary Garden which was commemorated as part of our 50th Anniversary celebration and holds a time capsule, buried at this time. Bricks that enclose



the gardens are inscribed by the names of both current and previous members and some are in memory of those who have passed. Two chairs are also inscribed with memorial names. Recently a 'Prayer Box' was donated to the garden. This garden is open to the public 24 hours a day.

This building, and the spirit of God, has enabled us to reach out to people internationally, nationally and locally at times of need and stress. We have been active in providing water, food relief, flood relief and tools for peace to many of the peoples of Africa, the people of Haiti and earthquake relief to the people of Turkey. Recently we sponsored a children's choir from Uganda, helping those children remain in school. We've participated in the Healing Fund for Indigenous communities and provided foods for the people of Canada's North. We currently buy our coffee from an Indigenous owned coffee producer who provides equipment to enable residents of reserves to have purified drinking water. We have sponsored refugees from Vietnam, Ukraine and most recently Iraq. We also continuously support the Downtown Mission and Hiatus House as well as Scouting, Guide and AA groups, who have been meeting at Glenwood almost since the beginning. An additional cornerstone of our mission has always been Outreach.

We are looking forward to celebrating our 70th Anniversary in 2025 and to continuing our community and widespread outreach.

Trivia questions:

At which Anniversary was the time capsule buried?

Which Moderator of the UCC was a teenager at Glenwood

Photo credit: Geri Sutts

Author: Helen Rattray



Grace United Church – Sarnia, Lambton

🎵 “Where it began, I can’t begin to know when, but then I know it’s growin’ strong... Reachin’ out, touchin’ me, touchin’ you.” Neil Diamond’s lyrics make me think of Grace. I settle in, get to know others, feel the warm welcoming group - followers of Jesus. This sense of belonging permeates our vision:

God's grace shines in our celebrating people.

We grow in faith together and share our love of Jesus Christ.

We welcome challenges, confident that God will guide us.



Grace began as a mission of Lambton Presbytery. Members of area United Churches left their congregations to plant a church in rapidly growing north end Sarnia. From meeting in schools (1956), the church expanded with its community (a manse in 1958, a chapel in 1959). But it is the vision that

drives us! We don’t take the easy path; rather, we take the path down which God has already headed. It is why we built the Christian Education wing before a sanctuary (1964 and 1999), why we sponsor refugee families (e.g., the Lam family in 1980, the Al Mudeer family in 2015), why we lease the manse to Community Living (1997), why we became an Affirming Ministry (2020) and why we pursue a theological shift from Relevance to Resonance (2024). May we move forward “confident that God will guide us.”

Submitted by: Marilyn Barros, Christopher Cooke

Community of Faith: Grace United Church, Sarnia, Lambton County

Photo credits: Rev. Patrick Morrison

Trivia Questions:

1. How many children attended the first Sunday School class?
2. Who are the four figures featured in the chapel stained glass?

ILDERTON UNITED CHURCH

Ilderton, Middlesex



Ilderton United Church finds its roots in the early Methodism of the London District of Upper Canada. The Ilderton-area was served by circuit riders in various buildings from the 1820s to the 1840s. In 1847, a brick church was built

on lands donated by John Littlewood on Lot 25, Concession 12, London Township – the first brick church in the London District. At the time, Ilderton was part of the three-point “Birr Circuit”, comprised of Wesley, Ilderton and Birr churches.

In 1875, the original Littlewood church was replaced with a new brick building with a steeple. In 1890, with the coming of the railway and the growth of the village at Ilderton, the congregation undertook the mammoth task of moving the church beam by beam and brick by brick onto a new site in the village. The church opened there in 1892.

On November 10, 1910, the church building was destroyed by fire. It was replaced by the current building, which opened in 1912. The congregation joined the United Church of Canada in 1925 and formed part of a two-point charge with Birr United Church until Birr closed in 2018.



Submitted by: John Goudy, Chair of the Official Board
Email: jgoudy@scottpetrie.com

Community of Faith Name: Ilderton Pastoral Charge (Ilderton United Church)

Community of Faith Location: Ilderton, Ontario
Municipality of Middlesex Centre
County of Middlesex

Photo credits: Historical photograph from post card – uncredited
Present-day photo: Google ©2025

Trivia questions:

Under which British hero of the Battle of Trafalgar did John Littlewood serve as midshipman as a boy?

Ilderton United Church has a doppelganger that also opened in 1912. Where is that church located?

Kilworth United Church, Middlesex

Kilworth United Church at 2442 Oxford Street West, London, On., built in 1850, was in the centre of Old Kilworth village and is now surrounded by the Komoka Provincial Park. Heritage



Designation was obtained in 2019. This small unique sanctuary of stone and limestone cornerstones, cut from the foot of a waterfall on the nearby Thames River, has seen many changes over the years. The Sunday school hall, built in 1890, is now called the Delaware Memorial Hall and displays stained glass windows from what was the Delaware Memorial United Church. Kilworth amalgamated with the Delaware Church in 2015. The kitchen replaced a dirt floor room with a hand pump in 1979. In 2024 a storage shed and large deck was added for outdoor services. The church hosts a weekly ukulele club, AA meetings, community dinners, movies and a weekly coffee social time. The Sunday



school currently has two students assisting in developing programs. Our outreach program supports various foodbanks, Ark Aid Mission Services, Karen's Place (which was founded by

one of our former parishioners) and Camp Kee-Mo-Kee. Over the years we have extended our hands to Oneida First Nations, our Indigenous neighbours.

We envision a future with a larger Sunday school and continued support for those in need as our world faces constant challenges. We are “The Little Church with a Big Heart.”

Submitted by: Beth Moyer

Community of Faith: Kilworth United Church, London, Middlesex County

Photo credits: Leanna Hess, Beth Moyer

Trivia Questions:

Where would you find the fossils in the exterior limestone wall of the church?

From the website: Who is Kilworth United Church’s resident harpist?

Knox United Church, Embro, Oxford County, Ontario

Written by Sheila A. Johnson
sjohnsonembro@gmail.com
February 24, 2025



Photo Credit: Rev. Susan Cole

The first Scot immigrants from the Highlands of Scotland arrived in Zorra Township in 1819¹. They were soon joined by scattered friends and family from Scotland arriving on their own and in 1829, the first shipload of Scots made their way to Zorra². Their first Presbyterian Church was a log structure built in 1833 on Concession 7 Lot 9. This building was quickly outgrown and in 1836, a new frame church was erected in Embro, called the “Auld Kirk”³. It was built with a grant of fifty pounds from the Synod of Upper Canada to

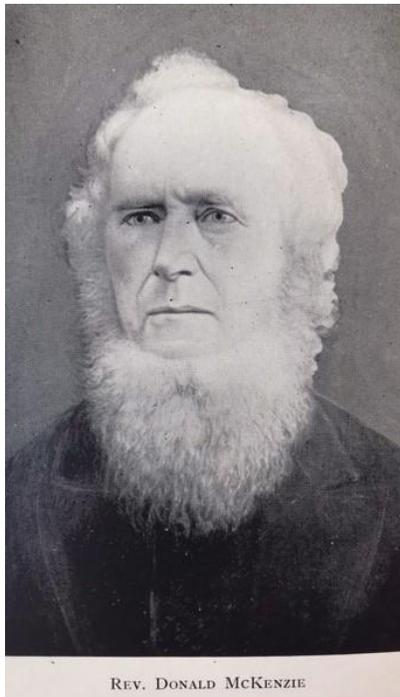
¹ W. D. McIntosh, *One Hundred Years in the Zorra Church* (Toronto: The United Church Publishing House, 1930), pg. 2-3. Immigration was often forced by “land clearances” in Scottish Highlands. British landowners cleared crofters off their land to make room for more profitable sheep. Immigrants often had to leave in the middle of the night, grabbing what possessions they could while their croft burned around them, set deliberately by land clearing agents.

² *One Hundred Years in the Zorra Church*, pg. 15.

³ *Ibid.*, pg. 86.

encourage construction of places of worship⁴. In 1863, a new brick church was constructed with a soaring steeple and large enough to accommodate 900 people⁵. 1400 people attended the dedication ceremony on a rainy February 19, 1863⁶. This building served as Knox Presbyterian Church of Embro until unification in 1925. It has served as the Knox United Church of Embro ever since.

The first Zorra minister was Reverend Donald McKenzie. He arrived in Embro, Ontario from Inverness, Scotland in 1834. Rev McKenzie conducted services in the Auld Kirk as well as serving area churches as an itinerant minister⁷. Donald McKenzie served the congregation of Knox Presbyterian Church as minister until 1872.



Source: McIntosh, *One Hundred Years in the Zorra Church*, pg. 157.

⁴ *One Hundred Years in the Zorra Church*, pg. 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pg. 93.

⁶ *One Hundred Years in the Zorra Church*, pg. 92.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pg. 158.

Trivia Questions

- 1. Knox United Church in Embro, Ontario was founded by new immigrants to the region in the early 19th century. What country did they come from?**
- 2. Who was the first minister of Knox Presbyterian Church in Zorra Township?**

Littlewood United Church

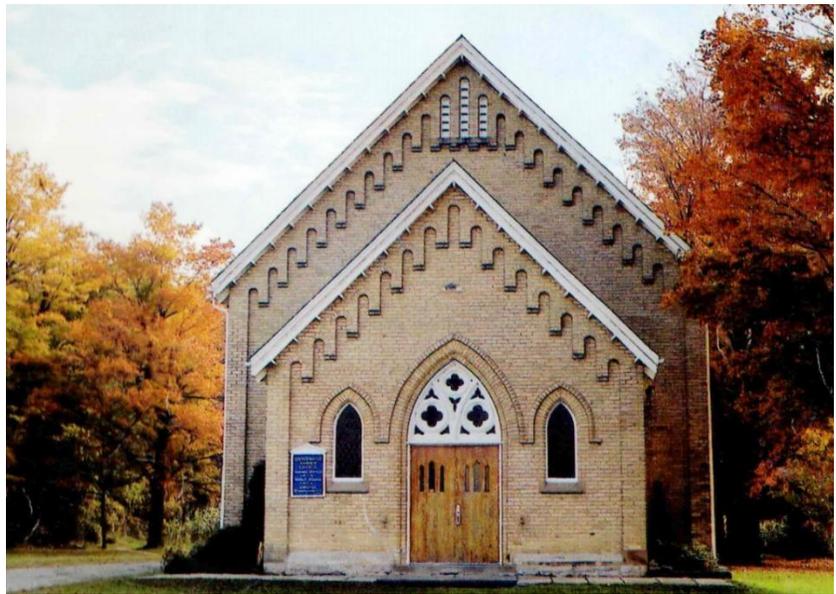
6780 Westdel Bourne, Middlesex Centre

Baker's Congregation was established in 1862, as one of the eight Churches on the Westminster Circuit of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. In 1867, land was deeded, and a frame Church was built on the Delaware - Westminster Township Townline. It was replaced by a brick building in 1893. A year later, in 1894, Baker's was renamed Littlewood Church. At this time the Littlewood community already consisted of a school, post office, blacksmith shop and later on a store was added.

Over the years, congregants have been faithfully involved in various Church groups, choirs, Sunday School, and much more.

Many turkey and beef suppers were held in the Church basement.

In 1972, a fire (arson) caused considerable damage to the front entryway, but eight months later the sanctuary officially reopened.



In 1979, Littlewood was the last remaining Church on the Westminster West Circuit and the Pastoral Charge was renamed "Littlewood". In 1986 our Charge partnered with St Andrews Westminster in a "Minister Sharing Project", which successfully carries on today. We continue to support numerous agencies that help those in need, including a 25 year growing project for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

We are thankful for the vision and faith of our ancestors that enables us to *Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness*. These words appear above the altar in our Church. You are invited to join us and our Minister Rev. Sue Browning on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am for coffee, fellowship and worship.

Submitted by: L. Kaiser, editor: J. Baker

Email: littewoodunitedchurch@gmail.com

Community of Faith: Littlewood United Church

Middlesex Centre

Middlesex County

Photo Credits: L. Kaiser

Trivia Questions

- 1) What is the date on the cornerstone by the front door?
- 2) What 'T' intersection is the church located on?

LONDON ROAD WEST UNITED CHURCH

SARNIA, ONTARIO



The first London Road West Church, rooted in the Wesleyan Methodist tradition, was established in 1857 in a small white frame building 50 rods west of Telfer Sideroad at the south corner of Highway #7. A new white frame building was completed in 1873 on the north side of the highway, again 40 rods from the corner, on land

donated by a parishioner family.

The current “*red brick church*,” still located at the corner of London Line and Telfer Side Road, was built in 1923 on the edge of the former Highway #7 leading into Sarnia. This traditional church building was officially dedicated on October 28, 1923, just two years before the United Church Union in 1925. They have faithfully served the surrounding rural community as followers of Christ ever since.

Eventually, due to the ever-increasing traffic and the ongoing expansion of both the highway and the city of Sarnia, additional property was acquired, and the original brick church was raised and moved 150 feet back to its current site in 1957. An expansion occurred in 1960 with the addition of the nave, new kitchen facilities, and a Christian Education wing, and these facilities became fully accessible in 1988.

The faithful congregation of London Road West is known for its generosity, commitment to the gospel, devoted choir, and musical gifts. Our active UCW group provides meals, pies, soups, and other fundraising activities throughout the year, including an Annual Bazaar.



Congregants actively support local agencies through an extensive annual Christmas outreach project and a yearly Lenten initiative, along with other endeavours. They demonstrate a commitment to social justice by assisting vulnerable individuals and families facing the impacts of poverty, such as food insecurity and mental health challenges. Local organizations, including Sarnia's Inn of the Good Shepherd, the Petrolia Refrigerator and Foodbank, Lambton Centre, and the Wellness Centre, receive support, reflecting their dedication to outreach, social equity, and care and compassion for their neighbours. London Road West United Church remains committed to the mission of the gospel and to being a faithful and essential part of the local community, both now and in the future.

Submitted by Pastor Roxanne Bale, roxanne.bale3@gmail.com

Community of Faith: London Road West United Church, Sarnia ON-Lambton

Photo Credits: Betty Allison

Trivia Questions:

What inscription is inscribed over the front door in the sanctuary?

What year is on the cornerstone of the church?

Melville United Church – Middlesex



Melville United Church (MUC) is located at 24159 Nairn Road in the Township of Middlesex Centre (formerly Lobo Township) and is

approximately a 20-minute drive northwest of the City of London. The congregation dates back to the 1820's when Scottish settlers worshipped together in their native Gaelic. In 1849, a small frame church was built with seats in the building 'rented' by the congregation members for a yearly fee. Sunday worship was a full day and included Sunday School for

all, followed by an English and then Gaelic service. In 1860, the 'little frame church' was dismantled from its nearby location and moved to the hamlet of Ivan – formerly known as Inkerman, a small community of 50 souls



boasting a post office, general store and hotel. In 1869, the church was renamed Melville Church, likely after Andrew or James Melville, two prominent Presbyterians of that time. In 1886, the old building was replaced with the current brick church. Records indicate that all the members volunteered in some capacity to build this lasting example of their faith where worship is still conducted today.

On December 21, 1924, the Melville congregation met to vote on the challenging subject of “Church Union” and the final vote was 77 for union and 49 against and in 1925 Melville celebrated their first service as part of the United Church of Canada. More recently, the MUC congregation committed to future generations building an addition with accessible washrooms, elevator, meeting room and office space. Like their predecessors, the members volunteered their time, monies and considerable skills to this project. With this addition, the MUC faith family, including an active UCW and Sunday School, prioritizes the worship experience, pastoral care, faith formation for all ages and environmental stewardship with live-streamed Sunday services, *many* food-related events, maintaining a website and social media presence, supporting Canada Food Grains projects, local homeless shelters and food banks. Most recently, MUC has raised funds to purchase specialized medical equipment for an individual in need. Demonstrating faith in action throughout the week for the wider community is a priority and our welcoming space hosts Art Cafes, Ontario Summer Games Road Races, music concerts, yoga classes, 4-H groups and more. The MUC family is thankful we continue to share our forebears’ deep and abiding faith in God’s love with each other and our community.

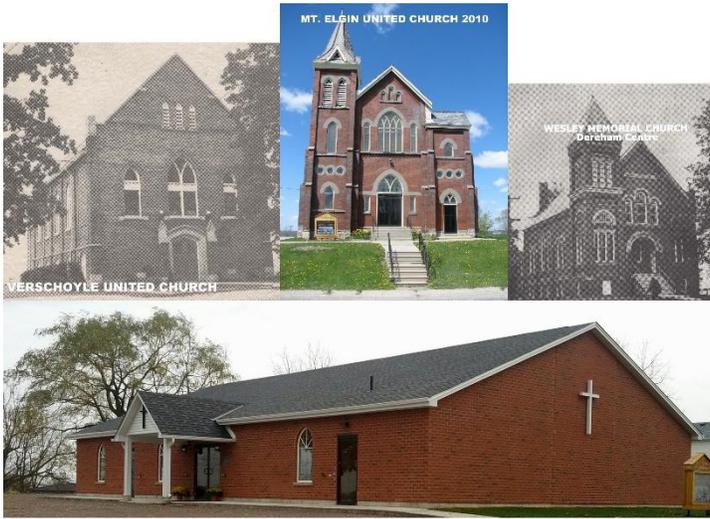
Trivia Questions:

How many patio stones have been dedicated in the Friendship Space (SW side of the parking lot entrance)?

What is the name of the hymn quoted on the website welcome page?

(melvilleuc.ca)

MOUNT ELGIN UNITED CHURCH – Oxford



Mt Elgin United Church overlooks the Upper Thames River watershed to the north and the Otter Creek watershed to the south. **For thousands of years** before colonial settlement, Indigenous peoples from many tribes called this land the centre of their lives and spirituality. After clearing the forests,

settlers farmed the fertile land. **In 1930**, the Verschoyle Presbyterian Church (far left), the Mt Elgin Methodist Church (middle) and the Wesley Memorial Church at Dereham Centre (right) formed a 3-point pastoral charge of the United Church of Canada. All the buildings were within 3 miles with each church serving their own unique farming community. **In 2025**, family descendants still recount the stories of the fires which destroyed frame churches and the structural failures of poorly constructed brick clad churches. But new churches were constructed inspired by the spiritual support of the circuit riders and the Sunday school classes attended by both children and adults. Changes in demographics and transportation, closed the churches at Dereham Centre in **1972** and Verschoyle in **2006**. Many came to Mt Elgin United Church.

In 2011 when the congregation decided to demolish and rebuild, we worshipped in the Mt Elgin Community Centre. **In 2012**, the new Mt Elgin United Church fully accessible multi-purpose building on one floor was built (pictured above). Surprising to some, but reminiscent of the faithful history of their collective past, within 3 years the building was

paid off! Today, during the week, there are a variety of activities and on Sundays, worship services are [streamed on YouTube](#). On Wednesday morning there is the Rural Café at the Community Centre.

As our community becomes increasingly more suburban, our congregation continues our faith journey. Whether we've grown up in Mt Elgin or come from other places or faith traditions, with our own faith stories of hope amidst adversity of failed structures and fires,

we are all welcomed. We are a work in progress striving to become a diversified Christian community as we celebrate the joy of Christmas, the deepening of Lent and Good Friday and the life of the risen Christ.



Submitted by: Marg Murray, murrayschell@gmail.com
Community of Faith: Mt Elgin United Church, Mt Elgin, Oxford County
Photo Credits: archives, Melissa Boesterd

Trivia Questions:

What inscription is on the stone to the right of the main door?

From the website, when did Pastor Lori Minler begin her service here?

New Scotland Ridge United Church

Faith shared. Hearts act. Grow with us



The New Scotland Ridge United Church, Rondeau Pastoral Charge is located on the Corner of new Scotland Line and Kent Bridge Road in the Municipality of Chatham Kent not far from Rondeau Park. The first service was held September 18, 2022, when the amalgamation of the Ridge Community Church and the New Scotland United Church of the former Guilds Pastoral Charge became official. As well as having deep rural roots, these two churches had a history of working together. They can trace their beginnings to the time of travelling preachers who held church services in homes and schoolhouses. The first church at the present New Scotland site was dedicated in 1879 by Dr Albert Carman and was called Carman Methodist Episcopal Church. There is a stone in the flowerbed near the door with Carmen and 1879i on it. In 1925, it was renamed Carman United Church. The original building was replaced in 1979 and renamed New Scotland United Church.

The Ridge Community Church sat near the corner of the Ridge Line and Mull Road for 103 years. It must have been quite a sight in 1919 to see a church building being moved by log rollers and 19 to 21 teams of horses. Purchased by the Ridge Presbyterian Community, this building was built on Ellen Street in Blenheim as an

Anglican Church in 1858. The last service at the Ridge Community Church was held on June 26, 2022. The building was demolished later that year.



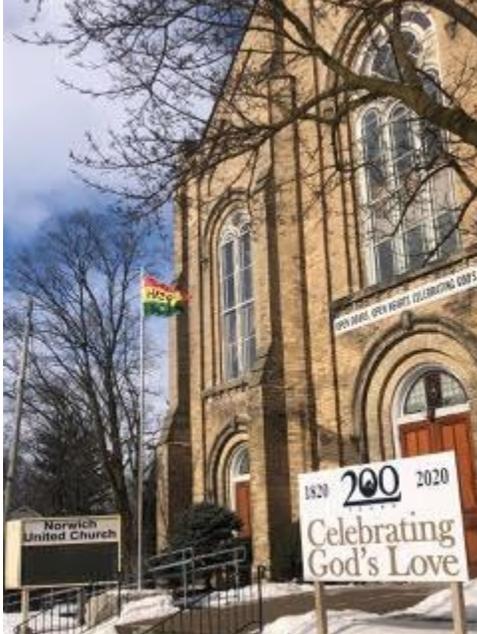
Our congregations joined together to be stronger and to grow as a community of faith. As once teams of horses pulled together, the members of our congregation are committed to work and pull together enabling our church to be a light to the community. We treasure our heritage and build on the past but are open to change, for without change there cannot be growth. Despite being a relatively small congregation (average weekly attendance is 38), we uphold the longstanding tradition of hosting events which draw in people from the greater community. We continue the New Scotland tradition of hosting a Vacation Bible School each summer. In 2024, 56 children enjoyed a week of fun and learning at New Scotland Ridge.

Submitted by: Ruth Pilbeam (rlpilbeam@hotmail.com), New Scotland Ridge United Church

Norwich United Church - Oxford

Open Doors, Open Hearts, Celebrating God's Love

Peter Lossing, founder of Norwich's Quaker settlement, placed a Methodist Meeting



House on his 1820 map of the Township. That year, Methodist Michael Stover, deeded a lot from his 1000 acre property to the Methodists so a place of worship could be built. It was to be used by all denominations until they could build a place of their own. His decision had lasting implications. Norwichville, a vigorous village, was about to develop around that Meeting House. A two storey frame building, in the style of the Hay Bay Meeting House, arose on the Stover land at the corner of what is now Clyde St. and Main St. Saddlebag preachers including William Ryerson served the Norwichville/Mt. Pleasant circuit

in early years. Later the forward thinking Methodists were ready for a new building. With a membership of 143 they built an unassuming brick church 36x65 feet in size in 1861.

Music played an important role in the new building. The circuit became Town Line, Northfield, New Durham, Newark and Norwich. A national Methodist Union in 1884 meant that the original Wesleyan congregation required a new much larger building. On May 25, 1885 the cornerstone was laid, several hundred persons attended the first service on February 7, 1886 in what was described as a majestic Italianate building. Rev. Williamson preached powerfully asking for pledges to pay the \$6500 debt and the church continued to play an important role in the village and area



hosting many events as it does today. **Church Union in June of 1925** brought 451 Methodists, 31 Presbyterians (from across the street), 31 Charter members (many former Quakers) and 1 Congregationalist together. A major renovation in 1928 provided the only recreational facility in town. An addition in 1960 provided room for an expanding Sunday School and renovations have continued to make this building the community asset it is today. We ensure a safe place to meet for community use. Recently, we've supported weekly coffee open house, twice weekly youth using the kitchen to develop life skills training of cooking and baking. Norwich has always been a strong supporter of causes beyond the community as well as a generous supporter of M&S, Ventures in Mission and refugee sponsorship. In this 100th Anniversary Year Norwich United Church celebrates 205 years of Worship, Service and Fellowship on the same site.

Submitted by Elisabeth Stone

Email address: stone_ge@oxford.net

Trivia Questions:

What circuit involved the saddleback riders in the early years?

Name one each character-defining element that contributes Norwich United Church and it's Manse to be named Of Heritage Value?

Olinda Ruthven United Church Ruthven, Essex

In 1916, our Church was part of a Methodist Circuit, which included Ruthven, Olinda, and Trinity at New California. At the inauguration of the United Church in 1925, these 3 congregations became United Churches, sharing a Minister, and remaining a 3 point charge



until 1990. The Olinda United Church and the Ruthven United Church voted to amalgamate at Ruthven on January 22, 1991. That was the birth of the Olinda Ruthven United Church. From that time forward we remain a part of the Ruthven Pastoral Charge, with Trinity New California. As a 2 point charge we share a Minister, with separate Sunday services at each Church, continuing to spread the “good news” to our congregations and our community.

As we celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada, we look to the future with guarded optimism. As are many Churches, our Church is faced with an aging congregation. With this being said, we continue to be proactive in our efforts to encourage new members to join us in our community of faith. Our Sunday services are at 9:30am, with both a children’s Sunday School program, as well as an active adult class. We also offer our Sunday services as an outreach, through the use of Zoom and YouTube.



We are blessed to have Blair Hall, as part of our Church building. The Hall, offering full kitchen facilities, is used by our Church family, as well as being rented to groups for special events. Our Church is fully accessible, including a lift to our Sanctuary.

At the rear of our building, are beautiful gardens and an Emmaus walking path, within a park-like setting.

Our 100th Anniversary committee will be hosting a “Garden Party”, in our Church gardens on Saturday, July 12th. The committee plans to provide live entertainment and refreshments. This event will be broadly promoted, hoping to encourage residents of the community to join us for the 100th Anniversary celebrations, while encouraging those attendees to consider joining our Church family.

Submitted by: Bill Kelly, Chair, Executive Board of Directors (wdkelly0@gmail.com)
Community of faith: Olinda Ruthven United Church, Ruthven, Essex County

Trivia Questions:

What is the date on the sandstone on the south side of our building?

What is the name of our current charge minister?



PEACE UNITED PASTORAL CHARGE

Oxford

Mission Statement: **MAKE ME A CHANNEL OF YOUR PEACE**



Peace United is located at 20 Samuel Street, in the lovely but growing town of Plattsville, in Oxford County. We became a church/congregation in 2010 when four local United Churches amalgamated to become one. Washington United, Plattsville United, Chesterfield United and Bright United joined to become what acquired the reputation of “poster child for successful amalgamation!” As we were led through the process of amalgamation by the late Rev Peter McKellar, we found our footing to go forward as one congregation with an attitude to be positive and renewed in our faith and our efforts to succeed. Plattsville United was chosen as the home for Peace as it had an addition in 1994 that housed a lift for people with mobility Issues, accessible washrooms and a new and bright office for our minister. The other 3 churches were sold and 2 became lovely homes and the other now holds the local heritage society and its displays. Some of the money from sales went towards installing a new and workable kitchen!

As with so many churches in this day and age, Peace has found its congregation to be aging and shrinking but we have found our efforts to reach out to the community, growing! We host dinner theatre as a fund raiser; we collect items for our local food bank; collect winter-wear for Operation



Sharing; Christmas gifts and donations go yearly to The Christmas Place; we sponsor several local families at Christmas with our Angel Basket donations; Space to Be is held monthly for moms and tots to gather; Friday Family Fun Night is a monthly venture to feed and involve families in the community. There is not enough time or space to list all our endeavors to reach out to people and introduce them to Peace United! As a past minister said...if there is a need Peace steps up!

OUR COMMITMENT AT PEACE:

Provide comfort

Embrace and include

Affirm in belonging

Connect in our community

Explore our faith

Submitted by: Maggie Alderson (walders@outlook.com)

Community of Faith: Oxford

Photo Credit: Denise Tew

Trivia Question: What activity happens on the last Friday of each month at Peace?

PEARCE- WILLIAMS SUMMER CAMP AND RETREAT FACILITY - ELGIN



In 1960, the United Church purchased the Sam Pearce farm for \$12K for the purpose of creating a camp culture. Pearce-Williams was the cornerstone of Christian camping and retreat experiences in Fingal, Ontario. Pearce-Williams was officially incorporated and camp programs began the following summer. Situated on 160 acres

of rolling hills, grasslands and forests, the Centre was home to cabins, a dining hall, a farmhouse with dorms attached, a Longhouse with a chapel, covered wagons, a craft shop, a pool and in later years, Pearce Hall. In 1975, the vision to make a year-round Centre became a reality and Rev. Murray Barnet was called to be the first full-time Co-ordinator. This successful venture led to leadership by Don Macpherson, Maya Landell and in 2005 Joe Richards was hired and is currently in the Executive Director role. Significant grants and donations were received to create accessible washrooms and showers in Williams Hall, a new porch around the farmhouse and a project manager was hired for World Camp and Farm Camp creation. The maintenance barn and craft barn were demolished and a new multi-purpose building and Humes Hall were built. Over the past decade, the Centre has undertaken significant facility upgrades, modernizing its 65 year old infrastructure to better serve as a welcoming, safe environment for the community for years to come.



Pearce-Williams has continued to thrive as a premier summer camp and retreat facility offering a variety of summer programs aiming at bolstering self- esteem and fostering community skills. Other than summer camp, this facility is booked with groups renting the property for retreats. Thousands of people of all ages have experienced the beauty of Pearce-Williams. The mission statement WELCOME, TEACH, SERVE continues to embody Pearce-Williams through personal growth, community building and spiritual development.

Submitted by Joanne Pond jpond753@gmail.com

Pearce-Williams Summer Camp and Retreat Facility, Fingal, Ontario, Elgin County

Photo Credits: Pearce-Williams photo gallery

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

What is on the porch of the farmhouse for everyone to enjoy?

From the website www.campisbetter.com how many different categories of summer camps are there to choose from?

PRINCETON UNITED CHURCH



The United Church in Princeton traces its roots back to the Wesleyan Methodist settlers of the early 19th century. Their original building was built in 1856. In 1880 the congregation moved to new, larger brick structure built at a cost of \$4000.00 The lot was purchased for \$2.00. According to the earliest records, the congregation at Princeton was always aligned with the

congregation at Etonia. Over the decades other churches have been added to the circuit and withdrawn. The congenial relationship endures today. The Methodist Church believed that it was effective for ministers to serve short terms with a congregation. This explains the service of 22 different ministers from 1880 until Union in 1925. The average stipend was \$600.00 annually. While living in the manse, wood for heating, feed for the horse and some foodstuffs were supplied. On March 10, 1926 the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations of Princeton agreed to a union with new congregation to be known as

Princeton United Church Services would be Sunday evenings and worship would be in the newer Methodist Church. Twenty three ministers have served from 1926 to present day. From the very first the members of Princeton United



Church have faithfully served the church and the wider community. As with many churches there have been many youth programmes as well as Sunday School. The women of the Church have been a force to reckon with in their experience and energy. As Jesus drew disciples to the table so does the church feed and care for their community. As with all things, change happens. So, it is with Princeton United Church. The closing service occurred on Sunday April 6, 2025. The congregations of Etonia and Princeton amalgamated to form a new church – Etonia-Princeton United Church.

Submitted by Audrey Hall audreyjeanhall@gmail.com

Princeton United Church, Oxford County, Antler River Watershed Region

Richards Memorial United Church, London, Ontario



(photo courtesy of Anita Ling)

Richards Memorial began its journey in 1951, when the congregation held regular worship and church meetings at Argyle Park Public School on Kathleen Street under the name Argyle United Church. Argyle United was a two-point charge with Bellwood United, which is now known as Rowntree Memorial. On November 3, 1953, our church was commemorated to honour Rev. Dr. R.T, Richards, Superintendent of Missions in Southern Ontario and we officially became Richards Memorial United Church. Eventually, a church building was erected on Clarke Road, followed by a new sanctuary dedicated in 1962.

In 1989, the congregation dreamed of building a seniors' apartment complex on the

property. Alongside the building of the 51-unit apartment complex, Argyle Manor, a new Christian Education and office facility were built. We moved into our new church building in 1991 and welcomed the first residents of Argyle Manor in the spring of 1992. Ever since, the residents have been valued members of our church community and neighbourhood, with several of them attending worship and church functions on a regular basis.

Our Christian Education Centre and Durrant Hall are well used year-round by numerous Scout groups, carpet ball league, a Retirees Club, UCW, AA, and Bible study groups. In addition, the UCW are renowned for their catering services throughout the year.

In our sanctuary, we are blessed by stained glass windows that have been donated by families in memory of loved ones who served as pivotal members of our church's life, and these have been dedicated to the glory of God in their honour. We are also very proud of the cross-shaped solar panels that adorn the roof of our sanctuary.

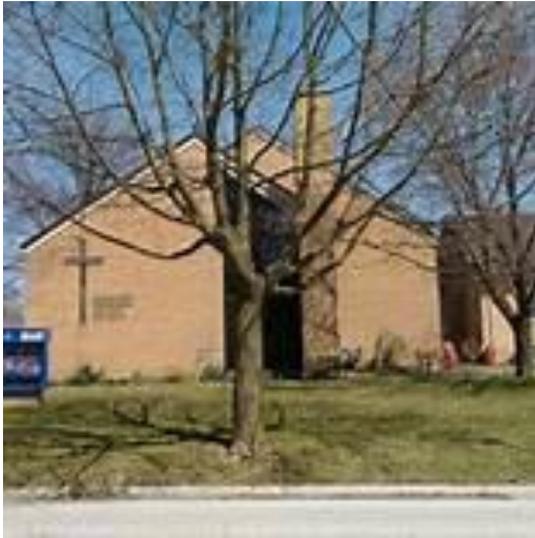
Our quarterly newsletter keeps congregants and adherents in the loop, whether they attend faithfully or are no longer able to make their way here on Sunday morning,

In our mission statement, we declare: "We are a caring community. Through worship, teaching, outreach and fellowship, we share God's love." It is our dream that through combining tradition and new vision, that we may continue to share God's love and care for our community well into the future.

Submitted by: Shirley Hardy, Rev. Jen Prince

Rowntree Memorial United Church, London

156 Elliott Street, London (Middlesex)



The first home for our congregation was a white frame building transported from North Bay by the Home Mission Board and situated on a concrete block foundation. It occupied seven lots in the Bellwood area of London at Elliott and Cheapside streets and was named Bellwood Park United. The building was dedicated April 11, 1948, and by July the congregation numbered 35. In the first year the congregation more than doubled with young families, Sunday School and mid-week activities. Our first minister was Rev. Gillies Eadie.

By the early 50's the building was bursting at the seams with 300 children in the Sunday School, so a larger building was planned. A fundraising campaign was launched - 'Buy Bricks, Build Bellwood'. On the night chosen to visit every home in the area there was a driving rainstorm. It was noted that members of the community were impressed by the tenacity of the canvassers so donated generously. Mr. and Mrs. Chester Rowntree, members of Metropolitan United offered to donate \$35,000 if the church was named Rowntree in memory of his parents- George and Phoebe Ann Rowntree. The offer was accepted; Rev Anne Graham was the minister; the new building was dedicated on March 4, 1956.

Since 1956 we've been served by 17 talented and dedicated clergy. In 2011/12, Wellington Street United (built in 1875 as a Methodist Church) and a portion of Robinson United (built in 1891 as a Methodist Church) communities of faith have joined us at Rowntree. Rev Wendy Noble is our ministry personnel (shared with Dundas Street Centre United Church) and a blessing to both congregations.

Rowntree United Church has a busy schedule hosting a Vietnamese Alliance Congregation on Sunday afternoons as well as VON programs, pickleball, two weekly community meals and other youth and neighbourhood programs.

We are thankful for the many volunteers and staff who manage all these programs.

Our mission is to Seek Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly with God. Micah 6:8

Our Vision is to be Rooted and grounded in God's love, we strive to be a relevant, respectful, resilient and resourceful community of faith serving one another, our neighbours and our world.

In March 2025, representatives of most of the United Churches in London with the support of the Antler River Watershed leadership met at Rowntree to begin conversations about ensuring a strong United Church presence in London by working together. A second meeting was held virtually and a third planned for June 2025. We are filled with hope and enthusiasm for the future of the United Church in London .



Submitted by: Phyllis Brady,
bradyphyllis@gmail.com

Photo Credits: Phyllis Brady

Trivia Questions:

1. What is the name of Rowntree's Music Director?
2. What is unusual about the church's address?

Shiloh-Inwood United Church – Lambton



We are a small rural community of faith serving God and the community for over 100 years. At one time, 3 churches made up the Inwood Pastoral charge. St. Andrew's (2006) and Shiloh (2024) have closed but Shiloh-Inwood still holds physical presence and active worship in the village of Inwood. Despite closures, community spirit thrives, strengthened by resiliency, faith and fond memories. We are grateful for the wisdom of our forefathers who recognized a need to congregate for worship in a farm community. Through donations of land, horse and wagon conveyance, offerings of strong hands, grit, time and

skill this realization became a reality as one by one out of the wilderness our churches were built. At present, weekly participation in our multi-generational worship services fluctuates between 20-30 people with 3-5 more who join online. We are blessed by the spiritual leadership of a retired ordained minister, a lay person and 2 ministers who are new residents in our community. As stewards of God's love, we lift up one another and intentionally reach out to our community especially now as there is no other provisional gathering space in our village. We host monthly community meals, fundraising events and community-building meetings with hope that sharing our space will provide service to other groups. 2025 is an exciting year of renovation in our church. God has answered our prayers, removed obstacles, preserved the integrity of our building and provided access to needed funds. New flooring, drywall and paint, insulation, fans, lighting, electrical and heating upgrades, storage, and accessibility features will enhance the comfort, attractiveness and acoustics of our sanctuary and Sunday school room. Pews

salvaged from the deconstruction of the Shiloh building will provide meaningful furnishings in our sanctuary. We are planning a special worship service to celebrate the completion of renovations! Our faith story will move forward led by God's holy purpose and century-old grounding embellished in a fresh, new beginning!



Sprucedale United Church Chatham-Kent



As we celebrate our 70th Anniversary this year, Sprucedale United Church is a proud urban congregation, a member of the Antler River Watershed Region. Our small white church was dedicated in 1955, formed primarily by Canadian Veterans of World War 2 and their families. In 1957, we partnered with Providence United, a

rural church, in order to employ our first full time minister. Our warm partnership continues. Sprucedale flourished, filling our building, so a new sanctuary and offices were added in 1964, followed in 1991 by our Friendship Centre and a modern kitchen. Over the years, our fund-raising activities have included many breakfasts, dinners, garage sales, bazaars, themed events, workshops and musical evenings. For so many years we

were a busy neighbourhood location for weekly child, teen and adult clubs, Sunday services and a vibrant Sunday School. Of course, our many caring volunteers were the most integral part of our growth and value to our community. As a congregation, we continue to



practice our Faith In Action with visits, greeting cards, givings to Mission and Service and gathering donations for various local charities. We hold 2 takeout dinners yearly and are generating other income by renting sections of our building to a summer STEM camp program, a teen robotics club and other possible choices. We feel very fortunate to have dedicated Licensed Lay Worship Leaders conducting our services. Our community

members are included in a ukulele group, card-making, weekly shuffleboard, plus Sunday coffee and conversation. We are maintaining a valuable presence in our community.

Submitted by: Lynn Russell lynndr@gmail.com

Community of Faith: Sprucedale United Church Chatham-Kent

Photo credits: Andrea MacFarlane, Lynn Russell

Trivia Questions

What special 50th Anniversary feature is seen at our north side door?

How many stained glass windows were installed in our sanctuary during the 1990's?

St. Andrew's United Church

Brooksdale, ON - 924044 Rd 92, RR #1 Embro, ON- Oxford

Along with the 100th anniversary of the United Church of Canada, St Andrews United at Brooksdale is celebrating 142 years of history as a place of worship. It was built in 1883, as a Presbyterian Church, on a 200 acre parcel of land known as the "Clergy Reserve." The congregation led by travelling ministers, had met since the 1830s in private homes, a log school, and out in the open. In 1915, they were joined by members of the former Methodist Church at Brooksdale, and at the time of church union, in 1925, voted to become part of the new United Church of Canada.

The congregation has embraced their unique rural background and their heritage in the community, with many years of "Bring Your Tractor to Church Sundays," Variety in the Dale nights, annual pancake suppers, Christmas meals, and as the meeting place for the local 4H and Women's Institute. Rental income received from "the farm," (now believed to be the last Clergy Reserve in Ontario) has been used to assist many charities. The Reserve has a history of planting trees for windbreaks, soil conservation efforts and sound farm stewardship. In the past, a strong windstorm blew out the north end of the church. The entrance is now from the north facing the road, and the change can still be seen today with the exterior brickwork, and recent additions of new windows. A new heating system and a stair lift are helping to continue our mission statement that, "We are a



Christian ministry to people, for our church family, community and to the world, meeting spiritual, physical and emotional needs through the example and teaching of Jesus Christ providing fellowship in happy and sad times."

Submitted by John Hiuser



St. Andrew's United Church - Chatham Ontario

The current St. Andrew's United Church building, constructed in 1869, is one of the oldest surviving heritage quality buildings in the Chatham-Kent area. Architecture and interior features are reminiscent of the past with wrought iron and wood pews, an elaborate pipe organ and beautiful woodwork. In 1834, local Presbyterians petitioned for a grant of land and church site. By 1841, a frame structure was

built. In 1869, the frame structure was removed and the brick centre section of the present sanctuary was built.

Local architect W.F. Rutley added a balcony and corner entrance in 1880. In 1923, the present day three manual console organ by Casavant-Freres of Quebec replaced the 1902 Karn organ. The present Fellowship Hall was built in 1908 as a Sunday School.

In 1925, St. Andrew's United Church was created by church union. With growth, a major expansion was completed in 1957 with the present Chapel, Parlour, Fellowship Hall,

Christian Education and office spaces completed. In 2006, Park Street United Church

amalgamated with St. Andrew's after 164 years of ministry rooted in the Methodist



traditions. Music and outreach activities characterized both congregations and continues in the community.

A concert series called *Saturdays at 7*,

the Bel Canto children's choir and a community orchestra enriches the musical culture of the community. The building and church members provide many outreach activities including a pantry program, addiction supports, community theatre and public health programs, all carried on within the walls of the heritage structure St. Andrew's United Church.

Trivia Questions:

The St. Andrew's United Church logo, consisting of a dove and a full sun, are on display on our building exterior in three places. Where can you find the logo?

Who was the Irish-born minister and abolitionist who served St. Andrew's and founded the Elgin settlement

Who was the Canadian Prime Minister whose father was the minister of Park Street United Church?

Submitted by: John Keech, Church Archivist, jmkeech72@gmail.com

Community of Faith: St. Andrew's United Church, Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Photo Credits: Tracy Wygiera & Richard Hansen



St. Andrew's United Church – St Thomas, Elgin

St. Andrew's United Church in St. Thomas, Ontario, has been a cornerstone of its community for over a century, reflecting both spiritual dedication and adaptability to changing times.

The church's roots trace back to July 1914 with the establishment of the West Avenue Union Mission. This initiative was driven by a group of dedicated individuals aiming to provide a place of worship for residents in the southwest section of St. Thomas. A new building was dedicated that same year, serving as a hub for community worship and activities.

In the spring of 1926, under the leadership of Rev. A. E. Menzies, then assistant minister at First United Church, the mission formally joined the United Church of Canada. The congregation adopted the name "St. Andrew's United Church," marking a new chapter in its history.

Throughout its history, St. Andrew's has been actively involved in various pastoral arrangements to better serve its congregation. They have partnered with the former Homedale United Church, were briefly a two-point charge with Talbotville United Church, aligned with St. Mark's United in the 60's and have recently entered into a Collaborative Agreement with New Vision Community Church. These collaborations reflect the church's commitment to adaptability and community outreach.

In 1947, during Rev. H. Royal's ministry, a hall was constructed behind the main church building to accommodate Sunday School and other church organizations. Further

renovations took place in 1965, culminating in a rededication service on April 4 of that year. Most recently a ramp into the building and another into the sanctuary, along with accessible washroom facilities, made the building a much more friendly place for all.

Today, St. Andrew's United Church remains an active and vibrant part of the St. Thomas community. The church hosts regular worship services, community events, and outreach programs. Our long-running and affordable Growing Youth summer day camps is a highlight of our community of faith. Events such as indoor yard sales, Strawberry Socials and various worship services aim to foster community spirit and engagement.

St. Andrew's United Church continues to embody its mission of faith, community service, and adaptability, remaining a beacon for its congregation and the broader St. Thomas community.

St. Andrew's Westminster United Church

London (Glanworth) Ontario

St. Andrew's Westminster United Church, now located on Glanworth Drive in the City of London, was founded in 1854 on the 8th Concession of what was then Westminster Township in Middlesex County. The settlers residing in this area were mainly from the highlands of Scotland and had been members of the Church of Scotland. In 1854, friends and neighbours met and decided to form a congregation, build a church and call a minister. A parcel of land was purchased and by the summer of 1856, the congregation had a church of their own.



As the congregation and Sunday School grew, the need of a new church building was felt, and in 1877 additional land was donated and the cornerstone of the new building was finally laid in 1888. In January 1925, members of St. Andrew's Westminster were given the opportunity to vote on the union of the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches. A substantial majority voted in favour, and much work was done to ensure all felt welcome in the wider fellowship of the new church. Through the years, St. Andrew's has continued to be a warm and welcoming place, adapting to the



changing times and the needs of the community. One of the constants at St. Andrew's is the music program as the congregation continues to enjoy wonderful music every Sunday with a talented choir and

dedicated musical leadership. Outreach is also a core part of St Andrew's, from projects such as growing crops for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, mental health workshops or collections for food banks and other local charities, and sometimes outreach just for fun such as strawberry socials, square dance evenings, trivia nights,

musical concerts, community euchres. Outreach also has meant significant technological changes as the services are now live streamed each Sunday. The little country church on the corner, has seen significant growth in the last few years, and Rev. Susan Browning continues to inspire this faith community with her creativity, her vision and her timely and inspiring sermons. St. Andrew's Westminster is a faith community with deep roots and a vibrant and promising future.

Trivia Question: St. Andrew's Westminster U.C. is located at a major road extension that connects London and St. Thomas. What is the name of this road?

Submitted by: Susan Grieve

St. Andrew' Westminster United Church, 2008 Glanworth Drive, London (Middlesex County)

Email: sawuchurch@gmail.com

St. Clair United Church Aamjiwnaang First Nation Lambton



In 1829, “nine persons in two birch bark canoes paddled out of Lake Huron into the St. Clair River and sought out Chief Wawanosh. Ordained Indigenous minister, Rev. Peter Jones (1802-1856), leader of the Wesleyan missionary group, then conducted a service for Chief Wawanosh and his people, in the Ojibwe language and the St. Clair (United) Church, with its Wesleyan Methodist roots, was born. The church, built on the Aamjiwnaang First Nations territory, has had to relocate a few times, from its original location on the banks of the St. Clair River, (Sarnia) to its current church site which was built in June, 1950. As the United Church of Canada celebrates its 100th Anniversary June 25th, 2025, St. Clair United will celebrate 196 years of faithful ministry. The church is situated next to the Aamjiwnaang Band Office, a Wellness and Welcome Centre, and the Education Building. A cenotaph honouring local Indigenous peoples who died serving Canada during times of war is located a few steps from the church. St. Clair United is very much a community church and is continues to have an important role in serving the peoples on the Aamjiwnaang Reserve, providing for the spiritual and practical needs of the community.



Dedication of artwork by local artist, John Williams, in gratitude to High Park United Church, for their support as they prepared to close.

Submitted by: Rev. Debra P. McGill (revdpmcgill@gmail.com)

Community of Faith: St. Clair United Church, Aamjiwnaang First Nations, Sarnia,
Lambton County

Photo Credits: Church photo: website,
Janice Rising: dedication of artwork with artist, John Williams, and
his son. (permission to use granted.)

Trivia Questions:

1. Is there a picture of Rev. Peter Jones?
2. Have there been other Indigenous ministers who served St. Clair United?

ST. DAVID'S UNITED CHURCH

WOODSTOCK, ONTARIO



In 1952, based on the rapid growth in the City of Woodstock, a committee was formed within the four United Churches in Woodstock: Central, Chalmers, College Avenue and Dundas Street, to investigate the need for the

establishment of a new church in the East part of the city. Fundraising occurred between 1953 – 1955 and an option to purchase property on Springbank Avenue in Woodstock became available. On April 30, 1959, Oxford Presbytery granted a submitted petition to constitute this new church organization with 123 names on the charter. The church was temporarily called Springbank United Church until 1960 when the congregation officially chose the name – St. David's United Church.

We are a vibrant church family living our mission statement, "Celebrating Faith, Family and Community." We joyfully celebrate God's goodness in the life of our church, in our lives and in the world. Through the various activities of this church, in-house and in support of the community and wider world, we will continue to live out God's mission in the world, reaching out to people in love with compassion.



Trivia Questions:

- 1) What do the West wall sanctuary banners depict?
- 2) How many rows of pews in sanctuary and balcony?

Community of Faith: St. David's United Church, Woodstock, Oxford County

Photo Credits: Carol Harrison and Ted MClaucllin (Carman Cameras)

Submitted by: Pastor Nancy Vandenberghe and Carol Harrison.

stdavidsminister@gmail.com

St. John's Botany United Church Kent Bridge, ON - Kent



The history of St. John's Botany began in 1848 as a Presbyterian Congregation. After receiving permission from the Botany School Board that any Christian Church could use the school for services, they met in the school building. It was not until 1858 that they built their own modest frame building to hold their Sunday Services. The congregation met in this

building until 1900 when a motion was passed to build a new brick structure on a location that was adjacent to the Post Office of the day. The construction of the building took place rapidly and the first service was held in the new church on February 24, 1901.

In 1925 when the union of the three faiths: Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist took place St. John's Presbyterian Church chose not to hold a vote but just automatically became the St. John's United Church of Canada.

Over the years the St. John's Botany Church, which stands on the West corner of the intersection of the Botany Line and Scane Road in Chatham Kent, is a landmark of the area. The church has been involved in several three- and four-point charges, sharing Ministers and sharing in the planning and expenses of running the churches. As of 2025, St. John's Botany is part of a three-point charge called RURAL UNITED including: St. John's, Turin and St. Paul's-Victoria Avenue with the Reverend Martin Mwale as out Minister. We celebrated our 125th Anniversary on June 8th, 2025, with all three churches in attendance.



The building is still a well-kept sound structure and over the years has been a central focus for those who call the Botany Community, home.

Submitted by: Sharon Lesy Sharon.lesy@hotmail.com

Community of Faith: St. John's Botany United Church, 12377 Botany Line, Kent Bridge, ON

Photo Credits: Sharon Lesy, Carol Verstraete

Trivia:

What is the date on the cornerstone?

From the website - What is the name of our three-point charge?

St. Luke's United Church South Raleigh - Chatham Kent

For at least 25 years before the St. Luke's Congregation actually built the building in 1901, the Congregation met in local homes. Reverend William King from South Buxton would ride on horseback on Sunday afternoon, to deliver his



Sunday sermon. Around the turn of the century (1900's), the congregation fundraised to build the present building. The new church, which cost \$1,982.28, was opened on the Sabbath, September 22, 1901. One hundred and eight

St. Luke's United Church - 2018

dollars was placed on the offering plates that day.”

(from St. Luke's 100th Anniversary Booklet).

St. Luke's was opened as a Presbyterian Church, and was formally linked with St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in South Buxton. One hundred years ago, in 1925, the Congregation voted unanimously to join the United Church of Canada. St. Luke's continued their Pastoral relationship with St. Andrew's, and later with Grace United Church (previously Methodist), on Talbot Trail.

In the 1900's, a horse barn was constructed rear of the church, open to the south, to house the horses during service. During the 1930's, as horses were pastured and folks drove cars, the horse barn was dismantled and rebuilt as the

church hall. In the 1960's, a connecting hall with two Sunday School rooms and washrooms were added to connect the church with the hall (on left side of above picture).

Today, St. Luke's United Church in South Raleigh is part of a four church – 3 Pastoral Charge Ministry Sharing Agreement. We continue to worship every week, (traveling back and forth with Talbot Street United Church) with 15 to 20 from St. Luke's added to the Talbot Street Congregation for an average Sunday attendance of 40 to 50. St. Luke's shares its ministry with the surrounding community offering Ministerial and Pastoral Services.

May God continue to bless our ministries.

Submitted by Susan Pepper and Reverend Eric Skillings

Website: www.Southbuxton.ca

Email: info@southbuxton.ca

Community of Faith: St. Luke's United Church

South Raleigh, Chatham Kent, Ontario

Photo Credits: Susan Pepper

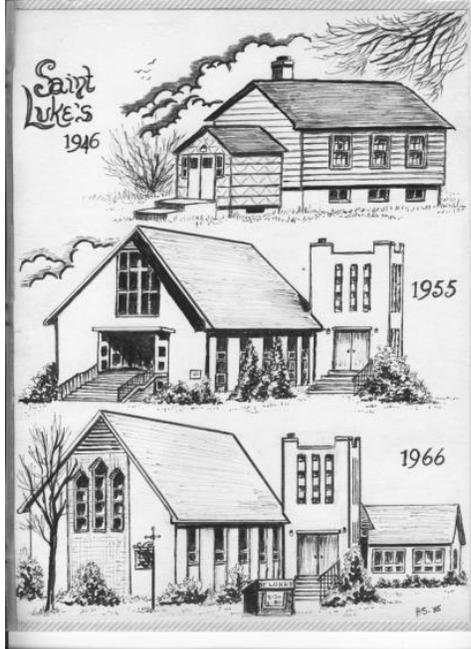


Annual Pasta Supper and Auction Sale -

Trivia Questions:

1. How many families supported St. Luke's Presbyterian Church in 1901 when the building was built?
2. What is St. Luke's major fundraiser?

St. Luke's United Church Sarnia, Lambton



St. Luke's roots began in 1945 as a Sunday school which was housed in S.S. No. 9 in southeast Sarnia. Soon after, Lambton Presbytery requested the Home Mission Board "provide a place of worship, religious instruction and fellowship for this rapidly growing area." A building was acquired from Polymer, moved to Devine St E, remodeled and dedicated as St. Luke's United Church on Dec 15, 1946. In a letter written by Joan Archibald inviting members to their first anniversary, she wrote "We are still a very small church

- but our possibilities and potentialities are infinitely great."

Spring forward to 1954, when construction of a \$50,000 church located at the corner of Indian and Wellington was begun to serve the 150 families of the congregation. With the rapid post-war growth, the Sunday school, crammed in the basement, needed to expand.



Goodbye
COVID

In 1965, construction of a new Christian Education wing and renovations of the Church Sanctuary were begun and completed the following year. The size of the congregation remained strong over the next 40 years.

In December 1990, a fire, set by neighborhood children, nearly destroyed the sanctuary. After a year of repairs, we returned to worship. In 2008, our “field of dreams”, a vacant lot on our property, was donated for \$1 a year to construct the Dow Centre for Youth which houses Rebound, Big Sisters and Big Brothers. In partnership with Rebound, community partners and the UCC, renovations of 5 rooms in the CE wing began in 2016 to provide space for the HUB, a wrap-around drop-in centre for youth 16-24. We provide space for 13 other weekly groups such as: AA, NA, TOPS, Boys & Girls Club. The quote from 1946 still rings true today as our little church on the corner serves our community.

Submitted by: Larry McLaren, lmclaren6@cogeco.ca

Community of Faith: St. Luke's United Church, Samia, Lambton

Photo Credit: Sketches by Hilda Sivell (deceased member of St. Luke's)

Trivia Questions:

What hangs from the ceiling at the front of our sanctuary?

From the Website: Who is our music director?

St. Paul's United Church - Tillsonburg – Oxford County



Our antecedent Wesley Methodist Church began in 1867. The original cornerstone was laid on the present site until 1912 when fire destroyed the building. A union of 2 churches in 1873 created Tillsonburg Methodist which changed in 1917 to St. Paul's Methodist. Finally with the Union in

1925; it became the St. Paul's United Church. A Friendship Centre was built and dedicated in May 1988. This allowed for additional spaces: offices, work and meeting rooms, a small kitchen, extra washrooms (one fully accessible), a library, and a sound proof family room. In the basement there is an equipped kitchen, a banquet hall and a multipurpose room plus storage. We also have a fully accessible entrance with a ramp and automatic doors. Our sanctuary has projection screens and a computer to run Easy Worship slides, a high tech sound system, hearing assisted devices. During Covid-19 we setup our YouTube channel and began live streaming worship services.

Our Mission Statement is "*We are a community minded Christian congregation, **Called to Serve God by Serving Others.***" This is evident in the number of community groups like Guiding and exercise who use our facilities weekly at no cost. We do regular collections for the local Women's Shelter, supporting several families at Christmas, and regular collections for the local Food Bank.

Two outstanding outreach programs for St. Paul's are our Messy Church and our Community Kitchen/Closet. Our Messy Church sees about 55-60 people children, adults and volunteers once per month enjoying games, stories and crafts plus lunch. Our Community Kitchen began usually in October until April providing a hot meal to anyone who needed it. In 2024 the program changed to year-round. Each Saturday hot lunches are prepared for either eat-in, take out or delivery catering to approximately 70 people each week often there is also bread and fruits available for take-away. A Community Closet was also created

where people needing clothing can "shop" for gently used or new items at no cost.

We continue to be faithful as a United Church of Canada.



Cutting of our 155th Anniversary cake in 2022 by our youngest member Cohen Bruckler & longest serving member Doreen Smith (now deceased)

Trivia Question

1. What is the date on the Cornerstone in the foyer?
2. What is the name of our current clergy?

Submitted by: Mary Anne Silverthorn- Council Chair m.silverthorn@sympatico.ca

Community of Faith –St. Paul's United Church – OXFORD

88 Bidwell St. Tillsonburg, **ONTARIO** --N4G 3V2

St. Paul's-Victoria Avenue United Church



St. Paul's-Victoria Avenue United, Kent Centre/Chatham is noted as the "Busy Little Church By the Side of the Road." St. Paul's was built in 1892. A Sunday School Hall/basement was added in 1929. Victoria Avenue was built in 1877 in Chatham. We amalgamated as ONE in 2023. Our congregation is a blend of rural and urban church traditions with progressive ideas.

Our Charge is called Rural United Pastoral Charge consisting of two other neighbouring churches - St John's Botany and Turin. We collaborate to meet the needs of our three faith communities, sharing our Worship Leaders and our current technology requirements.

St. Paul's- Victoria Avenue United Church is presently noted as the only Affirming Church in Chatham Kent. We are called to be inclusive of all persons and celebrate the diverse abilities and gifts of all. We also support Bill's Place as a safe and welcoming location in Chatham Kent for the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

We learned of a different culture by sponsoring a Syrian Refugee Family. Our search committee extended a welcomed to Rev. Martin from the Reform Church in Zambia in 2023. His excellent abilities allowed us to celebrate his covenanting to our United Church in 2025.

As we strive to learn of others, we begin each service with a variation of the Land Acknowledgements, plus an Open Heart Thought - Celebrating Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Music, a choir and enthusiastic singing are a very meaningful part of our faith journey.



Congregation at St. Pauls-Victoria Avenue United Church

Our active United Church Women meet monthly with worship and programs. We give generous support financially to many outreach projects such as our Mission and Service, Kenesserie Camp, Hospice, our students, shut-ins and various other social and mental health agencies in our community and beyond to strive for justice.

Our Wednesday mornings Pantry Program, is an organized outreach which gives support of some food and staples for over 100 people struggling with insecurity needs in Chatham.

Location: 22125 Communication Rd. Chatham Kent

Website: stpaulsvicaveunited@yahoo.com

Submitted by: Carolyn Fraser, Gary Houston, Jane Lawton

Trivia:

- 1) What is written on our sign?
- 2) What is our Charge called?

Talbot Street United Church, Talbot Street Pastoral Charge Chatham-Kent



Talbot Street United Church stands amid grain fields, facing the expanse of Lake Erie across the road. We are the living descendants of Christian ministry begun in 1826 by Wesleyan Methodist preachers on the Amherstburg Circuit. "Ebenezer Methodist Church," built of local brick in 1872, served at the present site until its foundation decayed. Farm families with new money from natural gas wells, in 1902 engaged T. J. Rutley of Chatham, a renowned architect, to build "Talbot Street Methodist Church." Exterior brick walls are accented with buttresses, and inside, textured plaster contrasts with rich wood in wainscoting and ceilings. Stained glass

windows feature Christian symbols. From the curved altar rail edging the chancel, "amphitheatre" seating fans out into the sanctuary. The basement houses the kitchen and church hall. Pastoral charge restructuring in the 1960's closed Salem United Church, and

brought many families to Talbot Street. The larger congregation constructed an addition. A church parlour adjoins the sanctuary, and downstairs three Sunday School



rooms supplement the hall. Indoor washrooms made a welcome appearance. Improvements to accessibility and energy efficiency continue. Talbot Street readily adopts United Church music resources and ensures that every family receives “Broadview” magazine. Mission & Service givings are a priority, as are the Wheatley food bank and Christmas baskets. We nurture rural community with Hallowe’en and Christmas parties. We innovate; today we share in collaborative ministry with three neighbouring churches. A local paper reported at the 1903 opening of Talbot Street, “There was a peculiar zest about the people that augers well for the future success of the church. Although the congregation will not be large, the members who will attend are a liberal and sturdy lot of yeomen who can be depended upon to meet any emergency.”

Submission from

Christie Coatsworth, Regional Council Representative, dawson.christie@gmail.com

Email for Talbot Street Secretary, Tracey Major, secretary4tsuc@gmail.com

Email for Minister, Rev. Eric Skillings, southbuxtonpc@gmail.com

Community of Faith: Talbot Street United Church, 3741 Talbot Trail, Port Alma, ON

Website: Talbot Street United Church, www.talbotstreet.ca

Facebook page: Talbot Street United Church

Instagram: #talbotstreetunitedchurch

CoF Location: Kent

Trivia Questions

What signs of inclusivity are visible at the front entrance of Talbot Street United Church?

What three churches partner in collaborative ministry with Talbot Street United Church?

Talbotville United Church - Elgin



The earliest church record is from 1844 with Rev. Edward Baillie, a minister of the New Connection branch of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, holding services in Talbotville. That same year land was purchased for building the first Methodist New Connexion Church in Talbotville on the north edge of lot 41. The current brick church building was erected and dedicated in 1878, also on lot 41 but closer to the main corner of the village. The adjacent manse was purchased in 1860 and the brick addition built in 1875. Unlike many churches built in the 19th century, Talbotville was erected all on one level making it easy for all abilities to navigate the building, with an entrance ramp and automated entry added in 2014.

There were a variety of churches forming the pastoral charge over the years but as of 1958 Talbotville United was part of the Suburban Pastoral Charge sharing a minister with Townline United and Yarmouth Centre United. Townline closed in 2006 and Yarmouth Centre amalgamated with Talbotville in 2018, and Talbotville is now a single point charge. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic recorded services began in 2020, and since 2022 worship services are live streamed on the Talbotville United YouTube channel.

In 2025 Talbotville United continues to be a place of worship and community, and offers Sunday School, choir, prayer shawl ministry, and special services such as the outdoor Easter sunrise service, and the annual Sunday School picnic. The congregation regularly supports local social service organizations through weekly donations and special campaigns.

While Talbotville celebrated its 180th anniversary in 2024, this quote from the history published in 1938, may say it best, "Nevertheless they have left behind them a heritage of devotion to duty and loyalty to God that should be a source of great inspiration to those who come after them.



Submitted by: Janice Fisher

Photo credits: Janice Fisher

talbotvilleunited.com

Talbotville United Church

10734 Sunset Rd.

St Thomas, ON

N5P 3T2

Thamesville United Church – Chatham-Kent

Thamesville United Church history began in 1804 when a few settlers along the

Thames River felt a need to fellowship and worship together. The first Methodist services



were held in a shed behind what is now the Sherman Cemetery and were led by the Rev. Nathan Bangs, the first circuit rider to visit settlers

along the Thames River. In 1862, an Elizabeth Street property was obtained as a gift for one shilling from David Sherman, and in 1863 the first wooden church was built. This church was eventually sold and dismantled when the congregation decided to build a new church. On October 23, 1898, a new Gothic style church costing \$7000.00 was opened. By the 1950's upgraded facilities were needed so a Christian Education building, costing \$40,000.00, was added on to the existing church.

By the late 1900's, the church was continuing to decay and the congregation decided to rebuild once again, for over \$900,000.00. In 2002, the present multi-functional and accessible sanctuary was built and the cornerstone was laid in 2003.

Our rich history includes that of a three point charge of Croton (1995), Kent Bridge (2003) and Thamesville, amalgamating over time to a one point charge. The current sanctuary building was paid for



within seven years, with proceeds generated by a capital campaign, congregational givings, and various fundraising events (concerts, dinner theatres and pie making).

To this day we continue to serve our local community in a multitude of ways: through worship and events such as hosting theatre, making pies, offering dinners, weekly “soups on” lunches, a monthly Community meal, and a free Pantry. A favourite annual event is our Breakfast with Santa and Wee Shoppe. Most recently (December 2024) we added a stairlift to allow access to our 2nd floor where the minister’s office and church office are located. We are proud to say we are now fully accessible for all.

Trivia Questions:

When visiting our building, what Thamesville landmark is across the street from the church?

From the Website: In what ways do we help out to feed the wider community?

Submitted by: Dennis & Karen Badder ranchkd@gmail.com & Tracy Wygiera

tiffintracy@gmail.com

Community of Faith: Thamesville United Church, Thamesville, Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Photo Credits: Joanne Cincurak & Tracy Wygiera

Thorndale United Church – Thames Centre, Middlesex



The cornerstone of the brick structure was laid in 1879. The original Thorndale Methodist circuit embraced Thorndale, Evans, Wyton, Bethesda, Bailey and Lairds Churches. In 1907, the circuit was divided and only Wyton, Thorndale and Bethesda remained. In 1911, the church was remodelled, and a pipe organ was installed. On June 10, 1925, a new denomination was born from the union of Methodist,

Congregationalists and Presbyterians producing the United Church of Canada. In 1948,

Wyton United Church closed, leaving Thorndale and Bethesda. In

1959, was a

major renovation when the floor was

raised, and a basement was put

under the church. A Narthex was

built as a front entrance. The



sanctuary was completely renovated with new pews, a centre aisle and new floor. In July, 1961, Zion United Church in London Township joined the Circuit. In December, 1973, Bethesda closed and was invited to worship at Thorndale. In 1979, a Memorial Fund was started, and new stained glass windows were purchased. The round stained glass window at the back of the church has been in the church since 1879. It has been re-painted several times. In 2001, a new kitchen was installed. In June of 2013, Crumlin United Church closed, and several members joined our congregation. In June, 2023 Zion United Church closed, ending the Pastoral Charge. In 2023, Zion and Thorndale congregations were amalgamated. The back room was remodelled and named the Zion Room. That same year Thorndale UC entered into a collaborative ministry arrangement with Browns UC sharing a minister.

Trivia Questions

What historical posting is found in front of the church?

What does Thorndale UC call their Sunday school program?

Pam Wilcox

pamwilcox@hotmail.ca

Thorndale United Church

Thames Center

Trinity United Church, Glencoe

Bucking the trend of itinerant preachers, the Rev. Joseph Walker purchased land in Mosa Township in 1854 and built a brick Methodist Episcopal Church on what is now Old Airport Rd near Trillium Dr. This church was used for about 26 years, then moved off the property.

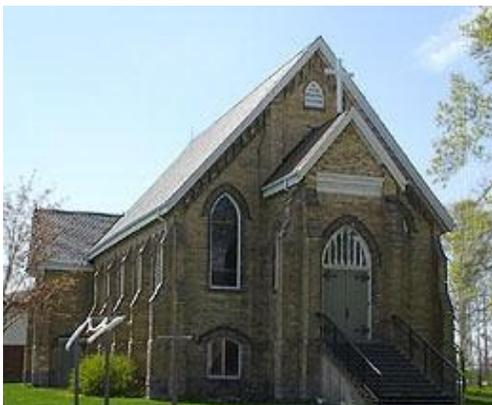
A new church was built on the north side of Concession St in the village of Glencoe in 1871, but the congregation outgrew that building. When a

building burned down across Concession from their church, they seized the opportunity to purchase the land and make plans for a new larger building. With much fanfare, four corner stones were laid on June 9, 1892, for the large brick building which still stands at the corner of Concession St



Former Trinity United Church, Glencoe

and Main St. It served the Trinity United congregation well for 126 years, but as with so many churches today, membership dwindled, and the decision was made to sell the building in 2018 to a private citizen. The congregation carried on, meeting most often at the Glencoe Arena and, during the summer of Covid, outdoors at a farm half a mile from the 1854 site. Post-Covid, the congregation of St John's Anglican Church allowed us the use of their building where we worshipped separately for a time, but in 2023 the two



St John's Anglican and Trinity United Church

congregations formalized an agreement to worship together, alternating Anglican and United services weekly. This is a success story which, we are told, has become an inspiration for other small communities of faith.

Submitted by Nola Dow, jncamdow@gmail.com

Trinity United Church, Glencoe, Middlesex County

Photo credits: Nola Dow

Trivia questions:

How many churches share the Main Street and Concession Street corner?

What church's worship videos are shared weekly on Trinity's Facebook page?

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH AND COMMUNITY CENTER

London, Middlesex



In **1904**, people in the Pottersburg area of London East held cottage meetings in their homes. In **1907**, they began to meet in the Forrester's Hall over Ned Henshaw's blacksmith shop [now a nail salon] and they were called the **Pottersburg Methodist Congregation**. On July 17, **1908**, Rev. C.B. Lancely [minister of Dundas Center

Church] presided over a meeting at the Forrester's Hall to organize the new church. In November **1908**, they and their appointed minister moved into their first building which was named **London Junction Methodist Church**. In **1915**, the name of the church changed to **The Hale Street Methodist Church**. [In 1922, that building was split in two and made into two houses - #33 and #35 Burslem Street.] The S.S. #23 Pottersburg Public School which was almost across the street from our current church, became their temporary home. In November **1921**, the four cornerstones were laid at the present location and eventually they were able to use the basement for a six year period. In **1925**, with the amalgamation of the Methodist Congregational and Presbyterian churches, our church was renamed **Trinity United Church**. In **1927**, the upper portion of the building was completed and a cornerstone on the parking lot side with '1927' was laid. The



trowel used is in the glass case in the Narthex. On January 22, **1928**, the first service was held in our current building. On February **1954**, they finally burned the 1927 mortgage. In **1955**, a \$140,000.00 addition was built and a new cornerstone was laid near the rear door by the minister's office. In the renovation, the original front entrance door was changed from the center of the church to the right side near the parking lot. The pillars around the original door were re-constructed again at the new entrance. To add the addition, the church had to purchase and tear down a house at 76 Doulton Street so that there was enough space for the addition to be built at the back of the old church and leaving a space wide enough for a car to go a round the church. In November **2011**, the Spiritualist Church who shares a common goal with Trinity, began to share space in our building which gave Trinity an income.. On September 26, **2016**, Mt. Zion United Church and Trinity began to 'share' minister Rev. Paul Browning and we have become 'sister churches'. In **2016** the name of our church was changed again to reflect how our church was working with the surrounding neighbourhoods.. We are now proudly known as **Trinity United Church and Community Center**. May God continue to bless the work we do in His Name.

[compiled and written by Trinity's historian, Bonnie Spencer-Beer]

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1. - What year was the building erected?
2. - What scene is depicted in the stained-glass window at the Talbot side of Trinity United Church?

TWO PHOTOS - [1] church building by Bonnie Spencer-Beer

[2] congregation by Carole Burrows

Trinity United Church – Ingersoll, Oxford



From its early beginnings, Trinity United Church has shown its congregational spirit that has helped sustain

it. The Rev. Nathan Bangs started us officially at the first-quarterly Board in Oxford, 1804, for the Episcopal Methodist Church. Many settlers who accompanied Thomas Ingersoll were early members of TUC. TUC's various locations showed an undaunted development from a schoolhouse, a log structure, the current site of West Oxford church, to a log schoolhouse in Ingersoll on Thames Street where Victory Memorial School stood. 1854 and 1865 were milestones in Trinity's progress. Respectively, the Wesleyan Methodist Church which assisted escaped slaves whose descendants eventually built their own Methodist Church on Catherine Street, 1855, and the construction of the King Street Methodist Church whose congregation grew to 975 by 1924. As Trinity appears now, above, it embodies the fundamental structure of what was



once the Sunday School constructed in 1888. From the union of Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian, we



became Trinity United Church in 1925 (we've completed major renovations in 1958-59, 1998, and 2012-2018). Engineers told us to abandon the larger sanctuary, 2012, for safety reasons. The ceiling beams that were built to house the new extended wings, improperly constructed, from the old sanctuary circa 1865, were in danger of collapsing. Regardless of all the various modifications of our sanctuary, we continue as an Inclusive Church welcoming all and reaching out as our logo suggests, to our community and beyond. We are a community of faith that exists to teach a life-giving and inclusive Christian Faith by nurturing spirituality, uplifting worship, and service in our community with core values of Justice, Wisdom, Respect and Hope. Our congregation worships weekly in-person and online at 10:30 AM on Sundays. We are honoured to host the STICH Supper Club (a non-profit addressing poverty, food scarcity, and social isolation in Oxford County), Sparks & Embers groups, AA & NA groups, Operation Sharing (a non-profit organization that provides services to the homeless community), a Muslim prayer group, yoga group, pickleball groups, a children's drop-in program, weekly community coffee meet-ups, and a stained-glass makers group.

Trivia Questions:

1. What community outreach meets every Thursday afternoon in our lower hall?
2. What tiny ceramic creatures roam all around our sanctuary each week?

Submitted by: Cliff Martin, cliffmartin747@gmail.com

Trinity United Ingersoll, Oxford County

Photo Credits, Cliff Martin, Rev. Joy

Written consent was received from those included in the photo of the Congregation.

Turin United Church

14188 Turin Line, Thamesville, ON – Chatham-Kent



Turin United Church sits at the crossroads of Turin Line and Glassford Road in southeast Chatham-Kent. In 2025 Turin celebrates the 159th Anniversary of the congregation and the 125th Anniversary of the building.

Prior to 1900, the congregation met in private homes and then a wooden structure on the present site. In the beginning it was known as the Indian Lands, then Turin Presbyterian Church and on June 10, 1925, Turin United Church. Turin United Church is now the last congregation in the former geographical Township of Orford, Kent County. The Stewards have been diligent over the years to maintain the building. It has become a venue for community activities including 4-H Clubs and supports many activities for the UCW and

Sunday

School. It is fully accessible on the main level with a ramp and handicap



washroom facilities. The selling of fruit pies made by the UCW Members in our inspected kitchen, provide the funds to support many charities. Our Sunday School attendance has fluctuated over the years from less than 10 to over 50. After being part of several pastoral charges in the past 159 years, the congregation of Turin is pleased to be a sister church with St. Paul's -Victoria Ave, St. John's Botany and collectively known as Rural United Pastoral Charge. The worship is thoughtfully planned with the Minister, Martin Mwale and joint Session members for continuity across the Pastoral Charge.

Trivia Questions

- 1) What is the symbol at the top of the stained-glass window on the west hall of the sanctuary?
- 2) What is the year on the corner stone of the church?

Name to contact: Carol Verstraete

Email address to contact: hmtuc@yahoo.ca

Community of Faith: Turin

County of Community of Faith: Kent

Church photo credit: Carol Verstraete

Congregation photo credit: Tabitha Hastings

The above history information was taken from the 2016 History Book.

Union United Church - Union - Elgin



First worship services of the Union congregation were held 1820 in the home of David Burgess of Union. Later

meetings were held in the nearby schoolhouse, led by saddle-bag preachers.

In 1836, Union Church became part of the St. Thomas circuit of the Wesleyan Methodist.

In 1854 Union Church became part of Port Stanley circuit. The first Methodist Church building in Union was built on what is now called Stone Church Road, east side, part way up the hill - date unknown. In 1850, 1 1/2 acres of property purchased for church

and burial purposes south of the on west side of the same road and the wooden structure was moved to this site. In 1871 Sparta and Union were



organized into a pastoral charge. Property purchased on east side of road in 1876 to build a brick structure with sight of the village. Spring 1877 corner stone laid and the first service held in November 1877 in new building. Cost of new structure was \$3,327 February 1948 fire destroyed brick structure and congregation organized a committee to rebuild.

October 1949 service of dedication was held in new stone structure. This structure built with a lot of volunteer labour was valued at approximately \$125,000 at the time. The manse for the pastoral charge was in Sparta until 1964 when a new manse was constructed

across the road from Union Church. This manse and property was sold in 2008. In 2012 Union United Church Pastoral Charge was created as a one point charge when Sparta United Church closed. Sunday school is still an important part of our church life, though the number of children attending is small. United Church Mission and Service has always been an important part of life at Union church and the congregation. The congregation has worshipped in 5 different buildings, yes, the buildings are meaningful, but the church is the people.

Submitted by Roberta Gillard, robertagillard@gmail.com

Community of Faith: Union United Church, Union ON, Elgin County

Photo Credits: Bill Gillard, Jeff Noble

Trivia Questions

Who originally owned the property on which Union United Church Cemetery now occupies?

Find the cairn at the front of the church building, how many church buildings on the present site are listed on the cairn and what are the dates?

Villages United Church – Granton, Middlesex



Villages United

Church in Granton traces its roots back to at least 7 rural congregations which were all established in the 1860s. These congregations, some Methodist and some Presbyterian, were founded in several small communities north of London - including Granton, Lucan, Clandeboye, Edgewood and Bryanston. A number of amalgamations (including United Church union in 1925) during our 160+ years of history have resulted in Villages United Church as we know it today.

Since 2010 we have also been part of a shared ministry collaboration with a number of other local churches. The number of congregations involved in this collaboration has varied between 5 and 7 over the years – originally we called ourselves the “Group of Seven”. When Lucan and Granton amalgamated in 2014 we became Villages United, and we adopted the name “Villages Rural Ministries” to refer to the wider cluster of churches participating in our shared ministry collaboration. The Communities of Faith which are currently part of the cluster include Centralia, Zion West, Kirkton and Hensall, in addition to Villages in Granton.

The small town rural churches that make up our collective history have always been closely involved in our communities. Over the years there have been countless pot-luck

dinners and community fundraiser meals, and events like concerts, dinner theatres, the Halloween haunted house, and participation in local town parades. We support community organizations and outreach through Canadian Foodgrains Bank, local food banks, schools, and retirement and nursing homes in our communities.



Photo Credits:

Villages Congregation – Devin Dunn

Outside of Church – Dave Whiting

Granton, Middlesex County

Contact: Dave Whiting

519-319-6779

dwhiting519@gmail.com

White Oaks United Church – London

The White Oaks community was growing in London during the '80's when Rev. Glen Wright began knocking on doors, inviting families to begin a church. There wasn't even a building yet. The new congregation met at a school. Some of the families weren't just new to the neighborhood, but also new to Canada.

Creating a church and congregation takes lots of time, talent, and treasure. And "sweat equity". The National Church partnered with us by providing both a grant from the Mission and Service Fund and sending a student intern to help. She reported to the new church office, just upstairs at the LCBO! Later, the congregation moved into our newly built hall with the expectation of building a sanctuary later.

White Oaks became so busy being a church we never got around to building that sanctuary. We formed choirs, ran a food cupboard, provided a community garden, trained lay leaders and numerous student ministers. We had movie nights, camp outs and of course, church meetings. There was Sunday school for the children and study groups for the adults to learn about their faith. There was an early experiential worship service with modern hymns. The congregation began to plan for the future.

We realized that our community demographics and economy were changing, and denser housing was needed in our area. We felt the pressures of an aging congregation and a decreasing financial base. Our biggest asset is our property. Once again, the National Church through The United Church Property Corporation and Kindred Works partnered with us in dreaming a different future. A new building project would incorporate new congregation space into an apartment building, plus provide some townhouses too.

Some things have remained constant. London is still a growing city, with White Oaks still a growing neighbourhood, still with new Canadians. God is still growing ministry at Southdale and Jalna. White Oakes United Church is still Open to God, Open to New Life, Open to You.

Submitted by: Heather McLean mclean.ireland@sympatico.ca

Photo Credit: Laurie McAndrew

Community of Faith: White Oaks United Church, 1901 Jalna Blvd, London Ontario, N6E 3V8 [Middlesex County]

Trivia Questions:

- Before constructing their first church building, where did White Oaks United Church worship, and where was their office?
- What is White Oaks United building on their property?

Current building



Artist Rendering of New Building Design



Trivia Questions (& Answers)

The original questions are posted at the bottom of each church's history page.

Bedford UC, Windsor, Ontario - Essex

Where is the Fighting Parson's photo hanging at Bedford? (Front Church Foyer)

Belmont UC – Middlesex Presbytery

What year did the St George's Anglican Church bell get installed at Belmont United?
(1977)

Who does the baptismal font (at the front of the sanctuary) commemorate and what year?
(Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Venning 1873-1923)

Brinsley UC, Middlesex

Brinsley United Church is very proud of their stained-glass windows, which are in memory of different family members over the years. How many beautify stained-glass windows are there? (8)

There is a brick indicating the year for which the church was built. Can you find it? What year was it? (1922)

Calvary UC, London

Who was the first ordained minister of what is now known as Calvary United Church?
(Reverend William Henry Butt)

Calvary is one of probably very few United Churches in Antler River Watershed Region with a stained glass window depicting a canoe ride. Where is this window located?
(West end of south side of the sanctuary)

Central UC, St. Thomas, Elgin

What does the largest stained-glass window on the east wall of the sanctuary depict?
(a train, railway yards and other symbols of St. Thomas's railway history)

What organization performs a British Style pantomime at Central each fall?
(The Kettle Creek Players)

Colborne Street UC, London

In what year was the church at the corner of Colborne and Piccadilly Streets dedicated?
(1889)

From the website: Who is the minister currently serving our church? *(Rev. Frank Staples)*

College Avenue UC, Woodstock, Oxford

On what street is College Avenue located? (Wilson Street)

What year was the present sanctuary constructed? (1900)

Corunna UC – Lambton

We need a good amount of storage space for not only our many pies, but also the ingredients. How many deep freezers do we have on our premises? (4, one of which is a double-length)

In 2024, Jim Randall designed and built a Little Free Library for outside the church, mirroring the look of Corunna United. How long did it take him to complete this project? (3 days)

Darrel S Moffatt UC – Tilbury, Essex

When were the LED lights installed in the Church Hall? (June 2024 – from Facebook).

What year was the present day Darrel S Moffat Memorial Church opened? (1924 - one year before Church Union – from above story)

Dorchester UC – Middlesex

Does DUC have an online presence? (yes, Facebook, website, and zoom services)

How old is the current building where DUC worships? (136 yrs old)

Dundas Street Centre UC – London, Middlesex

What is the name of the outreach program which operates out of our basement providing clothing for agencies which are helping the needy in our community? (Good Samaritan Cupboard)

When Dundas Street Centre United Church purchased (in 1869) the property on which it now sits, what was its formal name at that time? (Dundas St. Wesleyan Methodist Church)

Emmanuel UC – Windsor, Essex

What is the date on the cornerstone near our center doors? (1955)

Who is our Minister Emeritus? (Rev. Dr. John Palmer)

Epworth UC – Kingsville, Essex

Which of God's creatures finds a nesting spot at Epworth United Church?

(Birds Canada has recognized Epworth United Church for providing an important nesting and roosting habitat for the Chimney Swift. The Chimney Swift is a rare and threatened bird.)

What challenge did the members of Epworth United Church recently undertake to support their community?

(It is the Agape Challenge. Each week the members are challenged to complete a task which demonstrates a commitment to showing the selfless, unconditional, and sacrificial love of Christ to God and people every day, relying on the power of the Holy Spirit.)

Erie Street UC – Ridgetown, Kent

Erie Street United Church loves music! Is there an anthem performed by the choir most Sundays in the church service?

(Yes! Even though we're a small church, we're mighty! The choir consists of 12 or so members, led by a choir director and a pianist or two or three (in rotation) whose dedication allows us to enjoy worship through music each week.)

Etonia-Princeton UC – Brant

Etonia-Princeton UC is an anomaly in Antler River Watershed. Why is that?
(Etonia-Princeton UC lies in Brant County.)

First UC – St Thomas, Elgin

What is the date on the cornerstone on the east side of the building? (1948)

From the website: Who are the current ministers serving our church? (Rev. Scott Beckett and Rev. Paul Browning)

Forest UC – Forest, Lambton

What are the four symbols on the north and south windows of the church?

(Burning bush, descending dove, open bible and alpha and omega...four symbols from the United Church Crest and represent the three churches involved in union.)

Website questions: Who are the present minister and music director at Forest United?
(Rev. Jeffery Smith and Ruth Balog)

Glenwood UC – Windsor, Essex

At which Anniversary was the time capsule buried? (50th anniversary)

Which Moderator of the UCC was a teenager at Glenwood? (The Very Rev. David Giuliano)

Grace UC – Sarnia, Lambton

How many children attended the first Sunday School class? (40)

Who are the four figures featured in the chapel stained glass? (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

Ilderton UC – Middlesex

Under which British hero of the Battle of Trafalgar did John Littlewood serve as midshipman as a boy? (Vice-Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson)

Ilderton United Church has a doppelganger that also opened in 1912. Where is that church located? (Duff's United Church in Walton, Ontario, which closed in 2015)

Kilworth UC – Middlesex

Can you find the fossils in the exterior limestone wall of the church? (located at the far left corner of north side or front of the building)

From the website: Who is Kilworth United Church's resident harpist? (Jan Earnshaw)

Knox UC – Embro, Oxford

Knox United Church in Embro, Ontario was founded by new immigrants to the region in the early 19th century. What country did they come from? (Scotland)

Who was the first minister of Knox Presbyterian Church in Zorra Township? (Rev. Donald McKenzie)

Littlewood UC – Middlesex

What is the date on the cornerstone by the front door? (1893)

What 'T' intersection is the church located on?

(Westdel Bourne and Little Church Drive – the road sign is 15 feet from the front door.)

London Road West UC – Sarnia, Lambton

What inscription is inscribed over the front door in the sanctuary? ("Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet.")

What year is on the cornerstone of the church? (1923)

Melville UC – Middlesex

How many patio stones have been dedicated in the Friendship Space (SW side of the parking lot entrance)? (98)

What is the name of the hymn quoted on the website welcome page (melvilleuc.ca) ("Let Us Build a House")

Mount Elgin UC – Oxford

What inscription is on the stone to the right of the main door?
(TO THE SERVICE OF GOD)

From the website, when did Pastor Lori Minler begin her service here?
(JANUARY 2020)

Norwich UC - Oxford

What circuit involved the saddleback riders in the early years?
(Norwichville and Mt Pleasant)

Name a character-defining element that contributes to Norwich United Church and its Manse to be identified as having Heritage Value (one each).
(church – cast-iron ended numbered pews; manse- twin round-headed windows on the second story) These two examples are part of many important features of these two buildings

Olinda-Ruthven UC – Essex

What is the date on the sandstone on the south side of our building? (1859)

What is the name of our current charge minister? (Reverend Olav Kitchen)

Peace UC – Oxford

What activity happens on the last Friday of each month at Peace?
(Family Friday Food & Fun)

Pearce-Williams Summer Camp and Retreat Facility – Elgin

What is on the porch of the farmhouse for everyone to enjoy? (large rocking chairs)

From the website www.campisbetter.com how many different categories of summer camps are there to choose from? (11 or 12 if you count Family Camp)

Rowntree Memorial United Church - London, Middlesex

What is the name of Rowntree's Music Director? (Ryan Baxter)

What is unusual about the church's address? (Access to Rowntree United Church is from Cheapside Street and Brampton Road. The church's street orientation changed with the building built in 1956, but the postal address has not.)

Shiloh-Inwood UC - Lambton

In 1922, a Sunday school room was built onto the church. What made this possible?
(A bequest in the will of Mr. James Smilie.)

Four members of the Shiloh Church entered the ministry. Who were they?
(Rev. Gordon Pierce, Rev. Stewart Miner, Rev. Keith Syer and Pastor Roy Pierce)

Sprucedale UC – Chatham-Kent

What special 50th Anniversary feature is seen at our north side door?
(a living rock fountain in our quiet garden)

How many stained glass windows were installed in our sanctuary during the 1990's?
(14 beautiful dedication windows depicting favourite Bible stories)

St. Andrew's UC – Brooksdale, Oxford

The front entrance used to be from the south. Where is the church entrance now? (on the north, facing the road)

St. Andrew's UC – Chatham-Kent

The St. Andrew's United Church logo, consisting of a dove and a full sun, are on display on our building exterior in three places. Where can you find the logo?
(Garden door, corner door and side door)

Who was the Irish-born minister and abolitionist who served St. Andrew's and founded the Elgin settlement? (Rev. William King)

Who was the Canadian Prime Minister whose father was the minister of Park Street United Church? (Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson)

St. Andrew's United Church – St. Thomas

Who is the angel in the front garden dedicated in memory of?

St. Andrew's-Westminster United Church – Glanworth, London, Middlesex

St Andrew's-Westminster United Church is located at a major road extension that connects London and St. Thomas. What is the name of this road? (Highbury Avenue)

St Clair United Church – Aajmjiwnaang First Nation Lambton

Is there a picture of Rev. Peter Jones? (No. There is an artist's sketch of Rev. Allen Salt (1818-1911) that hangs on the back wall of the sanctuary along with many other photos of the early history of the church and the community it serves.)

Have there been other Indigenous ministers who served St. Clair United? (Yes, there have been. Rev. Allen Salt and Rev. Matthew Stevens. Others may also have had First Nations in their genealogy, but they hadn't officially declared their status.)

St David's UC – Oxford

What do the West wall sanctuary banners depict? (creation)

How many rows of pews are in the sanctuary and balcony? (there are none actually as padded chairs replaced the pews.)

St. John's Botany United Church – Kent

What is the date on the cornerstone? (1900)

From the website - What is the name of our three-point charge? (Rural United)

St. Luke's UC – Chatham-Kent

How many families supported St. Luke's Presbyterian Church in 1901 when the building was built? (six – from website).

What is St. Luke's major fundraiser? (Pasta Dinner and Auction Sale – see picture)

St. Luke's UC – Sarnia, Lambton

What hangs from the ceiling at the front of our sanctuary? (large wooden cross)

From the Website: Who is our music director? (D. Jay Moons)

St. Paul's UC – Tillsonburg. Oxford

What is the date on the Cornerstone in the foyer? (1867)

What is the name of our current clergy? (Rev'd Karlene Brown-Palmer)

St. Paul's-Victoria Avenue United Church

What is written on our sign? (Love is Love)

What is our Charge called? (St. Paul's-Victoria Avenue United Church)

Talbot Street UC – Chatham-Kent

What signs of inclusivity are visible at the front entrance of Talbot Street United Church? (Automatic door opener button, LGBTQ+ sticker, graded entrance replacing steps, handrail)

What three churches partner in collaborative ministry with Talbot Street United Church? (St Luke's United Church and St Andrew's United Church (South Buxton Pastoral Charge), and Darrel S Moffat Memorial United Church (Tilbury-Quinn Pastoral Charge))

Thamesville UC – Chatham-Kent

When visiting our building, what Thamesville landmark is across the street from the church? (the Town Hall, along with the Cenotaph & Library)

From the Website: In what ways do we help out to feed the wider community? ("At the Table" Community meal, "Soup's On", "Lil Free Pantry" Cupboard and Root Cellar)

Thorndale UC – Middlesex

What historical posting is found in front of the church? (Thorndale Heritage posted by the Lions)

What does Thorndale UC call their Sunday school program?

Trinity UC – Ingersoll, Oxford

What community outreach meets every Thursday afternoon in our lower hall?
(The STICH Supper Club! STICH stands for Stronger Together Ingersoll Community Harvest and they serve a hot, free meal to over 200 people every week, supported by volunteers and community donations. TUC is proud to host such an important outreach which combats poverty, hunger, and social isolation.)

What tiny ceramic creatures roam all around our sanctuary each week?
(We have 2 ceramic church mice which hide all over our sanctuary. On Sundays, the congregation has great fun, finding their new hiding spots.)

Trinity UC and Community Centre - London, Middlesex

What year was the building erected? (find the cornerstone)

What scene is depicted in the stained-glass window at the Talbot side of Trinity United Church? (Jesus holding a lamb)

Trinity UC, Glencoe, Middlesex County

How many churches share the Main Street and Concession Street corner?
(Three. The former Trinity United Church, St. John's Anglican and Trinity United Church, and Glencoe Presbyterian Church)

What church's worship videos are shared weekly on Trinity's Facebook page?
(Main Street United Church, Mitchell, ON)

Turin UC – Thamesville, Chatham-Kent

What is the symbol at the top of the stained-glass window on the west hall of the sanctuary? (Burning Bush)

What is the year on the corner stone of the church? (1900)

Union UC – Elgin

Who originally owned the property on which Union United Church Cemetery now occupies. (John and Pearly Willis)

Find the cairn at the front of the church building, how many church buildings on the present site are listed on the cairn and what are the dates? (1877 and 1949)

White Oaks UC – London, Middlesex

Before constructing their first church building, where did White Oaks United Church worship, and where was their office?

What is White Oaks United building on their property?