

Some Historic Notes

The first service of worship noted in the Murray Harbour area was held in 1806 in the home of Mr. James Irving, a Dumfriesshire Presbyterian, and was led by Rev. Dr. James MacGregor of the Pictou Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church.

The first recorded baptisms noted in the Murray Harbour area were children of William and Ruhamah (Hugh) Sencabaugh. Their baptisms were recorded by Rev. John Bulpitt of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

Rev. Bulpitt had a small church built in Murray Harbour. This first Methodist church on the Island, outside of Charlottetown, was opened by Rev. John Hicks in August of 1815.

In 1824, two Methodist class meetings are noted in Murray Harbour. One was in French to accommodate families of the Guernsey settlers who had arrived in 1806. The area Methodist Circuit then included Murray Harbour, Cape Bear and White Sands.

The Murray Harbour United Church was originally commissioned as a Presbyterian church in 1905. In 1925, it became part of the United Church of Canada.

Some Historic Notes

The Murray River Presbyterian congregation had its roots in the early history of the village of Murray River. During its early stages, the Presbyterian congregation formed in the area shared worship facilities with the other established churches in the community. These facilities included the Temperance Hall located on the Murray Harbour Road.

When Murray River became a part of the Murray Harbour-Murray River-Little Sands pastoral charge in 1892, there was no church building and the congregation was continuing to meet in the Temperance Hall.

The Temperance Hall was built in the mid 1800's where the Murray River Community Cemetery is now located. It was moved by horse and capson to the Gladstone Road in 1913 and ceased to be a public building in 1955 when it was sold by the village to Mrs. Fanny Moore.

During the pastorate of Rev. Ewen Gillis (1892-1903), Gavin and Cartney McLure generously donated land for a Murray River Presbyterian church. The Deed of Conveyance was accepted by George McKay, Alexander McKenzie, Matthew McLure, Norman White, John Whiteway and Robert White on behalf of the congregation. A place of worship was erected for the Presbyterians in the Murray River area under the supervision of John Whiteway. It was dedicated and opened for services on November 25, 1894. The first elders of the new Presbyterian church were John Whiteway, Robert Whiteway and Abram Bonnell.

On August 25, 1904, Rev. Samuel D. MacPhee was inducted as minister of the charge and served until 1906. The charge decided that Murray River would be a more suitable place for the minister to reside so the manse in Murray Harbour was sold and one bought for the same purpose in Murray River. During Rev. MacPhee's pastorate, membership increased and a new organ was purchased for the church.

During the pastorate of Rev. A.J. MacNeill (1907-1916) a Ladies Aid and a Women's Missionary Society were organized at the Murray River church.

In 1925, when church union took place, the Murray River Presbyterian Church became Murray River United Church - part of the United Church of Canada.