

HANNA

*First United Church*



**GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY**

1912 — 1962

and

Dedication of the New Church

**October 24th, 1962**

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"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into  
the house of the Lord". (Psalm 122:1)

## PREFACE

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name,  
there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20)

Every once in a while through life special occasions arise which we want to remember with pride and a joy of achievement. The Fiftieth Anniversary and the Dedication of the New First United Church is such an occasion. The Session and the Committee of Stewards have felt that this milestone in our history is worthy of the permanence of the printed page.

The story that follows is an inspiring one dating back to the spring of 1910, when a few courageous pioneers, filled with the Spirit of God, gathered to form a congregation in the home of Mr. Richard Hannah. There have been prosperous times, and there have been difficult times in the history of the church of the past fifty years, but through it all we can feel the awareness of the leading of the Spirit of God.

An attempt has been made to record the faithful works of members of the congregation, as well as the sacred memories of the many high points in the life of the church. We only wish that time and research facilities would enable us to gather and bring to the printed page more information concerning the history of Hanna First United Church. Certainly there are many persons, events and achievements which we have overlooked, but certainly not intentionally. Records are incomplete and memories of the past become slightly faded.

We wish to thank all the kind people who contributed any information or pictures for this undertaking.

May God continue to lead and guide our congregation in His own way so that the years of history still to be written may be worthy of His name and may bring great advancement for His Kingdom in Hanna and beyond.

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History compiled and written by J. C. Charyk  
on behalf of the  
Session and the Committee of Stewards of  
Hanna First United Church  
July 1962

**A HISTORY OF THE HANNA FIRST UNITED CHURCH  
FOR  
THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY and DEDICATION OF THE NEW CHURCH  
1912 - 1962**

Let us look back for a moment in silent tribute and respect to the days of the pioneers of the Hanna area. It is a history of the faith of our forefathers in a new land, of people starting a new life in an untried and unproved area; of hard work, of hardship, of failure and of success. The courage, industry, and privation of the pioneers who first opened up this area was repeated hundreds of times in the West, as peoples from scores of countries, as peoples of many faiths and ideals built the Canadian West into the bread-basket of the world.

In Hanna, as well as elsewhere, through all their hardships and isolation the pioneers did not forget their Creator. As the area was being opened and the first heavy influx of settlers arrived they banded together to build a church—to give thanks to God for His blessing in the new land.

The beginning of the Hanna Presbyterian Congregation dates back to the last Sabbath of May in the year 1910 when a few people in the sparsely settled district in and around the Copeville store, met in the home of Mr. Richard Hannah one mile south-east of what later became the town of Hanna. The first service was held by Mr. J. T. Warwick, a student appointed by the Home Mission Committee to the Copeville Mission Field. The text of the first sermon was, "I will not let thee go except Thou bless me". (Genesis 32:26).

The services were held regularly at Mr. Hannah's home until July 14, 1912. At that time the hamlet of Hanna was beginning to grow and it was thought wise to change the place of service to the larger centre. The Hanna townsite was sold in Saskatoon on August 7, 1912 and before this date there were squatters moving in, and one of these, Charles F. Brown, had a partly completed pool room. It was in this unfurnished pool room that Mr. Warwick, the student missionary, held his first service in Hanna on July 14 1912. He preached from the text, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved".

Mr. Warwick's own words, a number of years later, concerning the beginning of the Hanna Presbyterian Church are recorded in the minute book and are worth repeating if only from the standpoint of prophecy. This report was read at the congregational meeting on Friday, October 1, 1915.

Quote, "The beginning of the Hanna Presbyterian Church dates back to the year 1910 when a few people in the then thinly settled district met in the home of Mr. Richard Hannah to worship God. The first service was held on the last Sabbath of May 1910. On that Sabbath and for the most of the two years that were to follow the attendance could have been easily counted without going far into the tens. The text on that first day was, "I will not let thee go, except Thou bless me", and on looking back from where we stand one can now say there could not have been a more suitable one. There

were to be discouragements. We did not know that Hanna would spring up out of the future to carry on, perhaps to the end of time, the work we began away back in those early days. Had we known this our disappointments would have seemed small. We did not know it, but by staying at our posts we today see, at least, the beginning of the rewards of our labour".

"No little credit is due to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hannah whose door was ever open and who never tired in extending to the people and the Missionary the hospitality of their home. The service was conducted here until the 14th of July 1912 when it was moved to the town of Hanna. May the first text preached from in Hanna be mentioned here also, for at this distance it seems to have been appropriate too, although at the time unintentionally taken "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved".



*The home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hannah where the first services were held between 1910 and 1912*

*Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hannah, whose door was ever open and who never tired in extending to the people and the Missionary the hospitality of their home. ... 1910-1912*

For a few months services were held in the pool room and then transferred to the Hanna Public School Building. The pool hall, where the first services were held, was later moved up town and today is the Red and White Store.

The original meeting of the congregation of the Hanna Presbyterian Church was held on September 23, 1912.

The minute book summarizes the first meeting as follows:

"Prayer was offered by the missionary in charge, Mr. Warwick.

Moved by Mr. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Stirling, that Mr. Warwick act as Temporary Chairman. Carried.

Moved by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Thompson that J. H. Stephens act as Temporary Secretary. Carried.

Moved by Mr. Stirling and seconded by Mr. Trenaman that a Board of Managers be elected. Carried.

The following members of the Congregation were elected as the Board of Managers.

A. J. Robertson, Chairman  
Mr. Thompson, Secretary-Treasurer  
J. C. Trenaman  
Mr. O. C. Smith  
Mr. Hannah  
Mr. James Parker  
Mr. George Burkell  
Dr. James Grant.

A committee was appointed, namely, Smith, Thompson, and Trenaman, to acquire a suitable church site.

Saturday evening, October 5th, was selected as the first meeting of the Board of Managers.

Meeting closed with the benediction.

Signed - J. H. Stephens

Temporary Secretary

The erection of a church in Hanna was uppermost in the minds of the adherents and at a meeting of the Congregation of the Presbyterian Church held in the Hanna Public School on November 12 1912, after the Sunday night's service, the following business was transacted by the Congregation:

"Moved by Mr. W. C. Stirling, seconded by Mrs. F. Mathe, that the Board of Managers be instructed to make application to the proper Presbyterian authorities for a loan of \$1,000.00 for the erection of a Presbyterian Church in Hanna. Carried."

Again on November 18, 1912, at a meeting of the Board of Managers of the Presbyterian Church called by the chairman in the office of Messrs. Robertson, Stirling & Trenaman, the following important decisions were made:

"Moved by Mr. Trenaman, seconded by Mr. Smith, that the Board accept Mr. Burkell's contract with the C.N.R. Townsite Company, and pay him his entire equity, namely: \$266.00 for Lots 17 and 18, Block 29, for church purposes. Carried."

"Moved by Mr. Trenaman, seconded by Mr. Smith that the Board of Managers enter into a contract with Mr. Burkell binding the Church to hold this property for church purposes for a period of two years, and in case of the Church not doing so that the property revert back to Mr. Burkell, upon his returning all money paid by the Church upon the above property, including interest at 8% per annum. Carried".

"Moved by Mr. Burkell, seconded by Mr. Smith, that the Secretary write the Board of Trade, asking them for permission to use the school house for services during the winter. Carried."

Late in 1912 Mr. Warwick was succeeded by Rev. Samuels, an ordained minister. Rev. Samuels remained for only six months when he was succeeded by Rev. S. W. Thompson of Kindersley who continued until the spring of 1915 when he accepted a call from Peace River. The minute book contains the comment that Rev. Thompson was a well-read person.

At the beginning of the year 1913 the Herald Hall was finished and the services were transferred to this place and continued to be held there for the next four years. A fire destroyed the second story of the Herald Hall but the congregation continued to use the hall in spite of the damage. Since Mr. W. C. Stirling owned the hall it was later known as the Stirling Hall.

The payment for the two church lots involved some difficulty, for at a meeting of the Board on January 21, 1914, it was moved by Mr. Stirling and seconded by J. H. Stephens that the board of managers address a resolution to the Ladies' Aid Society asking that they contribute a part of the payment of \$225.00 due on the church lots. It appeared that the ladies came through in fine style in raising the required money for on March 20, 1914 at the regular meeting of the Board, Mr. Fisher moved and Mr. Loveday seconded a motion directed to the Ladies' Aid Society stating that, "The Board tender the Ladies' Aid a vote of thanks for the donation of \$225.00 to apply on the lots."

Definite steps were also taken at this meeting when Mr. C. P. Johnston moved and Mr. W. C. Stirling seconded a motion stipulating that, "We proceed to erect a church building at a cost approximately of \$2500.00 and that we apply to the Church Mission Building Board for a maximum loan."

In the meantime the congregation continued to use the Stirling Hall for church purposes, while the Ladies' Aid Society continued its money raising activities. This state of affairs could be gleaned by reading the minutes of various annual congregational meetings:

The January 30 1914 meeting records: "Moved by Mr. Stirling and seconded by Mr. Stephens that a vote of thanks be tendered our Ladies' Aid Society for their generous help towards the church during the year, particularly in helping to pay off the church lots." Also the meeting extended thanks of the congregation to Mr. Stirling for the use of his hall for church purposes.

One year later on February 10, 1915, Mr. Stephens moves and Mr. Fisher seconds a motion, "that the congregation extend a vote of thanks to the Ladies' Aid Society for financial assistance."

At a meeting of the Board of Managers on May 18, 1915, moved by Mr. H. Halladay and seconded by Mr. Odell that Mr. Stirling be paid \$10.00 per month beginning on June 1 for the use and the care of the hall.

The Rev. Thompson was followed by Mr. O. R. Lavers, a student missionary from Queen's College, Kingston. Mr. Lavers remained only during the summer and fall months of 1915, but it was during his pastorate that the congregation was officially organized. Let us retrace the steps followed

by the congregation in becoming fully organized.

On May 18, 1915, on a motion by Mr. Lane and seconded by Mr. Fisher that proceedings be taken to organize a congregation and form a session was carried. On September 17, 1915, moved by Mr. Lavers and seconded by Mr. Odell that October 3, 1915, be the date set for completing the organization of the congregation. At the same meeting Mr. Stephens moved and Mr. Fisher seconded that "An announcement be made from the pulpit on the Sunday before the business meeting calling for suggestions for a name for the congregation, and that a vote be taken at the business meeting on October first on the names received and the name receiving the largest number of votes shall be the name of the congregation. There were to be two services held on Sunday, October 3, 1915, viz., 11 o'clock in the morning and 7.30 in the evening. At the morning service the ordination of the Elders shall take place, and at the evening service the reception of the members and the communion shall be held.

The Congregational meeting on Friday, October 1, 1915, was an important one, for it was the official organization of the Congregation. Rev. W. M. Cruickshank of Castor presided over the meeting and explained that an application was made on behalf of the Hanna Congregation by Rev. W. Shearer to the Presbytery of Castor for permission to organize the congregation and that he (Rev. Cruickshank) had been appointed by the Presbytery to officiate. The questions, which the applicants for membership must answer, were then read and the communion roll was opened. Moved by Mr. Lavers and seconded by Mr. Fisher that the names of the applicants which were then read, be placed on the communion roll. Carried. The four Elders elected at this organizational meeting were Messrs. W. C. Stirling, F. E. Fisher, G. MacFadyen and James Stephens. Rev. Cruickshank on behalf of the Presbytery of Castor extended the right hand of fellowship to the new members and officers. An application was also made to the Presbytery of Castor for permission to raise the status of the Hanna Field to Augmentation.

The following suggestions for a name for the new congregation were considered and voted upon viz., St. Andrews, Knox, First Presbyterian Church, and St. Paul's. The name approved by the Congregation was "First Presbyterian Church".

Mr. Lavers returned to College and he was followed by Mr. Trefry who had charge of the First Presbyterian Church for approximately three months when the Congregation decided to become an augmented charge and call a minister. On July 21, 1916, Rev. W. W. Aitchison of Zealandia, Saskatchewan, who had received an unanimous call arrived in Hanna to become pastor of the congregation, but owing to the difficulty of holding a Presbytery Meeting he was not inducted until about two weeks later.

In November 1916 a congregational meeting was held to discuss the building of a new church. At this meeting it was decided to erect a church on the property held by the congregation at the corner of First Street East and Fourth Avenue.

The first service was held in the new church on February 7, 1917 and on April 8 following, the church was formally dedicated by Rev. W.

Shearer, Superintendent of Home Missions. During 1918 the remainder of the debt on the church was paid, and at the annual congregational meeting held on February 5, 1919, it was decided that the church become self-supporting, but owing to the decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to increase ministers salaries the congregation did not become self-supporting until 1920.

It might be of interest to members of the present congregation to know the amount of a Sunday collection in the early days, say in 1917. We must realize that the value of money has changed considerably since 1917 and that a five cent piece at that time was worth a good deal more than it is today. Is it small wonder that every church has had to dispense with the oldtime shallow collection plates and invest in plates of some depth?

#### Plate Collections in 1917

February	14	\$3.40	April	4	\$7.25
"	21	\$2.75	"	11	\$5.90
"	28	\$2.80	"	18	\$6.30
March	7	\$4.35	"	25	\$4.60
"	14	\$4.15	May	2	\$7.00
"	21	\$4.25	"	9	\$6.30
"	28	\$4.15	"	16	\$5.45
			"	23	\$4.85
			"	30	\$6.50

An interesting document of 1915, that has been carefully preserved by the church, was the **Subscriptions for the Purchase of the Church Site and the Erection of the Building**. It reads, "We the undersigned citizens of Hanna and vicinity hereby subscribe the sums of money opposite our names for the purpose of purchasing a church site and the erection of a Presbyterian Church thereon. The amount of money required is \$5,000.00. The list includes the following contributors: W. C. Stirling, A. J. Robertson, J. C. Trenaman, Jas. Parker James Grant, M.D.; C. N. Vassar, A. F. Maley, George Parking, Hoover and Campbell, C. P. Johnston, G. A. Jamieson, H. J. Leggett, J. A. McLure, Black & MacLeod, G. W. Fleming, Brink & Jarrell, Gibb, Brown & Odell, and J. H. Stephens.

1916 was a year of progress for the First Presbyterian Church for not only was construction started on the church but plans were considered for providing a house for the minister. The Board first brought up the matter on Saturday, April 29, 1916, "Moved by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Hannah that a committee be appointed to arrange for a house for the minister". The committee consisted of Messrs. Miller and Hamilton. On July 26 1916, Rev. Aitchison proposed that a house be built on the church property. Moved by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Mr. MacFadyen that the proposal be accepted and trustees were to be appointed so as to draw out the agreement. However, at the Congregational Meeting held in Fleming Hall on Wednesday, August 9, 1916 difficulties were encountered concerning the manse committees. "The three manse committees appointed at the last meeting were to have met and prepared reports to present to the congregational meeting. The Plans Committee were there and gave a report. They had a few sketches but could not do very much until the Finance Committee



gave their report. The Finance Committee was not present so on a motion by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Mr. Fisher the "old committee" was disbanded and a new committee of Mr. Robinson, Mr. Odell, and Mr. Stephens was appointed.

The minister, Rev. Aitchison, required a house so he submitted a proposition to build a house. The meeting ended with the minister being given the permission to build a suitable house on the church lots and all expenses on the agreement to be charged to the congregation. A week later, August 14, the Board of Managers met again this time to interview Mr. Finkbeiner with a view to purchase his church property and dwelling place. Still no solution. Eventually the manse problem was solved for the Rev. Aitchison agreed to build on other lots separate from the church lots, and by November 8 the Board agreed that the rent of Rev. Aitchison's house be paid. At the congregational meeting on January 22, 1917, it was moved by Mr. J. E. Fisher and seconded by Mr. S. B. Robinson that \$20.00 per month rent be paid to Rev. Aitchison for the manse.

The manse problem again came to the fore when Rev. Aitchison left the congregation in February 1921 and sold his house. The Board of Managers met on August 19, 1921 to deal with the manse problem again. Since the matter of procuring a manse was urgent it was decided that Mr. Robinson should see the Real Estate agents and secure at once as suitable a residence as possible. The matter of building a manse was also dealt with and on realizing that it would necessitate a considerable expenditure, Mr. Odell offered to write to Mr. Laird, Secretary-Treasurer of the Finance Board of the Presbyterian Church in Canada regarding the possibility of securing a loan of \$1,000.00 or \$1,500.00. It was also suggested that a local loan might be raised and Mr. J. Stephens offered to interview Mr. Jas. Burns along these lines.

By September 6, 1921, the Board had decided to build a manse and definite action was taken on that day when at a special meeting of the Board Mr. Stephens moved and Mr. Odell seconded that application be made to the Presbytery for \$2,000.00 for the purpose of erecting a manse. The secretary was instructed to phone Rev. Brunton of Castor for the necessary application forms. It was also moved by Mrs. F. Mathe and seconded by Mr. Odell that the Board bring the matter of a manse before the congregation and state exactly the proposition proposed. Mr. Odell and Mr. Laurie were appointed to speak to the congregation at the first regular evening service.

The Rev. E. I. Rainey arrived early in September so the manse problem became more urgent than ever. On September 14, 1921, the planning of the manse was discussed at length and on motion of Mr. J. Stephens and seconded by Mr. A. E. Jones, a committee of Mr. Robinson, Mr. Laurie and Mr. Rainey was appointed to choose suitable plans and specifications and submit the estimates to the Board at an early date.

A special meeting of the congregation was called at the close of the evening service September 18, 1921 for the purpose of giving to the Board of Managers and Trustees the authority to apply to the Church Manse Board for a loan of \$2,000.00, and to secure mortgages. Moved by Mr.

Stirling and seconded by Mr. McFadyen that the Congregation give to the Board of Managers and Trustees this authority. The motion was carried.

On September 30, 1921, the Board of Managers was considering the five contracts tendered for the building of the manse. Moved by Mr. J. Stephens and seconded by Mr. A. E. Jones that the lowest tender be accepted. The figure submitted by Mr. J. E. MacFarlane being the lowest, the building committee was instructed to inform him to the effect that his tender had been accepted. It was also moved by Mr. J. Stephens and seconded by the Secretary, Mr. C. H. Johnston, that Mr. Robinson, Mr. Laurie and Mr. Odell be a supervisory construction committee. There appeared to be some misunderstanding regarding the specifications covered by the tender submitted by Mr. MacFarlane for the Board meets at a special session on October 4 to reject the MacFarlane tender and to reconsider the tender of Mr. J. English. Mr. English constructed the manse that is still in use today.

The original manse contract of 1912 between Mr. Jas. English and the Church Board is on file in the church records and reads as follows:

"Contract for Manse Building 24x36 according to Plans and Specifications submitted. Complete with best class of furnace and hardware generally used in Hanna. Coal not supplied.

Price \$2,970.00

Signed: Jas. English.

Girls' work was organized in 1918 and for some years was actively carried forward. One of the largest C.G.I.T. camps was held at the Hand Hills Lake and entertained some seventy girls from Hanna, Craigmy e, Delia and other tributary points. The mothers in charge of this camp were all from the Hanna Congregation and included: Mrs. R. Gilchrist, Camp Mother; Mrs. A. A. Woodle, Business Secretary; Mrs. J. E. Fisher, in charge of cooking meals; Mrs. K. Stirling, Camp Leader. Assistant leaders were Mrs. Edgar, Miss Ella Howard, and Miss Carrie Bredin. According to the records this was the largest and most successful camp ever held under the care of the Hanna Congregation, in spite of bad weather that once blew down every tent.



A C.G.I.T. Group in 1937

The Session Book makes mention of the induction of Rev. E. I. Rainey but fails to record his resignation. Comment was made at the session

meeting on September 20, 1921 on the entirely pleasing reception given to Rev. and Mrs. Rainey on his induction. The sermon was preached by the Rev. McCurley of Delia, while Rev. Brunton, Moderator of Castor gave the charge to the Minister and to the Congregation. In 1925 the Moderator John Pate, before proceeding with the formal business, called the attention of the Members of the Session to the fact that no records of the proceedings of the Session, either referring to resignation of Rev. E. I. Rainey, the calling of a successor, or the matter of the induction had been placed in the minutes. That in fact, the last date of entry was October 1922 and here it was November 1925.

It was during the term of office of Rev. John Pate, January 1926, that the First Presbyterian Church of Hanna became the First United Church. Records show that in the fall of 1925 it was moved by Mr. J. G. Odell and seconded by Mr. James E. Fisher that the Session place itself on record as being unanimously in favor of the Organic Union of the Congregational, the Methodist and the Presbyterian Churches, and that the Moderator John Pate intimate the same to the Union Committee of the negotiating churches.

On May 9, 1926, a meeting of the Congregation was held for the purpose of hearing a statement from the Pastor. Rev. Pate, in a few words, stated that he had called the meeting for the purpose of placing his resignation as Pastor, before the Congregation. He did this with the deepest regret but health considerations demanded that he should seek a lower altitude.

The Rev. A. W. Coone came to Hanna First United Church from Nanton, where he had enjoyed a very happy and successful pastorate with the Methodist Congregation leaving there after the advent of the Church Union. Illness interrupted the ministry of Rev. Coone and he left in June

1928. Rev. J. W. Derby filled in during the illness of Rev. Coone in the spring of 1928.

On December 15, 1928, a unanimous call was extended to the Rev. J. V. Howey of Munson who was in charge of the United Church work at that point. Rev. Howey accepted and preached his first sermon on April 6, 1929, and was inducted on April 5.

Rev. Howey stayed two years and was followed by Rev. J. W. Churchill who stayed till the end of July 1933 leaving the ministry, but volunteered for work in Lethbridge on behalf of Rev. Bishop who was in poor health.



Rev. J. Wesley Churchill who served the Congregation from 1930 to 1933.

By August 1, 1933, the Settlement Committee had sent out Rev. F. J. Hartley of Trochu to the Hanna Charge. Mr. Hartley had enjoyed a six-year service in the United Church there, leaving with much regret on

the part of the Trochu Congregation, but Rev. Hartley felt the Hanna Charge, being a one appointment field, to be the best for him. He began work in Hanna First United on August 1, 1933. Rev. Hartley had had some connection with the Hanna Congregation at its inception, having arrived from Manitoba at Castor in May 1922. Rev. Hartley was inducted as the Presbyterian minister there. Hanna was started in 1912, and early in 1913, Rev. Hartley, who was the Missionary Convener visited Hanna and preached in a pool room where a student Mr. Warwick was holding his Presbyterian services. At this particular service Rev. Hartley organized the First Ladies' Aid Society in Hanna. In 1915 Rev. Hartley moved to Calgary taking charge of the Ogden and Pleasant Heights Congregations, while in 1927 he was appointed to the Trochu charge, and in August 1933 to Hanna. Rev. Hartley continued his ministry in Hanna until 1939.

The Session Report for the year 1937 reflects a spirit of gloom and discouragement as it portrays the effects of drought and the economic setbacks of the thirties.

"The past year has been a hard one in many ways, but our church through our minister, Rev. F. J. Hartley, has helped distribute several cars of vegetables and boxes of clothing. The Junior Sunday School of Knox United sent some Christmas boxes and 110 white gifts through this Sunday School, but many, many more calls were made that could not be filled. To the government, to the railroad company, and to all donors and to those who helped we express thanks. Our minister has written all, thanking them for the relief afforded in this way. But besides our material difficulties our church has suffered in other ways. We lost our oldest Elder, a grand old man of this church, Mr. James E. Fisher. Mrs. Fisher, his wife, who died a few years previous, was one of the most consistent Christian women connected with our church. Then too we lost Mr. J. Lamb, who died suddenly. Mr. Lamb had been an elder for one term was most faithful in attendance when he was able to get in from the country. Then too this Congregation and town lost some good friends by death, in the person of Mr. McCrea, the editor of the Hanna Herald, and Mrs. Neff.

During the prosperous years our church went forward splendidly, good church and manse property built and paid for, but lately with the rest of the district we have suffered through the overwhelming drought, but even so, we gave of our poverty over \$350 to the M. and M. Fund, while this year we have fallen rather badly and it looks as if about \$200 will be all we can raise.

Our Sunday School has been well maintained under the superintendency of Mr. Harvey, although at times and particularly this year we have lost largely. Our Primary Sunday School has for many years been a credit to the town and the church. Mrs. Rorabeck, the Primary Superintendent Mrs. Roger Rose, Mrs. Purdy, Miss Cook, Mrs. Dr. Argue, and a good many of our young girls in the past years have done wonderful work.

The week of prayer in 1937 was not very well attended, compared with this year it was poorly attended. 1938 was better attended than any year since Rev. Hartley became our minister.

In addition to serving this church our Minister, has given supply to the Alps School, 17 miles out, and to Grassy Slope, 13 miles North-East of Hanna. These services have been rather well attended and very much appreciated although on account of agricultural conditions they have not been able to make much of a contribution. We hope that our minister is not out too much for driving expenses".

Rev. C. E. A. Pocock was inducted on Friday, August 4, 1939 and he preached his first sermon on Sunday, August 6. He used the following text, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also the Greek. (Romans 1:16). Rev. Pocock came to the Hanna Congregation in answer to a most unanimous call. He had enjoyed a very successful pastorate in Okotoks from which after seven years he came to Hanna. Rev. Pocock was a graduate in Arts and Theology from Queen's University and started his ministry in Wetaskiwin in 1912. Later pastorates included Stettler, Fort Saskatchewan, and eventually Okotoks. Rev. Pocock's ministry terminated on July 1, 1942.

Rev. A. O. McNeil came to Hanna in August 1942 and served the church until the late summer of 1947. Mr. W. C. Stirling, the Clerk of Session, includes this note in the Session Minute Book, dated October 17, 1947 relative to this particular period, "Not many meetings I believe were held by the Session of our church during the latter part of 1945, 1946, and the first part of 1947. I, as Clerk of the Session, was rather too lame to take an active part, and did not attend any meetings during this period, and in late December 1946 I fell and broke my hip, which kept me in for about ten months. Our minister Rev. A. O. McNeil received a call to Creston B.C., and the Settlement Board sent us Rev. W. H. Irwin. Mr. Irwin came to us from the Bellevue-Hillcrest charge.



Rev. W. H. Irwin was inducted into the First United Church on Friday, August 8, 1947 with the Rev. S. J. Munn officiating assisted by Rev. G. Huer and Rev. B. Guy. The records show that Rev. Irwin served diligently until his lamented death on January 26, 1949. Problems inseparable from ministerial supply were overcome by the generous service of visiting clergy and laymen for the remainder of the Conference Year. Rev. Pow of Calgary was very kind in this regard and spent a good deal of time in the Hanna Charge.

Rev. and Mrs. A. O. McNeil

On July 1, 1949, the Rev. J. Edgar Clarke assumed the duties of the Hanna Pastorate in response to a call from the Congregation duly approved by Presbytery on May 16 1949. The Session recorded with gratitude its appreciation of the loyalty and support of the Congregation during the vacancy.



Rev. J. E. Clarke was inducted on June 30, 1949, with the Rev. A. G. Edworthy and Rev. S. J. Munn officiating. During his ministry at Hanna First United, which lasted until June 24, 1951, Rev. Clarke made a survey of the progress of the local church from 1925 to 1950. It appears that he presented the material in chart form to the Congregation. The significant feature of this survey was, "that when times were hardest the membership of the Church increased."

*First United Church in 1950*

Mr. Harry Grummitt, Clerk of Session, records the following information dated September 1951, "Due to the long illness and subsequent death of Mr. Wm. C. Stirling, the reports of the Session have not been in full. Mr. Stirling passed away in May and was buried May 20, 1950. He was one of the pillars of the church from its inception and always had the church at heart. Mr. John Eason, Elder, also died in 1951 on April 15. In 1951 the Church was moved over and raised to make more room for the Sunday School. It was suggested that a plate be placed in the Church with the names of the deceased Elders on it. A committee of Mr. Robinson, Mr. Harvey and Mr. Grummitt be appointed to look into the number of deceased Elders which included Mr. James Fisher, Mr. J. Lamb Sr.; Mr. John A. Campbell, Mr. John Rorabeck, Mr. Wm. C. Stirling, and Mr. John Eason. It appeared as if no action was taken in respect to recognizing these Elders who had gone to their reward.

A committee of Mrs. Pratt, J. Odell and H. Grummitt, interviewed Rev. Wm. L. Gourlay in May 1951 relative to accepting the call to Hanna First United. He accepted.

Rev. W. L. Gourlay was inducted on September 14, 1951. At the service addresses were given by Rev. W. Pringle of Oyen, Rev. E. W. Edworthy of Drumheller and Rev. DeLeeuw of Delia. Rev. W. L. Gourlay continued to



serve the Hanna congregation for a period of nine years with the last service on June 26, 1960. His ministry was characterized by the extension of services to outlying places like Chinook, Youngstown, Richdale, Garden Plains, Parr, etc. In 1959 the First Sector Plan under the chairmanship of Mr. Wm. Cross was initiated with much success and prospects for a new church appeared brighter.

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*Rev. W. L. Gourlay, who served the Hanna First United Church for a period of nine years.*

The induction service for Rev. John W. Moules, formerly of Milk River was conducted by the Rev. Geo. McClintock of Three Hills, assisted by Mr. Lynn Turner of Delia on July 4, 1960. At the reception following the service, Mrs. Argue read a history of First United Church and short addresses were given by Rev. J. Edgar Clarke, formerly of Hanna now serving in Vancouver and Canon Murray Starr of All Saints' Anglican Church, Hanna.

The past two years have been very promising years for First United, The 1960 and 1961 Sector Plans proved successful, an A.O.T.S. Men's Club is functioning, a new Church and Christian Education Building is nearing completion, youth groups like the Hi-C and Explorers meet regularly, Mrs. D. Ramsay maintains an up-to-date Nursery Roll, Church and Sunday School attendance is increasing, and the United Church Women held their inaugural service on January 14, 1962. All in all we can say, "Our grateful thanks Dear Lord for all Thy manifold Blessings."



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*Rev. John W. Moules. Present minister of Hanna First United Church*

## SIGNIFICANT YEARS IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

"Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set".  
(Proverbs 22:28)

- 1910—First service in the home of Mr. Richard Hannah.
- 1912—First service in Hanna in an unfinished pool room.  
—First meeting of the Board of Managers.  
—Organization of the Ladies' Aid Society with Mrs. Stirling as the first president and Mrs. Mathe as the first secretary.  
—Organization of the first Sunday School with Mrs. Stirling as the superintendent.  
—Purchase of Lots 17 and 18 Block 20 from William Burkell for a church site.  
—Services transferred from the pool room to Hanna Public School.
- 1913—Services held in the Herald Hall, later known as Stirling Hall.  
—Choir organized under the leadership of Mr. S. B. Robinson.
- 1915—Official organization of the church by Rev. Cruickshank of the Castor Presbytery.  
—Selection of a name for the Congregation - First Presbyterian Church.
- 1917—First service held in the New Church.  
—Church formally dedicated by Rev. W. Shearer, Superintendent of Home Missions.
- 1918—Debt on church fully paid.  
—A local committee on War Work organized.
- 1919—New organ purchased, Style E54 Esley.  
—C.G.I.T., Tuxis Boys and Trail Rangers organized.
- 1920—Women's Missionary Society comes into being with Mrs. W. Stirling as the first president and Mrs. F. Mathe as first secretary.
- 1921—Church Manse built by Contractor James English at a cost of \$2,950.
- 1924—An addition to the Church Building at a cost of \$1,500.00.
- 1925—Moved by J. G. Odell and seconded by Mr. J. A. Fisher that the Session place itself on record as being unanimously in favor of Organic Union of the Congregational, the Methodist and the Presbyterian Churches.
- 1926—Hanna First United Congregation comes into existence.
- 1937—Church distributes relief in the form of vegetables and clothing received from Eastern Canada.  
—Mission Band organized by W.M.S.
- 1938—Twenty-fifth Anniversary Service of the Congregation (1912-1937) with Rev. A. R. Schrag of Drumheller as the guest minister.
- 1947—Thirtieth Anniversary Service of the Opening of the new church (1917-1947) with Rev. Edworthy of Drumheller as guest minister.
- 1951—The Church Building was moved over and raised to make room for the Sunday School in the Basement.
- 1954—Rebuilding the church porch with outside entrance on the East Side.
- 1959—First Sector Plan under the chairmanship of Mr. Wm. Cross.  
—Organization of Hi-C under the leadership of Mr. S. Bell.
- 1960—Second Sector Plan under the chairmanship of Mr. Victor Mohl.
- 1961—Explorers Organized.  
—Third Sector Plan under the chairmanship of Mr. Richard West.



- Amount raised by the congregation and all organizations \$32,399.00.  
—A.O.T.S. Men's Club organized. Membership 30.  
—Mrs. H. Grummitt becomes the first woman Elder in the history of the church.  
1962—United Church Women organized with induction service on Jan. 14. Membership of 120.  
—Tender of \$106,604.00 from Bayker Construction of Calgary accepted.  
—March 18 Sod Turning Ceremony for the new church building. Mr. J. H. Stephens turned the first sod.  
—50th Anniversary of the Church.  
—Dedication of the New Church and Christian Education Building.  
—Total number of people under pastoral oversight 1200, including Parr, Garden Plains, and Richdale.

### MINISTERS AND STUDENTS WHO HAVE SERVED THIS CHURCH

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8).

- 1910—1912 Mr. J. T. Warwick (student)  
1912—1913 Rev. Samuels  
1913—1915 Rev. S. W. Thomson  
1915 to fall Mr. O. R. Lavers (Student)  
1915 (3 months) Mr. Trefry  
1916—1921 Rev. W. W. Aitchison  
1921—1923 Rev. E. I. Rainey  
1923—1926 Rev. John Pate  
1926—1928 Rev. A. W. Coone (Rev. J. W. Derby filled in during the illness of Rev. Coone in Spring 1928)  
1928—1930 Rev. J. V. Howey  
1930—1933 Rev. J. W. Churchill  
1933—1939 Rev. F. J. Hartley  
1939—1942 Rev. C. E. A. Pocock  
1942—1947 Rev. A. O. McNeil  
1947—1949 Rev. W. H. Irwin (Died January 1949, balance of year to June filled in by several supply ministers and laymen. Rev. Paw of Calgary most frequently)  
1949—1951 Rev. J. Edgar Clarke  
1951—1960 Rev. W. L. Gourlay  
1960— Rev. John W. Moules

### THE CHURCH ELDERS

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

The Elders of the church have oversight of the spiritual interests of the Congregation. These are the essential interests and all others depend on them. If there were no spiritual interests there would be no church and therefore no point in having a church building, church organizations, or a church budget. Because the Elders are charged with the oversight of these interests, the Session is clearly of crucial importance in the life of the church.

indeed, to be an Elder is to hold the noblest office and carry the greatest trust that can be given to a layman by his congregation.

In the 50-year history of the Hanna First United approximately twenty-six Elders took their turn in being "good and faithful servants" in fact, several members have served as Elders for the entire half-century.

The following is a list of Elders who, at one time or another served the Church or are still serving in this important capacity:

J. E. Fisher 1912-1937; G. McFadyen 1912-1926; W. C. Stirling 1912-1951; J. H. Stephens 1912-Present; G. Hannah 1921-1926; A. J. Campbell 1921-1942; J. Odell 1921-Present; S. B. Robinson 1924-Present; F. A. Mathe 1924-1943; H. Grummitt 1927-1961; C. S. Long 1933-1935; J. P. Rorabeck 1937-1938; J. Lamb 1937-1938; A. L. Harvey 1938-1953; E. Hoveland 1943-1945; J. Eason 1949-1951; S. A. Miller 1951-1953; J. Lamb Jr. 1950-Present; Alex Mohl 1953-Present; Geo. Stephens 1953-Present; Dr. G. D. Wilkins 1960-Present; E. Osborn 1960-Present; Mrs. H. Grummitt 1961-Present; P. Cochran 1961-Present; G. Rust 1961-Present; R. Robinson 1961-Present; J. C. Charyk 1961-Present.

### THE CHURCH STEWARDS

"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business". (Acts 6:3).

The Committee of Stewards of any church act as an inspiration to the members of the congregation. The great need is for imaginative and aggressive leadership to insure systematic and proportional offerings unto the Lord. A financial effort can be made a stimulating experience for a congregation, building up its vitality to make a real impact on the life within and around it. Down through the fifty years the Committee of Stewards of the Hanna First United Church have approached their responsibilities with the positive attitude that the Church of God has a worthwhile job to do, and it had better be doing it, and if it requires more money, then that money must be found.

The number of members on the Committee of Stewards of Hanna First United Church has varied with the needs and the times. In 1912 there were nine members, in 1913 it was reduced to five; in 1915 increased from five to seven; in 1916 again reduced to five; in 1918 increased to 6; in 1919 increased to eight; in 1942 raised to nine, and so the story goes until by 1962 there were 15 members.

The first Board of Stewards organized in 1912 consisted of: A. J. Robertson, Mr. Thompson, J. C. Trenaman, O. C. Smith James Parker, Mr. Hannah, George Burkell, Dr. James Grant, J. H. Stephens, and G. W. Fleming who took the place of O. C. Smith. The passage of years brought changes: 1913 - W. C. Stirling and Mr. Loveday. 1914 - A. Falconer, Mr. Fisher, C. P. Johnstar H. M. Blois, W. Robertson, Mr. Halladay, Mr. Lane, J. Odell, and Mr. FcFadyen. 1916 - Mr. Stewart, R. L. Miller, G. Hannah, J. Hamilton. 1918 - A. E. Jones. The war years saw a number of women coming on the

Board of Stewards, viz., 1919 - Mrs. Stirling, Mrs. Mathe, Mrs. Gilchrist, and Mrs. Stuart.

In more recent times (1942) the Board of Stewards consisted of: E. Hoveland, D. M. Graham, A. W. Finch Mrs. H. Grummitt, Mrs. Pratt, J. P. Winning, J. G. Odell, J. H. Stephens and S. A. Miller.

Changes are few in the Board of Stewards as the years go by as may be evidenced by the following new members added to take the places of retiring members: 1943 - Mr. E. R. Henderson; 1945 - J. D. Aikenhead; 1947 - R. Whyte and J. Lamb; 1949 - W. Rothwell; 1950 - H. I. Lund, M. A. Wolfe, C. W. Parker; 1951 - Dr. G. D. Wilkins; 1952 - R. L. Wood, Wm. Cross, T. Horne; 1953 - L. D. Warwick, 1954 - J. S. Sinclair and L. Hutton; 1959 - L. Hoge and J. C. Charyk; 1960 - D. Fano, G. Hunter V. Mohl, G. Stephens; 1961 - R. Mohl, C. Harrison, G. Morrison, R. West and W. Simpson 1962 - R. Moore, H. Karg and W. Watson.

Although the records are incomplete the following have served as secretaries of the Board of Stewards: J. H. Stephens 1912-1915; G. McFadyen 1915-1917; A. E. Jones 1917-1921; C. H. Johnston 1921-; R. P. Cochran 1931-1954; Roy Robinson 1955-1958; L. Hutton 1958-1961; G. Hunter 1961 to present.

### **THE BUILDING COMMITTEE**

At a Congregational Meeting held on January 25, 1961 a Building Committee was elected under the General Chairmanship of Mr. W. G. Hay. The members of this Committee included: P. Cochran, Secretary-Treasurer; W. Cross, Vice Chairman; D. Coolidge; G. Fleck; F. Ormiston; A. A. Hutton; G. R. McCrea; R. S. Moore; G. A. Rasmussen; R. Whyte; G. D. Wilkins; O. L. Hutton; V. Mohl; G. Lunde; Dale Smith, and J. W. Moules. It was through the efforts of these hard-working members that the needs of the Congregation were surveyed; a building site selected; plans for the church building draughted; a program of financing initiated; and the supervision of the actual construction maintained.

### **WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS**

"Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." (Proverbs 31:28).

The influences radiating from homes where God is loved extend onward through all time. This being true, how important the task of our mother-centred Christian homes today! The comforting, uplifting, and abiding influences of women is one of the most powerful forces that work for good in the world today.

The Ladies' Aid Society of Hanna First Presbyterian Church was organized in 1912 with Mrs. Stirling as first president and Mrs. Mathe as the first secretary. This organization has been very active during the entire history of the church and has proved to be of great financial and spiritual assistance.



*Some of the women of Ladies' Aid Society of First United Church of 1927. Reading from the left: Mrs. A. D. Turner, Mrs. A. Larson, Mrs. F. A. Mathe, Mrs. Gilchrist, Mrs. O. Carrier, Sr., and Mrs. J. Lamb.*

In the spring of 1920 a Women's Missionary Society was organized and has proved to be a help in interesting many in the missionary activities of the church. Again it was Mrs. W. Stirling as the first president and Mrs. F. Mathe as the first secretary. Of the records available the presidents from 1936 were: Mrs. Hartley, Mrs. Stirling, Mrs. Graham, Mrs. Pratt (president 7 years), Mrs. Gourlay, Miss Carol Mathe, and Miss Sadie Lamb.

Mrs. Pratt was outstanding in her faithfulness towards work in the W.M.S. for she served the Society in various official capacities from 1934 until her passing in 1962. At one time or another she was Treasurer, Assistant Secretary, Secretary of Christian Stewardship, and President. The church records bear out the fact that she travelled more miles on church business than any other member of our congregation in the fifty-year history of the church. Mrs. Pratt appeared to attend every Presbytery Conference and each Alberta Conference annually on behalf of the W.M.S. Her longest trip was as a delegate to the W.M.S. Dominion Board held in Toronto in May 1943.

The W.M.S. organized a Mission Band on March 25, 1937 under the leadership of Mrs. Hipperson, and continued to sponsor this Junior Mission Group for something like 17 years.



The minutes of the W.M.S. show that their missionary work not only extended to all parts of Alberta but Canada and the World.

A note in the minute book states, "The Ladies' organizations of this church were always in most capable hands." Some of the pioneer women who played an important part in the history (1912-20) of First

*The W.M.S. of First United Church 1949*

United Church included: Mrs. J. E. Fisher, Mrs. F. Mathe, Mrs. A. D. Turner, Mrs. Gilchrist, Mrs. Trenaman, Mrs. W. C. Stirling, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Smart, Mrs. Tant, Mrs. Girvan, Mrs. Carrier Sr. Mrs. Hendershott, Mrs. John Stanley, Mrs. Geo. Fleming, Mrs. Woodle, Miss Emma Stephens, Mrs. H. Grummitt, Mrs. Stuart, Mrs. Krater, Miss Stanley, Mrs. Hunter, Mrs. S. B. Robinson Mrs. Odell, Mrs. McFadyen, Mrs. E. R. Brown, Mrs. Hannah, Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Small, Mrs. A. J. Campbell, Mrs. Lane, Mrs. E. R. Harris, Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Stephens, and probably many others that the minute books failed to record.



*The W.A. Group of the First United Church in 1928.*

Both the W.A. and the W.M.S. were dissolved on January 14, 1962 when the United Church Women came into being, but their good works will continue to live forever. Mrs. Richard West is the first president of the Hanna United Church Women, while Miss Carol Mathe is the first Secretary of the Drumheller Presbytery of the United Church Women.

### **CHURCH MUSIC**

"O Come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make joyful noise to the rock of our salvation." (Psalm 95:1).

Praising the Lord through music has always been an integral part of the Church Service of Hanna First United Church. The first choir was organized by Mr. S. B. Robinson in 1913. Some of the members of this first choir included: Mr. Bruce Wallen, Mr. J. H. Stephens, Mr. and Mrs. F. Mathe, Mrs. George Fleming, Miss Emma Stephens, Mrs. John Stanley, and Mr. and Mrs. Jamieson. Edna Stanley was the church organist during this early period.

It must be realized that the organ of those days had to be pumped by hand, so it was the custom to hire a strong boy to pump the organ. His usual rate of pay for doing the job was \$2.50 per quarter year. Mr. Dale Smith, the present leader of the First United Choir, performed the task for a while in years gone by when he was a boy.

Miss Stanley served as organist for nearly ten years, while Mr. S. B. Robinson was choir leader for nearly 25 years.

On March 31, 1919 a new organ was ordered for the church at a price of \$475.00 and twenty-seven years later on September 22, 1946, Mr. H. H. Beach introduced the question of purchasing a Hammond Organ for the church. Eventually speakers and chimes were added to the Hammond Organ. It might be worth mentioning in passing that the choir raised very close to \$3,000 to pay for the modernization of the organ.

Some of the leaders who have made a valuable contribution to the music of the church include: Mrs. Edna Gibb, Mr. S. B. Robinson, Miss Stanley, Mr. R. A. Morton, H. H. Beach, Mrs. A. W. Prime, Mr. N. Chell, Mr. J. Paetkau, W. G. Hay, and Dale Smith. Hanna First United has been most fortunate in having many musically gifted people join the choir.

### THE SABBATH SCHOOL

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6).

The Sabbath School was organized very early in the history of the church for the records show that the first superintendent Mrs. Stirling, reported to the annual meeting of the Presbyterian Church held on January 29, 1913, that, "the Sabbath School was making progress and was financially self-sustaining. On August 18, 1916, the Elders made this note in their minutes, "The condition of the Sunday School was discussed and additional teachers were appointed."

The minutes of the Session and of the Committee of Stewards make mention of the following Superintendents that at one time or another helped in God's Work with His little ones: Mr. J. E. Fisher (1917), Mr. A. E. Jones (1920), G. D. Shields (1927) A. L. Harvey 1938 and again in 1944. More recently the names included Rev. A. O. McNeil, R. P. Cochran, H. Grummitt, Dale Smith, R. Pelletier, Mrs. Gourlay, Miss Cook, Mrs. Roger Rose, Mrs. Purdy, Mrs. D. Taylor, R. Stephens, Mrs. Dr. Argue, Mrs. Benjamin, Mrs. Hay, Mr. Wm. Cross, Mr. H. Lund, and J. C. Choryk.



The names of other superintendents and those of hundreds of teachers, young or old, who turned out Sunday after Sunday for months or for years, are not recorded in any minute books of Hanna First United Church but are recorded for all Eternity in Heaven. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee". One of the strengths of Hanna First United for the past fifty years has been in her Sunday School for we do not live in vain when we influence others for good. Total membership is now 226 pupils.

*A Sunday School Class of 1937. (Bobby Cochran, Master Buchborough, Lee Helmer, Bill O'Brien, Jack Ruddy, Master Webber and the teacher Miss Jessie O'Brien (Baltas).*

## SIDELIGHTS ON HISTORY

Church minute books are noted for the formal manner in which they portray church activities, but once in a while the dry humour of the recorder comes into play.

### **The Women Always Get Their Way**

January 15, 1921 - "On being reminded by Mrs. Mathe that the Board owed the Ladies' Aid \$400 the chairman S. B. Robinson moved that we pay said society \$100 at once. Seconded by Mr. Laurie. Motion carried unanimously".

September 14, 1921 - "On being reminded once more by Mrs. Small of the amount owing the Ladies' Aid the Board decided to borrow \$200 from the bank and pay off same at once".

### **Some Difficulties In Holding a Church Meeting**

August 9, 1916 - "As the Finance Committee were not present and did not act another committee was appointed. Moved by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Mr. Fisher that the old committee be disbanded."

October 12, 1921 - "The minutes of the ~~three~~ previous meetings were read and adopted on a motion by Mr. Odell and seconded by Mr. Mathe."

January 12, 1941 - "The Clerk not being present and not having sent the minute book, the minutes of the last meeting could not be read nor the business arising out of them be discussed. There was no report from the Committee appointed at the last meeting, which was cause for much regret."

April 25, 1954 - "As no further action was taken we were dismissed unceremoniously".

### **We Shall Have Music**

August 9, 1919 - "Miss Edna Stanley, the church organist, was willing to accept \$75 for the year 1919, and to cancel arrears of 1918."

May 12, 1919 - "The secretary be given the loan of the old organ until such time as needed."

March 8, 1920 - "That \$2.50 per quarter year be paid the boy for pumping the organ."

February 9, 1921 - "The secretary was instructed to find out the cost of installing a motor on the organ."

September 6, 1921 - "Mr. Robinson the choir leader, tendered his verbal resignation but same was emphatically turned down."

### **Thieves In The House Of Prayer**

April 21, 1919 - "Moved by Mr. Mathe and seconded by Mr. Stuart that Mr. Odell arrange for a lock and bolt on the church door."

September 14, 1921 - "Moved by A. E. Jones and seconded by J. G. Odell that the secretary see about putting a night latch on the church door."

### **Remember The Sabbath Day And Keep It Holy**

February 8, 1920 - "Resolved that as hockey and other games had been played on the Lord's Day that the Town Council be requested to suppress all such attempts to disturb the peace of the Sunday."

**A Good Idea**

February 24, 1924 - "The Ladies' Aid of the Presbyterian Church held a china shower at the residence of Mrs. F. A. Mathe on Tuesday evening, in order to replace the broken pieces in the lunch service at the Aid kitchen. Sixty cups were donated by those present".

**A SALUTE TO THE EARLY PIONEERS  
OF HANNA FIRST UNITED CHURCH**

"His Lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." (Matthew 25:23).



*Pioneer Days. The coming of the railroad to the Hanna area. The home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hannah in the distance. 1912*

**STIRLING**

"The record of our first 25 years would be most incomplete if reference were not made to the late Mrs. Katherine Elizabeth Stirling, wife of Elder W. C. Stirling. Mrs. Stirling died in Calgary Holy Cross Hospital on June 14 1936, after a short illness. Mrs. Stirling was survived by her husband and one son Donald, having suffered the tragic loss by drowning of her two little boys in 1916, her only children at that time.

Mrs. Stirling during all the years that the church has been giving service in Hanna, has been a most consistent worker. She was the first president of the Ladies' Aid, the first president of the W.M.S. and the organizer of the C.G.I.T., and in all the twenty five years she was closely connected with the work of the Sunday School. The Session of this Church (1937) is honoured in paying a high tribute to the memory of a great Christian mother."

At the annual meeting of First United Church on January 18, 1950 appreciation was expressed of the long service of Mr. W. C. Stirling, now resident of Calgary, and the Pastor (J. E. Clarke) conveyed the good wishes of the Congregation to Mr. Stirling by letter.

Mr. Stirling passed away after a short illness and was buried on May 20, 1950. He was one of the Pillars of the Church from its organization and always had the Church at heart".



### **McFADYEN**

The Session learned with regret, on April 4, 1920 that one of their members, Mr. G. McFadyen was about to leave Hanna with his family and return to Scotland. During his residence here Mr. McFadyen rendered valuable service to the church and the best wishes of the Session would follow him and his family to the Old Land."

### **FISHER**

"The Clerk was instructed to write into the minutes on January 11, 1938, a note re the death of Mr. J. E. Fisher, the grand old man of our church, who had been one of the pioneer elders when the church was organized in 1913. Mr. Fisher died in August 1917, while his wife a splendid Christian woman died February 29, 1930.

### **RORABECK**

"The Session asked the Clerk to forward to Mrs. Rorabeck a letter expressing their sympathy with her in her recent great sorrow in the loss of her husband, John P. Rorabeck, who had just recently returned to Hanna to live. Mr. Rorabeck was a most valued member of our Session. He had been an Elder before leaving Hanna for a two years' absence and was most warmly welcomed back to the church. Although in poor health we had all hoped he would long be spared. He dropped dead in his garden." Minutes on September 28, 1941.

### **CAMPBELL**

"Mention was then made of the loss of our most esteemed member of the Session - Archibald John Campbell, who died in the Hanna Hospital on October 29, 1942, and was buried from this Church on November 1, 1941. Mr. Campbell has been a Session member some years before but was away seven to eight years, and came back to us in March 1940. He was a most highly respected member of the whole town and district and his loss is very greatly felt. On a motion, the Clerk was asked to write Mrs. A. J. Campbell at Rumsey where she had moved to live with her daughter, and express our real sympathy with her in her great loss."

### **MATHE**

This fine Christian couple came to Hanna from the State of Wisconsin in 1912, and for over forty years were faithful workers in the Church. One is impressed by the numerous times that the name "Mathe" appears in the various church records. Both were members of the choir as early as 1913, while Mr. Mathe was an Elder from 1924 to 1943 and a church usher for even a longer period of time. Mrs. Mathe served on the Board of Stewards the Ladies' Aid Society, the Womens' Missionary Society (Life Member), the Sunday School, and was Senior Leader of the C.G.I.T. for many years. Mr. Mathe passed away on January 27, 1953, while Mrs. Mathe went to her eternal rest on April 30, 1959.

### **GRUMMITT**

The Grummitt Family served the Congregation very faithfully for nearly half a century. Harry was Church Elder from 1927 until his death in 1961, the Clerk of the Session from 1950 to 1960, and even a Sunday

School Superintendent in the summer of 1927. Mrs. Grummitt is still a faithful worker in the various ladies' groups, a staunch M and M supporter, and has assisted in preparing the elements for the Communion Services for well nigh 35 years. A high tribute was paid to Mrs. Grummitt when she was elected to the Session in 1961. She was the first woman to be so honoured in the 50 year history of the Church.

### STEPHENS

Mr. J. H. Stephens, the only remaining member of the original Session of this Congregation (1912) has served the Church continually as an Elder for half a century. He has also been a member of the choir, and has acted as Clerk of the Session. Mr. Stephens was given the honor of turning the first sod for the new church on Sunday March 25, 1962. Mr. Stephens is one of the true pioneers of Hanna First United Church.

### ROBINSON

The first choir was organized in 1913 under the leadership of Mr. Steve Robinson and he continued in that capacity for at least twenty-five years. He just could not get his resignation accepted. Mr. Robinson served the Church in many other ways, member of the Board of Stewards, Secretary-Treasurer of the Session, and Church Trustee. His wife has been active in the various womens' organizations of the Church for over 45 years. This faithful Christian couple are both hale and hearty today as they spend their eventide of life in Hanna. Their son Roy has been secretary for the Sunday School for many years.

### ODELL

Mr. J. Odell was elected to the Board of Stewards in 1915 and to the Session in 1921. He is still an active member of the 1962 Session, after serving for 41 consecutive years, and it was only a couple of years ago that he was able to retire from the Board of Stewards, after 45 consecutive years. Like Mr. Robinson, he was not able to get his resignation accepted, he had too much ability. Mr. Odell's wife and helpmate in making such a splendid Christian contribution to the life of the First United Church passed away on January 9, 1956. Mr. Odell's faithful record of service is very hard to equal, and the Hanna Church is fortunate in having such a valuable member.

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“Whatever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name  
of the Lord Jesus”. (Colossians 3:17).

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