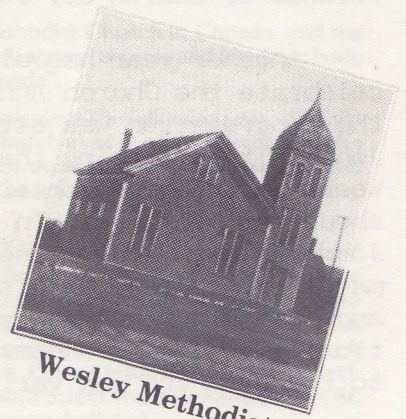


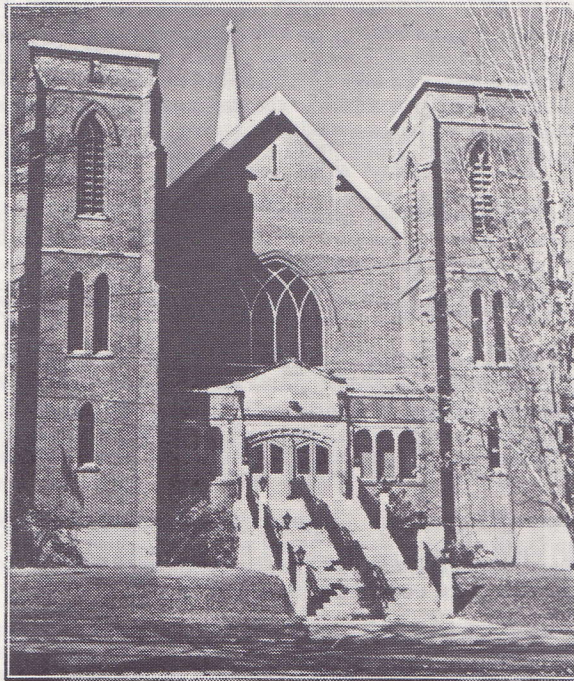
St. John Presbyterian



Sharon Presbyterian



Wesley Methodist



Sharon St. John United Church

United Church of Canada

Stellarton, Nova Scotia

October 7, 1992

Friends of Sharon St. John:

Another year has almost passed and we are once again preparing to celebrate the Church Anniversary on Oct. 25, 1992. It is 129 years since the congregation was established and 58 years since it became Sharon St. John. It is fitting that Thanksgiving precedes our anniversary by two weeks because it emphasizes the expression of gratitude we should have about our heritage. In the eyes of a new comer it appears that Sharon St. John has been amply blessed by faithful and dedicated founders who had a magnificent sense of vision and mission, even in the midst of disaster and fire. Moreover, our roots in the Presbyterian and Methodist traditions give us a richness in theology, liturgy and organization that add to the strength and variety of Sharon St. John today.

When we express gratitude we must always be thankful for the many individuals who give time and talent to enable our church to fulfil its mission daily. A church as large in size and numbers as ours needs many people who will make a personal commitment to serve God through the church. The whole community benefits from such commitment. God always works through people and thereby enables them to experience a richer and fuller life. We are thankful for an abundance of such faithful people in Sharon St. John.

The present church building is now more than 65 years old. It's a well built structure and has been well maintained over the years. But the weather and in particular the acid rain has taken its toll on the exterior of the building. As a result, over the next year or two you will be hearing more about needed restoration. Similarly, the church pipe organ is in need of an overhaul and a plan is underway to determine cost, source of funds and a company to undertake such work.

Thus, Anniversary 1992 will emphasize a sense of gratitude for our past community of faith; and initiate an expression of commitment for our future needs and service to God's people.

The speaker for Anniversary Sunday, Oct. 25, will be the new minister, the Rev. Foster B. Jenkins, with the church choir providing special music. The evening service (7:00 p.m.) will feature the Bethany Chorale from Halifax, who are known throughout Atlantic Canada for their excellent presentations.

Please plan to attend, participate and enjoy our Anniversary Celebrations. May God bless you all.

Sincerely,

Foster B. Jenkins
Foster B. Jenkins

On the 9th. day of May, 1924, an Act Representing the Union of Certain Churches, changed the Protestant picture for all time.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada, by its various church courts, the Methodist Church in Canada, and the Congregational Churches of Canada have by their petition represented that they agreed to unite and form one body or denomination of Christians under the name of "The United Church Of Canada".

While the Act of Union took place in 1924, the actual union in Stellarton took place the following year, 1925. At that time the Stellarton Wesley Methodist Church and St. John Presbyterian Church united to become the St. John United Church. It was not until the fall of 1934 that Sharon United Church and St. John United Church were united and formed the present congregation of "Sharon and St. John United Church" as it was known at that time. Today we know it as Sharon St. John United Church.

The beginning of this church goes back many years, to a small log edifice known as The Church Of Scotland which was built in the north end of what is now Stellarton. In fact, the street now known as Kirk Avenue gets its name from that church. It was a rough and uncomfortable building, but was used for many years. When it came time to move, another church was built. Historians disagree as to the exact location; some believe a church built in "Irish Town" now known as Plymouth, was where the congregation moved to, and there is little doubt that such a church existed, and likely a number of people of the old church did attend meetings there. Others insist that another church was erected on a location somewhere near the present day Nissan Motors on Foord Street and became known as St. John Church (a picture of this church appears on the front page of the anniversary bulletin).

It was in this part of the growing town of Stellarton that the original Sharon Church was erected. Its location is a little vague, but it appears that it was built on what is now known as MacKay Street (about where Queen Street meets MacKay Street?). This building served the needs of the people for many years, until it reached the point where it needed a complete overhaul. At this point the people had to decide whether it would be better to spend a large sum of money on repairs, or erect a new church. They opted for the latter and the result was the "new" Sharon Church on Stellar Street. This church was used until it was destroyed by fire in 1924. The present Sharon St. John United Church is located on the same spot as the old one.

The third church involved in Church Union was The Wesley Methodist Church which was erected on Foord Street where it crossed by Allan Avenue. When Church Union came into effect, that church ceased to be used for church services and became a church hall. It too was destroyed by fire after it had been sold and turned into a garage.

The pictures of all three founding churches appear on the front cover of the bulletin, together with a picture of the present day place of worship.

For many years the United Church maintained a building on Kirk Avenue which was known as "The Mission Hall". This was used as a center of religion for the residents of that area. When it no longer could be used for that purpose it became a Sunday School for the children. From that the building became a small factory, but soon it became too small for that purpose. For a while it was used by the "Happy Day" pre-school classes. Finally, this well-used building has become the meeting place for a group of non-denominational Christians. It seems that this venerable building has now gone full circle.

Finally, on November 10, 1963, the congregation of Sharon St. John United Church dedicated a new church hall and Christian Education Center. It was erected on the vacant space between the church and the manse, and built onto the church. This center contains a large auditorium, church office, ladies parlor, kitchen, classrooms for Sunday School, etc.

The history of this congregation reminds one of: "And when the last great Scorer sets His mark against your name, He marks not if you lost or won, but how you played the game." The people of Sharon St. John United Church have had their wins and losses, and maybe these have balanced out. However, these people have to be remembered as those who played the game to the full.

The following is a list of the ministers who have served the people of the congregation over the years:

Dr. C.C. MacIntosh	1913 - 1934
Rev. Dr. G.M. Young	1934 - 1936
Rev. D.M. Grant	1936 - 1937
Rev. T.E. MacLennan	1937 - 1943
Rev. Dr. R.D. MacIntosh	1943 - 1954
Rev. D.C. Boothroyd	1954 - 1963
Rev. D.H. Gass	1963 - 1974
Rev. R.E. Johnston	1974 - 1980
Rev. N.D. MacDougall	1980 - 1988
Rev. G. E. Barrett	1989-1992
Rev. Foster B. Jenkins	1992-



The Church Crest

What we call the Church Crest is really the official signature of the Church, placed on legal documents, the ordination parchments and licenses to perform the sacraments. It was designed by Dr. V.T. Mooney, former Treasurer of the Church.

For our church members this insignia is a spiritual and historic reminder. Its oval shape is derived from the outline of a fish which was used as a symbol of identity by early Christians. The initials of the words "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour" spell the Greek word for fish.

The "X" at the centre is the first letter in the Greek word for Christ, and is a traditional symbol for Christ.

The open Bible represents the Congregational Churches with their emphasis upon God's truth that makes people free. From this communion we have a heritage of liberty in prophesying, love of spiritual freedom, awareness of the creative power of the Holy Spirit and clear witness for civic justice.

The dove is emblematic of the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:10) whose transforming power has been a distinctive mark of Methodism. Here our heritage is one of evangelical zeal, concern for human redemption, warmth of Christian fellowship, the testimony of Spiritual experience and the ministry of sacred song.

The burning bush is the symbol of Presbyterianism. It refers to the bush that burned and was not consumed (Exodus 3:2) and symbolizes the indestructibility of the Church. From Presbyterianism we have received a heritage of high regard for the dignity in worship, for the education of all people, for the authority of scripture and for the church as the body of Christ.

The symbols Alpha and Omega in the lower quarter are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. They symbolize the eternal, living God, in the fullness of creation. (Revelation 1:8.)

The Latin words "ut omnes unum sint" meaning "That all may be one" are a reminder that we are both a "united" and a "uniting" church.