

A Brief Synopsis of our Earliest Years – St. Anne's from 1957-1967

In 1957, the Moen family moved to McNab Crescent. At that time, no houses had been built directly behind or east of the crescent. There were approximately 17 Catholic families living in the area (Anderson, Bintner, Deis, Dureau, Eistetter, Foley, Furlong, Grudniski, Lawrence, LeBlanc, Leibel, McKay, Moen, Runge, Watson, Wolfe, Ziffle). All were members of Christ the King parish.

In the beginning of 1958, Gerri Moen organized the first CWL circle. Subsequently, as the area continued to grow both south and east, she organized three more circles. On October 25, 1962, the CWL received its charter with 64 members registered. The Charter president was Mary Noll.

With no money in an account, the CWL pledged and accomplished raising money to pay for all the altar furnishings for the new St. Anne's church (at a cost of \$6,096.00).

Father Kinlin (later Monsigneur) was appointed to organize what was to become St. Anne's parish. Under the assistance of Dave Furlong, Mac Boyles and Dennis Foley, a house was purchased on Knowles Crescent for a rectory and, as Father Kinlin knew Gerri Moen, he asked her to assist him in the selection and purchase of all the furnishings for the rectory. (As a side note, in those days when a priest drove the car, a female passenger rode in the back seat. This made shopping trips very interesting as Gerri was expecting a baby around this time!)

When Father Kinlin moved into the rectory, the CWL organized a parish 'grocery' shower. More than 300 people attended. The CWL purchased all the kitchen and bedding supplies needed to set up a home.

St. Anne's parish was formed in July, 1962 with 180 families and the Right Reverend P.S. Kinlin as pastor.

A steering committee was organized and plans commenced to build the hall. Gerry McGinn (an engineer) drew up the plans for the hall and supervised the construction. The hall was completed in November, 1962 and was opened to become the chapel and parish centre. We celebrated mass in the hall for 5 years.

On Sunday, September 8, 1963, the first parish council meeting was held. Present were Monsigneur Kinlin as chairperson, Joe Deis, Dave Furlong, John Dureau, Denis Foley, John Moser, Mac Boyles, Fred McNeill, Gordon McKay, Bernie Jean, Vince Coffey, Karl Wappell, Mary Noll, Theresa Fitzgerald and Yvette Nogue.

Mass in the hall was quite an experience! Metal chairs and wooden kneelers that slid around. A group of women took turns scrubbing the floor on hands and knees in the altar area (that was where the lower level of our stage is now). As all the chairs were close together it was a challenge for anyone overweight or expecting!

This was the time our music was changing as the "folk mass" became popular. Who would have thought we would have guitars and at times an accordion in a Catholic church?

August 1964, Reverend J. Floyd became Pastor of St. Anne's.

Members of the Parish Council making the decision to build the church were:

Father Floyd, Messrs F. McNeill, T. Edwards, J. Dureau, D. Foley, J. M. Boyles, J. Moser, V. Coffey, P. Balon, A. Baker, J. McMahon, D. Furlong, P. O. Meon, E. Osiowy, Mesdames T. Fitzgerald, Y. Nogue, J. Mahoney.

It was moved by P. O. Moen and seconded by F. McNeill that:

“We agree to go ahead with the proposal immediately, which includes approval for the building committee to proceed immediately to tender, and the finance committee immediately make formal arrangements with Sherwood Credit Union to borrow \$300,000.00 and that in addition everyone on the Parish Council has to be completely enthusiastic.” Carried.

In March 1966 the construction tender was awarded for the church. The final cost was estimated at \$325,000. On April 12, Archbishop M. C. O’Neill turned the sod assisted by the building committee – Gordon McKay, John Dureau, Terry Moynihan and Father Floyd.

On November 27, 1967 the altar was consecrated by the Right Reverend F. Gerein.

St. Anne’s quickly became a vibrant, hardworking, christian family with everyone, men and women, pitching in when needed. Many teas, children’s carnivals, dances and fund raisers were held in the hall.

The official Blessing of the Church was con-celebrated by The Most Reverend M. C. O’Neill, Reverend C. Novokowski O.M.I., Reverend J. A. Floyd, Reverend J. J. McArdle SJ, Rt. Reverend P. S. Kinlin, and Reverend T. G. Finucane SJ.

Of note: For many years there was one mass on Christmas eve. It commenced at midnight!! There would be well over 300 people attend, and under the direction of John Mahoney, the ushers would have to set up about 75 more chairs along the walls.

St. Anne’s had a large choir and our organist was Pat Wappel.

An interesting change took place around 1989 in the church when women were allowed to distribute communion. Gerri Moen was the first female to do so at St. Anne’s. What a blessing for her!

The list of names of the charter members of St. Anne’s is too lengthy for this space. Several of those parishioners are still with us, so with

the possibility of missing someone, we will just say “May God continue to bless you, and thanks for the memories!”

St. Anne’s continue to be a vibrant and generous family. How very blessed we have been for 50 years!!!