

*Irene Kennedy*

## GRAND BEND UNITED CHURCH

Grand Bend United Church stands at the corner of Main and Queen Streets in Grand Bend. This church has been part of a two-point charge with Greenway United Church since 1878. The present structure, built of red brick, was erected in 1927. The building consists of: a sanctuary holding 225 people, a choir loft with an electronic organ, a choir room, a church office, a large downstairs meeting room, 5 small meeting rooms, a kitchen and two washrooms.

Church members represent a diverse group of people of all ages. The present church membership is 235 and is made up of: school teachers and administrators, business people, farmers, retirees from not only Ontario but also from many parts of Canada and the United States. Average attendance each Sunday is approximately 160 persons.

The Sunday School is active and includes about thirty-five children meeting every Sunday. A vibrant young peoples' group meets regularly and includes twenty members. The U.C.W., which consists of 25 very active members, meets on a regular basis. The church choir consists of 10-12 dedicated members and is growing under the very capable leadership of Mr. Norm Abbott, a professional organist, cellist and choir director from Toronto.

The Session meets regularly once a month. The Session is organized in committees including: worship, outreach, pastoral care, Christian development and membership. The Stewards also meet once a month. The two charges are considering reorganizing stewards, session etc. to become more effective and efficient. The church custodian, looks after the church and the grounds. The Pastoral Charge secretary works Monday to Friday in the mornings in the office of the Grand Bend church..

Special events sponsored by the Grand Bend United church include: special concerts, the annual church anniversary turkey supper, held every November. U.C.W. events include turkey pie sales, summer bake sale and the annual winter carnival luncheon.

The church also provides accommodation for a community day nursery, held five mornings a week.

*GREENWAY UNITED CHURCH*

Greenway United Church is situated in the hamlet of Greenway, six miles south-east of Grand Bend, just off Highway 81, on a paved road, named Greenway Road. In 1897 the present day church was built, and was originally a Methodist Church.

Greenway United Church is a neat well maintained, white brick building, with a large driveshed for parking, situated on a half acre lot with huge maple trees. The church has beautiful stained glass windows, new carpeting, and the wood trim and benches show many years of TLC. There is an organ, piano and a choir loft. Seating capacity in the sanctuary is 200. Downstairs is the Sunday School Department, with a large centre room and four smaller rooms on the side. It is well equipped with a piano, tables and chairs. One of the classrooms also serves as a kitchen, with a fridge, stove, cupboards and running water. There are also two washrooms. The church has a good oil furnace and large ceiling fans.

The present membership is approximately 160<sup>95</sup> and includes a good mixture of ages (average attendance each Sunday is approximately 35). Today's members include descendants of the first members of Bethel, Salem, Corbett and Greenway Methodist's congregations, and two German churches, Evangelical and Lutheran. The majority of people live on farms or are retired and live near their farms. There are some small businesses and some professional people (teachers, nurses, etc.) who commute to work in larger areas, such as Sarnia, London, Exeter, Parkhill, Forest or Strathroy. Their main interests are family and farming.

The UCW is a very important part of the finances of the Greenway United Church. They meet once a month, in the afternoon, either in the church or in a member's home. There are approximately 30 active members.

A very Special Project which the UCW organize every year in June is their Annual Strawberry and Ham Supper. Almost everyone in the church community is involved in some way. 400 to 450 people from near and far come and pay to partake of this delicious meal. A good profit is made for the UCW, who in turn use this to help the church. The best thing about this project is that it brings everyone together and they all have a good time working together for the church.

The paid staff of Greenway United Church consists of an organist, treasurer, and two janitors.

Other churches include a Roman Catholic church at Mt. Carmel five miles away and the Pinery Baptist Church six miles away on Highway 21, south of Grand Bend. In Parkhill, there are Roman Catholic, Anglican, Bethel, and United Church congregations.

Greenway is a typical rural Ontario church, in a peaceful hamlet, surrounded by pastures of cattle and fields of corn and grain. In the Greenway congregation there is a definite love of God and pride in their church.

*WORSHIP SERVICES*

Worship services are held on Sunday mornings at both Grand Bend<sup>y</sup> Greenway churches. The Greenway service is held at 9:45 a.m., and the Grand Bend service is at 11:15 a.m. The churches are six miles apart. A children's story is usually told at both services prior to the children retiring to Sunday School.

The Order of Worship is usually determined by the minister working in concert with the Worship Committee at each church. Communion services are held on a regular basis at the discretion of the minister and the Worship Committee.

Summer services at Grand Bend are unique. During the months of July and August, services are held under the trees on the large lawn in front of the manse. Outdoor services at Grand Bend provide an outreach to the community and have been a tradition for almost one hundred years. Many summer residents have become "summer members" and visitors from Ontario, Quebec and the United States comment favourable on these services.

A special Summer Services Committee organizes these services every year. Each service starts with a sing song and features diverse musical programs, one of which is the well known "Jazz Liturgy" composed by church member, Norman Tufts.

It should also be noted that several times a year the congregation of Greenway and Grand Bend join together for special combined services. Such occasions would include: church anniversaries, Good Friday and Christmas Eve, presentation of jazz liturgies, and other special summer services.

*THE MANSE*

The Grand Bend-Greenway manse is located on a large piece of property adjacent to the church. The building is a bungalow constructed in 1954 of yellow brick and consists of: a kitchen, living room, dining room, three bedrooms, den or study, a bathroom, a full basement and a double garage. It is unfurnished, but appliances are provided. A fenced side yard is also included plus a large treed front lawn that is used for outdoor services during the summer. The manse property has access to three streets.

Municipal services provided include fire protection (hydrants), water (Lake Huron Pipeline), hydro, telephone, sewers, TV cable, natural gas.

The following places are within walking distance of the church and manse: Valu Mart grocery store is on Main Street opposite the Church. A book store, convenience and video store, hardware store and the central Ontario Provincial Police Station are also on the Main Street. Also within walking distance are: Steve's Garage, the Post Office and the Library, all on Crescent Street, as well as the Public Elementary School and the Medical Centre on Gill Road and an Optometrist on Highway 81. A barber shop, several hair salons, two banks (Montreal and Toronto-Dominion), and several restaurants are also a short walk from the manse.

**It should also be noted that beautiful Lake Huron is also within walking distance of the manse. Grand Bend has one of the finest sandy beaches in Ontario, and the sunsets over Lake Huron are spectacular!**

*THE COMMUNITY*

The Village of Grand Bend is located on Lake Huron at the boundaries of two counties: Huron on the north and Lambton on the south.

Grand Bend and the surrounding area, has a population of approximately 3,000 people. In the summer months the population of the same area increases to approximately 25,000-30,000 people. In the past Grand Bend was known as mainly a summer resort. In the last twenty-five years, however, it has developed into a year round community, promoting family living on the shores of beautiful Lake Huron. In addition to summer activities, the area has become known for: cross country skiing, the annual winter carnival, the annual air show, special golf tournaments. Jazz festivals and concerts and plays are performed from June to September at the Huron Country Playhouse, the third largest summer playhouse in Ontario. As you can see this is a growing, vibrant, friendly community. Grand Bend United Church is located at the very centre of this community, and faces a challenging and promising future!

The community of Grand Bend includes: the Village of Grand Bend and the surrounding communities of Maplewood, Oakwood, Grand Cove Estates (a retirement community), Southcott Pines, Beach of Pines, Huron Woods and Van Dongen. The summer community stretches from St. Joseph on the north to the Provincial Pinery Park on the south.

Grand Bend has a mayor and a council that meets on a regular basis. They also have a local Chamber of Commerce, a Legion, a Rotary Club, a Lions Club and a Seniors Club. These organizations are active in the community and sponsor many outstanding events.

Secondary Schools in the area include: South Huron in Exeter, North Lambton in Forest, and North Middlesex in Parkhill. Colleges include: Centralia International in Huron Park, Lambton in Sarnia, and Fanshawe in London. The University of Western Ontario is located in London.

There are three golf courses in the area. A large Big V drug store, Valu Mart and I.G.A. grocery stores are located in the Village. There are three gasoline stations and three repair garages in the Village and vicinity.

Churches in the area include: Anglican, Roman Catholic, Gospel Hall and the Church of God. These churches, and others in Dashwood, belong to an ecumenical association. This group meets several times during the year for special ecumenical services and was started by the Grand Bend United Church.

It should also be noted that Sarnia and Port Huron, the U.S. border, is a 45 mile drive from Grand Bend.