

**History of Ladner/St Stephens Pastoral charge...
as shared at the 85th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada**

In the eighteen eighties life on the farm in Delta was lonely. The pioneer's compulsion to worship and socialize was powerful. It is said that when the Anglican church was built in 1891 John Kirkland, a pioneer farmer who built the Ladner Trunk Road and served as Reeve of the Delta Council, asked the Anglican bishop, "If the Methodists were to worship with them would he grant them certain rights?" I don't remember exactly what those rights were but the bishop couldn't grant them.

Following that Methodist missionary services were held in Delta as early as 1882. At that time the mission charge included Maple Ridge, Langley Prairie, Mud Bay, Boundary Bay and Ladner's Landing. Services were held on Westham Island by 1884 and by 1889 the mission was confined pretty well to the Delta. That was when the second church at Ladner's Landing opened its doors and its heart to the good folks of Delta. It was built on the southeast corner of the intersection of 48th Avenue and Delta Street and continued to serve the people of Delta and God until the United Church of Canada was formed in 1925.



The Presbyterians were not far behind. Their first church was Saint Stephen's in East Delta. Construction by volunteer labour began at the beginning of August 1891 and it was consecrated on September 25th of the same year. Those early pioneers of East Delta were far away from the riverboat landings and their ministers had to walk or ride on horseback over an often-impassable road for wagons. They are still going strong as a part of this dual pastoral charge.

The Presbyterians in Ladner soon followed and this church building opened as St. Andrews Presbyterian shortly after. It is because of those early pioneers and their generosity of spirit that we have built and will continue to build this Heart for God in the Heart of the Village.



Do you remember the pioneers who came before us? **Yes! We Remember!**

With thanks to Ken Atkey...