**SPRING BAY PENTECOSTAL CHURCH**

HISTORY

Rev. Neil Matheson and his wife Rhoda were the first Pentecostal missionaries on Manitoulin Island. They pioneered churches at Meldrum Bay, Elizabeth Bay, Spring Bay and Tehkummah. Although the Matheson’s first began the work in Meldrum Bay in 1934 and later in Elizabeth Bay it was not until 1947 that they began the work in Spring Bay. This was after the Spring Bay Camp had begun under the leadership of Rev. J.H. Blair, Rev. Gordon Atter and Pastor Matheson.

With very meager finances, the Matheson’s rented a house in Spring Bay and began to hold Bible Study and prayer meeting in their home as well as visit the homes in the area handing out Pentecostal revival magazines, telling of great revival meeting in large tents and auditoriums where people were being saved and healed; miracles were taking place and people were experiencing a baptism in the Holy Ghost with the physical evidence of speaking in other tongues as at Pentecostal in Acts 2:4.

In 1949 the Matheson’s applied to the Western Ontario District Superintendent, Rev. J.H. Blair for financial assistance to purchase an old Presbyterian Church building, located on the four corners in Spring Bay. It had not been in use for many years and had been built by the pioneers in the community. The local people named it the “Red Church” because of the red metal siding on it. The infant Spring Bay Church was now birthed.

A young farmer who happened to be a veteran of World War II, along with his wife who was a school teacher began attending the mid-week Bible study. In 1951 this young couple, Frank & Thelma Haner were filled with the Holy Spirit while Rev. Jack West was the evening evangelist at Spring Bay Pentecostal Camp, and began attending the Pentecostal Church regularly. Both Frank & Thelma were graduates of Toronto Bible College and later they went on to full time Pentecostal ministry.

In 1952 Rev. Walter Fowke and his wife Miriam came to Spring Bay to be the new pastors and care for the work. There was no parsonage for the Fowke family so Rev. Gordon Atter suggested making a small apartment by partitioning off one end of the church. It was a place to live and the accommodations were quite primitive, but the Fowke’s graciously accepted it and carried out the work with heart and soul.

In 1954 the Fowke’s resigned and moved to Manitoba. Pastor Edward (Ted) Welch, his wife and daughter Barbara were appointed from the Elizabeth Bay Church and held Sunday School, morning services and mid-week Bible study.

The work continued to grow under their loving leadership. After the Welch family left Spring Bay the work slowly declined. Pastor Rae McKenzie and his wife Gloria followed the Welch family but their stay was short due to illness. Spring Bay again became the appointment of Elizabeth Bay with Rev. Lawrence Beck and his wife Lois, 1964-1965.

In 1965 Rev. Harold Bradley and his wife Lillian and daughters moved to Manitoulin Island and ministered in both Elizabeth Bay and Spring Bay. They did a lot of pastoral visitation as well as holding Sunday services by moved away in 1969. The Bradley’s were followed by Rev. Glen Adams and his wife Grace from 1970 to 1971. Some of the people who later did summer supply were Paul Springer, Albert Midgley, Rev. Gordon Atter, and Rev. Robert Clark.

In March of 1979 Rev. Roy Hunter and his wife Mary purchased a house and property on Lake Kagawong next to the Pentecostal Camp grounds. They continued to attend service in Tehkummah but started a children’s church called “The Happy Hour” in their home. In the spring of 1980 Marie Kirk, a local school teacher who attended services requested the work be opened up for services once more full time. The Hunters became the full time pastors upon the request of Rev. Atter and Rev. Clark. When Rev. Hunter took a heart attack and was no longer able to carry on, David and Rosalie Jaggard as well as Marie Kirk helped with the services. Rev. Frank Haner was approached about becoming the pastor, but felt he needed to cut back on his activity due to health limitations. He agreed to do pulpit supply and help with visitation if Pastor Hunter would look after administration. The assembly grew rapidly and in 1983 the sanctuary was renovated.

In 1984 Rev. Frank Haner agreed to become the full time pastor when Rev. Hunter’s health deteriorated. Pastor Haner said he would become the pastor if the church would purchase a house for a future pastor. Within a week the house next to the church became available and was purchased and extensively renovated . In 1986 Thelma Haner went home to be with Her Lord and Saviour after a lengthy battle with cancer.

In 1991 an addition was added to the church to allow for Sunday School rooms and a fellowship hall. In 1993 Pastor Haner resigned as the Pastor and in February 1994 Rev. Tom Porter and his wife Karen came from Blind River to be the Pastors.

The Porter’s were pastors in Spring Bay until Pastor Tom passed away from Cancer in 1999. Pastor Frank Haner again agreed to serve as the Pastor until another full time Pastor could be found. In July 2000 Rev. Derek Frampton and his wife Lisa came to be the new Pastors. They served well until the summer of 2009 when they resigned and moved to Newfoundland. The Frampton’s were followed by the present pastor – Rev. Dan Thompson and his wife Terry who moved to Spring Bay in November 2009.