

Heritage Value

Trinity United Church is valued as a community landmark; for its continuous use as a place of worship and centre of community life; and for its blend of Gothic and Classical Revival architectural styles. Trinity United Church is situated prominently at the head of the harbour where it is visible from land and sea. It is the most northerly of the three churches on the shore which are known collectively as Mahone Bay's "Three Churches." Together with eight other heritage properties on Edgewater Street, including Bayview Cemetery, the three churches comprise a significant representation of Mahone Bay's history.

During the early years after settlement began in 1754, settlers worshipped in homes or in nearby communities. In 1833, trustees from four denominations - Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian – jointly built the Union and Harmony Meeting House. Thirty years later, beginning in 1861, the Presbyterians built their own church on the hill behind the Old Burying Ground, close to the Anglican Church which had been consecrated there in 1835. In 1869 the Presbyterian congregation engaged its first resident minister, Rev. Ebenezer McNab.

In 1885 the Presbyterian Church building was moved to the shore road for better accessibility. In 1894 the building was raised to accommodate a basement including a church hall. The Lutheran Church had been built at the shore in 1869. By 1887, when the new St. James' Anglican Church was consecrated, the trio of churches was complete. Their prominence and visibility enabled mariners to line up their steeples for direction. The steeple of Trinity United, which had been the tallest of the three, was damaged in the late 1920's and not replaced.

With Church Union in 1925, most Mahone Bay Methodists and Presbyterians - but not all - joined to form a new congregation, choosing to meet in the Presbyterian Church which then became known as Trinity United. Reverend Cater Windsor served as the first Pastor of Trinity United from 1825-1829. The bell from the Methodist Church now hangs in the Trinity United tower.

Valued by the community as a place of on-going worship and community life since 1863, Trinity United collaborates with the town's other churches to hold ecumenical services, to share resources, and to share outreach projects such as the Food Bank. Trinity United and the United Baptist Church exchange worship space during the ministers' summer breaks. Trinity United is one of the venues for the summer concert series, Music at the Three Churches.

Trinity United Church is valued for having retained its original architectural form which blends Gothic Revival and Classical Revival features. Trinity United is unique amongst the Mahone Bay churches in this regard.

Character-Defining Elements

Character-defining elements of Trinity United Church relate to its function as a place of worship and its blend of Gothic and Classical Revival features including the following:

- Gothic Revival features such as steeply arched windows, entry transom and bell tower openings
- Classical Revival features such as medium pitch roof, cornices and gable end pediment
- Symmetrical three-bay façade
- Label moldings on windows and transom
- Simple scheme of white paint with minimal black detail on paneled double doors
- Raised foundation clad with wood imitation stonework
- Interior features such as the Casavant organ, original wooden pews, wainscoting and wood ceiling.