

Seventeen clergymen have served the Covenant Church to date. The first pastor, A. Swanstrom, was a farmer-preacher and bricklayer. R. Peterson served his parish while driving a horse called Mobile, the standing joke being he should get a second one called Otto so he'd own the first "automobile." C.O. Hofstrand was a farmer-teacher-preacher from Sweden initiating the first Bible school here. G. Hawkinson was the first driver of a sparkling new Model T Ford purchased by the congregation to aid his ministry. Elderly G.A. Wilson, who hailed from an American oil-producing state, was instrumental in forming a company which first drilled for oil here. The congregation grew steadily under D.N. Ericson, R. Johnson, J.S. Peterson, C. Sturdy, A.H. Stiller. E.B. Anderson served during the Second World War when that congregation was especially active in missionary and related work abroad. A. Pederson paved the way for relocating in town while E. Onan was the youngest of the pastors.

Five years before we came to Minnedosa Rev. K. Englund moved here. His ministry seems to have left a deep impression on people of all faiths due to the occurrence of several highly-unusual miracle-type phenomena. While building a church in Edmonton he fell and broke his kneck, lived in a cast for a long time and following its removal required constant medical care because of violent headaches. He came to Minnedosa hoping a smaller charge might alleviate his illness but with no success. In despair he resigned but before the resignation could take effect he was returning from Neepawa with an Anglican colleague, Rev. Hales, when the car was struck by lightning. After suffering from severe electrical shock and returning home Rev. Englund realized to his amazement his illness had vanished completely and joyfully continued serving his congregation. Less than a week later the Smoland church too was struck by lightning, burning from the steeple down. The building was equipped with recently inspected lightning rods and the company which installed them had never had a similar case in 50 years of business. These strange acts of nature impressed even the most irreligious and non-superstitious cynics.

The previous two clergymen were D. Johnson and C. Campbell, both of whom I knew and respected personally for their obvious sincerity and genuine concern for people while the current one's J. Stone. Particularly meaningful to our family was the fact that though members of the United Church we hadn't lived here for a week before Rev. Johnson called to welcome us to Minnedosa. As a former collegiate teacher here and later a family counsellor-writer the past decade's convinced me the work done with children and young adults by this congregation is exceptionally effective. May the red cross shine long and brightly on this church and continue to welcome strangers to our town and valley for many nights to come.

30. BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM VALLEY VISTAS column, Brandon Sun, Jan. 28/72

We all know French-Canadian culture's not confined simply to the spoken language; that it's the over-all behavior and mentality of a whole group consisting of factors like religion, education, politics, tradition, memories and aspirations. We're vaguely aware of this in a semi-detached intellectual sort of way but few of us English-speaking Canadians ever really make a conscious effort to learn more about this remarkable culture by deliberately placing ourselves into close contact with it. One Minnedosa high school class recently decided to change this, with some intriguing results.

Our collegiate was lucky in 1970 to acquire the services of an exceptionally fine French-Canadian teacher, Martial Marcoux. Not only is he an excellent teacher of French, he's also an equally able one-man bilingual and bicultural force in this English-speaking community. His profound conviction of the desirability of student exchange programs between high schools of Canada's two founding languages received strong support from principal Max Schatz, a most capable educator instrumental in initiating two progressive educational programs--responsible attendance and the semester system--into our collegiate. When the administration of St. Anne collegiate (40 miles southeast of Winnipeg) recently expressed interest in learning more about these programs Marcoux and Schatz recognized a heaven-sent opportunity for a student exchange program.

On Jan. 2, 21 Minnedosa Grade 11 students studying French travelled to the French-Canadian town on the Seine River, were paired with 21 St. Anne collegiate students in whose homes they lived, whose classes they attended, in whose extra-curricular activities they participated, and whose churches many visited. On Jan. 8, the 21 students with partners came to Minnedosa to repeat the experience for a further week with our students as hosts. St. Anne's guidance counsellor Miss Gilberte Proteau--a masters graduate from University of Ottawa--accompanied the group while their student council president Rachel Massicotte was a participating member.

Because our oldest daughter Verna and son Lory were involved in the program I was able to get to know two St. Anne students--vivacious attractive Jeannine Audette and husky handsome