

St. Elijah Romanian / Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Lennard

Construction Dates: 1903; 1908 (rebuilt)

Architect: Unknown

Master Carpenter: Unknown

Iconographer: Unknown

Builders: First parish families

Building Committee: Unknown

The first Romanian Orthodox and Ukrainian Orthodox settlers to Lennard arrived in the years 1900-1901, headed by Elie Burda, George Paulenko, John Paulenko and Nick Pentichuk. After attaining their homesteads, the settlers placed a cross on one of the fields to become the site of the future Orthodox church building. Soon, in 1903 they built the first church dedicated to the prophet Elijah of logs, plastered with mud, and with a sod roof line. In 1908 it was rebuilt to accommodate the larger population and the arrival of more Ukrainian families led by Alexie Slusarchuk.

Here the two Orthodox populations (45 families and a number of single men) took turns in serving the Liturgy by itinerant Romanian and Ukrainian priests. Later a cemetery was added to the church, a parish manse, still later a Cross of Freedom and a bell tower. After WWII the John Palanka home on the main street became converted into a church and cultural museum.

All was well until frictions in the 1930's started among the two populations and the Ukrainian Orthodox decided to separate and build their own church hall and Church building down the road.

The Romanian community continued with their own church that eventually reached 82 families in the 1940-50 period. In 1970, the parish joined the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America (OCA). Presently about 25 families find their spiritual home in St. Elijah's Romanian Orthodox Church in Lennard Manitoba.

Note: This church is also known as the St. Elie Romanian Orthodox Church.

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