9. Boyne Lake

Holy Cross Ukrainian Orthodox Church

The founding of the Elevation of the Holy Cross Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Boyne Lake began during the tenure of Father Ivan Mayba in Smoky Lake. It remained part of the Smoky Lake Parish District. On November 23, 1933, a letter to the Consistory reported that local residents were purchasing a four-acre parcel of land from the Great West Life Company to establish a church and cemetery. To formalize the land transfer, the congregation needed to be legally incorporated.

A founding meeting was held on December 23, 1933, at the Conrad School. An application for incorporation as the Congregation of the Holy Cross was submitted to the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada (UGOC). The application was approved on February 3, 1934, and the land acquisition was finalized shortly thereafter. By June of the same year, the property had been fenced, a cross was erected, and plans were underway to construct a sanctuary during the coming winter.

The congregation initially consisted of 20 members, including several former Greek Catholics. A modest rectangular church, measuring 20' by 24', was built with two small domes flanking the entryway. While little information exists about the church during the late Depression and 1940s, records show that five liturgies were celebrated in 1951 when the congregation had just five members. By 1956, membership had grown to 11 families, and six Divine Liturgies were celebrated annually. This pattern remained consistent for some time.

In 1958, the financially struggling congregation informed the Consistory that it could not afford its UGOC budget allocation and feared the community might dissolve.

Holy Cross Ukrainian Orthodox Church

Membership fluctuated, with 16 families reported in 1960, though only three liturgies were celebrated that year.

In the mid-1960s, the congregation briefly adopted Sts. Peter and Paul as its patrons but later reverted to its original dedication: the Elevation (Vozvyzhennia) of the Holy Cross. Despite these challenges, the community continued to persevere. In July 1980, a cairn was erected on the church property to commemorate Alberta's 75th anniversary and honor the church's founding members. By the 1990s, the church was supported by only a few families, who lovingly maintained it as a place of worship.

The church features a hall behind the sanctuary and a metal bell tower. Although small, it remains an enduring symbol of faith and community resilience in the Boyne Lake district.

Priests

I. Mayba (1933–1936)

H. Wasyliw (1936–1943)

D. Senyshyn (1944–1949)

D. Foty (1949–1950)

F. Kulchynsky (1950–1951)

P. Satsevich (1951–1961)

S. Hrebeniuk (1961–1962)

Y. Rybalka (1962–1965)

Y. Turzhansky (1965–1970)

S. Hredil (1970–1973)

L. Diachina (1973–1975)

L. Kubin (1975–1977)

S. Semotiuk (1977?)

L. Kubin (1978–1988)

O. Hudyma (1988–1991)

P. Kosacki (1991–1992?)

T. Udod (1992–1995)

J. Plewa (1995–2003)

B. Ambrosie (2003 to present)

Cemetery

The Holy Cross Ukrainian Orthodox Cemetery is located on the church property (NW 36-60-12 W4).

Location and Feast Day

Southeast corner of Secondary Highway 866 and Township Road 610, 11 km north of Highway 28, northwest of the village of Ashmont. NW 36-61-12, County of St. Paul. *GPS Coordinates:* 54.238197, -111.677424 Their *Feast Day* is September 14.

Founding Members

Ted Bidloch

Emil Bodnar

Mike Harasym

George Hlushko

Dmytro Huk

John Kostrub,

William Kostrub,

Mike Lahola

Steve Melenka

John Sadlowski

Alex Wanchuk

John Zawaliy

John Zawochy

Mike Zukiwski

Holy Cross Ukrainian Orthodox Church