



15. Edmonton

Saint Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor

St Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox congregation owes its establishment to the dedication of Mrs. Tillie (Teklia) Kurysh. In 1958, she donated three adjacent lots at the southeast corner of 99 Avenue and 75 Street. This generous gift laid the foundation for Edmonton's third Ukrainian Orthodox congregation.

By the late 1950s, it had become evident that the growing Ukrainian Orthodox community in Edmonton required additional churches. St. John's Cathedral was flourishing due to an influx of former Alberta farming community residents and Displaced Persons from war-torn Europe. The diverse needs of this expanded congregation underscored the necessity for new parishes, particularly in east Edmonton, where young Ukrainian Orthodox families were settling.

On December 22, 1959, members of St. John's Cathedral initiated plans for a new parish. John P. Nikiforuk was elected acting president, with Reverends M. Fyk and A. Chomiak providing pastoral care. Although St. Andrew's was incorporated at this meeting, substantial progress began after the first annual meeting in November 1960. Under the leadership of the newly elected president, Russell Dzenick, membership drives and organizational efforts gained momentum. During this early phase, services were occasionally held at the Forest Heights Community League Hall.

In 1961, architect Casey A. (Kassian) Skakun was hired to design a church and parish hall complex. The initial plans proposed a modern, flat-roofed sanctuary rather than a traditional dome-crowned structure. By 1963, the congregation had grown to 107 families. The first phase of the complex, a cultural centre, was constructed. Archbishop Andrew blessed the land on June 23, 1963. Steve Hrudehy Construction built the \$112,000



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facility, which was officially opened on February 16, 1964, and served as a temporary worship space.

By 1965, the congregation's growth necessitated a full-time pastor. Reverend Michael Yurkiwsky was appointed, fostering a dynamic Sunday School and cultural program. By 1968, St. Andrew's had 150 families and was well established.

In 1969, Reverend Meroslaw Kryschuk succeeded Rev. Yurkiwsky. His leadership coincided with plans to construct a permanent church. Financial constraints led to a new design by architect David Kobayaski and civil engineer Eugene Krawchuk. The revised plans maintained a modern aesthetic while incorporating a large central dome added during construction. On May 24, 1972, a Moleben and sod-turning ceremony marked the beginning of construction. Archbishop Andrew dedicated the sanctuary on November 5, 1972, although the interior was completed gradually as funds allowed.

In 1973, the congregation inquired about designation as a sobor, reflecting its growing confidence and stability. Over the next two

decades, St. Andrew's flourished under Rev. Kryschuk's leadership. By 1985, the congregation celebrated the ordination of Demjan Hohol, a former altar boy, as a Deacon in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada.

To commemorate the 1,000th anniversary of Ukraine's Christianization in 988, the parish installed a \$150,000 ikonostasis and commissioned stained glass windows from the Makarenko Studio of New York. The studio also painted the interior walls.

In 1993–1994, two smaller domes were added to enhance the church's Orthodox silhouette. Although redesigning the central dome was considered, practical concerns limited these plans. By 1994, St. Andrew's membership had grown to 374 individuals.

The patron saint's day celebration in 1996 included the blessing of two new icons for the Confessional Altars. "The Holy Trinity," donated by the Senior CYMK, and "The Crucifixion," gifted by Luba Feduschak and Mrs. Olga Senchyna, were consecrated. A special altar for the Plashchynytsia, donated by the Salamandick family, was also blessed during the liturgy.



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Priests

M. Fyk and A. Chomiak (1959–1963)
H. Wasyliv (1963–1965)
M. Yurkiwsky (1965–1969)
M. Kryschuk (1969–1995)
V. Lakusta (1995–present)

Location and Feast Day

9831-75 Street, Avonmore District,
Edmonton. *GPS Coordinates:* 53.539261, -
113.442745 Their *Feast Day* is
December 13.

Founding Members

Russell Dzenick
John Makar
John Nikiforuk
Orest Mulka
Nick Dowhaniuk
Tillie Kurysh
Max Kanasewich
William Dymianiw
Dr. Leo Faryna

