

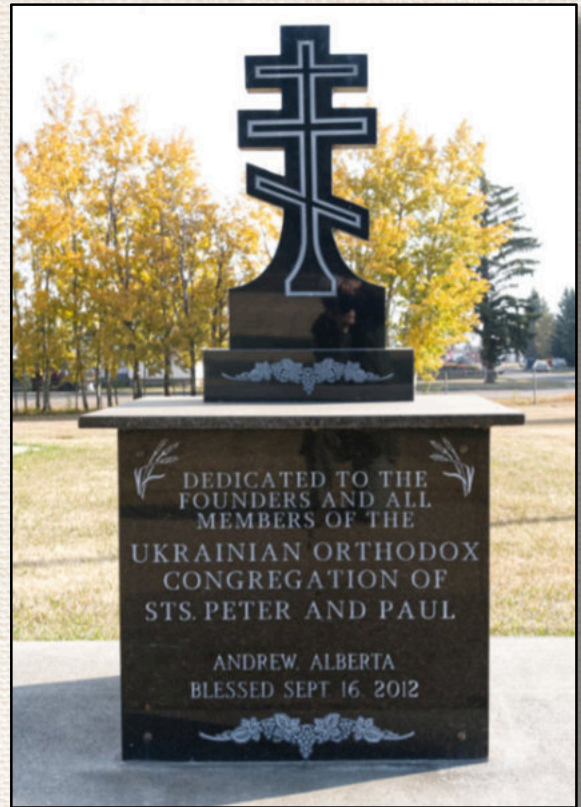
1. ANDREW

Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church

The foundation of *Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church* in Andrew can be traced back to the early 1930s. The interest originated from religious activities in the Sachava district, located several miles south of the village. In 1934, members of the St. John of Suchava parish proposed building a place of worship on their land opposite St. Michael's Russo-Greek Orthodox Church. However, this initiative faced opposition from some members, including the resident priest. Father Timotei Horbay argued that Andrew would be a more suitable location. This division was noted in a March 21, 1934, report in the *Vegreville Observer*: "It is understood from fairly good information that two churches will be built in Andrew this year. It is evident the people of Andrew and district believe the church must go hand in hand with the school to make good citizens."

Ultimately, the decision was made to erect the sanctuary in Sachava. The construction was completed between 1934 and 1935. Despite their disappointment, the pro-Andrew supporters contributed both money and labor to this project. Both groups were united in their allegiance to the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada, and their ongoing rivalry with those who remained part of the Russian Orthodox Church.

By 1936, a small group of activists initiated efforts to establish a congregation in Andrew. Four acres of land were purchased in the village that summer. An official organizational meeting was held on November 23 at the home of William and Mrs. Melenka, attended by six individuals. The Consistory of the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada issued a formal certificate of admission on July 28, 1941. During its formative years, Reverend I. Hykawy of St. John of Suchava celebrated the first liturgy in Andrew. Archbishop Ioan Theodorovich visited the community during his tours of east-central Alberta.



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Construction of the sanctuary began on July 4, 1939. It was led by volunteers under the supervision of Ivan (John) Mnoholitny, a skilled builder of Ukrainian churches. The structure, that featured a large central dome and several cupolas, was first used for services in September 1940. Over time, the church basement was developed into a multipurpose hall for meetings, dinners, and other parish activities. An iron bell stand was later installed near the church entrance. The bell was donated by members of the Zawale congregation after their sanctuary was abandoned.

Initially, the congregation consisted of 28 members, but by 1940, only half remained active. Between 1941 and 1946, membership stabilized at 12 to 14 families. By 1948, the church hosted 13 services and reported 16 paid members. Sunday school attendance exceeded 60 children in 1949, reflecting a vibrant parish life. Membership grew to 24 families by 1951 and continued to increase during the postwar years, driven by the baby boom and migration from surrounding farms into rural towns.

The church was formally consecrated by Metropolitan Ilarion on June 12, 1952. Around this time, discussions began regarding the installation of an ikonostasis. While financial

concerns divided the congregation, the majority eventually approved the project. By 1954, an icon screen was underway, and the exterior of the church had been stuccoed. These developments marked the maturation of the parish, supported by the community's growing prosperity.

During the mid-1950s, the congregation peaked, benefiting from an influx of retirees from surrounding farms and the declining activity at St. Michael's Church in Zawale. By this time, the church's congregation included 30 families, with 40 additional families identified as sympathizers—a total of 210 individuals. The church continued to host an average of 13 services per year.

A significant moment in the church's history occurred in July 1972 with the ordination of Rev. Henry Lakusta, a son of a former member. His brother Victor had been ordained earlier and serves at St. Andrew's Sobor in Edmonton. Over the years, the church underwent several renovations, including re-shingling the roof, replacing windows, repainting the dome and cupolas, and selling portions of its original land for residential development. Today, the church property consists of less than two acres. It shares ownership of a manse in Willingdon with other area churches.



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Priests

- T.M. Kisiliuk (1929-1933)
- T. Horbay (1936-38 – as pastor of nearby St. John of Suchava Church, he undoubtedly would have been consulted on the formation of the congregation)
- I. Hykawy (1938–40)
- S. Symchych (1940–44)
- M. Fyk (1944–45)
- H. Wasyliw (1945–50)
- I. Triska (1950–54)
- D. Luchak (1954–57)
- S. Stolarchuk (1957–63)
- I. Hykawy (1963–69)
- O. Olekshy (1969–71)
- P. Hnatiw (1971–74)
- S. Semotiuk (1974–80)
- S. Soroka (1980–81)
- P. Bodnar (1981–82)
- M. Bawa (1982–84)
- O. Hudema (1985–87)
- J. Puk (1988–1994)
- E. Maximimuk (1997–2003)
- B. Ambrosie (2003 –).

Cemetery

A one-acre parcel of land, likely acquired in 1925, serves as the church cemetery. It is located on the southern edge of the town along Secondary Highway 855 (GPS co-ordinates: 53.869420, -112.331297). The earliest burial was William Lesick, the church’s founding president, in December 1952. Notable burials include Tom Matchuk, Andrew’s first mayor, and Gregory Moisey, the first Justice of the Peace.



Location and Feast Day

Situated at the north end of the main street in the Village of Andrew, 5110-51 Avenue, County of Lamont. *GPS Co-ordinates:* 53.881432, -112.335769 | Their *Feast Day* is July 12.

Founding Members

- William Lesick
- John Filipchuk
- Roman Bratkiw
- Steve Lesick

Prominent Members

- William Melenka
- John Hunka,
- Nick Ewasiuk
- P. Andruk
- John Huculak was President for 25 years



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