

† THE † CHURCHES

EXAMPLE OF CHURCH UNION

For Inglewood's Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, 1970 was a big year; that was when the two churches amalgamated to form the Inglewood United Church.

Historically, the Methodist community appears to have fully established itself in Inglewood before its counterparts. The first Wesleyan services were held in the town in 1875, while the exact date Presbyterian services started is still not clear.

For many years, the latter was a mission station connected with Eltham, while the Methodists had built their first church in 1876 on a section in Rata St, bought for £65.

The church cost £240.

The foundation stone for the first Presbyterian Church was laid on August 4, 1902 by the Governor, Lord Ranfurly.

The Methodists erected a new church in 1895, and in 1900 the first married minister, the Rev. A. Ashcroft, was appointed. In 1906 a parsonage was bought in Konini St.

Then the Primitive Methodists, rivals to the Wesleyans, built their own church in Rimu St. The sects amalgamated in 1913.

The wooden Presbyterian Church in Cutfield St was replaced by a smaller concrete one in 1926, and a

manse was built in Totara Crescent in the 1960's.

The last Presbyterian service conducted at the Knox Church in Cutfield St was on November 29, 1970, by the Rev. F. Ralph.

Inglewood's Methodist community can be proud that it has provided three clergy who were later to become presidents of the Methodist Synod of N.Z., the Rev. Larsen, Peterson and Petch.

In 1956 a property facing Kelly, Brown and Maire Sts. was bought as a site for a new Methodist church and parsonage, while the Rata St property was sold to the Post Office. The new parsonage came into use in 1958.

Soon after, the site next to the Post Office, which had already been selected for a church, was sold to the Government, and it was decided to build a new church rather than move the older one.

The new Brown St Church was officially opened in 1961.

The Methodist Church held its final meeting before amalgamation in October 1970.

While, with modern means of transport, there has been a trend away from small country churches, the Presbyterian Church at Tarata is still a thriving community, with 90 members on the communion roll.

T.H. 21/01/1975