

60. Two Hills

Saint Paraskevia Ukrainian Orthodox Church

The roots of St. Paraskevia Parish date back to 1908, when an organizational meeting was held at the home of Elia Grekul. The settlers decided to establish a local church and cemetery, electing an executive to oversee the project. Shortly thereafter, an application was submitted to the Alberta Government for forty acres of land at NE 2-55-12 W4. Once approved, parishioners began hauling pine logs from a forest six miles away to construct a modest log church.

However, complications arose when the roof was in place and ready to be crowned with a cross. A dispute emerged among members: some favored the traditional tri-bar Orthodox cross, while others preferred the Latin Catholic cross. The disagreement escalated, causing work on the church to halt for several years. Eventually, the project was abandoned, and the log building was dismantled. Instead, parish members attended neighboring Orthodox churches that had been established in the vicinity during the intervening years. Consequently, St. Paraskevia functioned solely as a cemetery.

Land Ownership and Legal Recognition

On October 28, 1909, Wasyl Dochuk purchased the remaining quarter section of land encompassing NE 2-55-12 W4. However, the land proved too rough and stony for viable farming. After expressing his frustration to the provincial government and parish members, an agreement was reached: parishioners relinquished their rights to all but 15.71 acres, which they retained for use as a cemetery.

Although Dochuk obtained the full 160-acre title on June 1, 1920, parishioners registered a caveat on his farm, formally reserving the section already used as a burial ground. In addition to

interment services, annual Provody (a Ukrainian Orthodox memorial service) continued to be held at the site, commemorating the deceased. On July 7, 1959, the congregation was officially granted a Duplicate Certificate of Title to the cemetery under the name “Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Parish of St. Paraskevia.”

In 1965, the parish executive decided to sell an additional 11.48 acres to Harry Dochuk, the new owner of the original land. The cemetery was later enclosed with a fence made of treated posts and mesh wire, ensuring its preservation.

Ongoing Traditions and Present-Day Status

To this day, annual Provody services continue at the St. Paraskevia cemetery, followed by a memorial dinner. Though the congregation no longer has an active church, a quonset-style building now serves the modest needs of this unique Ukrainian Orthodox community.



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Priests

Fr. A. Chrustawka (1943–1948)
Fr. S. Hredil
Fr. W. Yurkiwsky
Fr. S. Sass
Fr. R. Denesiuk
Fr. A. Chomiak
Fr. H. Wasyliw (1975–1987)



Location and Feast Day

Northeast of Two Hills, one mile east of Highway 36, and one mile north of Highway 45, at NE 2-55-12 W4, County of Two Hills. | *GPS coordinates:* 53.727711, -111.667348

Founding Members

N. Dowhaniuk
E. Grekul

Cemetery

The first burials recorded at St. Paraskevia were those of W. Lakusta and I. Grekul.
Cemetery GPS: 53.727711, -111.667348

