

# The Birmingham Eccentric

1878

Section  
May 1953

D

The history of local  
and nearby churches,  
and various church groups

1953

## Birmingham's 1st Church Was Built by Methodists

An itinerant circuit rider preaching in the Willets Log Tavern brought Methodism to Birmingham in 1821. One hundred and thirty-one years later the new First Methodist Church, a beautiful Gothic structure on West Maple avenue, opened its doors to a congregation of over twelve hundred.

In 1822 Dr. Ezra S. Parke started holding Sunday meetings at his home. In 1827 Rev. William Pattee of the Ohio Conference formed the first group of Birmingham worshippers into a society, the first organization in the village which then consisted of three houses erected by Elijah Willets, John Hunter and John Hamilton.

The Oakland circuit was formed the following year and included Troy, Auburn, Farmington and Pontiac. Summer meetings were held in barns and winter meetings in the tavern or individual homes, with services usually conducted by local leaders.

It was considered a special event

when a minister or presiding elder came riding into town to preach and visit with the people.

THE FIRST OFFICIAL church structure in Birmingham, often called "Piety Hill," was the Methodist one at the corner of Merrill and Bates streets, built in 1839 and financed by two of its members, Stephen Chatfield and Michael Bloomberg. Thirty-seven persons comprised the congregation.

This frame building was torn down in 1926 after having served as church, library and town hall.

THE 15 YEARS following the organization of Birmingham Methodists found the group listed in the Oakland circuit, but in 1842 when the Michigan Conference changed its geographical districts, the Birmingham circuit was formed permitting the pastor to devote all of his time to this area.

During the Civil War period, Birmingham was the only place in the district to maintain a Sunday School continuously. The average church service attendance numbered about 65, with Sunday School about 50.

A report lists six class leaders, nine stewards who administered the business of the church, two local preachers, and a Sunday School superintendent. The pastor received \$500 annually.

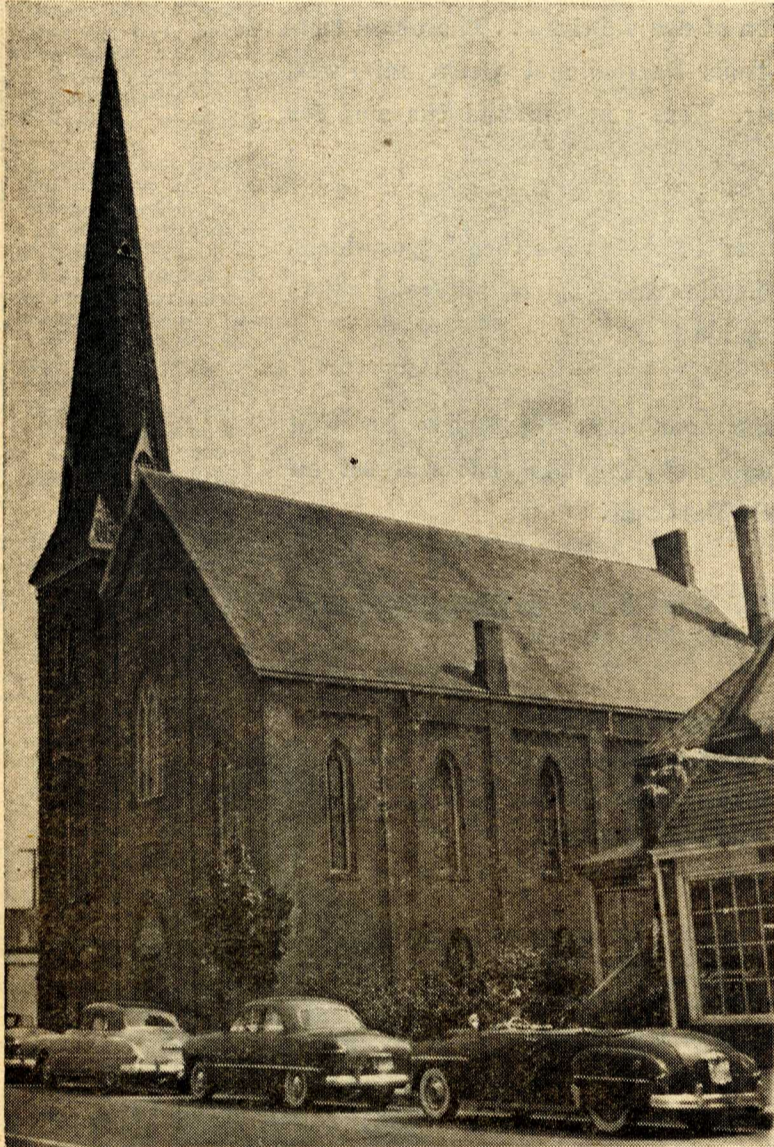
THE SECOND CHURCH, a landmark torn down only this past December, was built in 1871 at a cost of \$20,000 and dedicated in 1873. The Rev. Robert Bird was the minister.

Church men hauled stone, brick and wood while the women came along to cook the meals. Active in the project were Mr. and Mrs. James, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Kerr, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Ford, Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Heacock, Mr. and Mrs. Silas Wattles, Mr. and Mrs. Fred King, Mr. and Mrs. William Allen and Mr. and Mrs. Clark Pearsall.

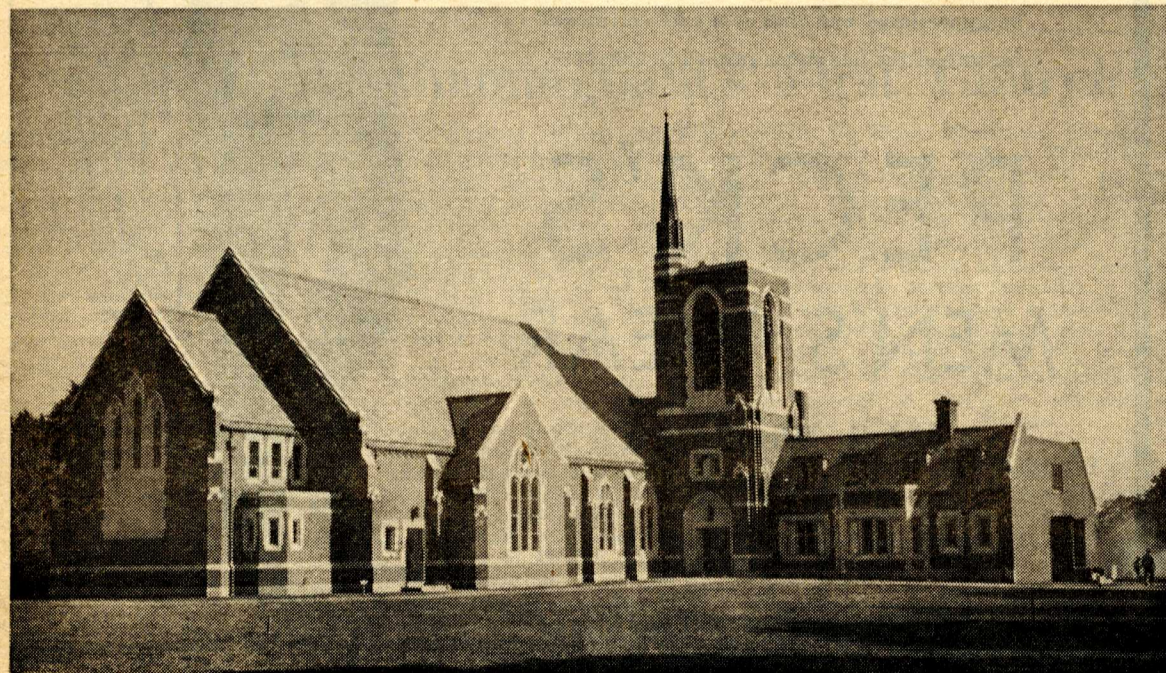
The list continues with Mr. and Mrs. William Hagerman, Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Addie Bayley, Mrs. Tibby Boyd, L. L. Houghton and Robert Bookham.

A new parsonage was built on the site in 1877. In 1886 the Woman's Home Missionary Society was organized; the Foreign Missionary Society came ten years later. The Epworth League was founded in 1889.

An ever-increasing congregation  
(Continued on Page 15)



ABOVE: CITY LANDMARK NO LONGER EXISTS  
Below: Beautiful new Methodist church on W. Maple



"Darkness is strong, and so is Sin, but surely God endures forever".

—James Russell Lowell

From the days when Birmingham's earliest inhabitants settled here, the deep yearning for spiritual development among them definitely assured the building of houses of worship.

Over the intervening 13 years many religious groups have banded together to erect their own churches, so that today the area embraces many denominations.

Due to Birmingham's most rapid increases in population during the past few years, not only have new denominations opened their own churches, but several of the older churches have found it necessary to build larger edifices of worship.

We have tried, in this special 75th Anniversary Edition, to present the story of this community's devotion to carrying into action one of the great American freedoms included in the nation's Bill of Rights: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

## Council of Churches Organized in 1947

Growing out of a dormant Ministerial Association of Birmingham, the Birmingham Council of Churches came into being in 1947.

Protestant ministers were invited into the Council through the efforts of the YMCA's executive secretary, Ed Kirbert. The earlier organization of ministers had ceased to function and it was felt that the need for a combination of effort again was clearly apparent.

Under Kirbert's direction, a schedule of regular monthly meetings was established, when pastors of participating churches could discuss mutual problems. Through the council, they have been able to take their messages of Christian living and truth to the community on a larger scale.

The council program has been arranged to include united worship, social relations, Christian education and other objectives of the church which touch all areas of human life.

Participating churches include First Presbyterian, First Methodist, Embury Methodist, St. James and Christ Church Cranbrook Episcopal churches, Franklin Community, Townsite Community (Congregational), Church of the Nazarene, Kirk in the Hills (Presbyterian), Redeemer, Our Shepherd and Ascension Lutheran churches.

AT THE START of the council, the Rev. W. Glen Harris, Ph.D., of the First Presbyterian church served as president pro tem. He was succeeded by the Rev. Arnold F. Runkel, D.D., of the First Methodist church.

The Rev. Harold E. Towne of St. James was named president in 1948, to be followed by the Rev. Emil Kontz of the First Baptist church and the Rev. Reginald Becker of Embury.

Currently the Rev. Robert Graham, assistant pastor of the First Presbyterian church, heads the organization. Kirbert has served as secretary-treasurer continuously since the Council's formation.

THE COUNCIL has concerned itself with the religious affairs of young people in the community. Periodic youth services have been held and an interest in youth ac-

tivities maintained.

Through the YMCA, a Y-church basketball league has been formed to give young men and boys an opportunity to enjoy competitive sports programs.

Community-wide programs which the council has sponsored include the union services on Good Friday and Thanksgiving mornings. A Protestant Reformation service also is held each year.

In connection with its programs, the council has brought some of the nation's most noted speakers in the field of religion to speak before Birmingham groups.

A member of the council recently said he felt it has been of great benefit to member-churches in their efforts to keep the spiritual growth of the community on a satisfactory level with its population growth.

## Cats Had Fondness For Church Organ

At the Episcopal church in recent years, a cat made news every so often by having kittens in the most unusual places. The rear of the church organ seemed to be a favorite spot.

Way back in 1902, the local Episcopalians were also having difficulty with cats and organs. Since the church organ was "acting up", an expert was brought out from Detroit to regulate, adjust and renew it.

When the expert opened up the organ, he at once extracted somebody's family cat. The poor feline was almost starved to death.

The vestrymen puzzled for weeks trying to figure out how it was that poor tabby got inside the internal construction of the church organ. The answer never was determined.

# Rungs on the ladder



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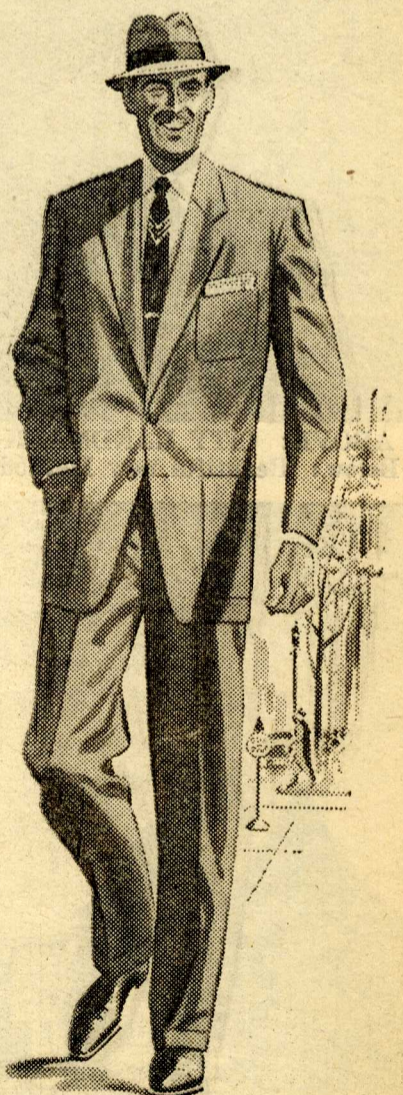
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CONGRATULATIONS to the BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC

Just driving past Christ Church Cranbrook gives many persons a deeper meaning of the often-used phrase, "God's House".

One of the most impressive churches in the area, Christ Church stands today as a constant reminder of the two who made it possible—Mr. and Mrs. George Booth. The church, as it is known by thousands today had a modest and humble beginning, when in 1918 Mr. Booth erected the "Meeting House", now a part of Brookside school.

Even this, however, was not the true starting point. When George Booth and his wife, Ellen Scripps Booth, came to Bloomfield Hills in the summer of 1905 he saw the need for a religious center, easily reached by those living in what was then a remote area.

He provided a large tent which was placed on the hill to the north of Lone Pine road and opposite the present church. Here his father, Henry Wood Booth, taught classes and conducted services for a summer or two.

Service and classes sometimes were held at Cranbrook cottage, Henry Wood Booth's residence, or in what had been the original garage adjoining Cranbrook House.

IT WAS IN 1918 that George Booth wrote to his father making known his wish to have the church message reach the "non-church-going people of this district".

It was at this time that the "Meeting House" was built on Cranbrook road. The building served a dual purpose, for church services were held there Sunday afternoon, attended often by the same persons who had seen the movie program there the night before.

The elder Mr. Booth continued to lead or arrange services in the "Meeting House" until his death on March 17, 1925.

Attendance at Sunday school increased under the direction of Geraldine Chrome Tretton, and with the newly organized Children's school, more space was needed. The Meeting House was expanded.

BY 1923, to furnish additional facilities, Mr. and Mrs. Booth's dream of providing the community

with a church and boys' school began to take shape.

They enlisted the aid of the Rev. Samuel S. Marquis, D.D., who had preached at the Meeting House on several occasions. Mr. Booth also confided his hopes in the Rt. Rev. Herman Page, bishop of the Michigan diocese.

In November 1924, Dr. Marquis accepted the bishop's appointment as minister-in-charge of the as yet unorganized Episcopal mission. He continued as spiritual leader of both the church and school until his retirement in 1939.

In the erection and furnishing of the church, Mr. Booth made many sketches which American and English craftsmen developed into objects of use and adornment. With Mrs. Booth's aid, he enriched the church with several antiquities which were purchased for particular places in the building.

GROUND WAS BROKEN for the building on July 5, 1925, but not without some difficulty. The sun-baked hillside resisted all efforts of the spade to more than scratch its surface and Mr. Booth had to put in a few minutes of work with a pick axe before the first earth could be turned.

While the building grew, members of the parish busied themselves locating churchly articles of sufficient beauty to grace the new edifice. Others were having modern craftsmen duplicate old and lovely church fixtures. Thus it was that many of the beautiful church furnishings were acquired and given in memory of loved ones.

The great fresco in the sanctuary was painted by the same Katherine McEwen who had painted the Wise Men on the wall of the Meeting

House 10 years before. Her undertaking for the church took three years to complete.

EASTER SUNDAY, 1926, marked the first service of the new building when the Chapel of St. Dunstan was crowded with worshippers. Deep mud on the roads and a plank walk from the roadside to the chapel door did not deter those who came to worship in the new church.

The church proper was used on Christmas Eve the following year when special midnight services were held.

Bishop Page consecrated the buildings on Sept. 29, 1928 with Dr. Marquis and the Rev. Warner Forsyth of St. James church assisting.

Time proved the early worries of the rector to be groundless, when in the days of the Meeting House he had wondered where there were enough people to form an active congregation. Like the smaller place of worship, Christ Church Cranbrook had no lack of communicants.

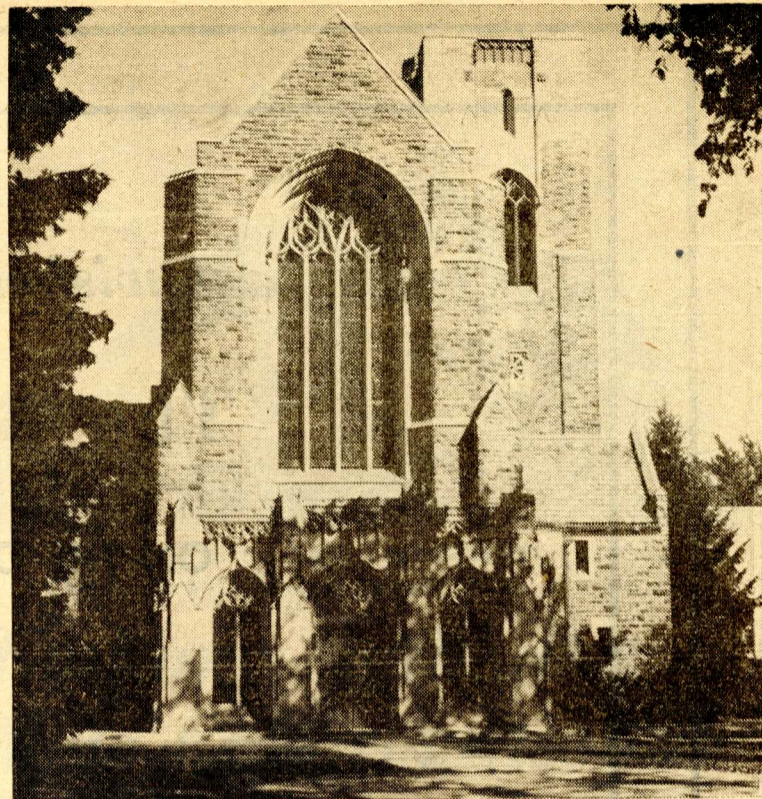
THE CONGREGATION and student body of the church school grew rapidly and before long, younger children were holding their classes in Brookside school, the church being overcrowded.

To accommodate this increase, a church school was built a short time later, serving also as a chapel for Kingswood and Cranbrook schools.

Although a part of the diocese of Michigan, Christ Church Cranbrook does not limit its activities to those of the Episcopal faith alone. It was established to meet the spiritual needs of all residents of the community who cared to participate, and has always fulfilled that obligation.

ITS FACILITIES always are available for civic and educational groups and is well known to many throughout Oakland county as the more or less "official" headquarters for all large meetings of the Red Cross chapter.

Many other groups have been welcomed there which were not



IMPRESSIVE ENTRANCE TO CHRIST CHURCH  
Has served Hills area since Easter Sunday, 1926

meeting for what could be called a "churchly" purpose.

In 1933, as another community service, the church opened a library. Books, periodicals and a special section of books on gardening were available at the outset.

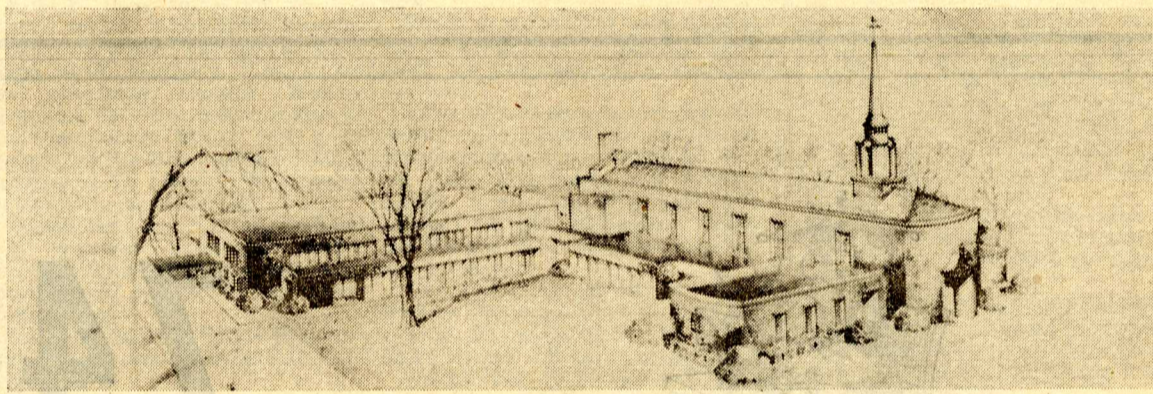
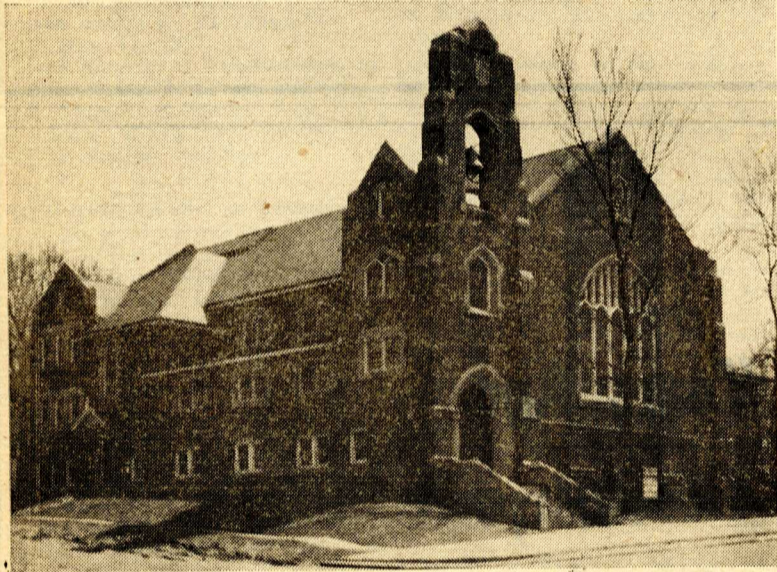
In spite of the impressive beauty of the entire building, perhaps one of the most outstanding features of Christ Church, and most widely known, is its huge 62-bell carillon which ranges over four complete chromatic octaves.

THE BELLS were made by the Taylor Bell Foundry of Loughborough, England, and were dedicated on Sept. 30, 1928 by Anton Brees, bellmaster of the noted Bok Singing Tower in Florida.

Since then, the many tons of metal have been played by some of the world's outstanding carillonists and are heard regularly during special vesper services.

Music plays a large part in the life of the church. The Adult Choir numbers 58 voices, Blue Choir, 50; Red Choir of 32 young children; Senior Choir and a music library of some 400 sets of services and anthems.

THE CHURCH has many groups whose combined activities not only are felt in the parish but extend far beyond its borders. These include the Woman's Auxiliary, Altar Guild, St. Andrew's Guild, Marquis club, Men's club and a Fellowship program.



ABOVE: NEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Left: N. Woodward site has served congregation for 35 years

## Presbyterians' 1st Meetings Held in Barn

From the standpoint of continuous service, the First Presbyterian is Birmingham's second oldest church, having been organized in 1834, seven years after the founding of the Methodist church.

When the first congregation began gathering for services in the barn of Deacon Elijah Fish (now the Benedict farm on North Woodward), Birmingham was little more than an outpost. Only nine members regularly attended the services at the maple grove on what was then called Pontiac Road, and they faced travel hazards undreamed of today.

After a year of worship at this site, meetings shifted to the Davis Hotel in the village. This later was to be known as the National Hotel and long one of the social gathering places of the rapidly growing little community.

At its founding the group was known as the Presbyterian Society of Bloomfield, but in 1850 the name was changed to that of the Presbyterian Society of Birmingham.

Following a period of worship in the hotel, the group moved to the old wooden school at the corner of Mill (West Maple) and Chester streets. Meetings were held there until May, 1843, when the Presbyterians rented the Methodist church and held afternoon services there. Rental fees were \$100 a year.

IN THE summer of 1844, during the second year of the Rev. E. H. Fairchild's pastorate, the group built and dedicated its first formal church home. John W. Hunter donated the land, a part of the holdings he had obtained from the government. The building was near what is now known as Maple and Woodward, standing at the south-

east corner.

Although church records make no definite statement, it may be assumed that the building was outgrown when, in 1860 it was sold at auction to one Henry J. Blumberg for \$156 and taken to a lot on the west side of Woodward and just north of Maple. Blumberg made the building available for political meetings.

WORK ON the new church, on the south side of E. Maple, midway between Woodward and Hunter, was started in December of that year. The entire cost of the church, including furnishings, was \$2,500. It was dedicated, free of debt.

To defray construction costs, the 52 pews were divided, with 42 apportioned for pewholders and 10 remaining "free pews". The paid pews were valued at from \$30 to \$65 each and were "sold" at public auction.

Furnishings of the church were obtained through the combined efforts of the ladies of the congregation.

During this time the church was

served by the Rev. S. N. Hill, who in addition to his clerical duties, organized and taught a "Select School". The present Hill school, erected in 1969, was named in his honor.

NOT SATISFIED with conducting a school and serving a church, Mr. Hill was active in Community affairs. In March, 1864, three months after Birmingham was incorporated as a village, he was appointed clerk.

This church group, like others in Birmingham, concerned itself widely in the betterment of others. To further this, the Women's Foreign Missionary society was formed in 1874 and by 1882, boasted a membership of 30 ladies. Dues of 50 cents a year went to help maintain missionaries abroad.

Various affairs sponsored by the society raised sufficient funds to set up a scholarship to support a deserving student in the mission fields of Persia.

THE CHURCH also was helped greatly by its Ladies' Literary club and the Ladies' Church society. From them came many gifts of furnishings, including 100 hymnals in 1899.

With all its many activities, it is only natural that the church should once more grow out of its home. During the service of the Rev. W. C. McKnight, a committee headed by Henry Bassett began plans for a larger building.

Wholeheartedly the congregation faced this new challenge, approved the plans and on June 17, 1917,

the cornerstone for the present building was laid.

The building, dedicated on Sept. 8, 1918, has several memorial windows, placed there by friends and families of members who had served the church long and well.

AMONG THOSE so honored are Belle Ward Jackson, Miss Susan Trowbridge, Mr. McKnight, Stephen V. R. Trowbridge, Guy Maxwell Trowbridge, Andrew C. Wallace, Eliza Wallace, Albert C. Adams, Silvin D. Simonson, Marjorie Simonson, and two foreign missionaries, Tillman C. Trowbridge (Antab, Turkey, 1857-1888) and James Quick, (Ceylon, India, 1862-1872.)

In 1936 the Presbyterian church, in an effort to provide a greater service to some members of its congregation, installed a number of individually controlled hearing aids, so those who were unable to hear clearly could regularly meet with their fellows and enjoy the sanctity of God's word.

Service—both to its members and its community—has been the keynote of the church since its organization.

THROUGH THE years its many organizations have worked closely with community groups for the betterment of all. The church has had active organizations for men and women, boys and girls.

Among its many programs has been the active sponsorship of Boy Scout Troop B-1, which it has inspired and watched over through the years.

*our best wishes to*

## The Birmingham Eccentric

ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

### Bingham & Bingham

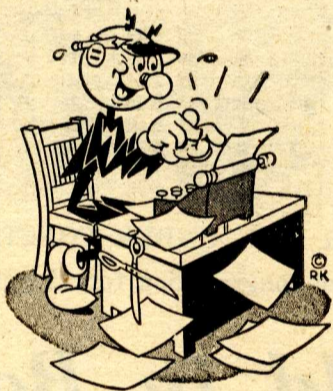
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# 74 Years Ago

The BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC was already a year old when, in 1879, electric lights were introduced as a circus oddity that outshone the elephant herd.

So, as it begins its second 75 years, The ECCENTRIC has had the opportunity to report much of the Age of Steam; all that is known so far of the Age of Electricity.

It has been a period of sweeping changes. And in the best journalistic tradition, The ECCENTRIC's first concern has been to serve Birmingham well . . . showing a lively interest in community affairs . . . often suggesting courses of action to meet the problems which arose with the changing times in its home town.

*So our salute goes to The  
BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC  
on its Diamond Anniversary!*

### the changing times

Wonder how much type was pried in The ECCENTRIC's composing room on dark, wintry afternoons under the dim gaslights?

Take 1908—only 45 years ago. ALL Birmingham's public lighting then consisted of about 44 16-candlepower bulbs, totaling less in light output than five of today's 100W bulbs.

Most of this lighting was for the Village library—and the jail.

Birmingham's first electric franchise with a direct predecessor of our company put a "ceiling" on electric rates of 16c per unit! Today's equivalent price is about 3c.

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## Has a Number of 'Firsts'

St. James Episcopal church, founded in Birmingham in 1894, had few of the feelings and struggles to get started that other churches of those early days experienced.

First formal meeting was held in Library Hall on a Sunday afternoon in April. Just two weeks later, April 12, 1894, a congregation was formed at the home of E. G. Stevenson and the church's life was under way.

Early meetings were in the First Baptist church with morning services and Sunday school. It was the first church in Birmingham to schedule regular services.

A month after the group's formation, the name was selected, and it was announced that a new brick church would be built shortly.

Work was started that year when Frank Pearsall hauled the first stone to be used in the building. Pearsall donated a great deal of his time after that Dec. 13 hauling job, and aided materially in the construction of the edifice.

At the outset, the vestrymen declared they wanted a church of the village would not be ashamed of and when in March, 1894, the completed building was ready for occupancy, they felt they had attained their goal.

ST. JAMES church, at that time, was perhaps the most costly church in town, having been constructed for \$5,000.

The first rector, the Rev. Mr. Carey, took over his duties in 1896, bringing his family to Birmingham.

Soon after his arrival the first confirmation class, numbering 17, was held, with a Bishop Davies officiating.

St. James not only fitted itself into the community and its religious life, but often took over the position of leader.

An example of this is the first appearance of a vested choir in Birmingham when, in 1897, the community buzzed with stories of the St. James choir. The success of the group was made certain

when it was revealed that one boy was walking more than five miles to attend rehearsals.

THIS EPISCOPAL group started the program of evening services for the community, hold its first in January, 1898. Popularity of these services was increased even more when Mrs. Charles Stinchfield financed the installation of acetylene lights in the church.

Another first for St. James came in 1910 when it announced the Tre Ore services for Good Friday. It followed by planning a special Christmas Eve service that year and four years later introduced the program of weekday Lenten services.

The quick acceptance of St. James church becomes even more unusual when one considers that Episcopal meetings were held in Birmingham prior to the Civil War but without any effort toward the establishment of a permanent parish.

ONE OF THE men most active in Episcopal affairs throughout the state was C. C. Trowbridge, mayor of Detroit and secretary to General Cass.

The grandfather of Mrs. George T. Hendrie of 359 Willits, Trowbridge was one who was responsible for many of the early meetings held here prior to the formation of the congregation.

This church always has occupied the site on which it now stands—the southeast corner of W. Maple and Chester streets. The property

was purchased for \$600 and at the ground breaking the first shovel of earth was turned by William Walker.

Little detailed history of the church is available, such as early improvements to the property and enlargements of church holdings.

THERE ALWAYS has been evidence of its growth and interest in community, life, however.

During the pastorate of the Rev. David Thornberry in 1906-7, he served not only the local church but a mission in Royal Oak where meetings were held in a school building. This, today, is St. John's church at the corner of 11 Mile and Woodward.

Mr. Thornberry, after 47 years in the Episcopal ministry, is now making his home at 488 Southfield and is active again in the affairs of St. James as assistant to the Rev. Harold E. Towne, rector.

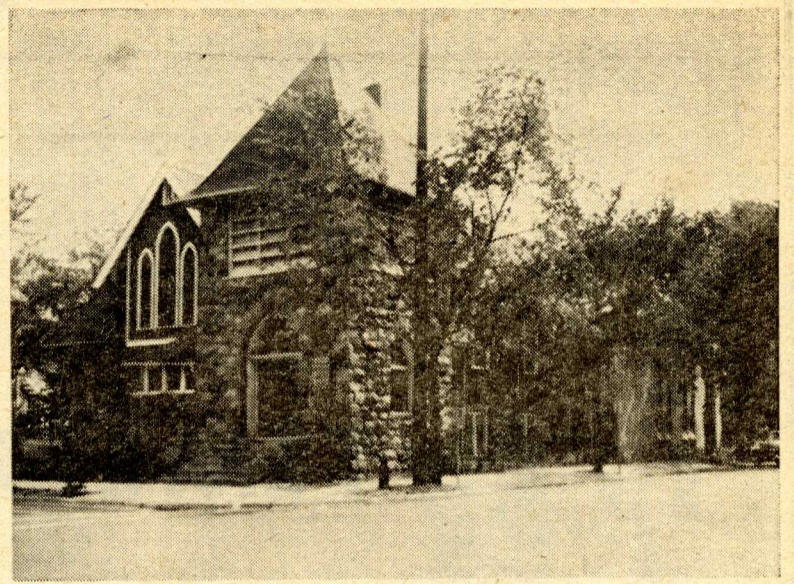
Two other missions, St. James at Berkley and St. Anne's at Oakley Park, are currently sponsored by the local church.

AMONG ITS other community interests and lasting impressions was the part it took in the foundation of the Birmingham Community House.

When plans for this service first were being discussed in 1920, the Rev. Charles H. McCurdy made a survey among his parishioners and found only a small percentage of the women were active in church affairs.

He declared that some activity should be provided for the women of the community which would be of benefit to all, and gave generously of his time in the early life of the House.

St. James, too, had a part in the establishment of Cranbrook. Mr. George Booth, who founded Christ Church Cranbrook, was serving St. James as senior warden at the



CHURCH STILL IS USING ORIGINAL SITE  
But physical appearance rapidly being changed

time and received the help of fellow churchmen in his plans.

IN 1947, a member of the church anonymously gave \$4,000 to the City of Birmingham for the development of what then was known as "Grant Park". Because of his church affiliation, he asked that the name of the church, rather than his own, be given to the park.

Probably one of the most widely known affairs of St. James church beyond its religious life is the annual pet parade held each spring.

One of the big events for Birmingham youngsters, it calls forth hundreds of boys and girls and their pets each year, treating townspeople to a Mardi Gras all their own.

SHORTLY AFTER the end of the war the church began to realize its hopes of expansion.

In 1949, ground was broken for the \$150,000 addition which included a new kitchen and choir rooms, additional space for group meetings and increased area for the nave.

At the groundbreaking ceremony stone ceremony, June 23, the Rt. Rev. Russell Hubbard, suffragan bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, officiated. At the corner on April 29 of that year, the Rt. Rev. Richard S. Emrich was the honored guest.

The addition was completed and ready for use in December, 1949, when a special dedication ceremony was held.

Currently the church is conducting another expansion program, estimated at \$180,000.

THIS WILL MEAN the removal of the frame house which has served as church house and Sunday school room for many years, and an entirely new front for the present building.

When completed, the nave will seat 500 persons and will provide room for a side altar.

Reaping the harvest of its earlier campaign, the church will hold temporary services at the Community House during the church remodeling.

## More Than Century of History Behind Southfield Church

Over a century ago, missionaries of the Associated Presbyterian church of North America ministered to the religious needs of the scattered residents of the Southfield area.

Earliest records show that two brothers, the Revs. John and James Law, were the first to serve in the area.

Early in 1849 the Rev. F. A. Hutchinson and the Rev. Mr. Lee were in the field, joined later in the year by the Rev. Mr. Brownlee.

These three petitioned the board of home missions for the organization of a congregation in Southfield township and paved the way

for the establishment of a regular program of worship.

In April 1850, at the first meeting, 17 charter members were enrolled and from their number selected Daniel Parks and Matthew Erwin, Sr., as the ruling elders.

It is interesting to note that some of the descendants of these early members still are living in the area and active in the church affairs.

SOON AFTER the organization, the Revs. James M. Smeallie and David Dinsmore were sent to serve this and other congregations in the area. In the spring of 1851 Southfield extended a call to Mr. Smeallie to become the regular pastor. He accepted and on the first Wednesday in September, 1852, was ordained and installed.

At this time, the Southfield congregation and others of Michigan separated from the Richland (Ohio) Presbytery and were organized as a Detroit Presbytery.

Six years later the Associate Presbytery and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian combined to form the United Presbyterian church. The Southfield congregation and Detroit Presbytery became a part of this group.

MR. SMEALLIE served Southfield and Troy (now Royal Oak), parishes. His residence was in Troy since the Southfield church did not at that time own a parsonage.

In those days the pastor was not only faced with the task of serving a sprawling parish, he also had to cope with unfavorable and unpleasant travel conditions.

In the Southfield area, the early roads were not among the least of the pastor's trouble. Natural drainage was very bad and surface water of winter and spring months left the roads in a semi-inundated condition.

Tree stumps stuck up above the surface of the ground and roads were little more than trails winding in and out among them. Over these roads Mr. Smeallie traveled by horseback, serving both congregations as best he could.

THE FIRST recorded infant baptism to be performed by Mr. Smeallie during his pastorate was one Robert John Parks, in 1851.

Mr. Smeallie left the church in 1860 after seven years there, to accept a call to Kortright, Del. He was followed by the Rev. William Robertson in 1861, the church having been vacant for a year.

It was during Mr. Robertson's service to the parish that the present church was built.

The building committee composed of Alexander McClelland, Alexander Gregg, William Beatty and Matthew Erwin with the finance committee of John and James Erwin, Ezekiel Hutton, John McClelland, John Muldragh and Adams Reid secured subscriptions amounting to \$1,450 and the congregation voted to start work.

A CONTRACT was awarded to William Bailey and Son and in early winter, 1862, work was begun. The estimated contract was \$1,580.

During the construction period the church, which had been purchased from the Southfield Presbyterian church and moved to the site, was once more due for travel. It was taken from the site which had been given to the church by Mr. Hutton, the northwest corner of his farm, to the farm of a Mr. Sturman.

All went well for the newly inspired group and in 1893, when a new congregation was formed in Birmingham, the Rev. A. H. Orr, then serving Southfield, left to become pastor of the new parish.

HE ADDED the Troy area to his duties, and since that time the Southfield United Presbyterian church has maintained its own parish and supported its own pastor.

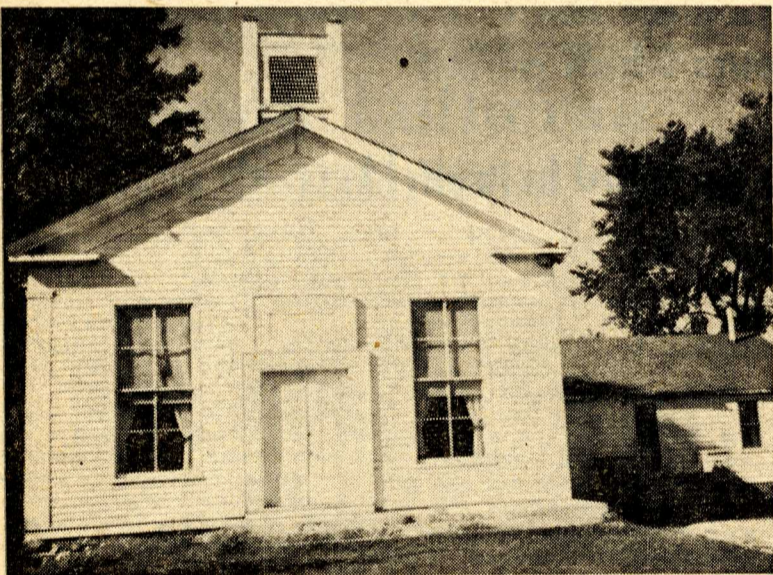
Two years after this the first parsonage was acquired at 10½ Mile road. The Rev. S. V. Kyle was the first pastor to occupy the home which remained in use until 1949 when it was sold and a new building erected beside the church.

In 1912 great strides were taken toward modernizing the church building. A basement was dug under it and a central heating system installed.

As the congregation increased, a Bible school wing was added, dedicated and free of debt in 1944. This, equal in floor space to the original building, has two floors and a basement. It is still in use.

THE CHURCH has several women's organizations, the Missionary society having been formed in 1892. Its first president was Miss Mary Jane Erwin.

Today, the 85-year-old building no longer is able to care for the number of persons who are using it. Early this year under the guidance of the pastor, the Rev. Harvey M. Luce, plans were launched for the erection of a new \$100,000 educational building, adjacent to the old building.



SOUTHFIELD CHURCH ERECTED IN 1862  
On W. 10 Mile east of Lahser road

## New Catholic Parish Formed

First formal announcement of the newest Catholic parish in Birmingham was made on Oct. 18, 1951.

At that time Edward Cardinal Mooney, Archbishop of Detroit, said the new parish, to be known as Our Lady Queen of Martyrs, had been established to serve the South Birmingham-Beverly Hills area. The Rev. Lucian A. Hebert was placed in charge.

Boundaries were established with Lincoln avenue to the north, Woodward on the east, Normandy to the south and Cranbrook to the West. The site of parish buildings is on Pierce street between Birwood and Locherbie.

For a time members of the parish held services in the chapel of the Little Flower high school on North Woodward. Construction was scheduled for the following year.

Bishop Alexander Zableski officiated at the cornerstone ceremonies for the first unit on Sunday, July 6, 1952.

THIS FIRST structure on the two and a half acre site will serve only temporarily as a church and chapel. Its ultimate use will be as an auditorium and gymnasium. Plans also include a church building and parochial school, the lat-

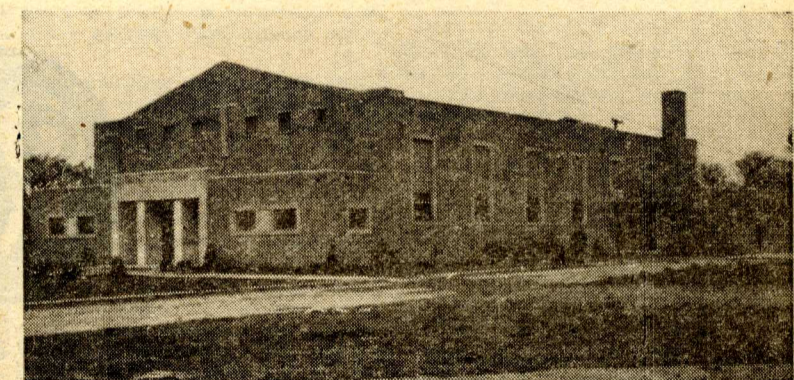
ter to be ready for occupancy at the beginning of the 1954 school year.

Work on the new building unit progressed rapidly and on Christmas Eve, 1952, the first services were held in the new church.

The newly organized Altar society began its work program almost as soon as building construction started. When the first service was held, all altar clothes, vestments and church linens were ready for use.

Mrs. Eugene Kind, chairman of the group, said thousands of hours and millions of stitches went into the intricate designs of the beautiful robes.

IN THIS FIRST solemn high mass, the pastor was assisted by



FIRST UNIT OF OUR LADY'S TOTAL PLAN  
Ultimate church, school buildings planned for 1954

the Revs. Albert Allen and John J. Reardon as deacon and sub-deacon.

Since its inception the parish has

prospered. Several guilds have grown from the Altar society and with the Men's club are active in church and parish affairs.

# **TIME TO THINK . . .**

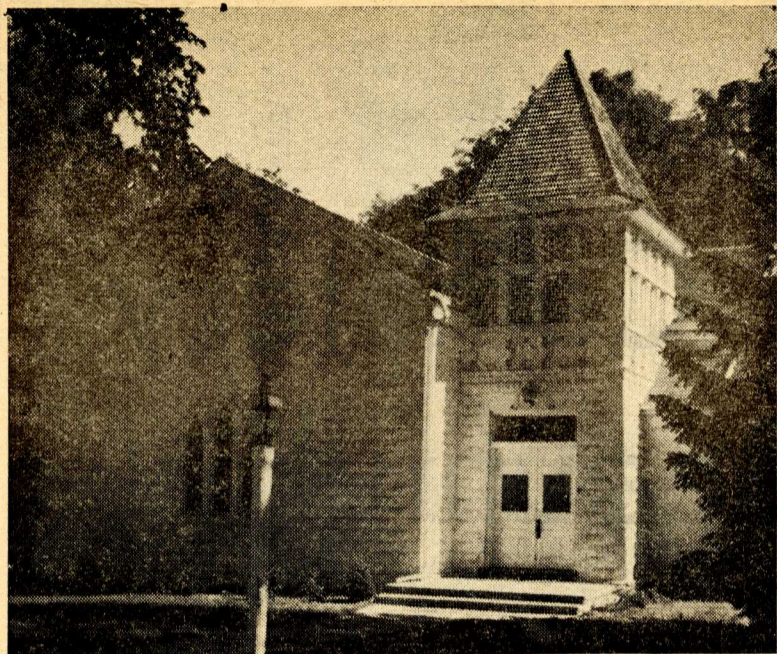
Anniversary celebrations serve many purposes. One of the most important . . . one of the most significant, to our way of thinking, is that they literally make us stop whatever we may be concerned with in the rush of daily routine and take **TIME TO THINK!** Certainly a 75th anniversary brings to mind the early struggles and the "blood-sweat-and-tears" involved in attaining that enviable age. The **RB SHOPS**, now 25 years old and located in Birmingham for 20 years, can join with you of **The ECCENTRIC** and pause long enough to properly assess the many factors taken for granted in this great land of ours which permit such progress and growth. Almost enough reward in itself for the past years of toil, isn't it?

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Branches in Royal Oak — Ferndale — Mt. Clemens

# Kirk Built Upon Col. George Gift



HAS SERVED FRANKLIN VILLAGE SINCE 1860  
And cost only \$210 to build

## Church Life Began In Franklin in 1831

Although today Franklin is served by an interdenominational church, its original place of worship was associated with the Presbyterian faith.

Started more than a century ago and only three years after the small community was named "Franklin", the first church was organized in a log house on the Sly farm near Wing Lake. The church was formed on June 1, 1831, by the Rev. Hornell assisted by one Eliza Bull.

For several years pastors came from Pontiac to conduct services but in 1846 a corporate body was organized. Deacon Bull was at this time elected agent of the church and given full power to transact any and all business pertaining to the erection of a suitable place of worship.

The church was built in 1848 on the west side of the road north of Franklin and near the Pickering tool house. Deacon Bull was the driving power of the church in all its activities and served as clerk from 1831 to 1870.

EVENTUALLY this church was discontinued and many of its members affiliated with the Methodist Protestant church (or class) of Franklin which had been organized in 1840.

In this group Laban Smith was the acknowledged superintendent (sometimes called "pastor"). Harry Brownson was elected leader with Jonas S. Pratt as steward.

These, with Nancy Smith, David Parkhurst, Abigail Pratt and Mary Brownson attended the quarterly conferences on Sept. 26, 1840, when the organization of the Franklin Circuit was affected. Laban Smith and Oliver Earle became the acknowledged pastors.

ON JUNE 12, 1841, the fourth quarterly conference was held in Franklin. The meeting was highlighted by the several resolutions passed by the assembly, denouncing the practice and evil influence of slavery in the United States.

From 1842-58 little of unusual interest took place in the life of the church other than the fact that Redford joined the Franklin Circuit. However, in 1858, a number of people began to seek the erection of a proper place of worship.

The church was completed in 1860 but not formally dedicated until June, 1863, when Thomas Plackett presided over the dedicatory service.

AT THIS TIME one A. C. Fuller became active on the circuit and held a series of protracted meetings in the several churches. Franklin had many conversions and added many new members to its rolls.

A warranty deed dated July 14, 1859 and recorded Sept. 1, 1859, shows that the site of the present church for \$50 was deeded by William C. Kyle and Emilv. his wife, to Stephen Durkee, William Hall, J. R. Bigelow, Jonathan Worthing and James VanEvery, trustees of the Methodist Protestant church of Franklin.

On Dec. 31, 1868, William and Ruth Hall deeded the property on the south side to James J. Trott and to grant access to it, they deeded an additional two rods on the east of the church property stipulating it was to be used only for highway purposes.

THE CHURCH construction cost \$210, with the horse sheds added about 20 years later at a cost of

\$169.02. Horses finally were replaced by the automobile and in 1920 these sheds were torn down and used mainly for firewood. The Rev. Ira Carley salvaged enough material to build a garage which still serves the parsonage.

The church-goer of early days had his choice of three entrances. He could go through the center door or either of two side entrances. These led past the big round stoves where the worshipper could pause to warm his hands and feet.

Pipes standing about two-thirds of the length of the church, on either side, furnished the heat and, needless to say, most of the congregation "sat on the sidelines."

CHURCH FURNISHINGS, the pastor's salary, repairs and most other items of church life which required a cash outlay, came about through efforts of the church women. Chicken pie suppers served at 25 cents each, or less if this price was more than one could afford, supplied a large percentage of church funds.

Donations of vegetables, meat, firewood and foodstuffs also were accepted as payment for these suppers and often were a part of the pastor's salary.

Old church records show that the Franklin church was the first in Michigan's Methodist Protestant group to form a missionary society. This group remained very active until after the turn of the century and at one time supported a missionary in the field.

THE LADIES AID, formed in 1903, now operates under the name of the Womens Society of Christian Service. Three divisions have become necessary because of its growth.

Other groups include the Youth Fellowship, started in 1895 as a unit of the Christian Endeavor society, which remained very active until 1905. Most recent church organization is the adult discussion group, formed within the last 10 years.

The Franklin church was closed in 1916 to be reopened two years later under the pastorate of the Rev. Edward Dunlavy as a unit of the Methodist Episcopal church. Two of his daughters, Mrs. James Bowden and Mrs. H. T. McCreedy, still live in Franklin.

UNDER THE direction of the present pastor, the Rev. William Lovejoy, the church has continued to grow and prosper. Evidence of this is in the newly constructed Sunday school and social wing of the church and the modernization of the old building in 1950.

While Franklin is fondly referred to as the community which time forgot, it cannot be said that time has ignored its church.

Through more than 100 years, the little church has stood steadfast, marking the changes which time has wrought on the community and its people.

In an area noted for its beautiful churches, Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian is rapidly becoming known as one of the most beautiful.

The church and its 30-acre tract of land in Bloomfield township were given to the community and the Detroit Presbytery by Col. Edwin S. George, noted philanthropist, industrialist and world traveler.

Accepted and dedicated by the Presbytery in the fall of 1947, the long range program of building got under way almost at once.

The entire holdings on West Long Lake road consist of Col. George's palatial home, known as Cedarholm, and three residences for staff members.

In Cedarholm is the lovely chapel in which Sunday School services are held and additional rooms used by the school and other church organizations.

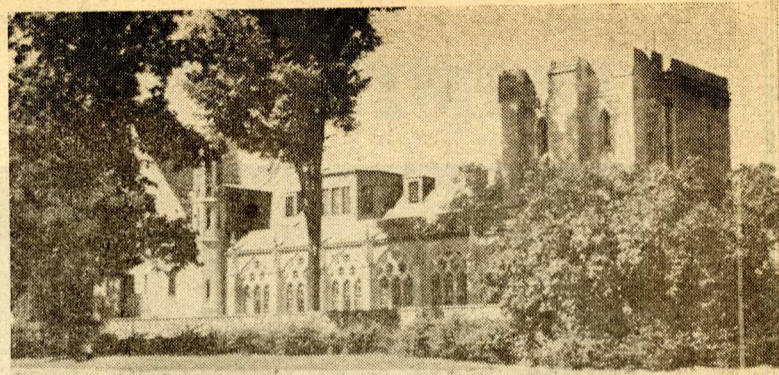
CONSTRUCTION of the new church has been under way continuously since its inception in 1948. The cloisters, a portion of the Tower of the Apostles and the first floor of the church have been completed.

Easter Sunday, 1952, saw the first service in the new George Chapel, first floor of the beautiful Gothic building. This room provides seating accommodations for 500 people.

In the Tower of the Apostles are 12 carved stone statues of the Twelve Disciples, approached by a cantilever stairway. Here, too, are found the symbols of the early Christian churches.

One of the most impressive features of the entire church edifice is the tower and cloister where 31 stained glass medallions pay silent tribute to men and women who have made outstanding contributions to the world.

AMONG THE group, which represents many religions and nation-



\$3,000,000 WILL BE SPENT ON EDIFICE  
Building program to continue 2 or 3 years more

alities, are Gandhi, Booker T. Washington, Maimonides, famed Jewish philosopher and John Monteith, founder of the University of Michigan. Four women also are in the group.

At the Kirk's inception, the Rev. Leslie A. Bechtel, D.D., executive secretary of the Presbytery was appointed pastor at the Kirk. Under his guidance the physical construction of the church has continued and, keeping pace with this, the congregation has flourished.

In November, 1947, eight weeks after the first service was held, the church membership was 58. By the following Easter the membership had nearly doubled and a Sunday School of like size was in operation.

TWO YOUTH choirs had been developed, several organizations started and the church has taken its place in the community. The church, as far as the Presbyterian church extension board was concerned, was fully established and a self-supporting organization.

Today the Kirk has a membership of more than 600, with 450 in the various church school depart-

ments. Men's and women's groups are fully organized and present a variety of programs for the church and community.

In mid-summer, 1952, the women of the church sponsored an outdoor art exhibit which brought entries from every state in the union and attracted over 5,000 visitors. This is but one example of the community interest which is a part of the Kirk's life.

DR. BECHTEL expects that at least two years, and possibly three, will pass before the entire building program is completed at a cost more than \$3,000,000.

On Jan. 25, 1951, the church membership was saddened by the death of the donor, Col. George, who passed away at Delray Beach, Fla.

Services were held at the Kirk, and the colonel is buried in the narthex of the new building. A suitable memorial tablet will be placed there upon the completion of the building, visible tribute to the man who made possible such a lasting and beautiful service to his community and his God.

## Redeemer Lutheran Founded As Result of 1924 Survey

The work of the Lutheran Church in Birmingham dates back to the fall of 1924 when, as a result of a survey conducted by the Detroit Pastoral Conference, the area was considered a likely one for the establishment of a Lutheran church.

In September of that year, the Rev. L. A. Schuessler was called to establish and organize a congregation. No services were held for three months, but an intensive canvass was conducted to investigate the possibilities.

Although the canvass revealed Birmingham to be not a predominantly Lutheran field, a number of families declared themselves interested in the project and a decision to begin active work was made.

THE FIRST LUTHERAN service was conducted in Johnston-Shaw hall on November 23, 1924. The congregation, organized April 4, 1925, was affiliated with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

The congregation grew under the leadership of Rev. Schuessler and a lot was purchased at the corner of Lincoln and Ann streets for a chapel which was dedicated May 10, 1925.

Less than a year later, Rev. Schuessler accepted a call to another parish and, for about six months, the church was without a minister.

The Rev. R. E. Scaer took over the minister's duties in September, 1926. During his four years' stay, a parsonage was constructed at the corner of Lincoln and Stanley streets.

IN THE SUMMER of 1930, the Rev. Scaer left his pastorate here to take up work in a parish at Winston-Salem, N.C. Almost a year elapsed before another minister was obtained by the 39 communicant members.

During this interval, a number of Detroit ministers offered their services to keep the little group intact.

The present minister, the Rev. Theodore Wuggazer, came from a parish in Cody, Wyo., to become the permanent minister on April 19, 1931, and has served continuously for 22 years.

Membership declined during the depression as a number of families moved away from the area. However, in 1940 the parish had increased to 120 and a number of

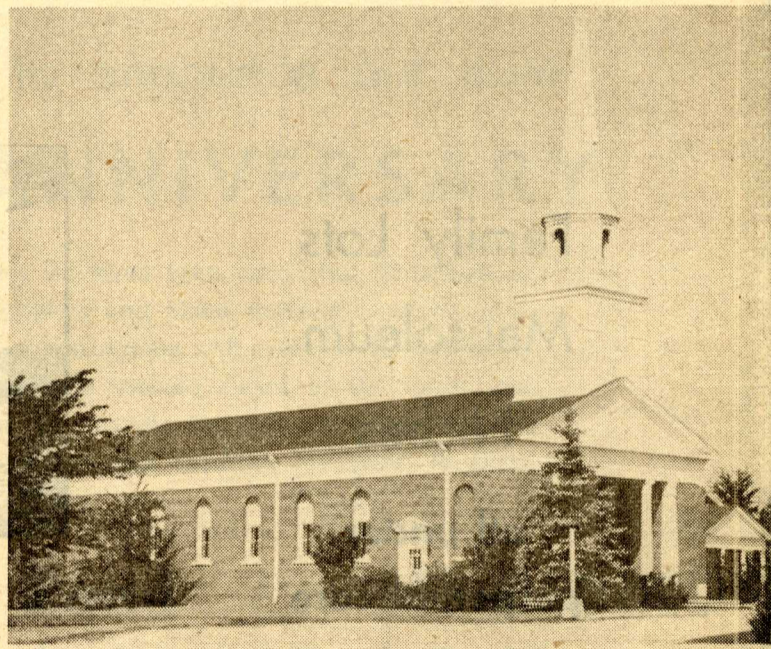
The Bible study program of the youth group is directed by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Gassaway. Other youth programs are led by Mr. and Mrs. Roy Brown and Mr. and Mrs. George Shave.

The ladies organization is active in the mission field and in supporting the overall program of the church. Mrs. Harold Storch is present chairman of the group.

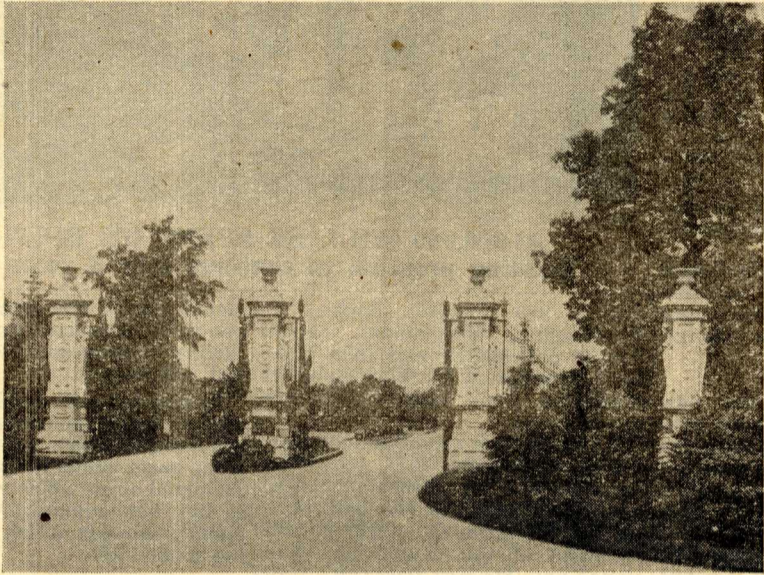
BOARD MEMBERS who supervise and direct the work of the church include Richard Oberschulte, president; Martin Otto, vice-president; Edmund Kleinschmit, secretary; Henry Gassaway, treasurer; and Harold Meinert, Sunday School superintendent.

Church elders are Walter Riedel and Karl Schuster, with Royden Lewis, Oliver Airo, John Hartmann and Ralph Reilly serving as trustees.

John Barnes, Arthur Brenner, and William Cowgill compose the finance board, and Royden Lewis, Lowell Heiserman, Walter Beyer and George Shave make up the board of ushers.



COLONIAL STYLE CHURCH BUILT IN 1941  
Educational wing was added recently

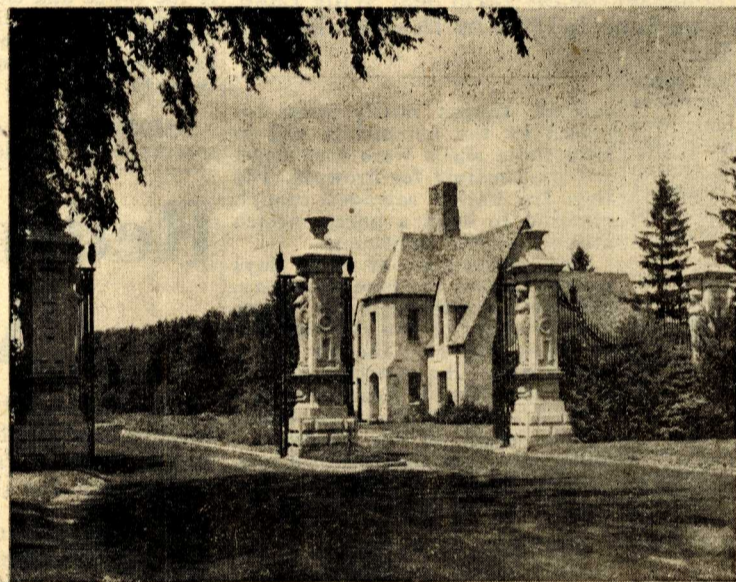


*Granite pillared entrance as completed in 1909*

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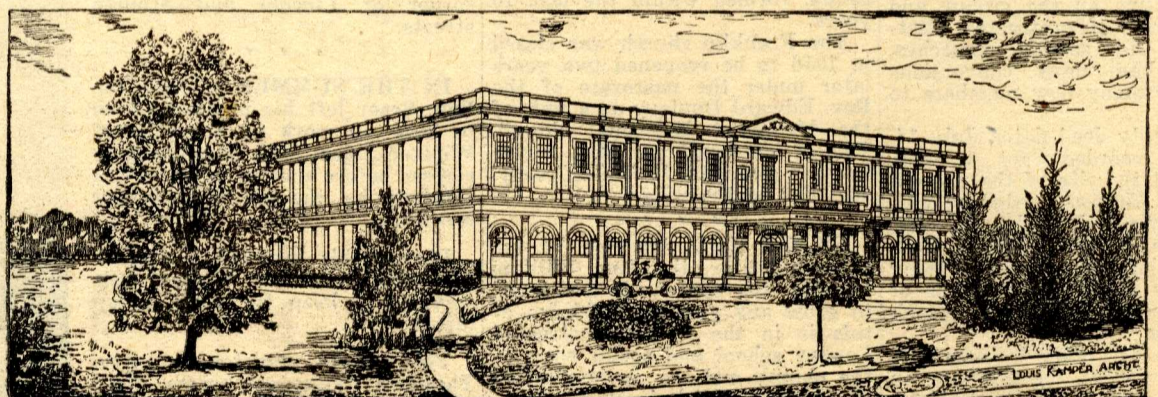


*Entrance as seen today*

## Roseland Park Cemetery

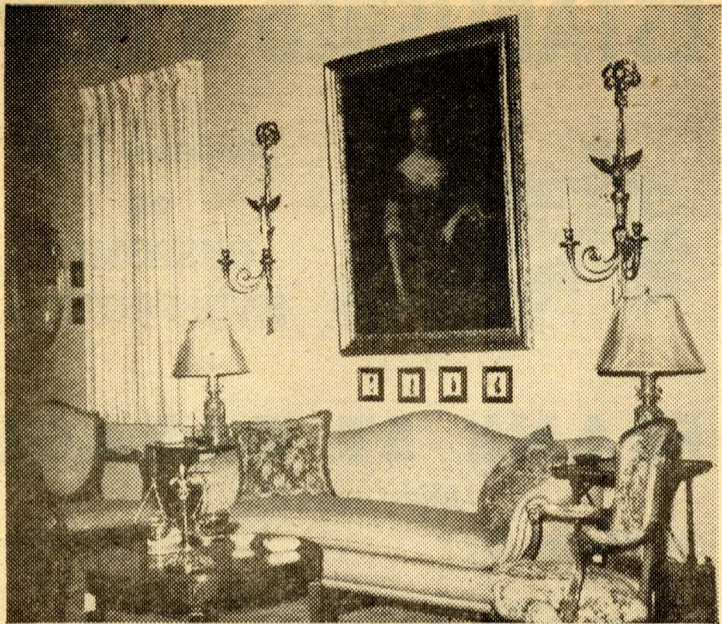
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*Community Mausoleum at time of erection in 1913.*





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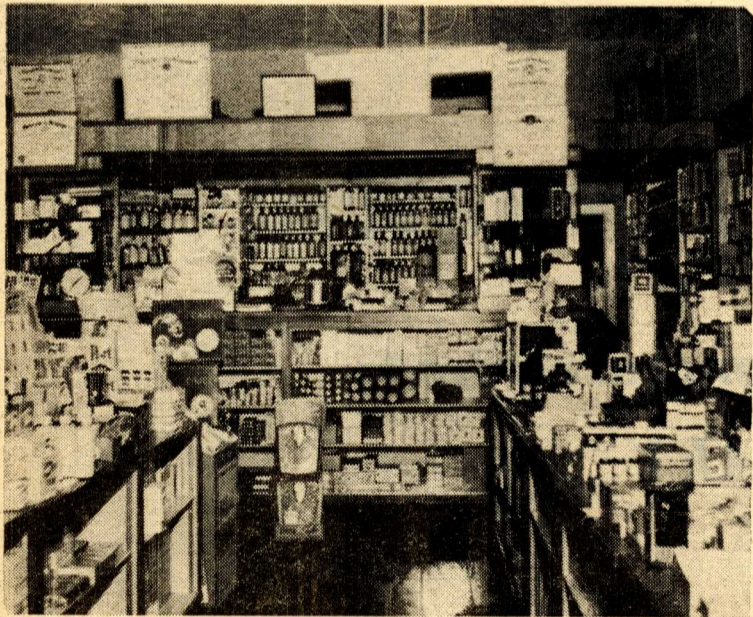
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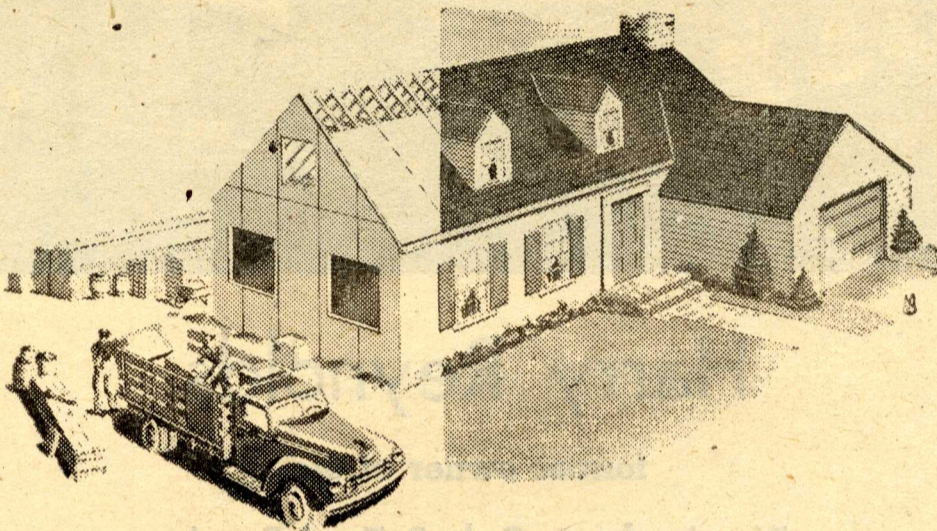
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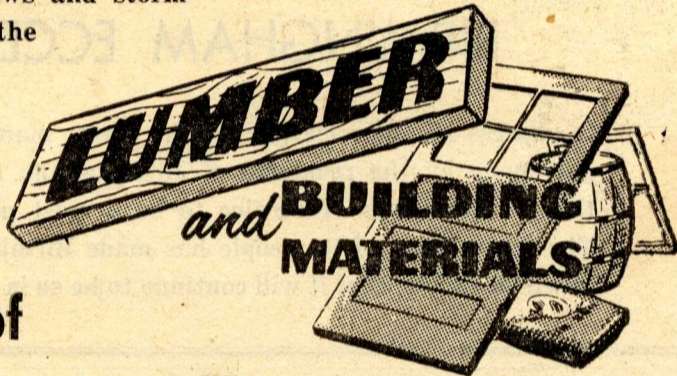
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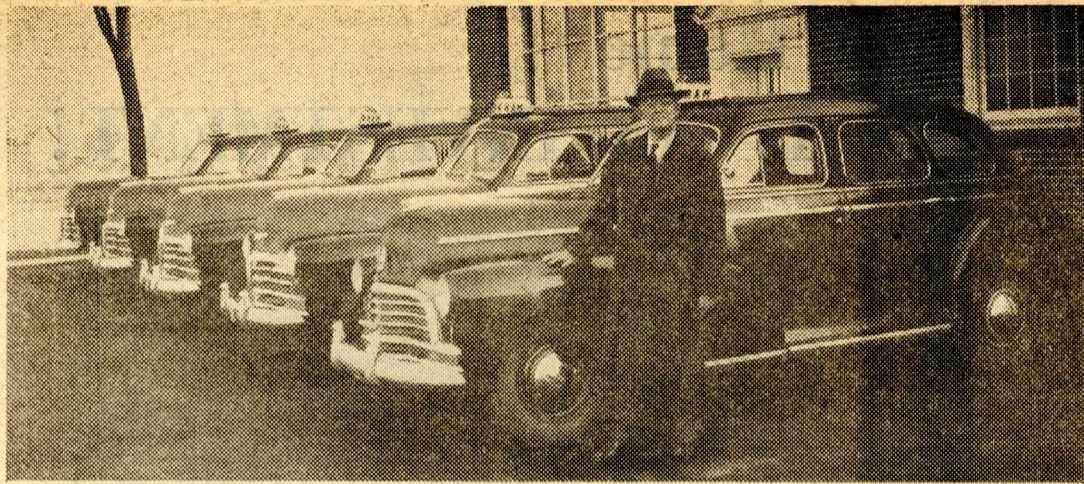
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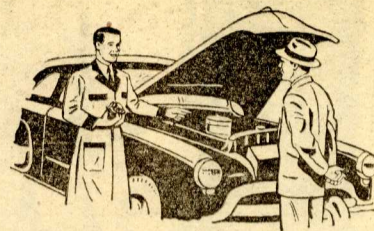
The 75th ANNIVERSARY

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**BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC**

to express his appreciation for the many, many years of faithful patronage by the residents of Birmingham, and has found the thirty-three years of service to be a most pleasant experience. The friendliness of its people has made Birmingham a fine place in which to live, that it will continue to be so is his firm conviction.

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# Holy Name Parish Celebrated Its First Mass 35 Years Ago

May, 1953

BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC  
75th Anniversary Edition

Page 11

Early in the morning of Sunday, May 12, 1918, groups of people were passing through the still quiet streets of Birmingham, evidently going toward the business area of the community.

Although Birmingham had for many years been known as "Piety Hill" and five church spires could be seen, the early risers were heading toward a dance hall and public meeting place on the second floor of the old Johnson and Shaw Block on South Woodward avenue.

These citizens, some of the early Catholic families of Birmingham, were on their way to attend the first celebration of Mass within the limits of the village.

By the year 1918 a large number of Catholic families were living in Birmingham, but had for years been obliged to travel to St. Mary's in Royal Oak.

Catholic youth in the area attended catechism classes every Wednesday afternoon in the Greenwood avenue home of Mrs. T. J. Griffin.

Therefore, it was an important milestone for Catholics in the area when arrangements were made in 1918 for the use of the hall in the Johnston and Shaw Block for Mass every Sunday morning.

**THE CELEBRANT** OF the first Mass was The Rev. John F. Needham, pastor of St. Mary's, Royal Oak. In spite of ill health, Rev. Needham kept up this arduous routine of traveling to Birmingham each Sunday, usually by trolley, to minister to the needs of the first parishioners.

After the celebration of Mass on May 12, the names of all present were placed in the record. Meetings of parishioners were held throughout the spring and summer at the home of John P. Glendon, and Joseph Griffin was appointed secretary-treasurer.

In July of that year it was decided to select a site for the church, school, rectory and convent. Active on the early plans were Joseph C. Donnelly, Joseph Braun, William Vhay and Thomas Lynch.

After considering other sites, a three-hundred foot piece at the northwest corner of Harmon and Woodland was selected. Bishop Kelly approved the purchase of the property and the title of Holy Name for the Birmingham mission.

Early social activities of the parish included dinners and parties, usually presided over by Mrs. Charles Greig.

When Father Maurice Chawke succeeded to the pastorate of St. Mary's in Royal Oak, he, in turn, took up the burden of caring for the Birmingham mission.

**MEANWHILE SERVICES** continued to be held in the Johnson-Shaw building. The altar was a simple, collapsible wooden frame which stood unnoticed in a corner during the six days of the week when the hall was given over to a decidedly more secular usage.

On Saturday nights, when "the last dance was over", Alex Rocheleau with his assistants, Bernard and Charlton DeLong, arranged the chairs and erected the little altar.

To the ladies of the parish,

headed by Mrs. F. J. Douglas and Mrs. V. M. Pollock, was given the task of laying out the proper vestments each Sunday morning. Serving the early Masses were J. A. Rocheleau, J. A. Braun, Frank McHugh, William Vhay and Theodore MacManus.

Ushers included John Hogan, Thomas J. Griffin, Russell Blackmer and Michael Fitzgibbons.

Forming the first choir were James O'Brien, Mrs. Frank Richardson, Mrs. William Haldane, Mrs. F. J. Douglas, Mrs. T. J. Griffin, Mrs. Braun, Mrs. Garner Miller, Mrs. Harold Van Dyke, accompanied by Mrs. H. H. Corson and Julius Wenzl.

**WORKING TOWARDS** a more permanent establishment in 1921, the Rev. William W. Ryan was named to take up residence in Birmingham and to make plans for the erection of a church. The home at the corner of Harmon and Woodland, now the Alumni House, was used as parochial residence.

Work was begun on the church building in November 1921, with Arthur Des Rosiers as the architect, and Charles E. Brady in charge of construction.

On Sunday morning, April 30, 1922, with a solemn High Mass, the new church was dedicated.

**THE NEXT CONCERN** of the pastor was to provide a school. At this time the parish included Bloomfield Hills as well as Birmingham and a large and rapidly growing number of school age children were in the boundaries.

Plans were drawn for a building which would be large enough for the expected growth of parish for several years to come and so arranged on the property that a future addition could easily be made when needed.

By the fall of 1928 the construction was completed with an adjacent convent for the teaching staff finished earlier in the summer.

The Holy Name school, then as now, has been directed by the nuns of the Order of Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, from Monroe.

**WITH THE COMPLETION** of the church, school and convent, by 1928 the parish debt was large. Further plans were dispelled by the stock market crash of 1929 followed by the depression, and division of the parish with the formation of St. Hugo of the Hills.

Arriving at this time to become second pastor of Holy Name was the Rev. James W. Cotter during whose careful and efficient pastorate Holy Name continued to grow and weather the financial storm.

The growth of the parish necessitated the addition of an assistant pastor, the Rev. Alex J. Brunnett who, on his death, was succeeded by the Rev. Lawrence W. Hamel.

The Rev. David J. Duncan was named third pastor of Holy Name in June 1940. During his administration, assisted by the Reverend Ralph V. Barton, Joseph Kress and the present assistant, Richard T. Parish, the church building was enlarged and beautified, a new rectory home purchased and an Alumni house provided.

**THE HIGHLIGHT** of Rev. Duncan's administration was the celebration of the parish's twenty-fifth anniversary and the undertaking of a \$200,000 building program.

A house on Greenwood avenue was purchased by the parish for an addition to the convent and was

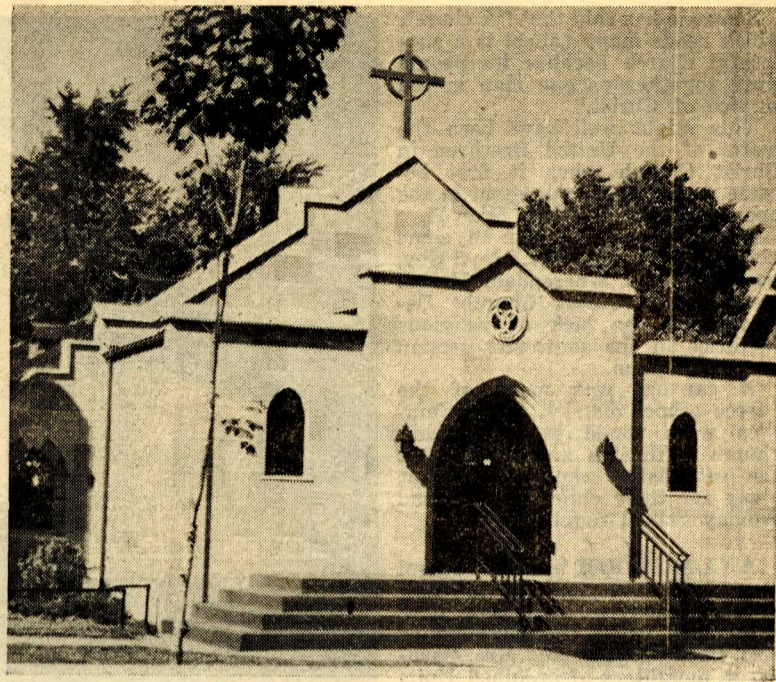
## We've Had a Little Inflation Since Then

"Putting on" a church supper generally is done to raise money. However, it is somewhat difficult for a person geared to the present day high cost of living to understand how any money could have been raised with the prices generally charged for church suppers in the "way back when" days.

In 1903, the ladies of the Methodist church were giving a supper. The menu consisted of: warm biscuits and maple syrup, Boston baked beans, cold meats, pickles, cakes and coffee.

These are appetizing items and the dinner patron got "all he could eat" for 15c.

At this particular church supper, the ladies netted \$12. Bad weather didn't keep the customers at home.



PARISH CHURCH DEDICATED IN APRIL, 1922  
Rev. William W. Ryan was first permanent pastor

opened in 1951 at an approximate cost of \$45,000.

The school addition was started in the spring of 1950 at a cost of \$425,000. The addition included a large auditorium, eight classrooms, a music room, library, locker rooms and showers, an office for the principal, check room and the infirmary.

**WHEN OPENED** in the fall of 1950, the school housed six hundred pupils, with ten sisters and five lay-teachers conducting classes. Edward Cardinal Mooney formally dedicated and blessed the new building in November of that year.

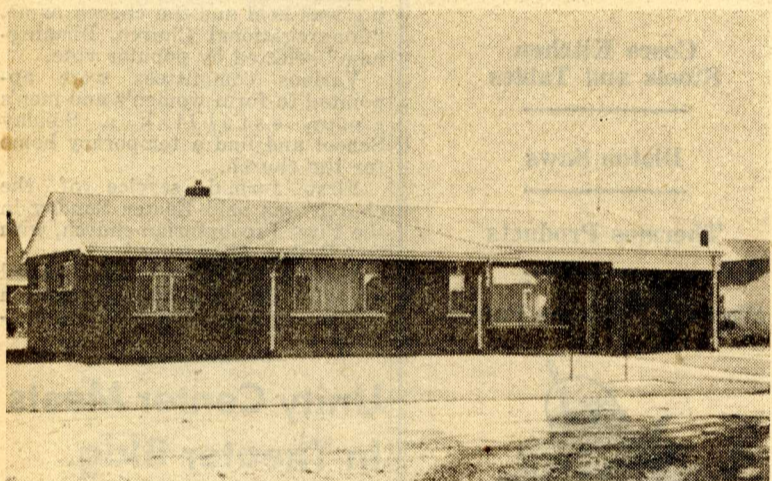
Formation of a choir of twenty-five mixed voices took place in the fall of 1949, and is conducted by Mrs. Joseph Bulone, the former Frances Hendricks. This group sings at all high masses as well

as at other solemn functions in the church.

In the fall of 1952, Rev. Duncan, pastor for 13 years, left Holy Name because of ill health. Monsignor Carroll F. Deady, who was and still is superintendent of the parochial schools of the Detroit archdiocese, was named pastor of Holy Name.

**FUTURE PLANS** include the building of a new church at the corner of Harmon and Woodland, with construction beginning by the spring of 1954. The present parish activities house will be moved from the site and attached by a breezeway to the rectory on Woodland.

Resurfacing of the playground and the purchase of additional playground equipment is scheduled for this spring.



TEMPORARY CHAPEL ON W. 14 MILE ROAD  
Permanent church now is in the planning stage

## Ascension Lutheran Serves Southwest Area

Celebrating its first birthday as an organized church in September, 1952, Ascension Lutheran church is among Birmingham's youngest religious organizations.

Actually, formation of the church started in 1950 when the Revs. Victor Holboth and George Rihkopf were sent to Birmingham by the English district of the Lutheran church, Missouri synod, to make a preliminary survey.

They strongly recommended establishment of a Lutheran church to serve the rapidly growing southern section of Birmingham and neighboring Beverly Hills area.

The Rev. Paul Shippert was called to begin the task. No building was available for temporary services in the West 14 Mile-Pierce area, and it was decided to erect a ranch-type house on property adjacent to the church site.

**THE CHAPEL** was opened formally Sept. 9, 1951. The house, designed especially for the type of use it was to see, was adequate for immediate demands. Church services, Sunday school classes and general meetings were held in its one large room.

From the start the church prospered and grew until today its members are facing another construction period in order to provide room enough for all its activities.

Steps already have been taken to start construction of a larger building "of more churchly appearance" at West 14 Mile and Henrietta. It is hoped to have the new church finished this year.

**CHARTER MEMBERS** of the

church include Mr. and Mrs. Earl Roberts, Miss Carolyn Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Aaron, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Perkins, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Semancek, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hilgendorf, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Folgart.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Hunt, Mrs. J. L. McGuire, Rodney Smith, Clifford Hunt, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. William Featham, Mrs. Warren Deakin, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Roberts and Mrs. Lucy Geiger.

Among the organizations within the church are the Hannah guild, Altar guild, Missionary League, Acolyte club and its several Bible classes.

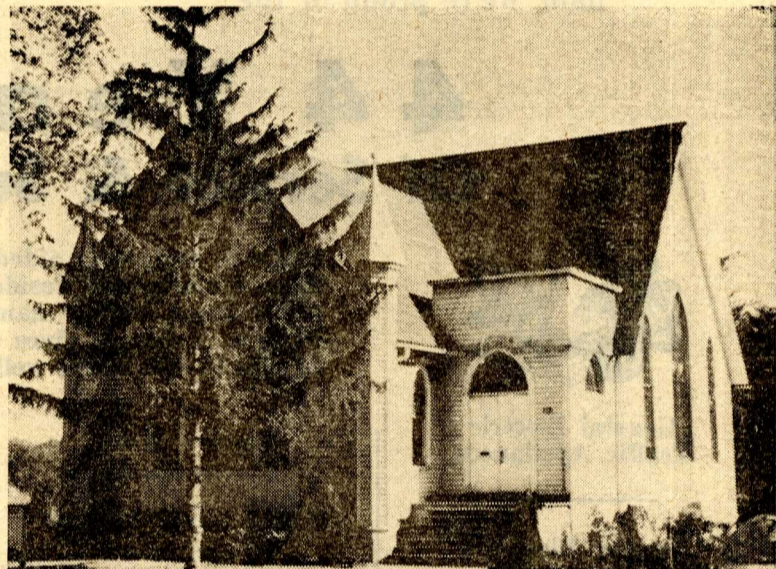
The Hannah guild has been active in promoting church affairs including projects for the benefit of the Lutheran Institute for the Deaf, Detroit.

**THE ALTAR GROUP** has scheduled study periods to gain a deeper knowledge of the Lutheran church and seeks to further beautify the church services. The missionary group dedicates its programs to work at home and abroad.

The Acolyte club is training young boys of the congregation to take a more active part in church life and assist the pastor.

A daily vacation Bible school is held each summer for children of all ages.

Current church officers, who will help direct the building program and future growth of the church are Raymond Semancek, president; Arthur Folgart, secretary; Lester Roberts, financial secretary; Mrs. Harry Perkins, treasurer and Charles Hilgendorf, trustee.



ORIGINALLY OCCUPIED A DOWNTOWN LOCATION  
But was moved in Oct., 1951, to its new site

## Church Moved to New Site for Nazarenes

Birmingham's religious growth during the present decade was augmented with the establishment in 1950 of the Church of the Nazarene.

It provides a church home for persons interested in the program and teachings of the Methodist Divine, the Rev. John Wesley and provide a place of worship for families without other church affiliations.

First meeting was held in July, 1950, with the formal organization the following Nov. 11. The Rev. William G. Ardrey was appointed its first pastor. He is a graduate of the Eastern Nazarene college at Woolston, Mass.

The church building located then at Woodward and Forest, was purchased by the district home mission board from a group known as the Christian Temple. The transaction was made with the understanding that the building and its furnishings would be moved from the downtown area.

**A SITE** was purchased on East Lincoln for the new location and for a time trouble dogged the steps of the new organization.

While the church building itself was judged rugged enough to un-

dergo the stress and strain of moving, city streets were not.

After several delays while city engineers established a route to follow, the move finally was made. A few bad times were experienced as trees and utility poles along the winding route had to be removed to permit passage of the building.

Once at the new location, little difficulty was experienced in getting the building off the dolly and onto the foundations of the newly dug basement.

**A CENTRAL** heating plant, new wiring, plumbing, interior decorating and landscaping was the immediate job before getting the church back into full activity. Total cost of the 150-foot square lot, building and furnishings is set at about \$20,000.

From its small start the church has grown steadily until today the congregation and Sunday school has an attendance of about 100 each.

In addition to its regular religious services, the Church of the Nazarene plans special activities for its young people, and sponsors revival and evangelistic meetings periodically throughout the year.

# Church Needs Met by Membership

Someone has said that "A church which needs many things is a successful church because its people work together as one man in the service of Christ."

This might well have been the motto of the United Brethren in Christ Church when it first became a part of Birmingham in the opening years of World War II.

Formation of the church came about in 1941. The Rev. Lloyd Eby, pastor of the Warrendale United Brethren in Christ Church, Detroit, saw the lack of religious facilities in the southwest section of Birmingham.

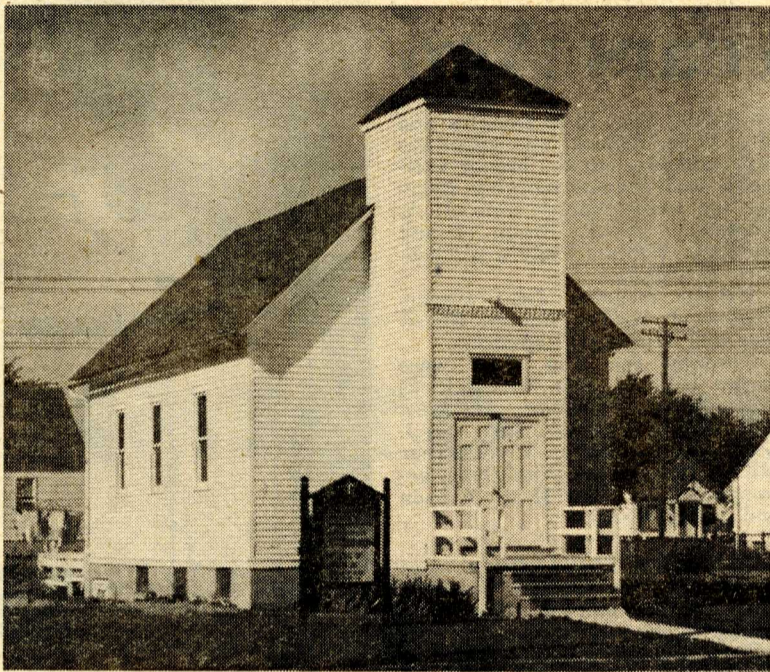
A canvass was made of the Pierce school district. Many families were found to be without church affiliation and others felt the established churches too far away for their children to attend Sunday School regularly.

A CLASSROOM in Pierce school was the first location of the new group. Sunday school classes were held there under the direction of Mrs. Bessie Slusser and Mrs. Barnhardt, daughters of ordained United Brethren ministers.

A year later Stanley Currie of Detroit joined the staff and worked wholeheartedly to build up the small group.

The war interrupted his work, but when he received his army discharge in 1945, he returned to Birmingham and took over as Sunday school superintendent.

With the steady growth of the Sunday school the need for a regular church program was seen. The services of the Rev. Ayer of Ohio were made available to the church and an even greater growth began. THE GROUP had purchased lots



EDIFICE LOCATED AT 14 MILE, EDGEWOOD  
Basement has been added, furnishings modernized

on 14 Mile road at Edgewood, and in 1945 moved their present church building onto the site.

An active program of church improvement got underway, with church members handling much of the work themselves during the labor-shortage war years.

A new basement was dug under the building, new heating equipment installed and proper lighting. The building was treated to a general overhaul, new windows and a

coat of gleaming white paint and a parking lot was laid out for church-goers.

Formal dedication of the building in February, 1949, was presided over by Bishop A. Johnson of Huntington, Ind.

In 1950 the Rev. Lee J. Griffy of Detroit became the regular church pastor.

Under his leadership the Birmingham congregation has not only become self-supporting but sup-

ports a full-time mission worker in Sierre Leone, Africa.

One of the projects is periodic visits to the Detroit Rescue Mission, where Mr. Griffy, with the assistance of his congregation, conducts services.

The Birmingham group is a member of the Detroit conference of the United Brethren in Christ Church, with the Rev. Paul Graham, superintendent.

## Doorstep Mystery Remains Unsolved

An unsolved mystery concerned a wooden box used as a door step at the rear of the Methodist church on Mill street (West Maple) in 1883.

It was an ordinary looking wooden box and after its use as a door step for many years, it was coming apart and was in a general dilapidated condition.

The caretaker of the church, Ira Chatfield, removed the box from its resting place and noticing something peculiar about it, began to knock it apart.

WHAT HE FOUND was most surprising. Carefully packed with paper, the box contained a jeweler's anvil, 375 watch crystals of assorted sizes, a lot of clock springs, clock keys, a gold ring with the set removed and numerous other articles.

How did the box get there? Exactly how long had it been there? Who put the box there?

Nobody ever knew.

## B'ham's Newest Church Formed 5 Months Ago

Organizational plans for Birmingham's newest church started in January 1953 after several discussions among interested parties in the area and officials of the Detroit Congregational association.

Under the direction of Jack A. Clark and with the assistance of Dr. Edward Willcox, head of the Detroit association, the need for a Congregational church here was established.

On Jan. 25 the first public meeting was held, when tentative plans, requirements and the possibility of meeting them were discussed.

Response to this meeting showed considerable demand for such a church in Birmingham and further plans for its establishment were launched.

A SECOND meeting March 1 assured church officials in the Detroit and New York offices that there were excellent possibilities for the group here. Both organizations pledged support to the new church, and Dr. Robert M. Frehse, member of the Detroit Round Table of Catholics, Jews and Protestants, became supply pastor during the organizational period.

The church formally was organized at this meeting when more than 40 persons signed the Covenant. It was voted to include as founding members all those who signed prior to the Easter Sunday service, with charter members being accepted for the balance of the year.

Dr. Frehse in his first appearance before the new congregation, spoke on "Brotherhood".

LATER IN March another meeting was held and the church name, "Congregational Church, Birmingham" selected by popular vote.

Various committees were appointed to form women's and men's groups, establish a Sunday School and find a temporary home for the church.

First formal service of the church was held Easter Sunday in the First Presbyterian church, with Dr. Frehse officiating.

Weekly services started April 12, with the enrolled congregation numbering approximately one hundred.

## Unity Center Meets In Theater Bldg.

Although it is one of Birmingham's smaller religious groups, the Unity Center is maintaining its place in the community and steadily forging ahead.

Served at present by Frank C. Glabach, a Ferndale attorney, the group was formed here in 1942 when a number of Birmingham residents expressed an interest in Unity teachings.

Its formative years were guided by Mrs. Virginia Shipley, an ordained Unity minister, who still remains active in the group's teaching programs.

First meetings were held in the Birmingham Community House. As the project grew, both in membership and the amount of class work given, the meeting place there became inadequate. After considerable discussion, the Unity Center was established in the Birmingham Theater building on South Woodward, where meetings now are held.

A PART of the Unity School of Christianity of Lee's Summit, Mo., the group is undenominational and nonsectarian, faithful to its purpose not to found a new church but to give help and guidance to members of any church or those without any church affiliations.

The Unity movement here was 10 years old before it began its first Sunday service programs, under Glabach's guidance and direction.

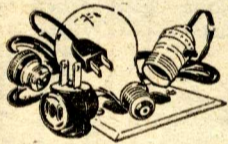
Today, in addition to these, Wednesday afternoon and Friday evening study groups also are a part of the regular program here.

Among the first graduates of Cranbrook school in June 1931, were five local boys. They were: Joseph William Torrence, 1424 Yorkshire Road; Harlow Palmer Davock II, 641 Dewey Lane; Aaron Switzer Brown, Nicolet road, Bloomfield Hills; Bruce Duncan MacDonald, Cranbrook road, Bloomfield, and Richard Jeffrey Sawyer, Abbey road, Birmingham.

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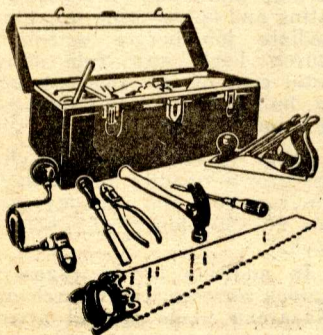


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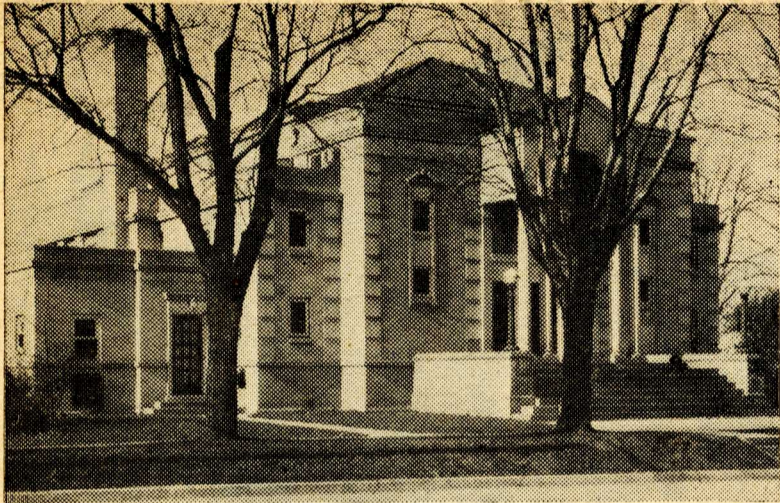
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HAS SERVED SCIENTISTS FOR 26 YEARS  
But first meeting was held 37 years ago

## Scientist Meetings First Held in Homes

In 1916 the several Christian Scientists residing in Birmingham felt a desire to attend services of their own denomination without the necessity of traveling to Detroit or Pontiac. Not to be stopped because they had no building in which to meet, they elected to gather in private homes rather than make this weekly journey.

Their first meeting June 11, 1916, was a far cry from their present place of worship. That initial service was attended by eight adults. While their service was conducted in the home of a member, six children crowded into a car in the garage for their Sunday school class!

For a time the group continued to meet in homes, but the need for a central meeting place was uppermost in their minds. On Sept. 3, 1916, a committee report stated that the services would henceforth be held in the ballroom of the Birmingham club at the northwest corner of Woodward and Merrill streets. Shortly after the club also made one of the smaller rooms available for Sunday school classes.

With this much establishment behind it, it soon became apparent that action should be taken for the formal organization of a Christian Science group in Birmingham.

On May 11, 1917, the Christian Science Society of Birmingham, a branch of the Mother Church, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, of Boston, Mass., was organized with 10 charter members.

**STILL SEEKING** a permanent home, the group purchased a building site on the east side of the city. When the club property was made available to the Society in 1918, the east side site was sold, the club property purchased, and the work started to transform the former club into a more churchly setting.

The building provided ample room for Sunday services and Sunday school classes as well as a reading room. Members welcomed it as a most progressive step opening the way for them to perform a greater community service.

It was during this period that the Birmingham society sponsored the first Christian Science lecture. Held in Baldwin high school, the lecture attracted a large number of persons from nearby communities, many coming in chartered interurban cars.

**IT ALSO** was during this period that the first distribution of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy's writings was made through Baldwin Public library. In addition, a lending library was established in the Society's reading room.

As Birmingham grew, its expansion was reflected in the increased membership of the society. Once again its facilities became cramped and once again the society was faced with the problem of providing a larger place of worship.

In July, 1924, the society was organized into a church. Lack of proper space became even more pronounced and in early 1925 members knew it was time for immediate action.

**THE PRESENT SITE** on the southwest corner of Willets and Chester streets was purchased in 1925. The group more and more began to appreciate the foresightedness of the founders who activated a building fund while meeting in private homes. Through the years, contributions had been received for this purpose and now made building plans look far less formidable.

By July, 1926, the Woodward avenue property (now the location of the Atlantic and Pacific Tea company's Birmingham store) had

been sold and plans were immediately set in motion for the construction of the new building.

**THE CORNERSTONE** was laid Dec. 7, 1926, and by the following July, regular services were being held in the building, although a few finishing touches still were needed for completion.

Formal dedication ceremony for the \$120,000 building was held June 10, 1928. A history of Christian Science teachings in Birmingham was read by one of the charter members, Mrs. Frances M. Reinke.

The auditorium of the building, seating 400 persons as does the Sunday school rooms, did not follow the usual church pattern of pews, but opera chairs were installed instead. The whole interior impressed all who attended the dedication with its air of quiet dignity and reverence.

In addition to the church building, the Christian Science group currently operates a reading room on East Maple and several times each year sponsors the local appearance of speakers from the Mother Church's board of lecturers.

## Shepherd Lutheran Serves SE Area

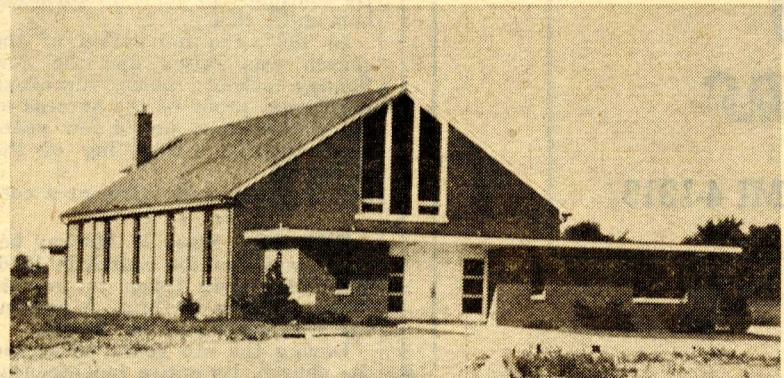
In June 1949, a group of 25 Lutheran pastors made a survey of the 14 Mile area east of Woodward to evaluate the possibility of a new Lutheran church.

As a result of the study, a temporary frame chapel was erected and dedicated Oct. 9, 1949, with the Rev. H. G. Allwardt as pastor. There was a charter membership of 34 communicants with 36 children enrolled in the Sunday School.

The congregation was organized formally in February, 1950. First president of the congregation was Adolph Zehnder, who had been the secretary of Epiphany Lutheran church, in Detroit.

Present officers are Charles Parrott, president; Perry Roulette, vice president; Edward Boltz, secretary; Joseph Bassett, treasurer and Victor Bohne, financial secretary.

With the rapid growth of the community, the temporary chapel soon proved to be inadequate. Plans for the first permanent unit were completed in April, 1951.



BUILT WITH LABOR CONTRIBUTED BY MEMBERS  
To become gym when final church plant is erected

## Unitarian Fellowship Formed in July, 1948

Birmingham's Unitarian Fellowship had its start in July 1948, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John C. K. Cowen in Bloomfield Hills.

At that time several persons from Birmingham, Pontiac and Royal Oak met with Miss Patricia McMahon of Pontiac to discuss the possibility of forming such a group here.

A second meeting was held in September when the Rev. Grant A. Butler of the American Unitarian association, Boston, Mass., was the guest speaker. He fully explained the purposes and aims of the group and urged the establishment of a fellowship in Birmingham.

During the following winter and spring, meetings were held at the homes of Mr. and Mrs. William Hambley, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Hesz, Mr. and Mrs. Alec Parnie and Albert M. MacCleery.

**BY-LAWS** were drawn up and the first formal meeting was held in March at the Community House. Munroe Husbands of the Unitarian extension and church maintenance department in Boston addressed the meeting.

In April charter members elected MacCleery as president; W. O. Vogt, treasurer and Mrs. Eugene Hasz, secretary.

October, 1950, saw the organization of a church school under the leadership of Mrs. Parnie.

The teaching staff then included MacCleery and Mr. and Mrs. Vogt, with regular Sunday classes at the Apple Orchard school. Worship services were conducted by the Rev. Merrill O. Bates, who became the regular pastor of the group in 1952.

**SINCE THE** formation of the church school, attendance has increased regularly, calling for additional staff members. The group has scheduled regular Sunday preaching services, meeting first at the Community House but more recently at the Birmingham YMCA building on W. Lincoln. The current membership is about 150.

Throughout the year the Fellowship sponsors numerous events such as discussion groups and social hours, nearly all held in the homes of members.

The Birmingham Fellowship currently is headed by Robert Dearth, president.



CONGREGATION'S NEW CHURCH ON 14 MILE RD.  
Former location was on Bennaville near Woodward

## Embury Methodist Was Congregational

Embury Methodist church began its activities in 1923. While it now is affiliated with the Methodist church, it started as a member of the Congregational church.

In 1923, the Rev. David Curry, then minister of the United Presbyterian church, resigned his pastorate and was ordained into the Congregational ministry. Under his leadership the church was organized as the Bennaville United Presbyterian Church, Inc. The name was changed a few months later to the Bennaville Avenue Congregational church. It also was known as the First Congregational church.

The first building was started in the fall of 1923 and built chiefly by volunteer labor. It was planned to make it not only a place of worship, but also a community center. At that time Birmingham extended only as far as Lincoln avenue. The territory from Lincoln to 14 Mile road was a separate community, known as Eco City.

**THE BUILDING** was not immediately finished. In October, 1924, a ten-week campaign was inaugurated to complete the structure.

When services first were held in the building, there was no basement and two coal stoves provided the heat.

After the pastorates of the following who served as Congregational ministers Dr. Ralph H. Ferris, John Hagerman and Edward Asplin, a meeting was held with officials of the Methodist Union, the Detroit District home missionary society.

The local congregation agreed to assume an indebtedness of \$1,900 against the property and the Methodist church offered certain help.

**CHARTER MEMBERSHIP** day

as a Methodist church was January 18, 1931. The Methodist Union sent Miss Lydia Baird into the field and she continued through the winter of 1931.

The Rev. Leigh Hagle, who was pastor of the Berkley Methodist church volunteered a ministry through the spring and summer of 1931 until he was appointed regularly in September of that year. Mr. Hagle continued as pastor until September, 1932, when the Rev. John Marvin was appointed.

In September, 1934, the Rev. Erwin King was appointed and continued until June, 1935.

In the fall and spring of 1936-37 the church was served by supply pastors, the Rev. John Marvin, Sr., and the Rev. Williams Rudolph Boyce served the congregation as student supply pastor from July, 1937 until 1941.

The Rev. Danel Jorgensen served the Embury and Hazel Park Methodist churches from 1941 to 1943.

**DURING THE** pastorate of the Rev. Max Moore, 1943-45, the sanctuary was remodeled by volunteer help and chancel furnishings and pews were installed.

The Rev. Jesse Epps served this church and the Southfield Methodist church from 1945-47, and became Embury's first full-time minister in 1947-48. It was during his pastorate that the new church site and parsonage at 1276 Bird street were purchased.

The present pastor, the Rev. Reginald B. Becker, was appointed in June, 1948. In late summer 1949, a concerted effort was launched to obtain a new church at an early date. On Palm Sunday of 1950 a Hammond electric organ was installed.

**GROUND WAS** broken Sunday, Aug. 26, 1951, for the new church on East 14 Mile Road at Croft street. The new church was consecrated Oct. 26, 1952, by Bishop Marshall R. Reed.

Throughout the church's history the Sunday school has had a central position. It has been large and strong in proportion to the total program of the church. It now has a staff of 18 officers and teachers.

The Woman's Society of Christian Service has a varied program of worship, study and service under the leadership of Mrs. Melvin Uppleger, president. A Methodist Men organization was formed about a year ago with Lee Weldon as first president, succeeded by William Lomas.

**THE METHODIST** Youth Fellowship, under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Loveland, counsellors, and Sydney Fawcett, president, is striving to meet the spiritual and recreational needs of a growing membership.

Throughout the years the congregation has made sacrificial efforts to meet the needs of its community. It is now rising to the challenge of serving not only its present membership but also the new and growing neighborhood into which it has moved.

### Served Several Terms As County Poor Supt.

Friend Belding, a charter member of the Birmingham Masons, was elected one of the first of three superintendents of the poor in January, 1839.

At this time the county commissioners abolished the distinction between county and township poor, assuming them all as a county charge. The terms of office for the county superintendents of the poor were fixed at three years.

Friend Belding served several terms as county poor superintendent, his last term of office ending in 1856.

# Baptist Church Re-formed

## In 1870 After 30-Year Lapse

Back in the days when Birmingham was the proverbial "wide place in the road," a group of interested persons started the first activities of the Baptist church.

Not much is known of those early struggles which started in 1833. Only a short paragraph in an old history of Oakland county mentions the Birmingham church, and that to state simply that it was dissolved in 1840.

For the next 30 years nothing was done to reorganize, but in 1870 another group became active in the establishment of a Baptist church here. The permanent organization was formed on June 28, 1870.

Shortly after the group formed, two lots were purchased for the erection of a building. For three years "The Regular Baptist Church of Birmingham" met in the various homes of its 17 charter members.

A pastor came from Pontiac every Sunday to deliver the sermons.

It was not long before the Birmingham and Royal Oak churches joined forces and thus were able to support a pastor. Regular services were held in the old Academy building at the corner of Maple and Pierce.

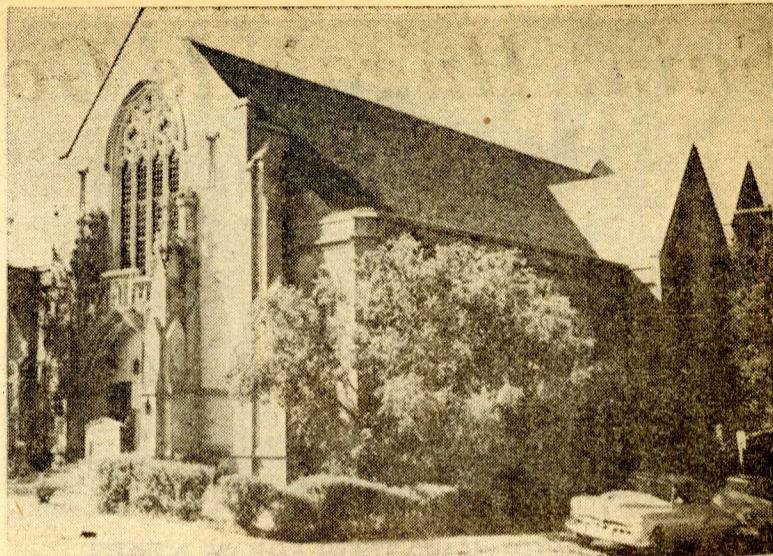
**FATE WAS NOT** through with its rough treatment of the group, however, for that building burned to the ground shortly after they began to use it. Once again the church was homeless.

Arrangements were made to meet in the Methodist Meeting House and all went well until "the Methodists expelled the church for preaching the doctrines of the New Testament" (quoted verbatim from old Baptist church records which went on to say), "after that Brother Finn preached in the streets".

In 1873 the Baptists took the major step toward having their own church home and named B. Daniels and E. Mathewson to prepare plans and details.

**THESE TWO** supervised erection of a building at the northwest corner of Willets and Bates streets, (fifty-five years later it was replaced by the present building). The first structure cost \$1,700 and was dedicated free of debt on Sept. 28, 1873.

The following year the congregation was honored when the Michigan Baptist association selected



**PRESENT CHURCH DEDICATED IN 1929**  
Replaced original 55-year-old building

Birmingham and its Baptist church for the scene of the 47th annual meeting.

Although the growth of the church from that time on was steady, records show that it faced many problems, not among the least being the question of finances.

The pastor received \$7 a week, the paritor 50 cents. This represented a large sum to the church members and special plans were launched to meet the costs.

**TRUSTEE AND** members of the Ladies Aid society were asked to see there always was enough money to meet these obligations. A part of the money was raised by renting facilities to the United Presbyterians for \$50 a year, and to save other expenses, the two groups united their Sunday schools.

The first to serve the new church was the Rev. M. Breaker, who 'although he preached "brisk and effective" sermons, Mr. Breaker found it necessary to leave after six weeks to complete his education.

He was followed by the Rev. Mr. Van Winkle, who left his mark on the church and community by performing one of the most unusual marriages in the history of both.

**MR. VAN WINKLE** was busily picking cherries in his garden one afternoon when a breathless couple stopped before him, announcing they wished to be married but must hurry to catch the cars to Detroit.

Mr. Van Winkle rose to the occasion by not wasting time to climb down from the ladder, but performing the ceremony from his perch high in the cherry tree.

Life continued to go anything but smoothly for the church, and a rapid change of ministers kept it more or less in an upset condition. At times they had supply pastors from other churches. One of these, the Rev. Mr. Miller of Pontiac, served the local church for almost four years!

In 1890, when the church managed to engage the services of a resident pastor who showed every sign of remaining, the congregation's joy knew no bounds. There was nothing too much for them to attempt if they felt it would please their pastor.

In 1893, when the Rev. Church was ill and hospitalized in Ann Arbor, the members of his parish launched a plan of "donation socials" to assist him.

His successor, the Rev. Rogers, was given the same cordial welcome and attentive care. Unaccustomed to outbursts of generosity on the part of his parishioners, Mr. Rogers often found himself unable to express his thanks.

**THIS WAS** the case when he was presented a beautifully bound copy of "The Life of Moody", and later when the \$26.85, collected in an "envelope social" was turned over to him.

Perhaps the statement that the amount was not to be applied to his salary shocked the good gentleman more than the actual gift.

Mr. Rogers tried to resign his pastorate in 1891, but was refused. He continued to serve in Birmingham until 1905.

In 1903, the foundation of the church was raised and the new Sunday school rooms furnished. Additional proof of the success of the church came just a few years later when a remodeling of the of \$1,700.

building was undertaken at a cost

**THE REV.** Peter M. Mackay became pastor of the church in 1916, and steps were taken to provide living quarters for him. A parsonage was purchased for \$5,500.

During the six years he served the church, its entire indebtedness was paid off and a lot at the corner of Maple and Bates was purchased for \$16,000. A five-year

pledge of \$14,000 also was made to the board of missions.

It was during the pastorate of the Rev. Thomas J. Edwards, who served from 1922-27, that the congregation began to express a growing desire for a new building to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding community.

It was not until 1927, however, during the pastorate of the Rev. David L. Woodward, that the program was actually launched.

**ESTIMATED COSTS** of the new building were placed roughly at \$100,000. The congregation immediately pledged \$4,500 and indicated additional pledges could and would be secured.

The Maple-Bates property was sold for \$80,000 and by the fall of 1928, congregational pledges had totaled \$50,000, with an additional \$28,000 promised.

The cornerstone of the new building was laid June 3, 1928. Plans were for an auditorium seating 600 persons, an assembly hall to accommodate 400 Sunday school children and a wing for administrative offices.

When the building was dedicated early in March, 1929, it also housed a \$12,000 organ, the gift of Mrs. Rebecca Hall. The instrument was constructed especially for this building.

**THE LOCAL** church was host again in 1931 to the Michigan association. Among the many popular and noted personages to attend this convention was Wilber M. Brucker, former governor of Michigan. More than 1,000 persons attended.

Life for the church became calmer now and the progress of it was steady and true with far fewer of the struggles it had experienced in the past.

**MORE AND MORE** it became an important factor in the general life of the community. Its doors were often opened to meetings of civic rather than religious import. Its gymnasium was made available for sports programs related to the YMCA. It became the meeting place of several large groups sponsoring programs of broad scope, such as Community Council affairs.

In 1947 the Rev. Emil Kontz, current pastor, became a part of the church family, coming to Birmingham from Chicago where he had headed the midwest office of the American Baptist Home Mission society.

During the next two years the church paid off all outstanding indebtedness, celebrating the event in 1949 with an old-fashioned church gathering and mortgage burning.

It also was during this period that the Sunday school was cited for its outstanding programs and became the model class on a Detroit television program.

**MEMBERS OF** the church took on the task of a complete cleanup of church properties and with rented spraying equipment painted the interior from basement to third floor shower rooms.

Aggressive action also was taken to increase the church membership with excellent results. Attendance at church services nearly tripled with an actual increase of 35 per cent in members.

Throughout the entire church, in all departments, this rise was noted, until today the church is enjoying the greatest prosperity of its life in Birmingham.

Presently the church is engaged in an extensive improvement program which includes redecorating the sanctuary, exterior landscaping and purchase of a new parsonage.

A stormy life, that of the Baptist church. It has weathered all the ill winds that have blown against it and in the words of its pastor, "looks to the future with high hope."

## THE FINEST DRYCLEANING

IN

## BIRMINGHAM

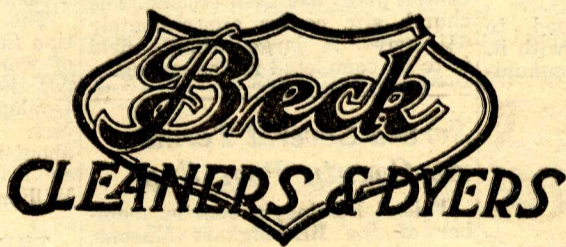
Because We Must Continually  
Strive To Make This Statement  
True, We Have Installed A

## 2 HOUR

DRYCLEANING SERVICE

And The Finest Of

## SHIRT LAUNDRY SERVICE



332 N. Woodward

MI 4-1313

# Saint Hugo's Is Gothic Memorial to 2 Brothers

The church of St. Hugo of the Hills, famed as an authentic gem of ecclesiastical architecture, nestles in the heart of Bloomfield Hills on Opdyke road.

The church, drawn in the Norman Gothic tradition, was erected by the late Theodore F. MacManus and Mrs. MacManus on their family estate, Stonycroft, as a memorial to their two deceased sons, Hugo and Hubert.

Dedication, attended by the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, took place on June 28, 1936. By direct Papal dispensation St. Hugo's contains a crypt where Mr. MacManus, the sons and a son-in-law, Alexander Toluboff, are interred.

APPROPRIATELY named St. Hugo after the patron of the hunt, the church hews rigidly to the monastic establishments of medieval times. Thick native stone walls pierced by high, narrow openings support a steep, sloping slate roof. A deep Gothic arch shelters the facade entrance. A narrow lancet

window admits light to the choir and silhouetted against the window's shadow is a sculpture of St. Hugo. The facade culminates in a heavy stone cross, which is mirrored in a still pond fronting the church.

The interior of St. Hugo's is fashioned from hand-cut stones with an open timber ceiling. Railings are of heavy wrought iron spindles anchored in the masonry and joined by heavy rope.

A figure of Christ, fashioned in Oberammergau, highlights the sanctuary and high altar. Stations of the Cross are hand-fashioned from solid blocks of wood from the Austrian Tyrol.

Upon its completion, the Church was deeded by Mr. and Mrs. MacManus to the Diocese of Detroit with the following dedication:

"We pray that it may be the

holy playground of little children, the joyous refuge and meeting place of the family and, in every fact, God's House of happy welcome to His own."

And so it has been.

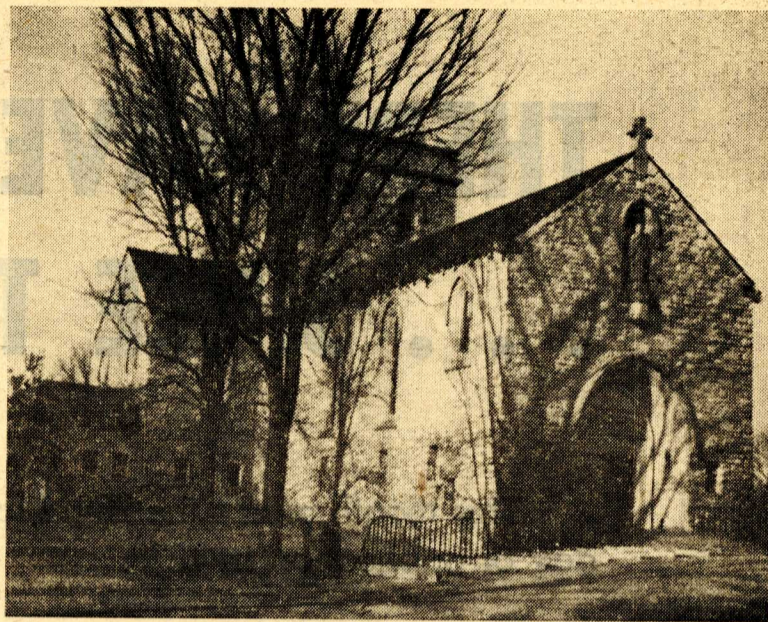
FROM A CONGREGATION of twenty families, originally members of Holy Name parish, St. Hugo's has grown to some two hundred families.

Activities include the Usher's Club and the Holy Name Society for male parishioners, and the St. Hugo Altar Guild and the National Council of Catholic Women for the women of the parish.

The late Rev. William W. Ryan was the first pastor of St. Hugo of the Hills. He was succeeded by the late Rev. Daniel T. Wholihan.

The Rev. Francis T. Stack, assisted by the Rev. John L. Howard, is present pastor.

ABOUT TWELVE YEARS ago St. Hugo's parochial school was



ST. HUGO OF THE HILLS  
Gift of MacManus family serves the Hills

built by the late Walter O. Briggs. The school is under the supervision of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and has an enrollment of 275 students in eight grades.

## Lathrup Community Church Is One of Newest in Area

The ground work for the church in Lathrup Village, formerly Lathrup townsite, was started in 1944. At the May meeting of the Comity department of the Detroit Council of Churches, Rev. A. M. Meikle, superintendent of the Congregational Association of Detroit, requested permission to survey the possibilities of a church in the area.

The survey was completed during the summer of 1944 and, at the October meeting of the Comity department, it was decided to assign Lathrup Village to the Congregational denomination for the development of a church.

During the same month the board of trustees of the Congregational Association of Detroit voted to assume responsibility for the church and obtained backing from the Congregational board of Home Missions in New York, thus assuring a substantial aid from them.



TOWNSITE COMMUNITY CHURCH  
Congregational church situated on Southfield road

WORLD WAR II delayed further action, although a survey resulted in the selection of a site on Southfield road, just north of the Annie Lathrup School.

At a November 21, 1946 meeting, temporary officers were chosen and the name of "Townsite Community Church" selected.

Kenneth W. Thompson was named chairman of a group of fifty charter members at a meeting on December 4, 1946.

Among those appointed to the newly-formed general committee were Charles Fey, Norman H. Iverson, John W. Sanders, Clifford B. Smith, Mrs. Leslie A. Brisebois, Mrs. Wendell Doering, Mrs. Joseph F. Rankin, Mrs. Richard H. Stone, Mrs. Charles W. Zink, Mrs. Thomas H. Myers and Edwin Schippel.

SHORTLY AFTERWARDS the Congregational Association of Detroit and Mr. and Mrs. Charles D. Kelley donated 18 lots for the church and funds for a parsonage. Church sessions were originally held in the school auditorium which was adapted for use by the chancel committee, headed by C. B.

Smith. Materials were donated by Thomas H. Myers.

200 adults and 100 children attended the first service which was held February 2, 1947.

A building campaign, headed by trustees T. H. Myers and Charles Fey, was begun in October, 1947. Funds raised in the area were matched by the New York Home Mission Board and the Detroit Association, and were enlarged by a grant from the Kresge Foundation.

GROUND-BREAKING services were held July 10, 1949, with the cornerstone being laid October 9 of the same year. The first service in the partly-completed church was held on Maundy Thursday, April 6, 1950, when the church was formally dedicated.

Speaking at the morning services was Dr. Harold N. Skidmore, superintendent of the Michigan Congregational Churches. Walter J. Howard, chairman of the building committee, presented the keys

to Leslie A. Brisebois, chairman of the board of trustees.

Participating in the evening services were Dr. Charles Haven Myers, minister of the North Congregational Association, and the Rev. Reginald Becker, president of the Birmingham Council of Churches.

THE CHURCH HAS a capacity of 316 and the Fellowship Hall can seat an additional 250. The building included a large parlor, offices, church school rooms, and a kitchen furnished with modern equipment by the women of the church, who also donated the organ.

An anonymous donor contributed the Maas Chimes and Bell Tower Reproducing System.

The Rev. John D. Rose is the present minister. Nelson H. Kimberly is church clerk; R. Neil Brannan, chairman of trustees, Albert E. Little, treasurer; and Mrs. Mona Spezzano, organist.

Membership includes 500, with 350 children enrolled in the church school.

## Women's Council Coordinates Work

It was back in 1937 when Mrs. John Martin, wife of the First Methodist church's pastor, saw "unity" as the answer to the problems of community help from church women.

Birmingham's church history is rich in incidents where the "ladies of the church" took hold of a dream and made it a reality. Through their efforts the many churches in this "Piety Hill" area grew and prospered, but they felt there must be more they could do for the community and religious work as a whole.

It was in May 1937 that Mrs. Martin called the first group together. Representatives from five churches met and from this beginning the Birmingham Council of Church Women was formed.

Mrs. Fred W. Johnson became the council's first president. Her official family was composed of Mrs. H. D. Harris, vice president; Mrs. E. C. Erickson, treasurer and charter members Mrs. Guy Jensen, Mrs. Victor Ogden and the late Mrs. R. H. Peck.

THE GROWTH and worth of the council perhaps is shown most clearly in what it can and does provide. At the end of that first year the council receipts totaled \$18,200, to be spent on its several projects. Total receipts for 1952 were \$769.98, collected through gifts and the May Fellowship breakfast.

When the council was only a year old, it tackled the problem of religious education in the public schools. Its Birmingham program was patterned after the one used successfully in Royal Oak and Plymouth schools.

The sixth grade at Adams school was the first group to have a regular class in Bible study, taught at first by a Miss Jenks. Mrs. Loren Blunt took charge of the class shortly, and before long sixth graders in all of Birmingham's public schools were receiving religious instructions. Classes were held in the schools with two sessions each week.

MRS. BLUNT left the classes which were taken over by a Mrs. Large. All was going well until gas rationing during World War II made her travel impossible and Mrs. Blunt once more was called into service. The Rev. D. B. Jorgensen of Embury Methodist church assisted with the program at this time.

Local classes were dropped shortly after this when several sections of the country were greatly disturbed by religious education programs in the public schools.

For a brief period, however, the council continued to supply instructors for early morning classes in the lower grades and a noon-hour session at Barnum junior high school.

FROM ITS beginning, the Birmingham Council of Church Women has sponsored community-wide observances of World Day of Prayer and an annual May breakfast. Another annual feature carried on for some years was an autumn mission institute.

The World Day of Prayer, held the first Friday in Lent, is a union program in Birmingham, which the council sponsors. Through its efforts, many prominent church speakers have appeared here, bringing important messages of world-wide Christianity.

The council's annual observance of Armistice Day has been replaced by its World Community day. This program is held the first Friday in November.

THE BIRMINGHAM council takes its place in world affairs with its Christian World missions, Christian social relations and Christian World relations programs. The World Day of Prayer program and May breakfast are two of the annual events held here to help support the broad projects.

The local council also supports the work of the Protestant religious counselor for international students at the University of Michigan.

Through its participation in this activity of the United Church Women of Michigan, the Birmingham council has been given the opportunity to be hosts to several groups of these young foreign students. Some have taken part in several programs here.

MOST RECENT project of the council, and perhaps one of the broadest, is its work in sponsoring visits of Red Cross mobile blood units to the Birmingham area.

Working with representatives of three Catholic parishes in the area, St. Hugo's Holy Name and Our Lady Queen of Martyrs, the Council has sponsored several such visits and will continue their support as long as the need for blood donations remains.

While the Council does not, ordinarily give recognition to a single individual, considering the group as a whole, instead, they do admit to a great deal of pride concerning Mrs. John K. Ormond.

MRS. ORMOND now is at Miraj, India, helping her husband, Dr. John K. Ormond, in his 3-year project as a preacher-surgeon-urologist-instructor at the Presbyterian Mission hospital there.

The local council is a part of the general department of United Church Women of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

## Birmingham's First Church

(Continued from Page One)

made it necessary to provide better facilities for the primary department, with a stucco building on Henrietta street being built in 1921. Miss Ella Adams, superintendent of this division until her retirement in 1946, was assisted by Miss Grace Heacock, Alta Green, Florence Wall, Mrs. Luther Heacock and Margaret McCarroll.

Families active in church projects during the foregoing period include the names of Adams, Armstrong, Blumberg, Botting, Bird, Camp, Campbell, Clarke, Claxton, Cornell, Dalley, Dennis, Doying, Eley, Evens, Ford, Graham, Green, Haack, Hascall, Heacock, Hulbert, Hupp, Keyser, Kist, Kreger, Langerman, LaTourette, Looney, Lowman, Lynd, McCarroll, MacGregor, Miller, Morrow, Murray, Nichols, Peabody, Peck, Quarton, Rainey, Schneider, Slusser, Sly, Smith, Staley, Streb, Utter, Wagner, Wall, Walton, Watkins, Wes-

terby, Whitney, Wiles and Wiley.

ANOTHER POPULATION upsurge found the congregation again cramped in present quarters. At the March board meeting under the chairmanship of Amos Gregory, it was decided to secure the services of Dr. F. O. Hunt of the board of home missions to plan to promote a financial crusade for a new building.

In March, 1950 it was decided to construct a new Gothic-type church at the southeast corner of West Maple and Pleasant street.

The cornerstone was laid Sunday, April 15, 1951. Aided by a \$100,000 grant from the Kresge Foundation, building continued through the summer of 1952. Last services in the seventy-five year old building were held August 24, 1952.

THE FIRST WEEK of October, 1952, was devoted to consecration services, opened by Bishop Mar-

shall R. Reed. The new church, completed at a cost of \$750,000, includes a sanctuary, balcony, parlors, music and robing rooms, church offices and staff administration facilities, assembly rooms for youth and children, kitchens, classrooms, and parking facilities. Forty ministers have served the Birmingham charge, beginning in 1854 with Salmon Steele. The Rev. Arnold F. Runkel, present minister, is assisted by associate minister, the Rev. James W. Wright.

### One Brave Woman In the Group

Birmingham's Methodist churchwomen have long been known to be ardent and zealous church workers. But 75 years ago, they not only put on the usual bazaars and church suppers, but did janitorial service as well.

In October 1878, the good ladies turned out to give the Methodist church a thorough cleaning.

All went well until they came to clean out the spittoons in the church vestibule. Only one lady among the group had the pluck and stamina to perform the disagreeable task.

Church custodians of today are undoubtedly grateful that the days of tobacco chewing church members are gone.

# THERE HAVE BEEN MANY MAYS ... SINCE THE DAYS OF HAYES

This month marks the 75th May The Birmingham Eccentric has recorded since its first day of publication in 1878.

What a wonderful and exciting 75 years it has been. Changes have occurred with such rapidity that it is difficult to visualize life a short 75 years ago. Presidents, from General Rutherford B. Hayes to General Dwight D. Eisenhower, have appeared on the national scene; nations have arisen; others have vanished from the earth; social and economic revolutions have completely altered former patterns of living, and Everyman's life has grown richer and fuller.

How long ago is 75 years?

Well, less than two years prior to the founding of this paper, General Custer and his party were completely annihilated at Little Big Horn, and on the day of The Eccentric's first edition there were only thirty-eight states in the Union. Lord Tennyson was still Poet Laureate of England; Pope Pius IX died to be succeeded by Leo XIII; the Umbria set an England-to-U.S. trans-Atlantic crossing record of six days, four hours (present record, Liner United States, three days, twelve hours); and Russia, as might be expected was engaged in another war.

In sports, the boys were still fighting with bare knuckles and Boston won the championship of the two-year-old National League—the American League had not yet come into existence.

Of course, our 'modern' inventions were not even on the drawing boards—in fact, many of the inventors had not been born. Radio and television were merely dreams. It was in 1878 the Crookes—greatest of English scientists in the realm of exact science—discovered the cathode ray, which, through the cathode ray tube, many years later, the "eye" of television.

Storer Broadcasting Company, pioneers in a comparatively new field of communication, last year celebrated its 25th anniversary. We are proud to have been a part of this country's great development as recorded by this paper. Because our executive offices are located in Birmingham, we extend heartiest congratulations to our neighbor, The Eccentric, upon its diamond anniversary.

Through our stations WJBK and WJBK-TV, we are happy to provide radio and television programs of religion, education and entertainment to the growing Birmingham-Bloomfield area.

George B. Storer, President

## STORER BROADCASTING COMPANY

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