

'Bound By Strong Roots'

The Edifices Are Imposing In B'field

By SALLY RUHF
Special Writer

An apple orchard, a social hall and a tent were the humble beginnings of the present Unitarian Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and Christ Episcopal Church Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills.

Today, their imposing edifices belie this early history and like the early Christians who gathered to worship in small groups so did the pioneers of these churches.

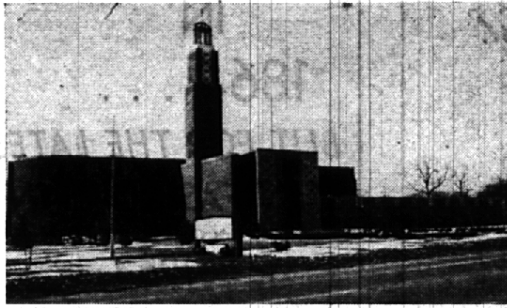
The Unitarian Church began in 1948 when the Boston headquarters of the Larger Fellowship (church by mail) asked Patricia McMahon of Pontiac to organize a local fellowship.

The McCleerys, the Hesses, the Hambleys, Jeannette Guysi and Elaine Parnie were the early pioneers. They met in private homes until the group grew too large and they moved to the Birmingham Community House. In 1951 Mrs. Parnie assumed leadership of the Sunday School and arranged for the whole group to meet in the Apple Orchard Nursery School located where the A&P now stands on Adams Road at Bowers.

THE MEMBERSHIP grew to 150 and Robert Dearth was adult discussion leader in the early 50's when the Birmingham YMCA and the Upton School in Royal Oak provided meeting places for the ever-growing fellowship of these liberal Christians.

In the words of their constitution, "they devote themselves to furthering the individual freedom of their own religious beliefs through study, worship, service, work and recreation."

In September, 1958, the proposed new building on N. Woodward near Lone Pine Road was created by the eminent modern architect, Minoru Yamasaki. In the words of the Unitarian historian, Kathryn T. Loomis, "After church that fine September morning we brought



WHERE LOCAL MORMONS WORSHIP
Congregation met first in homes, social hall.

our shovels here, children and grownups, and in a field of golden-rod, sumac turning scarlet, and wild purple asters, we had our ground-breaking ceremony."

TODAY, THE Unitarian fellowship numbers 500 under interim minister Robert Marshall. The membership lists such diverse occupations as a city commissioner, a former school board member, automobile executives, lawyers, architects, teachers, doctors and many artists whose paintings grace the walls of the social hall to enhance its beauty.

A poster seen in the hallway says, "A church for liberals on the go," an omen of future activity.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons), situated not far away on Woodward, also embodies the simplicity and beauty of modern architecture. Its design was on specifications from the church headquarters in Salt Lake City.

THE PRESENT church was erected after a history of meeting in private homes, then a social hall and then a small chapel in Pontiac. The present governor of Michigan, George Romney, was stake president (comparable to a diocese) for 10 years prior to his inauguration. Edwin Jones of Clawson then succeeded him.

In order to choose a ward leader of the church, by means of prayers and revelation, Findley Milne of Bloomfield Hills was selected as bishop. He now serves on a voluntary basis as the church has no paid ministry.

PRESENTLY the ward (or par-

ish) numbers 550 people. Its financial support depends upon "tithing" as the belief is that this is "a command of God." "Proselytizing" is an honorable thing and each year 12,000 young men 19 and 20 years old, at their own expense, are sent about the world by Salt Lake City orders from headquarters. They carry the principles of the gospel to people without this knowledge.

And about "polygamy" Bishop Milne says, "that went out 80 years ago and then only three percent of the Mormons practiced it, anyway."

THE HISTORY of Christ Episcopal Church Cranbrook began in 1904 when Henry Wood Booth first conducted divine services in a large tent on the hilltop north of the present site.

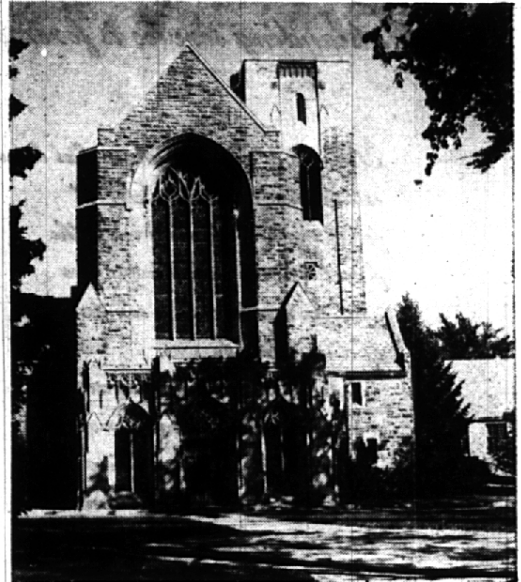
In 1918 the "Meeting House" on Cranbrook Road provided a place for social as well as religious gatherings.

In 1924 Samuel Marquis became the first rector after the George Gough Booths organized a parish and began plans to build a large church. It was created in 1925 by deed of gift from these Booths, founders of the six Cranbrook Institutions.

In July, ground-breaking ceremonies were held and the next Easter Sunday the first service was held in St. Dunstan's chapel.

THIS IS the largest of the three chapels within the church. It is named for the tenth century archbishop of Canterbury who it is said, "tweaked the devil's nose."

In 1928 the building was com-



CHRIST CHURCH CRANBROOK
First services were conducted in a tent.

pleted and both American and British craftsmen were employed. Throughout the entire building examples of ecclesiastical art from every century since the eleventh can be seen.

Memorial gifts comprise many of the works of art. An Old World medieval atmosphere prevails as the visitor gazes upon the stained glass windows, looks at the tapestries, the sculpture, the massive stone, the marble, the carved woods.

THE 32-BELL carillon attracts carilloners from around the world as well as concert audiences. The bells were dedicated in 1928 and their possession is part of the church's history.

Non-religious groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Recovery Inc., blood banks and the Bloomfield Hills Cooperative Nursery School meet regularly at Christ Church Cranbrook as did the Red Cross years ago. The church does not limit itself to Episcopalian participation alone but meets the "spiritual and human needs" of all residents of the community.

Thirty-eight years ago 23 women organized an auxiliary. Today the Women of the Church number 600 active members. Twice a year a "rummage" is held and people come from far and near to buy up its famous "bargains." From Ohio, from western Michigan, from Canada, from all areas of Detroit on buses and trains and cars they come to spend the day.

WHILE 300 people are needed to operate this highly organized project, the money they make goes to an assortment of agencies, religious as well as social service. Twenty-two different agencies within the parish, the diocese, the community, the nation and world are included as the women fulfill their goals of service.

The future of all three of these churches is provided for with building expansion plans. Each one anticipates growth. Fellowship, brotherhood, service are emphasized in each church.

St. Hugo's Was Built As A Memorial

By ELIZABETH VAN LOAN
Special Writer

St. Hugo of the Hills, the only Catholic church within the city limits of Bloomfield Hills, is set back from the Opdyke Road on a rise of ground overlooking a pond, surrounded by tall and stately trees.

This beautiful and tranquil setting was once Stenycroft, the estate of the late Mr. and Mrs. Theodore F. MacManus who built the church as a memorial to their deceased sons, Hugo and Hubert, then deeded it to the diocese of Detroit.

Interred in a crypt in the church are the bodies of Mr. and Mrs. MacManus, their sons and a son-in-law, Alexander Toluboff.

THE CHURCH is Norman Gothic with thick stone walls and a steeply pitched slate roof. Above the entrance is a statue of St. Hugo, patron saint of the hunt. Three hundred persons can be seated; not enough, however, for Sunday mass, so additional masses are said in the larger St. Walter's Chapel, north of St. Hugo's, on the 28.7 acres comprising the church property.

St. Hugo's was dedicated in June, 1936. Twenty families, originally members of Holy Name parish in Birmingham, made up the congregation.

THROUGH THE years, the congregation has grown until in 1963 it totaled 820 families. That year, the church of St. Thomas More was completed on Adams Road in Troy

and about 200 families were transferred there from St. Hugo's which now has 670 families listed on its rolls.

The parochial school at the north end of the property was built in the 1940's by Walter O. Briggs, since deceased.

Club activities at the church include the Holy Name Society, Altar Guild, ushers' club and a teen club of 100 members from ninth grade up.

Just completed is a road linking all of the church buildings and the parking lots.

FUTURE PLANS include a new sisters' home—now on the drawing board—for the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who direct the parochial school.

St. Hugo's has had four pastors. The first was the Rev. William W. Ryan, who was succeeded by the Rev. Daniel T. Wholihan, both now deceased.

Present pastor is the Very Rev. Monsignor Edmond A. Fournier, former vice rector of Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit. He came to St. Hugo's in 1963 following the death of the Rev. Francis T. Stack who died suddenly on the very day,

June 19, that St. Thomas More's was dedicated.

Assistant pastor is the Rev. Gerald Flanigan.

Not Many Here Now!

Proceeds from the oyster supper and school festival put on by the teachers and pupils of the Union school house (Hill school) in 1879 were used to fix up one of the vacant rooms in the school house for the accommodation of visitors at the school examinations.

Admission at the door was 10c. Oysters per dish, 10c. Tea or coffee, 5c. Supper without oysters, \$15c. A total of \$30 was made on the project.

No Books Were Lost

At the annual meeting of the Ladies Library Society in 1879, records show that there were 724 books in the library. Since the society had started in 1869, nearly \$2,000 had passed through the hands of the treasurer of the society and it was reported that no book from their library had ever been lost up to that date.



SOLE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN BLOOMFIELD HILLS
Site was once the Stenycroft Estate.