

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH, BEVERLY HILLS, BUILT IN 1955.  
Temporary chapel erected in 1951 now used as nursery.

IN BEVERLY

# Churches Older Than Village

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The Village of Beverly Hills, until 1958 a part of Southfield Township, is newer than three of its four churches.

Serving the southwest area are Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic parish, Ascension Lutheran Church, Beverly Hills Baptist Church and Beverly Hills Methodist Church.

The Catholic parish was created in October 1951, to serve the needs of the rapidly growing area, bounded by Lincoln on the north, Woodward on the east, 13 Mile on the south and Evergreen on the west.

The first structure on the two and a half acre site, located on Pierce between Birwood and Locherie, was the temporary church and chapel. It will eventually be used as an auditorium and gymnasium.

**CORNERSTONE CEREMONIES** for this building were held in July 1962, and the first services held in the new building were on Christmas Eve, 1962.

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs school opened in September, 1954, with 300 students in six elementary classrooms. Current enrollment at the school is approximately 970 in 23 classrooms.

The church rectory, a temporary

structure and the convent, opened in November, 1960, have also been completed on the site. A drive for funds was begun in 1961 and it is hoped ground may be broken for the new church building this spring.

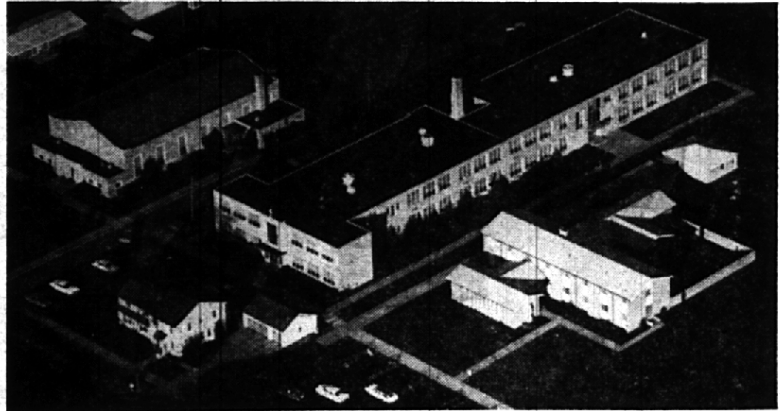
The Rev. Lucien A. Hebert has been in charge of the parish since its establishment and currently ministers to 1,225 families.

**FORMATION OF** Ascension Lutheran Church was begun in 1950, following a preliminary survey which strongly recommended establishment of a Lutheran church in this area of the community.

A ranch type house, to serve as a temporary chapel, was built on part of the church property, on W. 14 Mile Road, between Pierce and Henrietta. The chapel was first used in September 1951, with church services, Sunday school classes and general meetings held in its one large room.

Construction of the church proper was culminated with its dedication at opening services in May, 1955. The ranch house is now used as the Beverly Hills nursery school.

The Rev. Elbert W. Nuelken has been pastor of Ascension Lutheran church since March, 1958. Church membership has grown from 125 communicant members six years ago, to a present membership of 330 adults and 125 children.



QUEEN OF MARTYRS CATHOLIC CHURCH  
Cornerstone laid in 1962.

**THE BEVERLY HILLS** Baptist Church, on 13 Mile Road just west of Greenfield, held cornerstone ceremonies for the first of four proposed units in the fall of 1957.

On a four-acre site, the chapel was built to seat 240 persons and contains Sunday school classrooms as well.

Newest of the four churches in the area is the Beverly Hills Methodist church, 13 Mile and Evergreen roads, with Rev. Robert Boley as the minister.

**ORGANIZATION OF** the mission church began in January 1961, as a project of the Commission on Missions of the First Methodist church, in cooperation with the Methodist Union of Greater Detroit.

Ground was broken for the first unit on the five and a half acre site in May 1962, with cornerstone ceremonies in September 1963. Consecration ceremonies for the church, of contemporary design, were performed in February of this year.

# Christ Church Drew Hundreds to Dedication

Solemn, beautiful and impressive were the words used to describe the dedication and consecration services of Christ Church Cranbrook in October 1928.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Bishop Herman Page of Detroit, knocked on the front door of the church and was received by Mr. and Mrs. George G. Booth, the donors. This was symbolical of the transfer of the church to ecclesiastical authorities.

After the formal sentence of consecration, Bishop Page, preceded by the clergy and choir, marched to the carillon sounded out "Onward Christian Soldiers."

**THE CEREMONIES** were at-

tended by persons who filled the church. Carillon recitals by Anton Brees, carillonneur of Mercersburg Academy were given Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

Hundreds of persons attended the three recitals.

Christ Church together with Cranbrook School, were built and endowed by George and Ellen Scripps Booth. The gift was announced in November 1924 by Bishop Page and ground was broken for the edifice the following July.

The cornerstone was laid by Bishop Page in June 1926. On Christmas Day, 1927, and New Year's Day 1928, the congregation had services in the uncompleted main auditorium for the first time.

**GIFT OF INDUSTRIALIST**

# Kirk Land Donated

One of the state's largest Presbyterian churches, Kirk in the Hills, is located northwest of Birmingham in Bloomfield Township.

The Kirk, as it is commonly known, has been involved in an almost continuous construction program since its dedication by the Presbytery in 1947.

The church and its 30-acre tract of land on W. Long Lake Road were given to the community by Col. Edwin S. George, a noted philanthropist, industrialist and world traveler.

**DURING** construction work in June 1957 the Kirk was struck by a \$1,000,000 fire that destroyed most of the main building.

The original church property consisted of Col. George's former home, known as Cedarholm, and three residences for staff members. In August 1963 the Kirk began construction of a building to provide Christian education for boys and girls as well as to meet the needs of the adult congregation.

Easter Sunday, 1958 saw the first service in the George Chapel, first floor of the Gothic building. Accommodations were provided for 500 people.

At its inception, the Rev. Leslie A. Betchel, D.D., executive secretary of the Presbytery, was appointed pastor of the Kirk. Under his guidance the physical construction of the church was accomplished and the congregation flourished.

In November 1947, eight weeks after the first service in the temporary church the membership was 53. By the following Easter the membership had nearly doubled and a Sunday School of like size was in operation.

**COL. GEORGE**, the donor, died suddenly on Jan. 25, 1951 at his home in Delray Beach, Fla. Services were held at the Kirk and the colonel is buried in the narthex of the building.

The fire, which began in the towers of the church and extensively damaged the roof and set back completion date of construction for more than a year.

During the reconstruction period services were held in the Bloomfield Hills High School.

Rev. Dr. Harold C. DeWindt, pastor of the church at the time of the fire is still the minister at the Kirk. He is assisted by Rev. Chandler Benton.



KIRK IN THE HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Struck by \$1,000,000 fire in 1957.

photo by artist-photographer Sid Coale