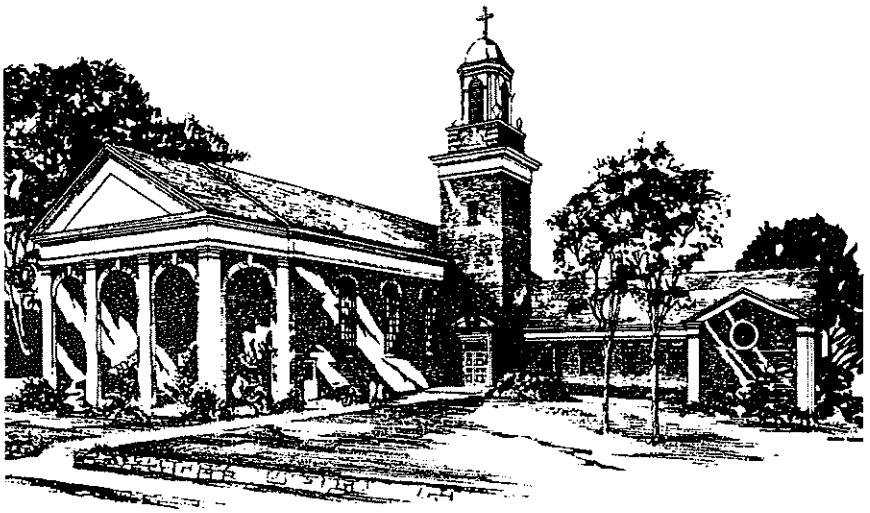


# The Church by Chippewa Creek

A History of the Methodist People  
of Brecksville 1823-1998



William F. Long



## Dedicated to

**Phillip Michael Long**, the third generation of the Long Family to worship at Brecksville Church, and to **all the children and grandchildren of the church** who will carry on when this generation is gone.

Our faith should shine from our lives through our actions,  
and should spill joyously from our mouths in testimony.  
Our children and grandchildren should learn of our faith  
and see our faith in action every day of our lives.



## Table of Contents

Preface	
Chapter 1 The Era of the Circuit Riders The Methodist Society to the Early 1990's	1
Chapter 2 Depression and Rejuvenation The Church from 1908 through the 1930's	18
Chapter 3 Building a New Church The Modern Church Building 1940-1964	30
Chapter 4 Growth of Fellowship Programs The Life of the Church 1960' -- 1980's	54
Chapter 5 Boy Scout Troop 175, United Methodist Women And Chippewa Place	78
Chapter 6 The Church Looks Outward Mission, Study and Service Projects	90
Epilogue	109
Pictures from the History of the Church	112
Appendices	118
Index	129



## PREFACE

The Brecksville United Methodist Church and its antecedent congregations (Brecksville Methodist Society, Brecksville Methodist Episcopal Church and Brecksville Methodist Church) have been a witness for the worship of God, the Lordship of Christ and the resilience of the people called Methodists in the Brecksville community for the past one hundred and seventy-five years. Much of the history of the church prior to 1932 has been lost to the ages, as church records, if any were kept, have not been found. At least two reasons might account for the lack of available records: first, for the first one hundred years of its existence, Brecksville Church was on a circuit served by traveling preachers who had spiritual oversight of several churches and who rotated among circuits frequently, thus giving little attention to keeping historical records; and second, from 1832 until 1909, the church building was a one-room meeting house with no place to store records. Only in 1954 was an office space designated for the keeping of church records.

In the East Ohio Conference Archives, there is a complete set of *Conference Journals* listing all the pastors to serve Brecksville Church. Bits and pieces of historical records have emerged from many persons and sources. We are particularly indebted to Betty Noble Klein for her interest in collecting clippings, pictures, programs and letters, especially those relating to the church's early history. After 1932, minutes of meetings and church newsletters provide a fertile source of information about church activities. In

addition to the historical documents, interviews with many persons who have been involved with the church over the century has yielded a rich oral history adding an invaluable collection of stories and anecdotes to the record contained herein.

This history is an attempt to provide a record of the events that have made Brecksville United Methodist Church the family of faith that it is today. After spending two years researching, reading, listening, sorting and putting the events of which I have learned into order, I hope this book will provide an interesting source of information about our common heritage.

My thanks to my family who supported me in my research, to the church members who offered information, encouragement and insight, to Dan Perttu who helped with the editing and writing of the final draft of this history and to the Gifts and Memorials Committee of Brecksville Church for financially supporting the printing and distribution of this work. Finally, thanks to Phillip Michael Long, my grandson, for providing in himself my motivation for writing this history that the stories of God's people who call themselves Brecksville United Methodist Church might be passed on to the next generation.



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **The Era of the Circuit Riders**

#### **Early Brecksville and the Brecksville Methodist Society**

The Village of Brecksville, located within Brecksville Township, was part of the Western Reserve that was transmitted to the State of Connecticut in the Connecticut Charter. The territory was sold to the Connecticut Land Company which traded whiskey and other goods with the Chippewa Indians in exchange for their withdrawal from the land. In turn, the land company sold parcels of land to a group of men who sold lots to the pioneer fathers of the Village of Brecksville. One pioneer, Lemuel Bourne, traveled 600 miles from Savoy, Massachusetts to Brecksville on foot and bought some land on what is presently the BF Goodrich property on Brecksville Road. After finishing his cabin on his newly acquired property, Bourne returned to New England on foot and married Delia Waite, bought a horse, and, in the Fall of 1812, returned to Brecksville by ox cart and covered wagon with a company of pioneers.

Bourne is of particular interest because he was one of the first pioneers to organize religious meetings in Brecksville. Bourne was influenced by religion throughout his life: his grandparents were among the founders of the Congregational Church at Attleboro, Massachusetts, and shortly before coming to Ohio, he heard a sermon by the Methodist revivalist Lorenzo Dow, which may account for the

fact that he embraced Methodism and later helped to organize the Brecksville Methodist Society. After settling into life in Brecksville, Bourne and his wife held a religious meeting in their home in 1814, which was actually the first documented religious meeting in Brecksville. Although their one-room house was only half-filled with 16 worshipers, everyone in three townships was present, except for one family that had been overlooked.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1814 and 1823 the villagers of Brecksville were most likely participating in religious activities. In fact, Methodism had already been established as an important religious force in the State of Ohio by 1822, and the administrative body that served to unite local Methodist churches—The Ohio Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church—already consisted of a number of very large “circuits” which used John Wesley’s system in England as a model. Wesley had established a pattern of moving his preachers to new assignments every few months thus keeping them “itinerating”. This practice was called “the Itineracy” and the preachers were referred to as “circuit riders”. As time went on, a circuit rider became responsible for more than one society—sometimes in America for a circuit consisting of as many as 20 or 30 societies. For a complete list of the Circuit Riders, refer to Appendix A.

The Brecksville Methodist Society was organized in 1823 by Lemuel Bourne, David Ring, Ezra Wyatt, Eliphalet Wyatt and all of their wives, as a part of the 17-point, 440-member Brunswick Circuit. Appointed in 1822 by the Ohio Conference, the Reverend James Rowe was the first circuit rider to visit the new society, and the Reverend William Swasey was the Presiding Elder. The early Circuit Riders traveled continuously from place to place preaching, marrying, performing baptisms, singing and praying with the little bands of Methodists, while the Presiding Elder visited each district four times a year and held a Quarterly Meeting to conduct the business of the church. The office of

Presiding Elder later evolved into the office of District Superintendent.

What did the Circuit Riders preach? According to Methodist historian John Versteeg,

“There were great differences in the preaching . . . but little deviation in the message. In this unity of presentation lay tremendous power. In the more settled denominations, religion was a dreary and dour affair, . . . [while] the itinerants . . . were enthusiasts: enthusiasts about a God who wants all men to be saved and who has made men free to comply with the conditions of salvation. Though their gospel, with its literalistic view of hell, had a stern side to it, for the most part these men gloried in full and free grace.”<sup>2</sup>

Essentially, they believed that every person was equal in the eyes of God.

Unfortunately, most of the preachers died young of “exposure”, loneliness, a poor diet or malarial fever. They experienced difficulty in trying to inspire religious fervor in many of the settlers who were far more interested in where their next meal was coming from. In Brecksville, however, the Methodist Society invited the Circuit Riders to come and preach, but the Society had to have strong lay leadership since the circuit only had two traveling preachers. In fact, on most Sundays the worship service was led by a layman; it was a special occasion when the preacher visited. Nevertheless, by its first anniversary in 1824, the Brecksville Methodist Society had grown to 16 members despite the fact that during these years the Society meetings were held in various homes and not in a centralized church building.

In addition to the church meetings held in various homes, the social life enjoyed by the villagers of young Brecksville in the 1820s was very active. Many social

events centered on house raising, corn husking bees and logging bees. A school was begun by Mrs. Benjamin Waite, who held classes in a private home.<sup>3</sup>

Although the villagers were developing a social community, they had to contend with many problems that were common to pioneers across the country. During this period travel was difficult; the roads were little more than dirt paths and there were few bridges over the many creeks and rivers. Furthermore, Brecksville was almost isolated at this time. Parts of the Cuyahoga River were navigable but in numerous places rapids made river travel dangerous. To help to provide for better transportation in this area, on July 4, 1825, work was started on a canal that would connect Lake Erie to the Ohio River. In 1827, the Ohio-Erie Canal was completed from Akron to Cleveland through Brecksville, and on July 3, 1827, Governor Allen Trimble officially opened the Canal.

## **Methodists Divided**

During the 1820s, there was a national protest movement within the Methodist Episcopal Church against what the protesters saw as blatantly undemocratic features of the Methodist system. The protesters were especially opposed to the authoritarian and paternalistic features that came from Wesley's and Asbury's days. They wanted to retain Methodism's faith and fervor, but they wanted to align those qualities with democratic principles and procedures. While the protestors agreed on common goals, they could not agree on how best to accomplish these aims. One group wanted to work within the existing church, while a second group wanted to form a new church organization. On November 2, 1830, members of the latter group—ministers and laymen from 12 of the 19 annual conferences—met in St. John's Church in Baltimore and

organized the Methodist Protestant Church. It would be over 100 years before these two branches would come together again.

The Brecksville Methodist Society, however, continued with the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is reasonable to assume—despite the lack of definitive historical evidence—that little country churches like Brecksville did not engage in the controversy as much as the large eastern city churches. Because Brecksville was just one little society on a large circuit, the Society only saw the Circuit Riders at infrequent intervals. Between these visits the lay people kept the church going, so, unlike the large churches with full-time clergy, Brecksville probably did not feel the lack of lay participation in the church.

### **The First Brecksville Methodist Church Building**

For nine years during the 1820s and early 1830s, the Brecksville Methodist Society met in the homes of the Society members. There were frequent discussions of building a church, but their efforts were thwarted by lack of funding. It was very difficult for the members to raise enough money to pay the quarterly assessment for their share of the two circuit riders' \$100-per-year salary, so setting aside money for a building presented a formidable challenge.

Once volunteer hours had been pledged, lumber donated and a construction site found on land owned by one of the members, the members felt as though a building project would be possible. In 1832, the first Methodist church building in Brecksville was started, and the villagers Lafayette Wyatt, Lorenzo Wyatt and James Wyatt, were among the members (the rest of whom are not documented) who helped to construct the church.<sup>4</sup> The plan for the simple building was based on the parishioners' memories of

their New England churches. It was a one-room frame building with the main entrance centered at the front with two steps leading up to a double door. Inside, there was a balcony at the back of the sanctuary over the front door. The pulpit stood on a higher level and had several steps leading up to it. The benches were, at first, constructed out of plain planks. At night, tallow candles in tin reflectors were used for illumination. The windows were tall and narrow with three on each side of the room, two in the front of the room and one on each side of the door. There was also a window behind the pulpit. Although the new building had a steeple on the roof, there was no money to buy a bell.<sup>5</sup>

Theodore Breck, whose house was just about halfway between the Methodist church and the Presbyterian church, which was also under construction, offered to give a bell to the first church completed. During the Summer of 1832, the frame of the Methodist church was erected and enclosed, but the interior was not finished for eight years, so the bell went to the Presbyterian church. Almost as an afterthought, on May 23, 1835, Thomas and Marana Allen sold the land which the new church occupied to the Trustees of the Brecksville Methodist Society. Ezra Wyatt, who owned a grist mill north of Public Square on Chippewa Creek, also owned part of the property on which the church was built and sold parcels of the property to the church during the next two decades.<sup>6</sup>

For several years, meetings were held in the unfinished building only during the summer. By 1840, the church building was plastered and given one coat of paint so that it could be used all year round. Cora Akers, who was interviewed in 1942 by Rev. John Bartrug for his church history, recalled the days in the 1840s and 1850s when she attended church as a girl:

“Father always did all his Sunday morning chores, put the wood for the church stoves in the back of

the buggy, hitched up the team, gathered his family together and bundled them off to morning services. We lived two and a half miles from the church, but the mud was never too deep, nor the snow too high, for us to attend. Mother always heated bricks for us to carry in our laps to keep warm on the way to church. We always held them during the church services, too, because the fires were never started until after father arrived, and we never got too warm in those early days. Then the church was heated with two stoves, placed on each side at the rear of the room. Long stove pipes, suspended by wire from the ceiling, extended the full length of the room and connected with chimneys at the front end of the room."<sup>7</sup>

Although the church was small and very plain, the new church building was a major milestone in the life of the little Methodist Society, since the entire community could recognize that the Society was a serious religious force in Brecksville.

### **The Message of the Church in the 1840s**

The Circuit Riders were still the primary source of religious leadership during this era. They endured a difficult life; those who were married had a particularly difficult time since their family home often was many miles from the circuit, and they might be away from their families for many weeks at a time. When away, the Circuit Riders frequently stayed at the home of one of the church families on the circuit.

Despite the continued lack of permanent preachers, the denomination of Methodism itself was evolving. During the 1840s, the ceremony of the Lord's Supper was highly

esteemed, although it was celebrated infrequently because of the scarcity of clergy to administer it. The use of wine in the communion service was expected. In addition, Methodist Societies held quarterly observances to coincide with visits of the Presiding Elder, besides the more regular worship services led by the Circuit Riders. Perhaps most significant, however, was the influence of political concerns about slavery on the national Methodist council. At the General Conference of 1844, the northern delegates expressed strong disapproval of any Methodist clergy owning slaves, which conflicted with the views of the southern delegates. In the meantime, each of the Southern Conferences reviewed the situation; and at a convention of Annual Conferences of the Slave-Holding States held in Louisville on May 17, 1845, they voted to withdraw from the Methodist Episcopal Church and to form the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

### **Revival In Brecksville: The 1850s<sup>8</sup>**

In 1853 a revival took place in Brecksville under Reverends Charles Thomas and Philip Plummer, who were the Circuit Riders for the Brooklyn Circuit that year. In these days many people were converted at revivals which contributed to the growth of the church. From time to time during the meeting, people would be invited to come forward and profess their faith. Unfortunately the well-publicized revivals sometimes attracted people who would try to disrupt the meeting, which was another hazard the preacher faced.

At the revivals, the preacher often preached the doctrine of "Assurance"—that one is assured of salvation, unlike the Calvinist doctrine that held that God chooses a select few and the rest are damned. The doctrine of Assurance was a fit accompaniment for the gospel of free choice and, in a good deal of Methodist literature, it was



referred to as “experiential religion.” In addition, the early Methodists came to believe that Christianity is one’s personal experience of God and God’s grace. They offered a present salvation: “The Spirit answers to the blood, and tells me I am born of God,” and they constantly testified to a living, loving, heavenly Father offering forgiveness and redemption here and now.<sup>9</sup> Methodism has all along given primacy to religious experience and, in these years, a revival was such an experience.

A year after the revival, in the summer of 1854, oil lamps were installed in the little church without a bell, which greatly improved the interior lighting. Until that time, tallow candles in small tin reflectors hung on posts or walls to provide illumination, which was minimal. The town was canvassed in a systematic way, and the citizens were asked to contribute money for new lamps, which attests to the strong sense of community that had already developed in Brecksville. One man, who was not a member of the church, sent word that he would sell a cow, if necessary, to help with the fund, but the Methodists had raised enough money to purchase the lamps without the sale of the cow.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to hosting revivals in Brecksville and improving illumination within the church building, the Methodists were active in donating funds to the Methodist Missionary Society: 21 members donated between \$0.50 and \$4, and several donated sums of lesser amounts. The total donation was \$20.47, a sum whose value was far greater in the mid-nineteenth century than it is today.<sup>11</sup>

By the late 1850s, the Methodist church still had no bell, nor did it have an organ or choir. Funerals were held in the Presbyterian Church and, when there were deaths in the township, the Presbyterian Church bell tolled the age of the departed. On a brighter side, the Methodists enjoyed an active social community: the nine-o’clock “love feasts” at the quarterly meetings when the Presiding Elder came to visit were major events, after which the rules of the church were

read. Some of the restrictions then in vogue were on card playing, dancing, brother going to law with brother, taking of usury and others.<sup>12</sup>

Sunday School was also an important part of church life in the late 1850s despite the fact that it was not held in winter because of the poor conditions of the roads. In those days, both Marilla Wyatt Mattison and Harriet Bourne Hunt taught the classes and they were well-attended. A. Avann, and Lorenzo Wyatt were class leaders, and sometimes the minister led the class when he was in town. The students were required to commit to memory six verses of the Scripture each week.<sup>13</sup>

### **The War Years: 1861–1865**

In 1861, Abraham Owen and Simon Jacobs were appointed Circuit Riders for the Richfield Circuit in the Cleveland District, of which Brecksville was a part. This was Abraham Owen's second year with the Richfield Circuit, but Simon Jacobs was new—he replaced the Rev. George Hutches, who went to war in 1860, along with 88 Brecksville men—a number equal to half of the voting population of the township. We know that this was an active circuit, because Rev. Owen reported 28 conversions during 1861. The 10-church circuit had 273 members, 3 deaths, 16 probationers and 6 local preachers, who provided the sermons between visits of the ordained Circuit Riders. In addition, that year Rev. Owen and Rev. Jacobs baptized 14 adults and 5 children.

At the 1862 Northern Ohio Conference held at Wellington, John Thompson and James Evans were appointed to the Richfield Circuit. They were to serve this circuit for the next three years during the war.

## **The Postwar Years<sup>14</sup>**

In turning to the postwar years, we find that documentation from this time is scarce; there is little information on the activities of the church. However, one significant event was when Augustus Adams presented the Brecksville church with its first Pulpit Bible on December 24, 1868, which was to serve the church for 76 years. Also that year, the fourteenth edition of the Hymn Book of the Methodist Church was published. Although it was a little book easily carried in a saddlebag, it contained 922 Hymns and 22 Doxologies, most of which have fallen out of favor, except for a few such as "Rock of Ages" and "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing."

Because of the many hardships the Presiding Elders had endured, in 1872 the Methodists started stationing their "Traveling Elders" rather than keeping them moving on circuits. Rev. Mead was appointed to supply Brecksville in 1878.<sup>15</sup>

## **The 1880s: Toward a More Modern Church**

In 1881 A. R. Palmer was appointed to the Richfield circuit which included Brecksville; he served the circuit for three years. During his tenure he prepared a report that documented the condition of the church: ". . . Congregation at Brecksville quite encouraging. . . . The [Sunday] School at Brecksville well sustained. Have made 63 Pastoral Visits... finances promise well."<sup>16</sup> Further documentation of the condition of the Brecksville Methodists comes from an 1887 conference report by Presiding Elder F. S. Hoyt:

"Brecksville was separated two months after Conference, with mutual consent, from the Richfield and Bath Circuit, and placed under the charge of Rev. John N. West. The protracted meeting held by

Brother West in the holidays resulted in 25 conversions, and 20 accessions. Six other persons united by letter. The membership now numbers 60, and the attendance upon the Sunday class meeting 40. Every financial claim was met.”

In addition, the church building was valued at \$1500 and, at the 1892 Conference, Presiding Elder John Mitchell included it in a list of churches that had been beautified and improved. He did not, however, describe any specific changes.

These local developments were augmented by the publication of “The Methodist Hymnal With Tunes” in 1896. It contained 1117 Hymns and 19 Doxologies, a standardized order of worship and standardized rituals of Baptism, Reception of Members and The Lord’s Supper.<sup>17</sup> As a result, music was elevated to a more important role in the ceremony of the church, but even more significant was the standardization of rituals that the hymnal provided.

Not only were the conditions of the church changing, but the congregation was also undergoing a metamorphosis similar to many groups in Brecksville at the turn of the century. In the early 1800s both the circuit riders and the Methodist people dressed plainly and rather distinctively both inside and outside of church but, as time went on, people gradually changed their views on appropriate dress outside of church. In Brecksville, many of the church members were farmers and only dressed up on Sunday: the women wore very long dresses with long sleeves and high necks, and the men wore mostly dark suits and ties.

## **The Story of the Bell**

Although many new developments were taking place in the church, the building still did not have a bell, and

members of the church felt this was a real problem. In 1874 the church had received a copy of the Methodist Almanac that included an advertisement for the Buckeye Bell Foundry in Cincinnati. This advertisement prompted the trustees to think of purchasing a bell, but the major impediment they faced was the high cost of the freight from Cincinnati to Brecksville. In 1880 the Cleveland Terminal and Valley Railroad was completed through Brecksville, and with it came the possibility of a lower shipping cost for the bell.

The bell project progressed to the point where it required a committee to oversee the progress. Mrs. Anson Norville, a member of the Methodist choir, was a member of this committee; she caught the tone of the Congregational Church's bell and wrote to the bell foundry to ask that the new bell be cast to blend with the Congregational bell. In 1905 the bell was finally cast for the church; the bell was 36 inches high and 40 inches in diameter and its combined weight with the mounting structure was 1410 pounds. Unfortunately, these dimensions were too large for the 70-year-old belfry; with a bell of this size, the lateral force of its swinging put a great strain on the mounting structure. In fact, it is likely that the swinging bell shook the entire church. This unexpected problem with the new bell forced the trustees to look at some drastic changes.

The solution to the problem was to build a new, stronger bell tower. Rather than rebuild the existing tower, a new entrance area was added to the building with the new tower rising above it. With the new tower in place, the old belfry was no longer needed and was later removed during the remodeling project.<sup>18</sup>

## **A New Century Brings More Changes**

After the Methodist church had finally acquired its bell, further significant changes took place. A new edition of

the Methodist hymnal, jointly published by the northern and southern churches in 1905, included a dignified order of service, tasteful music and a Psalter in the form of responsive readings. Also in 1905, the Methodist church purchased a new Farrand reed organ that had 15 stops; it was used until the Hammond organ replaced it in 1937. Three years later, an event occurred that would have a profound effect on the Methodist circuit riders: in 1908 Henry Ford started manufacturing the Model T Ford. With better roads and now with the advent of inexpensive automobiles, the circuits could be traveled by car instead of by horse.

Perhaps most significant, however, was the developing national tide of anxiety among Protestants, who feared the rapid growth of Catholicism due mainly to the influx of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. Most Protestants, including Methodists, found the ceremonies of the Catholics—the incense, candles and Latin Mass—to be strange and unfamiliar. One result was that Protestant churches of this period were designed to be different from Catholic churches: there were to be no center aisle, crucifix or cross, candles, or divided chancel, and the organ and choir were not to be located in a balcony at the rear of the sanctuary. The Brecksville Methodist Episcopal Church was “modernized” along these lines under the direction of Rev. Clair T. Goodwin in 1908.

The specific changes were drastic: the old steeple was demolished and taken off the roof, and the front entrance was closed and changed into a large window. The two narrow windows on each side of the old front door were removed and were most likely used in the new addition on the west side. In addition, the balcony at the rear of the room was removed. The newly constructed portions of the building included a new tower entrance, and a room on the west side of the building which was used as a dining room and classroom. Finally, the pulpit was lowered and the

window at the back of the pulpit was removed. Work was completed in 1909 when Rev. J. R. Carpenter was the pastor. At the 1909 North Ohio Conference of Methodists held in Elyria, Cleveland District Superintendent P. B. Stroup reported, "At Brecksville an addition has been built on to the church, nearly doubling the seating capacity, which means much to these people. All indebtedness was provided for." The cost of the addition was \$2100 of which the church had to borrow \$650.

The brief report by Rev. Stroup hardly does justice to the impact the building project had on the church. The little one-room church building that had been used for worship services for 77 years lacked the facilities for church fellowship activities; following Sunday worship, the shutters would be closed until the following Sunday morning. The new addition, however, had a room that could be used as a Sunday School room, a dining room or a social hall. And with the completion of the remodeling project, the new bell at last could be safely rung on Sunday mornings!<sup>19</sup>

By the 1910s, the Era of the Circuit Riders had come to a close. The Brecksville Methodist Church had entered the age of automobiles, and the church building itself barely resembled the original one constructed in the 1830s. These major developments in the church infrastructure signified the end of an old era and the beginning of a new one—one whose history would be far more complex.

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<sup>1</sup> Snow, Jeanette. *History of the Brecksville Methodist Episcopal Church*, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Versteeg, John, *Methodism: Ohio Area, 1812-1962* (Cincinnati, OH: Ohio Area Sesquicentennial Committee, 1962), p. 95.

<sup>3</sup> Bartrug, John W., *A History of Brecksville Methodist Church* (Brecksville, OH, 1942), p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> According to Mrs. Cora Akers, interviewed by Rev. Bartrug in 1942.

<sup>5</sup> Bartrug, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>8</sup> Members that Mrs. Turney remembered during this time: the Lemuel Bournes, the Eliphalet Wyatts, the Lorenzo Wyatts, the LaFayettes, the Higgins, the Vorises, Mrs. Breen, Mrs. Esty, the Allens, Mrs. Caleb Oakes, Mrs. Boyd, Mr. John Boyd, Miss Lizzie Boyd, and the Tylers. At that time, Mr. Tyler was the village blacksmith.

<sup>9</sup> Versteeg, p. 97.

<sup>10</sup> Bartrug, p. 3, and Snow, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> According to the North Ohio Conference held at Tiffin August 23-30, 1854. Note: Conference Journals during this period were primarily concerned with the clergy appointments and where the appointment was to a circuit, only the name of the circuit was listed. Apparently it did not occur to the journal editor that someone might like to know which churches were in the circuit! Fortunately in the back of these journals was the Missionary Society Treasurer's Report. The Treasurer would list every person by name who had contributed at least 50 cents during the year for missions. The names and amount contributed were listed by church, and the churches were grouped by circuit. This makes it possible to go back and determine in what circuit a church was included and also the names of some of the lay people.

<sup>12</sup> Snow, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> According to memories of Ann H. Turney

<sup>14</sup> Lemuel Bourne, G. W. Foote, L. W. Wyatt, H. C. Dunbar, Mr. R. A. Foote, Mrs. L. D. Adams, L. F. Wyatt, A. Avann, Mr. Latimer, Mrs. J. Barr, P. Dillon, Mrs. A. Tyler, S. E. Wyatt, William Allen, Mrs. W. James, C. Hunt, J. J. Barnes, William Avann, and Mrs. E. Dillow were some of the lay people active in the Brecksville Methodist Society after the war.

<sup>15</sup> He was a student at Baldwin University in Berea. In Brecksville the class membership was only 16 with L. Norvill serving as class leader. The Sunday School had 60 members with A. C. Hitchcock, Superintendent. The Trustees were A. Watkins, A. C. Hitchcock, L. F. Wyatt, and James Cleveland.

<sup>16</sup> According to the Pastor's Report for the quarter ending August 6, 1882, for Brecksville circuit, Cleveland District, North Ohio Conference.

<sup>17</sup> The first Hymn was "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing." In this book the music was at the top of the page with the words at the bottom of the page, and the hymns were not titled. The Gloria Patri ended with Amen, but the hymns did not. Three hundred and nine of the hymns were by C. Wesley.

<sup>18</sup> A hand written hymn found in the archives was probably written for the new bell. Although there is no evidence that the hymn was ever used in a worship service, it may have been written in anticipation of the arrival of



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the bell. When the bell could not be pealed after it was installed in the old bell tower, the hymn was probably forgotten.

**The Bell Song** (the tune is *Dennis*)

Hark! Hear the bell that rings  
And calls us from our homes  
To this dear place we come once more  
To worship Thee in love.

We come with family now  
To join our friends on earth  
And praise Thee with our voices now  
With heart and mind and soul.

We waited long these years  
To hear this bell ring out  
So father, mother, child and friend  
Could join its happy song.

When we at last go home  
The bell will count our years  
And tell each one who stays behind  
How long you gave us Lord.

<sup>19</sup> The 1909 remodeling project was a great success, but it became obvious that another small improvement was needed, which was the addition of a small porch roof over the front door of the church. The roof made it easier to enter the church on rainy days. Although there are no records of this period, the church was probably wired for electricity about this time.

## CHAPTER 2

### Depression and Rejuvenation

#### The 1910s

The complexity of the new century was reflected in some of the actions of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church as it sought to respond to the changes in the social order. For example, in response to the growing industrialization, the Baltimore General Conference of 1908 adopted a new Social Creed that included a forward-thinking statement on labor in factories. The statement read in part, "The Methodist Episcopal Church stands: For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practical point, with work for all; and for that degree of leisure for all which is the condition of the highest human life."<sup>1</sup> In addition, at the 1916 General Conference, grape juice was made mandatory for communion, because the Methodists had a history of opposition to alcohol since the Civil War and felt it would be hypocritical to use wine for communion. Finally, by a large majority, the 1918 General Conference approved laity rights for women two years before Congress passed the 19th Amendment which guaranteed women suffrage. These three important policy developments and changes on the national level are representative of the growing humanitarian approach to social issues of national significance, an

approach which is more characteristic of churches in general in the twentieth century.

As if to confirm the fact that the era of the Circuit Riders was at its close, Arthur C. Horrocks, a well-known Brecksville resident, was assigned to the church for the 1910 conference year. Although he was only at the Brecksville Methodist Church for one year, Horrocks wrote a brief history of the church for the *Brecksville Centennial History*. He also helped to lead the Brecksville Sunday School Convention in 1910.

After Horrocks's assignment was over in 1911, the Methodist Book of Concern published "The Ladies' Aid Manual" which described how ladies' groups should be organized and suggested activities that would "contribute to the social, intellectual, and financial development of the church without incurring any criticism." Some of these activities which occurred at the Brecksville Church on December 22, 1913 were games and exercises for the Sunday School students. Included were elaborate Christmas exercises—complete with various soloists, violin and organ music.<sup>2</sup>

In 1917 the little Brecksville church watched as the United States entered World War I, but American involvement was mercifully brief with the war ending in 1918. During February of that same year Brecksvillites and thousands of other Americans experienced the coldest winter in 48 years; at times the temperature dropped to 16 degrees below zero. World War One and the winter seem totally unrelated, but the War caused an unprecedented migration of people within the country who spread a virulent strain of Spanish influenza which was aggravated by the severe weather conditions. The influenza killed approximately 500,000 Americans and thus many church services were canceled across the country. Although there is no concrete evidence that the epidemic affected the Brecksville Methodist congregation, chances are that it did

since attendance at church services declined rapidly during 1918, and that trend continued into the 1920s.

## **The Church in Trouble**

By 1925 church membership was only 26, and prospects for the little church on the north side of Public Square were bleak. Although it is difficult to trace the origins of the decline in membership, the materialism of the Roaring Twenties led to decreasing memberships in churches across the nation. In Brecksville, only a few loyal members were holding the church together. In 1926, the trustees of the Brecksville Methodist Episcopal Church were faced with the problem of finding a sexton. Most likely because of lack of funding, three of the trustees, John Green, Carroll Bourne and Joe Breen, decided to take turns being sexton themselves. The financial circumstances of the church improved slightly in 1927 when the Village of Brecksville purchased from the church a parcel of land having a frontage of 44.5 feet on Public Square at a cost of \$1,557.50. This is currently the land where the Department of Human Resources is located.

While the Methodist Church was struggling through difficult times, the Village of Brecksville was flourishing in the late 1920s. The town boasted two grocery stores, two meat markets, a bank, a flour mill, a feed mill, a lumber mill, two electric stores, a hardware store, an automobile dealer, a barber shop, a shoe repair shop, a milk plant, a pharmacy, several garages and filling stations, a town band, a music club, two lawyers, a physician and surgeon, a hotel and two golf courses. Also during this time, the Junior Guild of the Methodist Sunday School was a small but active organization.

The Brecksville Methodist Episcopal Church, however, was in serious trouble. The Stock Market Crash of

1929 only exacerbated the hardships people endured; and while some historians might argue that attendance at church would increase as people became more despairing, the empirical evidence shows the opposite trend. In 1930, when Franklin J. Nichols was appointed as a supply pastor to the Brecksville church, the church only had 37 people listed as members. Because his wife was sick, Rev. Nichols was not able to devote much time to the church and, as a result, attendance at Sunday services fell to a point so low that the District Superintendent thought the church might close.

By May 1932, the congregation had dropped to five.<sup>3</sup> On that Sunday, a new resident, George R. Klein, and his family attended. Their five members doubled the size of the congregation. His presence and influence would greatly impact the life of the Brecksville Church in the years to come.

### **The George R. Klein Family Arrives**

Reverend Nichols knew that George R. Klein had been a Trustee at his former church; so shortly after joining Brecksville Church, Reverend Nichols invited Mr. Klein to attend a Trustees' meeting. At the meeting, the Trustees discussed the large debt of \$300 that they feared would require the church to be closed. As an alternative to closing the church, Mr. Klein developed a plan to attract new member families. Mr. Klein would drive around Brecksville in his large car and transport children to and from Sunday School. As more people came to church, Klein's eleven-year-old daughter, Virginia, helped Rev. Nichols' wife start a Sunday School by teaching the very young children while Mrs. Nichols taught grades four and higher.

## Centennial Celebration

Despite the fact that the future of the church seemed bleak, on November 20, 1932, the parishioners mustered enough energy to celebrate 100 years in the same building. It was a momentous occasion for the church. The day started with Sunday School, followed by Morning Worship with Rev. C. S. Murphy, Associate Pastor of Epworth – Euclid Methodist Episcopal Church, who preached that just as Christ had been the door to all the hundred years the church had passed through, so he would be in the future. Rev. Louzecky, who left Brecksville 40 years earlier to go into the ministry, returned and also spoke at the morning service. He stated that although he came to this country to become a millionaire, after he had invested himself in God, he felt like more than a millionaire.

In the afternoon the church gathered for the next part of the celebration. At that service Albert Breen gave a presentation about the Sunday School, Betty Noble gave a talk on the Church History<sup>4</sup>, Dr. Theodore Breck gave a talk titled "Founding Of A Town", and Dr. W. W. Dieterich--the District Superintendent, presented "Words Of Encouragement." Mayor B. W. Harris spoke on "The Church and the Community"; he said that the Methodist Church in Brecksville had always struggled but always managed to pull through difficult times, whereupon Rev. Nichols reminded him of the hymn just sung, "The Church's One Foundation is Jesus Christ Our Lord." Dr. Dieterich closed by telling how the church had touched the lives of its boys and girls, and that its best investment in the future was in its young people. During his remarks, Dr. Dieterich quoted from the "Grapevine Swing" and later was surprised to learn that a Brecksville girl, Fanny Snow Knowlton--who was a member of the church choir for many years--had set those verses to music. In the evening the church assembled again for the

final worship service, and former pastor Rev. W. G. Walters preached the sermon.

Around the time of the centennial celebration, a small kitchen was built at the back of the church. It had two kerosene stoves and a sink without running water. Although the furnishings were sparse, the parishioners were able to host successful social gatherings. For dinners, tables were set up in the Sunday School room and, at one famous dinner, Mrs. Nichols prepared a chicken casserole with so much stuffing that some people said she could feed 20 people with one chicken!

In September 1933, Rev. Arthur Maly began his ministry at Brecksville and at Elsmere-Lee in Cleveland. The total salary for this charge was \$1,100.00, of which neither church could afford to pay their full part during the previous year. During this grim year there was only one church activity—a Sunday morning worship service which was attended by about seven or eight people—and there wasn't any Sunday School, choir, or youth activities. In fact, the church building did not even have running water. When a baptism was performed, water had to be secured next door at the Fire Department.

Because of these increasingly desperate conditions, Dr. Dieterich suggested to Rev. Maly that the church might have to close. Maly, however, was not willing to give up; he said later, "I didn't commit my life to God in order to bury my first church." He set to work with the help of George R. Klein and others to revitalize the little church on the Square.

Reverend Maly's desire to rejuvenate the church caused him to visit avidly in the community seeking new members of his struggling congregation. According to one story, he followed moving vans to their destinations to invite the new residents to church. One particular new couple was considering joining the Congregational Church because they assumed that from the large amount of cars parked in front of the church, it had a larger, healthier congregation. Rev.

Maly replied, "You are right, but, if you want to see a church grow, come to our church to help us!"—which indeed inspired them to come. The very next Sunday, Rev. Maly asked the Methodist congregation to bring additional cars—if they owned them—and park them out front.

Whether or not parking extra cars in the parking lot helped to attract new members, in the autumn of 1934 the condition of the church was improving as the trustees found enough money to hire Dorothy Fuller to be the Choir Director. Documents show that the following organizations were increasingly active—the Chippewa Girls, Young Peoples' Class, Ladies Aid Society, the Choir and the Sunday School—the church was becoming revitalized. Elsie Maly was doing her part in the revitalization efforts by starting a Sunday School for ten- to twelve-year-olds and urging other people to participate. As Sunday School classes, a youth group and the choir were growing, prospects for the future of the church were improving greatly. As evidence of the effectiveness of these programs, several young people attended the Lakeside Institute religious studies three years later. Perhaps most exciting was the fact that church attendance on Sundays had increased to about 60 by March 1935.

### **The Church Was Full!**

On Easter Sunday, 1935, Mrs. William Noble, a member since her childhood, was shocked to see that the church was full. Her dream of 20 years before was finally realized. With God's blessings, with parishioners pooling their efforts, with leaders serving and with much prayer, the church continued to grow; and, as it began to come back to life, George R. Klein quietly took Rev. Maly aside and told him not to worry about his salary. Klein wanted to be church treasurer so that he could see that all bills were met without



anyone knowing he was contributing his own personal funds to make up the deficit. A quiet man who never wanted public thanks, he was a tremendous supporter and encourager of all church affairs, and he used his money to cultivate these activities. He said that he had prayed for years for the church in Brecksville to revive; that he wanted it to succeed.

This positive turn of events in Brecksville came at a time when the conflicts between the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church South were beginning to wane. The three branches jointly produced a new Methodist hymnal in 1935 which contained four orders for Sunday worship and a modest revision of Wesley's formal order for Morning Prayer. Essentially, the trend of the reforms was toward the direction of dignified order in both liturgy and music; the collaborative effort on the hymnal signaled the possible reunion of these three Methodist churches.

The year 1936 saw changes in leadership of the church. Although the Official Board of the Brecksville Methodist Church asked Rev. Maly to return the next year as their first full-time pastor, Dr. Dieterich—the District Superintendent—did not approve of pastors staying in their first church more than three years. He believed that ministers in their first church could fall into bad habits that they could better correct in another church. Thus, at the 1936 North-East Ohio Conference, Arthur Maly was appointed to the Ridgewood Methodist Church in Parma, and Rev. Robert Clemmons was appointed to Brecksville.

### **The late 1930s: Continued growth and revitalization<sup>5</sup>**

Because the church was growing, the Trustees began looking for ways to increase space in the church for the Sunday school classes. When a room was added to the

main church building during the 1909 remodeling project, it had a very high ceiling in keeping with the roof line of the sanctuary. In an effort to make more efficient use of that space, the Trustees devised a plan to divide the room into an upper and lower classroom. In addition, the church members realized that they could use the upper space for other church activities and enhanced its use possibilities by moving the old reed organ up there.

It also seems likely that about this time a basement was dug under the church so a coal furnace could be installed. The coal furnace provided much better heat than the wood-burning stoves, and the removal of the stoves made more room available in the church for the congregation.

In 1937 the Bishop appointed District Superintendent Dieterich's son, Robert, to Brecksville.<sup>6</sup> As a young pastor, Rev. Dieterich saw the little Methodist society grow despite the poor economic conditions brought on by the depression.<sup>7</sup> To contribute to this growing parish, George Klein bought a Hammond electric organ and donated it to the church anonymously. The new organ was dedicated on March 27, 1938, at the morning worship service, and the first recital was performed on it the following afternoon.<sup>8</sup> Klein's daughter-in-law, Betty, took lessons so she could play the new organ; and she became the first official organist after the church acquired the new instrument.<sup>9</sup>

The following year the church underwent another renovation. The old pews were replaced by new light oak pews, the floors were refinished and carpeted, stained glass windows were installed and a new choir and chancel were constructed. George Jackson, a member of the church and a woodworking teacher at Brecksville High School, designed and built the new chancel.<sup>10</sup>

George Klein continued to promote the growth of the church. Although he may have inspired many Brecksville families to join the church, records show that he specifically

encouraged Ralph Biggs—an employee at his company—to rent one of his houses in Brecksville and to join the congregation.<sup>11</sup> Klein also encouraged Stanley Hall—the caretaker and handyman for Klein’s Brecksville residence—and his family to join. Hall quickly became active in the church’s choir and soon secured the directorship of the choir.

In 1939 Robert Dieterich’s appointment at the Brecksville United Methodist Church ended, and Rev. John W. Bartrug was appointed. Also in 1939, by action of the General Conference, the name of the overall church was changed from the Methodist Episcopal Church to the Methodist Church, since the three branches of the Methodist Church—the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South—merged.

As the church entered the 1940s, the growth that began during the latter Depression years was sustained. This growth prompted the church leaders to look into constructing a new church building entirely—a project that would consume two decades of the church’s history.

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<sup>1</sup> Book of Discipline from the 1908 General Conference of the ME Church

<sup>2</sup> Rev. F. E. Kline played two violin solos. Philura Noble and Mable Gasser were also soloists, and C. C. Code was the song leader and organist.

<sup>3</sup> The members were Harriett Nichols, Edna Pheil, Carroll Bourne, Maggy Reed, and Mrs. Noble. Incidentally, William and Sarah May Noble had three daughters—Eudora, Betty, and Philura. Eudora played the piano and Betty and Philura sang.

<sup>4</sup> Betty Noble’s history talk had been prepared by her mother, Mrs. W. U. Noble. In it she spoke of the Lemuel Bourne and Lafayette Wyatt families, charter members of the church whose families were represented at the celebration. It was Ezra Wyatt, father of Lafayett, who built, owned and operated the old grist mill in Brecksville. Later Lafayett built the fires in the old stoves at the church. His daughters, Mrs. Cora Akers and Mrs. Alice Barnes were present along with Carroll Bourne, grandson of Lemuel. Mrs. Ann H. Turney, 88, was also present and could recall happenings back to 1854, when her parents came to Brecksville

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and joined the Methodist Society. She told of her brother, Joe Avann, who was advised by Pastor John W. Thomson to go to Berea to become a minister.

<sup>5</sup> That year the big beam was installed in the annex next door making two floors creating the Upper Room. The Civilian Conservation Corps helped install the heavy steel beam. Good solid oak chairs were purchased for the Upper Room. A number of these chairs were still in use many years later in the conference room of the new building. The Wedding Ring Class moved upstairs onto the lush carpets and into the heavy oak chairs, while the children played below in the kindergarten, primary division. In addition, much of the following information in this section is from a letter Rev. Dieterich wrote to the church in 1998 with some of his memories of Brecksville.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. Dieterich was born August 8, 1912, at Courtland, Ohio. He was graduated from Ohio Wesleyan with the bachelor degree and went on to Drew Seminary and Boston University School of Theology. He was received on trial in the North-East Ohio Conference in 1935 and into full connection in 1937. Although he served a church while a student, his first charge in the Northeast Ohio Conference was at Brecksville. (Rev. Dieterich was interviewed on August 8, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> Rev. Dieterich was the first pastor in Brecksville to wear the Methodist Preacher's uniform of a Prince Albert gray swallowtail coat with striped trousers. This was in the days before Methodist pastors adopted the clergy robe.

<sup>8</sup> Reginald Frey Merrill, organist at St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Cleveland played a dedicatory recital at 4 o'clock followed by a tea served by the ladies of the congregation.

<sup>9</sup> When Betty would come to the church to practice the organ, she would bring her infant daughter, Johanna, in a large basket and place the basket on the seat of the first pew. Some days Betty Dieterich would also bring her infant son, Billy Jeff, also in a basket and place him near Johanna so Betty could watch both babies as she practiced.

When Mildred Heineman, the music teacher in the Brecksville schools, first started working at the church in 1942 as Choir Director, Betty Klein was organist. After Betty resigned as organist, Mildred became the organist, and Ruth Chase became Choir Director. In 1948, Marguerite Burnett became organist and Mildred Heineman once again became Choir Director.

<sup>10</sup> George Jackson and Elsie Maly were cousins. The Jacksons lived on Oakes Road and the family consisted of George, Marie and two girls, Doris and Margaret, along with two younger boys, George and Robert.

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<sup>11</sup> Ralph Biggs and Betty Biggs joined the church in 1938. Ralph was born in Youngwood, Pennsylvania, December 5, 1910 and spent much of his childhood in Wheeling, West Virginia. After coming to Cleveland he joined the George R. Klein News Company and worked there until his retirement February 29, 1976. For many years he was the Comptroller for the company.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Building a New Church: The Modernization of the Brecksville Methodist Church**

As the church entered the 1940s, it was about to embark on two decades of substantial growth, paralleling the rate of growth experienced by the Village, and later, the City of Brecksville. By the mid-1960s, after the recruiting efforts of Rev. Amendt and with the completion of the new church building, the Brecksville Methodist Church had grown and modernized quite rapidly. The social health of the congregation was sustained by the formation of groups such as the Couples Club and the Methodist Men.

#### **The First Parsonage and the Fellowship Hall**

Starting in the early 1940s, the Brecksville Methodist Church was seeking ways to expand to meet the growing needs of the congregation and the church personnel. On June 24, 1941, the Trustees<sup>1</sup> voted to buy one-sixth of an acre of property next to the old church building to be used as a parsonage. The property included the home rented by the Harley Bourne family which was located on the corner of Brecksville and Royalton Roads. The rest of the property extended outward—east from the old church building to Brecksvillæ Road, covering the northeast corner of Public Square, north about 180 feet from the church's original lot;

and west to a line between the town hall and the neighboring dwelling which included the land at the rear of the church building, fire station and town hall.

The purchase price of the land and the house together was \$8,500. The church had \$2,500 in savings, and Mrs. Schmidt, the property owner, donated \$500 toward the purchase price in memory of her mother. George Klein offered to donate \$1,000 toward the purchase, provided that \$1,500 was raised by the congregation, leaving an additional balance of \$3,000 to be raised. After discussing the matter, the Trustees decided that the recent trend of positive growth and increased stability was a strong enough indication that the congregation could raise \$3000, and thus they agreed to purchasing the property. This purchase was the start of a significant movement within the church to construct an entirely new church building. On October 28, 1941, the property transaction was complete.

On June 25, 1941, John Bartrug was re-appointed to Brecksville by the Northeast Ohio Conference. He and his wife moved into the newly acquired parsonage October 14, 1941. Although the extensive remodeling work was not complete, the Bartrugs vacated their Elm Street house for the new owners.

As was still typical in the life of Methodist ministers, the Bartrugs' residence in the new parsonage was short-lived since Rev. William Phillips was appointed to serve the Brecksville Methodist Church in 1942. Shortly after coming to Brecksville, Rev. Phillips worked with the Trustees on a plan to renovate a small barn behind the church that was part of the property bought for the parsonage. In August, 1942 the Trustees reviewed a sketch of the proposed church addition which included a meeting room, kitchen, toilet and a passageway between the church and the barn addition. They voted to continue with the project, and asked architect Harry Bremmer, who was also a member of the church, to provide drawings for the work. Because of the limits on

materials and labor imposed by the War Production Board, the Trustees emphasized the need for volunteer labor. Although there is no specific documentation, it is reasonable to assume that the plans were actually executed in large part by the volunteer labor of the men of the church.

The fact that this building project relied mostly on personnel from within the congregation attests to the continued growth of the church. In 1942 there were 168 members, and Rev. Phillips had hopes of further increasing that number. Other indications of the continued growth and vitality of the congregation included Virginia Klein's (Gerseny) initiation of a choir for high-school and college girls that met during the Summer months, and the Trustees' decision to sponsor Boy Scout Troop # 175. A music committee was formed to deal with musical issues in the church service, the church choirs and the organists.

Because of this continued growth, the additional space provided by the remodeled barn was welcomed with great enthusiasm. In September, 1943 the meeting room in the remodeled barn was named Fellowship Hall; this space became central to the important meetings and activities of the church. To commemorate the remodeling of the parsonage and church, a week of celebration was planned in late October.<sup>2</sup> Following a fund-raising campaign, there were sufficient monies to pay off all debts, and on November 7, 1943, Fellowship Hall was dedicated.

Over the next 17 years, Fellowship Hall was in constant use, and many organizations besides those affiliated with the church borrowed the space. The room was popular because the space itself was so flexible and there was easy access to a well-furnished kitchen, especially after the Ladies' Aid Society had modernized it by installing electric ranges. By 1949 the church was holding monthly fellowship dinners on Wednesday evenings.



## Reverend Paul Giffin and the Church Youth Program

Reverend Paul Giffin was appointed to Brecksville at the 1945 Northeast Ohio Conference; a strong program and steady growth in membership marked his pastorate. Rev. Giffin was particularly interested in working with the church youth, and they responded to his interest. Under the direction of Rev. Giffin, youth groups were established at both the Methodist and the Congregational Churches, and the youths from both groups met together each week. Besides establishing these groups, Rev. Giffin also cultivated youth participation in church activities by sponsoring a dance in Fellowship Hall and by taking 16 youths on a retreat to the Cleveland District Institute at Lakeside where he was a member of the faculty. Rev. Giffin and his wife particularly enjoyed spending time with the young people; in spite of his poor health, he participated in physical activities such as tennis and baseball.<sup>3</sup> When youth group members were not attending a meeting or on a retreat, they helped to remodel the inside walls of the Sanctuary which had fallen into disrepair after 110 years of service. Unfortunately, their efforts were unable to solve the problems that were serious enough to require professional help.

In part because of the mounting problems with the church building, at the June, 1947 Official Board meeting, Bill Klein discussed the need for a new church building. He further emphasized the importance of subscribing money for the building fund and suggested that a building fund committee be established to actively carry on a campaign for the raising of such funds.

## Plans for a New Church

During the mid to late 1940s, the expansion of Brecksville's population helped the congregation to grow from 230 to 350 members. This substantial growth presented the possibility that an entirely new church building could be constructed. In March 1950, Harry Bremmer, a church member and an architect, prepared preliminary sketches for the new church building that included Sunday School rooms, a gymnasium, a balcony, bowling alleys and a stage. In September a decision was made to go ahead with the new building, but the congregation thought it prudent to construct the building in stages. Recognizing that cultivating the church youth was the best way of ensuring the future of the church, the church officials signed an agreement with Leavitt & Spieth Architects to design an educational building with a chapel and kitchen, marking the first stage of the long-term project.

A year later the church building project was still alive as the community continued to grow. At the September 1951 Trustees meeting, George R. Klein<sup>4</sup> introduced the idea of buying 3.5 acres of land north and west of the church at a cost of \$1000 per acre, and the Trustees agreed that it would be a wise move. In October Mr. Klein purchased the property (plus an additional acre purchased by his son, Bill) in his own name and George and Bill presented the 4.5 acres of land to the church as a gift.

The church received another gift in March, 1952, this time from Mr. Harned, who donated \$50 with the intent of starting a memorial library for the church. The Trustees approved the idea, and the library was thus officially begun. In the same year, the church leaders began to look into constructing a new building for Sunday School classes.<sup>5</sup> One idea was to convert the space that was occupied by an old coal furnace into a classroom, but for some reason the Trustees were not keen on the idea. Rather, the Trustees

decided in October 1953 that an entirely new building was necessary, and they signed a contract for the project later that month.<sup>6</sup>

## **Groundbreaking for the Sunday School**

The congregation gathered in a field behind the parsonage on October 25, 1953, to hold a groundbreaking ceremony for the educational building. Shortly thereafter, the Roediger Construction Company started work on the new building that was situated on the side of a rather steep hill.<sup>7</sup>

In an ironic turn of events, while a new portion of the church was being constructed, there was a fire in the old church on the morning of January 29, 1954. Quick action by the police prevented major damage, and what damage occurred was covered by insurance. Meanwhile, work on the new educational building was progressing. A cornerstone-laying ceremony was held in February 1954 which began with a worship service. After the worship service, the congregation processed to the front of the building for the rest of the ceremony which included the presentation of the cornerstone.

After seven months of construction, the new educational building was officially opened in September 1954.<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Virginia Klein Gerseny wrote and directed a pageant portraying the history of the 140-year-old congregation which was performed soon after the opening ceremony. In addition, former District Superintendent Robert Dieterich sent a letter of congratulation expressing his great happiness over the wonderful progress made by the church. He related that, when he came to the Cleveland District, the church was at a very low ebb, but the appointment of an efficient young pastor, Arthur Maly, and

the coming of some new families changed the situation quickly.

## **The Mid- and Late-1950s: A Vibrant Time in the Life of the Church**

Dieterich was right to congratulate the progress made by the Brecksville Methodist Church, and that growth was perpetuated by Rev. Charles Amendt. Similar to Arthur Maly, the Rev. Amendt was also a very dynamic personality. He was very proactive in his efforts to help the church to grow. As new families moved into Brecksville and Broadview Heights, Rev. Amendt personally invited them to come to church. He was such a warm, friendly person that after a few Sundays, most families did indeed join. By January 1955 the church membership had increased to 637.<sup>9</sup>

In 1957 the average Sunday School attendance was 200, and church membership was reported as 782. Continued growth enabled more church groups to form: in April 1957, the Methodist Men, a group that helped to maintain and refurbish the church buildings and grounds, was first organized.

## **The Couples Club**

In April 1954 a proposal was submitted to the Church Board for the formation of a Young Couples Club.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of this organization was two-fold: primarily to promote education in church history, affairs and functions, and secondarily to promote fellowship among the young couples of the church through social functions and by performing a yearly service project for the church. One of the many projects that the Couples Club undertook was to

publish a newsletter every month in order to promote a greater feeling of unity among members of Brecksville Methodist Church. This publication, *The Methodist Monthly*, consisted of news and activities along with a letter from the pastor. It proved to be widely accepted and appreciated since it eliminated separate mailings by different groups and helped the scattered membership to become more in tune with the activities of the church, which in turn fostered a stronger sense of community among members.<sup>11</sup>

Probably what brought the most attention to the Couples Club, however, were the annual plays. The doldrums of winter quickly lifted when it came time for play casting and rehearsing. To avoid the cost of royalties, the first plays performed were written by Virginia Gerseny. Many members said that Virginia, who also directed all the productions, was the driving force that pulled the productions together, despite the fact that it occasionally seemed questionable as to whether a quality performance was going to happen. Many of the practices were fun times for the participants, but, during the final week and at performances, the members wanted the production to be the best possible. The following table indicates which plays were performed.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Play</u>	<u>Presented at</u>
1954	He Ain't Done Right by Nell	Old Town Hall
1955	Flapper Follies	Old Town Hall
1957	Cactus Kate	Old Town Hall
1958	Dixie Jam	Old Town Hall
1959	Only a Farmer's Daughter	Old Jr. High
1961	King and I	Old Jr. High
1962	Boy Friend	Fellowship Hall
1963	Where's Charley	Fellowship Hall
1963	'Lil Abner	Fellowship Hall
1964	Sound of Music	Fellowship Hall
1965	Impostor	Fellowship Hall

Following each play, after all the equipment was put away, there was a "strike party" where everyone relaxed and enjoyed food and fun. The profit from these plays was used to purchase stage equipment, contributed to the building fund, helped to finish the third floor and helped to fund other improvement projects including the Tower Bell Carillon. Several Christmas pageants and plays were presented as well.<sup>12</sup>

Among the many other social activities that the Couples Club organized were picnics, mystery bus trips, potluck suppers and dances. This group also formed the Round Robin Bridge Club that continued even after the Couples Club was dissolved.

The Club continued to be a vital force up until 1969, when Bill Phillips proposed to the Church Board that the functions and energy of the Couples Club be transferred to the Family Life and Fellowship Committee. This was done so that this committee could provide fellowship activities not only for couples, but also for entire families. This committee also produced plays under the name of Fellowship Players. Nevertheless, during its history as a distinct group, the Couples Club was a very active and a beneficial part of the church that brought lasting friendships and support to the congregation.

## **Back to Business: Focusing on the Next Building Project**

In October 1957 the church held a 125-year celebration of the construction of the original building which included a Smorgasbord Dinner, a Pioneer Party, Ye Olde Hit Parade, Movie Gems, Vaudeville Varieties, a Birthday Cake Celebration, three Sunday morning Worship Services and Sunday evening Vespers. The program also included a brief history of the church and letters from former clergy

couples Elsie and Arthur Maly, Essie and Paul Giffin, William and Kathleen Phillips, as well as Robert Clemmons. The celebration was a time for the congregation to reflect on the church's history, especially during the 1940s and 1950s when the church experienced a dramatic revitalization after its near-death during the Great Depression.

One month following the celebration, Dr. Amendt requested the purchase of 50 hymnals; church attendance was still growing. There were no funds for this purchase, so the Official Board members decided to contribute \$2.50 each to fund the purchase. More significantly, the Trustees began over the course of the following year to take action on completing the church building project. In September, 1958 Otto Spieth presented a letter detailing the cost of completing the building at \$366,000. The issue of where the church services could be held during the next phase of construction was resolved in December 1958 when the Brecksville Town Council President, Robert Kubicek, assured them that they could use the town hall for services during construction.

Finally, it was time for the congregation to discuss the building proposal as a whole, and on February 22, 1959, a congregational meeting was held to discuss this massive issue. Although there was much discussion and sharing of information among the 930 members of the congregation who attended the meeting, no action was taken.

While there was no action taken on the building project, official business kept moving in the direction of growth. On October 19, the Official Board reported that the church was officially incorporated due mainly to the efforts of congregation member Arne Jarvela, an attorney who worked as a court reporter.

## A Classic Official Board Meeting

The Brecksville Methodist Church is fortunate to have detailed records of its Official Board Meetings which were recorded at this time by Mr. Jarvela. The following is an excerpt from the Official Board Meeting of November 16, 1959, which aptly captures the dynamics of how these meetings flowed during this important time in the church's history:

"The main item of business for the evening, the discussion of our building problems, was launched quietly enough in the dulcet tones of our Pastor, who informed the Board of the meeting of the Board of Trustees on the 13th of November, at which time the Trustees expressed their opinion that \$100,000 in cash represented the minimum requirement for commencing the so-called "Plan No. 2" of our building schedule. The tempo of the discussion soon became a crescendo, assuming fortissimo proportions. Congregational impatience caused by delay in starting the new building, and general dissatisfaction with the program leadership was voiced by the "Let's-do-it-nows", whose cause was ably and vociferously championed by Messrs. Amon, Nenadal, Schaal, Haynes and others. Prudence and caution were exhorted by the "\$100,000-Conservatives," whose views were effectively presented by the mild-spoken, statistic-laden Mr. Biggs, the not-so-mild-spoken Mrs. Phillips, and others. The presentations ran the gamut all the way from the age-old Methodist prerogative of personal testimonial to the equally ancient fear-invoking threat of secession. But, like all good Methodist Revivals, the discussion ended on a note of harmony and peace, with nobody mad



at nobody, culminating in a motion by Andy Nenadal, seconded by Mrs. Alice McCloskey: That the Official Board request the Board of Trustees to discard their decision reached at the November 13th meeting, and look into the possibility of a more favorable method of financing the future church building, with the idea in mind to get construction of the building started as soon as possible. The motion was put to vote and passed."

## **The Construction of Fellowship Hall**

On June 19, 1960, a Quarterly Conference meeting authorized the start of construction of the Fellowship Hall addition to the building. The Trustees then formed a new building committee to supervise this project, and members of this committee were George R. Klein, Harry Bremmer, Neil Frerick, Elwood Meyers and Leota Hoertz.<sup>13</sup> At their July meeting, the Trustees decided to salvage the organ, lectern, bell, and pews from the old church, perhaps to keep the sense of history alive, or perhaps to save money. Whatever the reason, on a weekend late in July, a group of volunteers began removing items from the old church and the old Fellowship Hall. One of the volunteers, Bill Cozby, recalls his experience:<sup>14</sup>

"The stained glass windows were taken out and hauled to George Klein's barn for storage. What happened to them after that I do not know.

"The Fellowship Hall had a fireplace. The crew removed the mantel and stone facing piece by piece. We looked at the pile of rock and somebody said, 'What shall we do with this?' After a dead silence I offered a sum. (I believe it was 25 dollars.)

They all agreed. Then they hauled it to our place and put it in the basement. . . . ”

In August, the Building Committee asked the architect to design the footers and walls on the janitor's storage room to support a structure above the storage room. They also asked for a ventilating system for Fellowship Hall, and architect Otto Spieth reported that he had sent out bids to six contractors. Meanwhile, the final services in the old building were held on August 28, 1960; it was a day of reflection on the past and anticipation for the future. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Spieth recommended that the bid for \$94,290 be accepted from the H. E. Klefman Company; the motion was approved.

The company began by razing the old church building, parsonage and the old Fellowship Hall to build the new Fellowship Hall, as the second stage of the whole church building plan. During this time, church services were held in the Old Town Hall next door.<sup>15</sup> In the end, the project was completed within fiscal boundaries, but at the January, 1961 meeting, the Trustees reported that an additional \$4500 would be required to build a gas house and to purchase stage curtains. In February the Official Board authorized the purchase of 300 chairs, 15 tables, 2 chair racks, 1 table rack and a dividing curtain to furnish the new Fellowship Hall.

By May 1961, the Hall was ready for use; the first Sunday worship service took place on May 21<sup>st</sup>, and in June the Hall was consecrated. Membership had increased to 1050.

### **The Formation of the Sanctuary Building Committee, and the Passing of Dr. Amendt**

In September, a new building committee was formed to build the last phase of the church including the sanctuary,

parlor, classrooms and tower. The new committee consisted of George Morris, Chairman; George R. Klein; Bill Benninghoff; Leota Hoertz; and Bill Long.

Committee member Bill Benninghoff and his wife Aileen salvaged the window that had been above the front door of the old church. They had the window refinished and presented it to the church. Presently, it is mounted above the double doors in the main hallway leading to Amendt Chapel. It provides both a physical and symbolic link to the past, since the window and the bell are the only items from the old church to be incorporated into the new building.

On November 12, 1962, Dr. Charles Amendt died suddenly and unexpectedly after a brief stay in the hospital. He had been admitted to the hospital ten days earlier with what had been termed "fatigue" and "heart strain" and was thought to be recovering. Members of the church as well as his family, friends, neighbors and associates all over the world were stunned to hear of his death. Funeral services were held Thursday, November 15 in Fellowship Hall with Dr. Robert H. Courtney, Cleveland District Superintendent, conducting the service. Interment was in Highland Drive Cemetery in Brecksville.

## **William Kenneth Hogg Arrives and the Construction Planning Continues**

Dr. Amendt's successor, Rev. William K. Hogg, his wife Evangeline and their children arrived in Brecksville on January 18, 1963, one of the coldest days of the century when the temperature dropped to 18 degrees below zero. Despite the weather, Dr. Hogg described the Brecksville Methodists as "a warm-hearted people."<sup>16</sup>

Rev. Hogg came at a critical time in the life of the Brecksville Methodist Church: the Sunday School building had been completed in 1954; Fellowship Hall had been

completed in 1961; and the church membership was rapidly growing. Just a few months before Dr. Amendt's death, the church had committed to finishing the building including the sanctuary, parlor and additional classrooms.

After Dr. Amendt's death, the Couples Club commissioned a portrait of him to be mounted over the fireplace in the parlor (presently, the portrait hangs in Amendt Chapel). Although the gift paid tribute to Dr. Amendt's important career, Rev. Hogg became concerned that there was no centralized, adjudicating authority that decided how gifts should be accepted and placed. To handle this problem fairly, he suggested forming a Gifts & Memorials Committee. The committee would accept gifts and memorials and establish criteria for their placement.

The Building Committee welcomed Rev. Hogg as an adviser and partner in the plan to complete the church building. Otto Spieth, the architect for the two previous building projects, brought in the preliminary plans and worked closely with Rev. Hogg and the committee in developing the working drawings.

In reviewing the original plan, the new building committee suggested several changes to the architect. The original plans called for a basement level, with the existing kitchen and Fellowship Hall, but a storeroom at the west end of the basement was added at the time Fellowship Hall was being built. The first floor would contain the Sanctuary, Narthex and Parlor,<sup>17</sup> but with the storeroom on the basement level, the plan was changed to include a crib room and a toddler's room above the storeroom.

The second floor was to include four classrooms above the parlor and narthex with a choir room above the front lobby in the base of the tower. A room for the choir was added at the west end over the new storeroom, while the two classrooms over the narthex were replaced by a balcony for the sanctuary, and two bathrooms were put in

the base of the tower. Two small offices or storerooms were also included in the revised plan.

With the Building Committee on a roll, they next added an entire extra floor! The third floor consisted of five class rooms, a small storage room and the Bourne Library in the third floor tower base. Because of the high sanctuary ceiling and roof, this third floor addition fit under the same basic roofline as the sanctuary.

The committee invited the choir director, Eleanor Anderson, to review the sanctuary and chancel plan. Mrs. Anderson asked if we could change the chancel to avoid a divided choir. Mr. Spieth took her suggestion under advisement and returned with a plan for the choir to be located behind a curved screen at the rear of the chancel with the communion table located just in front of the screen. He further suggested that by lighting either the front of the screen or the area behind the screen, the choir would be either hidden or visible.

By using wood and plaster moldings consistent with the rest of the room, Mr. Spieth blended the tall screen into the overall architecture. Because of its prominent position, he also suggested that the committee commission an artist to design a mural to be placed on the screen. After several field trips to view various works, the committee contracted with Willard Combes to design and install the work of art.

As the Building Committee continued to work with the architect, new problems presented themselves. The building design had been started in 1952 when the membership was 490, by 1963 the membership had grown to 1190! There were concerns that the congregation might outgrow the new church much sooner than was originally anticipated. However, the foundation for the new Sanctuary was fixed in the walls of Fellowship Hall so there was no practical way to change the exterior walls of the building. The Committee and architect had already increased the volume of the building by adding a west wing above the store room and by

adding another floor above the parlor and narthex. After much discussion, the committee recommended that the sanctuary be well ventilated and not air-conditioned; two large exhaust fans were to be installed in the attic.<sup>18</sup>

Besides the physical size of the church, the Sanctuary seating space also presented a problem since the church leaders had not anticipated such a rapid rate of growth in the congregation. One partial solution was to increase the seating space by adding a balcony. In addition, by designing the Narthex with large windows on both sides, the parlor could be used as an overflow space for Christmas and Easter crowds. With a sound system and windows, people in the parlor could see and hear the service. Finally, Mr. Spieth also worked out a plan to maximize the seating on the main floor of the sanctuary by making the side aisles fairly narrow and moving the first pew a little closer to the chancel. At the time these changes were made, the committee realized the room would be tight, but felt they had no other choice.

Plans seemed complete except that there was some concern about the cost of including a pipe organ.<sup>19</sup> As a member of the Building Committee, Bill Long made an economic study showing that the construction project was feasible. In fact, the cost of the sanctuary furnishings including the chancel screen, pews, chancel furniture and pipe organ could be included in the total budget. To pay for the project the church property would again need to be mortgaged.

After a presentation by the Building Committee, the Quarterly Conference voted on August 11, 1963, to continue with the last phase of the church building including a pipe organ<sup>20</sup>, pews, furnishings and the chancel screen. A letter from the Cleveland Trust Company was read indicating approval of a \$250,000 mortgage at 5 1/2% interest for ten years with payments of \$2500 per month. On August 23, 1963, Bill Benninghoff and Marie Phillips signed a contract

with Martini Construction Company to complete the church building at a cost of \$288,890 in 175 working days.

## **Constructing the New Church at Last**

It was an exciting time as Martini started work on the new building. Because all the new construction would be on top of the existing Fellowship Hall, Kitchen and Storeroom, a tile-breaking ceremony was held rather than a groundbreaking. Rev. Hogg, wearing his robe and a hard hat, used a brick hammer to break the first tile on the coping that had been used to protect the top of the walls around Fellowship Hall.

Martini got off to a good start in the Fall and continued to work through the winter on the new building.<sup>21</sup> As the new building started to take shape, the congregation continued to grow. By Conference time in 1964, the membership had increased to 1230. At the Official Board meeting of March 17, 1964, Bill Long moved and Ward Thiel seconded a motion directing the Pastoral Relations Committee to begin the process to secure an associate pastor. The church was getting too large for one pastor.

In the meantime, Pastor Hogg was working to organize the church. In the past almost all business had been carried out by the Official Board, Sunday School, and Trustees; however, Rev. Hogg encouraged the membership to organize the various commissions and committees in order to move toward a more focused church organization.

In the spirit of Rev. Hogg's reforms, a resolution of the Fourth Quarterly Conference created a Gifts & Memorials Committee on May 18, 1964. The committee was to be elected consisting of nine members chosen in the following manner: three from the Board of Trustees, three from the Board of Stewards and three from the Women's Society of Christian Service. The functions of the committee consisted

of formulating a plan for the giving and receiving of memorials and gifts from those members and friends who desire to give a memorial, for either a living or deceased relative or friend.<sup>22</sup> The original committee consisted of Elwood Meyers, Norman Hoertz, Sue Horne, Arne Jarvela, Bill Long and Alice McCloskey.

The construction of the new church was finally completed in October 1964. All day and into the evening of October 31, members of the Building Committee and friends worked to clean and prepare the church for its consecration.<sup>23</sup> Because the sanctuary furniture had not yet been delivered, folding chairs were set up for the congregation.

The Chancel Screen, however, was completed and in place. It was created and executed by Willard Combes as a mural in metal and stained glass. The plan for the mural was worked out with the architect, Otto Spieth, the Building Committee, and Pastor Bill Hogg. It is the only one of its kind.

The screen is inspirational and aesthetically adds to the beauty of the sanctuary. The figures and symbols are meant to be a constant preaching of the supremacy of Christ and a call to discipleship. It is meant to unfold in meaning to those who come to worship through the years.<sup>24</sup>

With the completion of this project, the church was completely modernized and capable of accommodating the activities of the increasingly substantial and vital congregation. Additionally it provided space for more service-oriented and faith-oriented activities in which the Brecksville Methodist Church would become involved over the next four decades.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Charles Teter, chairman, George R. Klein, Rev. John W. Bartrug, Walter Coleman, Henry Cook, George Jackson, and Charles Rose, were members.

<sup>2</sup> Sunday, October 31, was an Open House Party for the community and at 7:10 P.M. Dorothy Crandell of WTAM played the Hammond organ.



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After the concert, everyone was invited to see both the church with its new Fellowship Hall and the new parsonage. On Thursday all who contributed in any way to the building and renovation program were invited to a Fellowship Dinner. On Sunday at the 10:30 A.M. Morning Worship Rev. Phillips preached on the theme "To Serve the Present Age", the choir sang special music and new members were received. The Presentation and Dedication Service was at 8:00 pm where Dr. Earl R. Brown, District Superintendent, was the preacher.

<sup>3</sup> According to Essie Giffin, interviewed on June 26, 1998

<sup>4</sup> At the 1951 North-east Ohio Annual Conference, George R. Klein was elected to be a delegate to the 1952 General Conference.

<sup>5</sup> In 1952, The Brecksville Methodist church reported a membership of 490.

<sup>6</sup> Evan B. Hamilton, Vice-President, Roediger Construction Company and Neal Frerick, Chairman of the Trustees, signed a construction contract for the new educational building on October 15, 1953. The contract cost was \$156,480.

<sup>7</sup> The design included a large kitchen on the lowest level west of the main stairway. Outside the kitchen at the foot of the stairs was a room that formed the base of the tower. This room was first used as the toddler's room. To the east were several steps leading up to a corridor with rooms on both sides. The large room on the north side was to serve for seven years as a dining room but also could be divided into three classrooms. On the south side of the corridor would be found restrooms and a large L-shaped room that could be divided into two classrooms. This lowest floor was designed to be at the parking lot grade level. To provide more natural light and ventilation a steep slope was graded from the front lawn down to the windows on the South side of this floor. The next floor was designed to be at the front yard grade level. It included another long room on the north side that could be divided into three classrooms. On the south side of the corridor were an entryway, the office complex, restrooms and the chapel. The entry was designed to come through the base of the future tower. This entry was also connected to the old building with a corridor leading up to old Fellowship Hall. The third floor was left unfinished.

<sup>8</sup> At the Consecration Service, Bishop Hazen G. Werner delivered the sermon which was entitled, "The Church of the Present." Participating in the service were the Rev. Clarence H. LaRue, District Superintendent, and Pastor Charles C. Amendt. Other participants included Evan Hamilton, Otto Spieth, George R. Klein, and Neil Frerick. The choir under the direction of Mrs. Melvin Gerseny sang Shaw's "With a Voice of Singing." Mrs. Richard Clark was the organist.

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<sup>9</sup> Note: At the November 21, 1955, Official Board Meeting, a motion was made that Mrs. Ralph Biggs, Church Secretary, be required to keep operating budget records up to date to relieve George Exoo of this clerical work. This appears to be the first indication of the name of the first secretary.

<sup>10</sup> The Steering Committee consisted then of Mr. & Mrs. Richard Clark, Mr. & Mrs. Bill Phillips, Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Gerseny, and Mr. & Mrs. Harry Echelberger.

<sup>11</sup> This project was ably done under the direction of A. C. Scudiere as editor and Ruth Schroeder as secretary who was then also secretary of the church.

<sup>12</sup> The Couples Club arranged for Jack Montieth, who was a member then, to paint and donate a portrait of Dr. Amendt. Today the portrait still hangs in the Amendt Chapel.

<sup>13</sup> George Klein assembled the first meeting July 13 and at that meeting three proposals were made. These were to 1. rough in for an elevator, 2. provide for a folding door in Fellowship Hall, and 3. provide for janitor's storage.

<sup>14</sup> In a letter dated January 4, 1999

<sup>15</sup> The weekly rental was \$3.

<sup>16</sup> Dr. Hogg was interviewed on January 30, 1998.

<sup>17</sup> At this time, many members remembered the warm friendly Fellowship Hall in the old building. It had a fireplace that was frequently used during evening meetings. The consensus was to include a fireplace in the new Parlor since it would be a more comparable room than the new and much larger Fellowship Hall.

<sup>18</sup> Mr. Spieth recommended eight large chandeliers as the primary illumination for the sanctuary with additional lighting from six large floodlights in the attic. A dimmer would control the floodlights. Beyond this, lighting would be provided on the face of the screen and two spotlights to light the pulpit and lectern. Several floodlights were mounted behind the top of the screen to illuminate the choir. Dimmers also controlled the screen lights and choir lights.

Note: After using the sanctuary for a time, a change was made to use the dimmer to control the chandeliers rather than the floods. (This change was made in March, 1974.) In more recent years it became almost impossible to buy lamps for the large floods so they were removed. Spotlights were installed in two of the old flood openings in the ceiling to illuminate the communion table, and spotlights were installed in two of the old flood openings to illuminate the chancel cross. A further change was made in 1996 when higher wattage lamps were installed in the chandeliers.

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<sup>19</sup> During one of the Building Committee meetings Rev. Hogg brought up the subject of an organ for the new sanctuary. He suggested that we hire a consultant to work with Mr. Spieth to be certain that it would be possible at some future date to install a pipe organ since installations at later dates that require alterations in the original architecture tend to be more expensive.

Betty Clark, one of the church organists, suggested Ed Northrup as our Organ Consultant. After interviewing Mr. Northrup and examining his experience, the committee, during March 1963, signed a contract with him. The Building Committee and Otto Spieth met with Ed Northrup several times. The results of these meetings were several building design changes. Mr. Northrup assured the committee that any organ builder, except for Austin Organs, would be able to install a pipe organ. (Austin wind chests are too high to fit the available space.) The design changes included a blower room in the south end of the Sacristy, a twelve inch metal pipe from the blower room to the east organ loft and a louvered opening through the wall between the choir and Sacristy. Mr. Northrup also suggested a sloping ceiling in the balcony for better sound distribution.

On December 23, 1963, George Morris, chairman of the Building Committee, appointed an Organ Study Committee with the objectives of recommending if a permanent sanctuary organ should be purchased in 1964; what type of organ should be installed in the new sanctuary; and a specific organ builder including specifications and cost. The committee members were Bill Long, Chairman, Bill Benninghoff, Eleanor Anderson and Pastor Bill Hogg.

<sup>20</sup> An organ committee was formed to investigate a temporary instrument for use during the period before the delivery of a permanent organ. The committee listened to both Hammond electric and Allen electronic organs. An Allen electronic organ was moved into Fellowship Hall to be used during a Sunday service for a trial. Allen produced electronic instruments primarily designed to imitate pipe organs for use in churches. Hammond organs at this time had more elaborate consoles but sounded little different from those built in the 1930s. They were primarily used for popular music. After the committee listened to each instrument, they selected a Hammond. This turn of events horrified Chairman Bill Long, but on September 22, 1963, the committee did recommend the purchase of a D152 Hammond Organ. The purchase was approved by the Official Board. The Hammond organ was installed temporarily in Fellowship Hall to replace the old Hammond that had been bought in 1938.

<sup>21</sup> As construction progressed, the Building Committee studied furnishings for the new Sanctuary and on February 17, 1964, they

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recommended the purchase of Endicott pews and chancel furniture. Endicott was the lowest and best bid. The Committee also studied the installation of the old bell in the new bell tower. Three types of installation were considered. The first was to mount the bell as originally intended and extend a rope down through two floors to a place where it could be rung by pulling the rope. This would mean the bell ringer would have to go to the top floor of the building and climb the spiral staircase to the tower room. The second type of installation considered was to buy equipment so that the bell could be operated remotely by an electric motor that would swing the bell. The cost of this plan would be \$1880. The third method would be to mount the bell in a stationary position and install an electric hammer to ring the bell. (This is like the United Church of Christ Bell) The cost of this installation would be \$891. After much deliberation, the Building Committee recommended Plan Number One—a long rope.

<sup>22</sup> Two oak trees were presented to the church by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Kemble in memory of Mrs. Blanche Kemble. These trees planted in front of the chapel are the first living memorials for the church. Note: While the trees were small when planted in the Spring of 1964, they matured into large dignified trees by 1998.

<sup>23</sup> The most difficult job was to hang the cross. The cross had been designed for the sanctuary by Mr. Spieth. It is actually three crosses consisting of a wooden cross with a marble cross inlaid in the wood and a smaller marble cross in front of the larger marble cross. Two small holes were very carefully drilled through the plaster ceiling and two very thin steel cables lowered through the holes. The cables were fastened to the cross, and it was gently hoisted into position where the cables were anchored to structural steel in the attic.

<sup>24</sup> Four Apostles, or Disciples, were selected to be portrayed in figured metal representing the varied ministries of the Apostolic company. Their symbols are also seen in colored glass elsewhere on the screen.

The central figure traced upon the chancel screen is that of Jesus Christ, the True and Living Vine, who gives Life to every branch that shares His Life. Throughout the screen are the symbols of those who have born fruit because of their sharing of Life from the Christ.

To Christ's immediate right, holding the Cup, is John, the beloved disciple. The Cup indicates Jesus' question to James and John when they asked for positions of favor in the Kingdom, "Are you able to drink the cup of which I shall drink?" John was faithful to the end and was found at the foot of the Cross. He took Mary the mother of Jesus and provided for her after the crucifixion.

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The lined figure to the far right of Christ is that of Simon Peter. The Key symbolizes the "keys to the Kingdom" which Christ entrusted to Simon, called Peter, after his great confession of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Peter, with Paul, were the two prominent apostles in the New Testament Church.

On the left of Christ, holding the Loaf, is Philip. The loaf is reminiscent of Philip's part in the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Philip also was one who brought Nathaniel to Jesus with the words, "Come and see!". Philip was chosen as an average disciple, not fully perceiving, but faithful.

The apostle Paul is to the far left of Christ and holds the scroll that represents his several letters to the Churches. There is a tradition that contends that Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was blindness. In the portrayal by the artist his eyes are closed as one who has a sight handicap. Paul included himself among the apostles (1 Cor. 15:9) and was named by Luke, the writer of Acts, as one of the apostles.

Along with the five large figures, the vine includes symbols executed in stained glass representing the twelve original disciples plus Matthias who was elected to take Judas' place after Judas had taken his life. Two additional symbols represent Christ and Paul.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **The Growth of Fellowship Programs**

#### **Consecration of the Sanctuary**

The new Sanctuary was consecrated on November 1, 1964. Dr. Robert H. Courtney, District Superintendent, was the preacher at the 10:30 Sunday morning worship service. At 4:30 P.M. Bishop Francis E. Kearns preached and officiated in the Acts of Consecration. A reception, tea and tour of the building completed the festivities. After 12 years the Brecksville Methodist Church Building was completed!

As members of the Sanctuary Building Committee entered the completed sanctuary, their eyes were drawn to the upper part of the room. The marvelous vaulted ceiling and ornamental plasterworks were an amazing sight! Despite the fact they had struggled with floor space in the various rooms, door locations, stairways, they never dreamed how beautiful the sanctuary would be.<sup>1</sup>

Three months later, on February 28, 1965, Amendt Chapel was dedicated. The chapel was built as part of the first phase of the building program that was completed in 1954. The proposal to dedicate it to the memory of Dr. Amendt came from the youth of the church, who presented the plaque that is currently mounted outside the chapel door.

#### **The Organ**

After a full year of study, the Organ Committee prepared a report to the Trustees in December 1964.

During this year the committee consulted with the head of the Organ Department of Baldwin-Wallace College; interviewed four of the ten leading organ builders; watched a movie on organ building; visited an organ factory; and visited five churches in five cities to hear and see organs. After that year of research, the committee formulated a number of important conclusions.

First, they recommended that the organ be installed for the Christmas Season of 1966. There were reasons for such careful planning: the organ played an important and prominent role in the worship service, and it also had a very long life expectancy, so waiting an extra two years for the right instrument appeared worthwhile. Furthermore, the building committee selected Casavant, the second-largest organ manufacturer in the world, who had such a large backlog of orders that it could not start on the instrument until early 1966.<sup>2</sup>

After examining the specifications of the different organ models,<sup>3</sup> the committee decided on a two-manual church organ of conventional design, since the sanctuary did not require, nor did the budget permit, a large instrument. The organ was designed primarily for the worship service with the capability of playing both the classic and romantic literature. Because of its modest size, highly specialized voices were omitted in favor of a balanced ensemble. The committee believed that since the organ would be based on American classic contemporary specifications, it would still sound fresh, clear and contemporary 40 years from the time it was installed.<sup>4</sup>

The Trustees accepted the report and directed the Chairman of the Board to sign the contract for the new Casavant pipe organ at a cost of approximately \$30,000, to be installed by Christmas 1966.<sup>5</sup>

## More Church Staff Added

The church building was a wonderful asset to the church, but the growing congregation required additional staff. By 1965 membership had grown to 1289. Although Rev. Hogg had been successful in organizing and getting the committees and commissions to function in the operation of the church, the workload was too much for one pastor. To help to diffuse the workload, a Business Manager and an Associate Pastor were added to the church staff.

At the May 1965 Quarterly Conference, George Exoo was appointed Church Business Manager. In this position, George relieved Pastor Hogg of many routine duties and much administrative detail; he acted as purchasing agent, office supervisor and paymaster.

William Hodder was recommended to be the first associate pastor at Brecksville. After joining the staff in July, Rev. Hodder assisted Rev. Hogg with visitation and the new member classes. In September, 1965 he reported that 11 new members had joined the church during the month, and the membership was now 1302. However, in June Rev. Hogg told the Official Board that Mr. Hodder had not finished his seminary training as planned and would not be returning to the church. Mr. Hodder planned to pursue graduate studies in history at Kent State with a possible change in vocation to teaching. To replace Mr. Hodder, Donald Shank was appointed to Brecksville as the associate pastor in July, 1966.<sup>6</sup>

The additional administrative help was needed as the church became involved in more projects. In 1968 the church had raised over \$1000 to contribute to Project HOPE (Housing Our People Economically), an organization designed to help to improve the condition of impoverished households. Also in 1968, the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church voted to merge into a new church called the United Methodist Church. To comply



with this merger, the Brecksville Methodist Church changed its name to the Brecksville United Methodist Church, and a great deal of administrative reorganization was required after the merger.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to these projects, the Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF) was becoming more prominent as a church activity. The Junior High MYF reorganized in the Fall of 1968, changing to a Sunday evening meeting rather than a Sunday morning meeting and incorporating social activities like hay rides, holding flea markets and getaway weekends at Camp Klein. The Camp Klein weekends were particularly fun and inspirational: the program involved movies, popcorn, scripture reading, prayer, volleyball, creek hikes and baseball on the lawn. As a whole, these changes revitalized the group; attendance at the weekly meetings and other special activities increased greatly.

The last major development that indicated the need for additional administrative help was the founding of the Family Life and Fellowship Committee which evolved out of the Couples Club.<sup>8</sup> The Committee's first event was the "Hanging of the Greens" on December 1, 1968, a type of decoration party with a potluck supper, a performance by the Children's Choir and a 15-minute devotional slideshow for Advent.

## **The Church Connects with More Organizations**

A year later, in December, 1969, the Administrative Board voted to accept the Council on Ministries' proposal that Fellowship Hall be used for a Youth Coffee House on Saturday evenings from 8:00 P.M. to midnight, after a long and bitter debate. The Coffee House had started as a YMCA project, but the youths did not have a large enough space for their activities, so their leaders asked the church if they could use its space. One of the main items of concern for

church officials was the proposal to permit smoking at the Coffee House that would include 14 year olds. Although popular at first, the Coffee House operated for less than a year.

Later, in September 1970, members of the Brecksville-Broadview Heights Interfaith Action Council were discussing what was to become an important organization in the life of the community—FISH.

The FISH movement began in Old Headington, England. In this little village, a person who needed help would put a card, containing a simple drawing of a fish, in the window of his house. This was a signal to any passers-by that a neighbor was in some sort of distress. The fish symbol was first used by the early Christians as a means of self-identification as a follower of Jesus. The Greek word of fish (Ichthus) contains the first letters of the saying, "Jesus Christ, Son of God."

After several organizational and training meetings, the Brecksville-Broadview Heights FISH started operations on February 1, 1971. Initially 48 volunteers agreed to be on call for FISH calls. Most of the calls were for assistance with transportation, but the callers could request help with almost any household task that might present difficulties.

The concept of FISH seemed to be universal. By 1973, Jarrow Press published a directory of almost 1000 FISH chapters around the world. Each FISH chapter was an independent organization. In March 1974 the Brecksville-Broadview Heights & Independence FISH had incorporated as a Not For Profit Corporation in the State of Ohio.

By 1977 the FISH calls were running 18 to 25 per month. It had a budget of \$610 per year to cover the answering service, telephone service and postage. The officers elected at the 1977 Annual Meeting were President Bill Long (often called Fish Head), Vice President and Corresponding Secretary Austin Smith, Secretary Ruth Long, and Treasurer Dolly Salisbury.

By 1980 the three cities which FISH served had each started a Human Resources Department that provided the same type of services. Having completed its work, the FISH organization disbanded. During its nine years of operation, FISH was truly an ecumenical organization; volunteers came from all the churches and its clients came from all the various churches in the community.

### **Major happenings in the early 1970s**

In October, 1970 the church membership was reported at an all-time high of 1425, but attendance was decreasing, a trend which would continue over the next few years. The church's life continued to be vital. For instance, a hearth-side service was held in the Parlor on Thanksgiving day as there was no community-wide ecumenical service. The Thanksgiving day service was informal, and it encouraged active participation from families and children. The preacher at this service was the Reverend Ralph Dessem, formerly the pastor of the North Royalton United Methodist Church, and a resident of Brecksville.

Further evidence of this sustained vitality was the arrival of a new Yamaha piano for Fellowship Hall in March, 1971. The piano was purchased through numerous gifts to the Gifts and Memorials Fund, and it quickly became a popular item. The first use of the instrument was in the Senior High UMYF production of "Tell It Like It Is."

The month of March, 1971 proved to be a sad one in the life of the church, as the congregation was shocked by the sudden death of Ruth Schroeder, the long-time church secretary. Her quiet, modest, efficient and thoughtful way in handling the multitude of duties as Church Secretary made the church office a sensitive and effective communication center for the congregation. She was described as one of the "beautiful people" of the world. Besides her duties as

secretary, Ruth had been the editor of the *Methodist Monthly*, and when the *Methodist Monthly* was replaced by the bi-weekly *Good Word* in the late 1960s, she continued as editor of the new publication. A memorial fund was established in her name.

Music Director Eleanor Anderson took on the added responsibilities of church secretary in June, 1971.

At the 1971 East Ohio Conference, Reverend Don Shank left Brecksville Church after five years as Associate Pastor. While at Brecksville Rev. Shank worked with the youth and was particularly effective in bringing new life into the Brecksville Junior High Methodist Youth. He also introduced innovative worship experiences to the adult congregation and led a number of adult study groups. Beyond the local church, he served four years as Junior High Camp Director in addition to serving as a member of the District Program Council, the Conference Commission on Worship and the Conference Board of Evangelism.

Reverend Ralph Dessem was appointed as Brecksville Associate Pastor in July, 1971. Reverend Dessem was a graduate of Findlay College and Oberlin School of Theology. Before coming to Brecksville Church, he had served as pastor of the North Royalton Methodist church from 1961-69.

Rev. Dessem came at a time when "contemporary worship" became an important movement within the church. In 1971, after careful consideration, a new service of contemporary worship was proposed. This service, held the second Sunday of each month, was to replace the 11:00 AM service that had been a duplicate of the 9:30 AM service. This new service was to be totally different from the 9:30 AM service; yet, it would still contain all the elements of worship. As it was originally intended, the contemporary service was a bridge between the generations. The youth and adults who prepared these services each learned something about worship, and those who attended these services had a

meaningful experience of worship together. The first service was a "natural" with the Choraliars and "Tell It Like It Is." In song, there was a call, praise, confession, the word and response. The second contemporary service centered on "joy", and the third was a "celebration." The common theme running through these three services was a straightforward, direct approach to worship that left the congregation with a refreshing feeling.

With four weeks to plan each contemporary service, the pastors and participants had an opportunity to be creative. After three months it was clear how this new service fit into the life of the Church.

Early in 1972, Rev. Hogg decided to accept a transfer to Wooster and, at the 1972 East Ohio Conference, Reverend David Patton was appointed as Senior Pastor at Brecksville Church. Rev. Patton graduated from Mount Union College in 1952 and from Drew Theological Seminary in 1955. He traveled extensively in South America and in Europe. Before coming to Brecksville, he served five churches including Fowler, Hartford, West Lafayette, Chardon and Massillon. In addition, he served as district youth director, district missionary secretary, instructor in the Conference School of Missions and was a member of the Conference Board of Education.

Rev. Patton became Pastor at a very secure time in the church's history. In January, 1973, a statistical study reported that there were 1403 members; average church attendance at the two services was 295; there were 20 baptisms in 1972; 868 members attended church at sometime during the previous year; and average attendance at church school was 167 with 32 teachers.

## **The Church Bus**

Shortly after coming to Brecksville, Rev. Patton proposed the purchase of a church bus, and in April, 1973

the church bought a used bus from Independence Schools for \$400. Rev. Patton proposed that the MYF youth should paint the bus any way they wanted and, with the help of Hank James, the youth produced a bright, clean tartan design. After painting the bus, they refurbished the interior extensively.<sup>9</sup>

The church bus was used by many groups such as the church youth groups, Sunday School classes, confirmation classes, the Merry Methodists, the Full Life Group and the Boy Scouts. Taking church-sponsored trips in the bus provided a sense of community that had been lacking when group members used to car pool. This particular bus was used extensively for three years. Although it was a beautiful and unusual looking bus, it had mechanical problems. After a brake failure and two engine failures,<sup>10</sup> the bus was sold, and a second used school bus was purchased. Hank James, Bill Long and Scout Troop 175 painted the second bus. The newer bus was never decorated to the extent of the older, but it was more reliable and was used by the church for about three years when a third church bus was bought.

## **Sesquicentennial Celebration**

On Sunday, September 16, 1973 the congregation celebrated the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Brecksville Methodist Society, a forerunner of the Brecksville United Methodist Church. On this day there were two worship services in the morning with Rev. William Phillips preaching. The afternoon program consisted of a potluck dinner, and the evening program started with a hymn-sing and an informal worship service. Dr. William K. Hogg and Rev. Robert Dieterich, the pastor from 1937 to 1939, participated in the evening service. On October 29, 1973, a

memorial plaque was mounted on the sanctuary building as part of the celebration.<sup>11</sup>

## **Full Life Group**

Rae Ackerman started the Full Life Group of the Brecksville United Methodist Church on May 14, 1974. Rae and her husband, James, had started a similar group in North Olmsted in 1969 and, after moving to Brecksville, they felt such a group could serve the community well. There were 19 members of the church including Revs. Patton and Dessem at the first meeting. The initial officers were Rae Ackerman, President; James Ackerman, Vice President; Bertha Carmitchel, Secretary; and George Exoo, Treasurer.

By 1978 there were 70 active members of the Full Life Group which met monthly. They enjoyed community-wide fellowship, which included members of the United Church of Christ and other local churches. Besides hosting trips and retreats, the group held interesting programs in the winter and had corn roasts and picnics in the Summer.

## **Recitals Are Held on the Church Organ**

Not only were community fellowship groups active in the church at this time, but musical activities were also becoming more prominent facilitated in part by the church organ. In February, 1974 the Fine Arts Commission of the church sponsored an organ recital by John Christian, which included a rigorous program of works by Bach, Jean Langlais, Eugene Gigout, Francois Coupin, Cesar Frank and Oliver Messiaen. Mr. Christian was chairman of the Cleveland Institute Organ Department and was organist at the Lakewood United Methodist Church.

A year later musical activities were continuing with an accompanied organ recital held in memory of Mr. and Mrs. William U. Noble and Mr. and Mrs. George R. Klein. Bill Ellenberger was the organist, Kenneth Harhay played piano and Michael Krew played clarinet. The program included two movements from Mozart's Piano Concerto, K. 467, a movement from Mozart's Clarinet Concerto, K. 622, three Chorale Preludes and the "Dorian" Toccata by J. S. Bach, and "Theme and Five Variations" by Balbastre.

### **Administrative Business in the Mid- and Late-1970s**

At the 1974 Conference, Jim Henery was appointed to be the Brecksville Associate Pastor. Rev. Henery served with the US Coast Guard for two and one-half years before attending the College of Wooster, where he received his BA degree in 1971. He attended the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Naperville, Illinois, and Methodist Theological School, in Delaware, Ohio, where he received his Master of Divinity degree in 1974. On a more personal level, Jim Henery had a full beard and wore a robe of loosely woven material with a rope cincture about his waist on Sundays, which is why some said he looked like an Old Testament Prophet. For several years the confirmation class was almost out of control but, under Rev. Henery's guidance, the youth were very well behaved. When asked how he managed, he replied, "When one member of the class starts acting up, I stop talking and just stare at that person until order is restored."

Other important developments during this time included a rearrangement of the office space.<sup>12</sup> Although the changes were complex, in the end they allowed for more office space for the Pastor and Associate Pastor, in addition to a warmer, friendlier space for the toddlers. Finally, space was also allotted for the new position of Director of Christian



Education, which was filled by Alice Warburton in 1975. That same year, F. William Ross was appointed as the Brecksville Associate Pastor, replacing Rev. Henery. Reverend Ross was a graduate of Bowling Green State University and the Methodist Theological School in Ohio.

Besides personnel changes, improvements to the church building continued. For some time, church member Harry Bremmer had been concerned about the condition of the chapel, so in 1974, he put together a plan to finish the room, which included a new stained glass window and new furnishings, both of which he designed himself. The chapel itself was to be refurbished from the Fran McCoy Memorial Fund, and the money for the new furnishings were made possible through hundreds of gifts to the Amendt Memorial Fund, except for the altar table that was in memory of Mrs. Dell Bremmer from the Dell Bremmer Memorial Fund. The work on the Chapel was completed in September, 1976.

Three years later a new Education Coordinator, Sheila Kane, joined the church staff. Rev. Ross departed on January 1, 1979 to accept another appointment. The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee decided not to accept an Associate Pastor for 1979 due to the lack of experienced candidates. In September, Reverend Charles Holmes, a retired pastor, was secured to serve as a part-time minister of visitation.

## **The Church at Play**

During this period, the church continued to provide a very active social scene. Although members of the church did not perform a play every year as they did in the late 1950s and early 1960s, drama was still an important part of the church's social life. One highlight was when Rev. Ross directed a one-act melodrama, "Egad! What a Cad!"

In addition to drama, The Merry Methodists, the BUMS and the Full Life Group were all very active in promoting social activities among the congregation. The BUMS was a young adult group, and The Merry Methodists was a slightly older adult group that described themselves as, "A group of adults socially inclined, who generally meet once a month to have fun." The members of the Full Life Group were older. Unfortunately, there was not a large influx of younger members, so the BUMS and The Merry Methodists did not withstand the test of time. Many members joined the Full Life Group as they aged, so it continued to be a vital force in the church's social scene.

### **Living Memorial Plan**

At the June, 1975 Administrative Board meeting, a Living Memorial plan was established. Each individual Living Memorial was to be established with a minimum amount of \$5000, and the income from the fund was expected to be used for church purposes under the direction of the Gifts and Memorials Committee. Over the years the Living Memorial Fund was an ongoing asset to the church: from the time of its inception until the end of 1998, 34 Living Memorials, totaling \$202,456, were established. The first Living Memorial was established in honor of George R. and Virginia R. Klein.

### **Educational Efforts**

The educational facilities of the church continued to thrive as the decade of the 1980's began. The Junior High Youth Fellowship Group had 20 members, and the Senior High Youth Fellowship Group had 15 members and was continuing to grow. In addition, the confirmation class had

27 members; the adult education class had 23 members; and the church school staff consisted of approximately 60 teachers. At that time, the teachers were planning two new programs: "Death and Dying" and "Exploring My Faith."

At the 1980 East Ohio Conference Thomas Barson was appointed to Brecksville Church as Associate Pastor.

## **Endowment Fund**

In February, 1981 the Administrative Board established an Endowment Fund.<sup>13</sup> Non-profit organizations like churches, that rely heavily on voluntary contributions, use endowment fund income to help smooth out the income from contributions. In years when contributions are low, income from the endowment investments can be used to provide for continuing operation. When contributions are sufficient to cover needs, the interest may be reinvested for the future needs of the church. Essentially, The Endowment Fund was designed to protect the future congregational membership from the erosion of services and programs due to inflation and/or decreased contributions.

During the 1980s, however, the Endowment Fund did not grow substantially from contributions, so at the April, 1986 Administrative Board meeting, the church officials voted to combine the Endowment Fund and the Reserve Fund into one fund, also called the Reserve Fund which could be used for emergencies or for projects which required a one-time large expenditure.

## **Music Program**

Music had, for many years, been an important part of the life of the church. From approximately 1900 until 1954

the choir would flourish for a while and then wane. This cycle was repeated many times. In 1954, Virginia Klein Gerseny again started a choir which has continued until the present. In 1959 Eleanor Anderson became Choir Director, and the choir and music program expanded greatly under Eleanor's direction. By the fall of 1980, for example, the music staff included Eleanor Anderson, Director of Music; Donna Box, Director of Wesley Choral and Handbell Choirs; Carol Sladky, Director of Westminster Choir and Chapel Bells; Katherine Baker, Organist; Jeanne Ross, Assistant Organist; and Dorothy Stenger, Accompanist for the Gospelsingers. The music staff supported the adult Sanctuary Choir; the adult and youth Gospelsingers; the grade 7-12 Westminster Choir; the grade 1-6 Wesley Choir; the women's Church Bells; the men's and women's Abby Bells, the grade 9-12 Chapel Bells; the grade 6-8 Wesley Bells; and the older adult Silver Bells.

After 23 years of service as Director of Music, and 12 years as Church Secretary, Eleanor Anderson retired. The church choirs presented a memorial concert as a tribute to her in November, 1986. Participants included the Sanctuary Choir, Donna Box, Director; the Joyful Noise Choir, Carol Sladky, Director, Jeanne Ross, accompanist; Christopher Toth, organist; the Church Belles, Carol Sladky, Director; and Laurel Tschannen Bowers, flutist. Donna Box was hired to replace Mrs. Anderson as Director of Music.

Reverend Vernon Shepherd was appointed to Brecksville Church as Associate Pastor at the 1983 East Ohio Conference. Reverend Shepherd graduated from the Franciscan University and the Methodist Theological School in Ohio. During his three years of ministry at Brecksville, he was instrumental in strengthening the youth program, revitalizing the youth Sunday School program and assisting the Fellowship Players. When preparing to leave Brecksville in 1986, Rev. Shepherd wrote in the *Good Word*:

“While I worked here, I learned from Dave Patton that a minister is privileged to listen to trusting people, and this privilege is not deserved without the genuine effort of the minister. My belief was edified by Tom Taylor that the church is called to offer an ear and a hand to the people of the whole world. The unconditional commitment of Nancy Nahodil (church secretary) to the Lord and church helped me. And I was amazed always by the energy of Karen Kraushaar to look for something more. However, I gained the greatest wisdom in the spirit in our too brief ministry together as minister and congregation. Our real flesh and blood living, dying and loving that we have shared heart to heart and spirit to spirit as pastor and people has been the most satisfying part of my life.”

## **Financial Struggle**

Throughout the 175-year history of the church, finances were always a challenge. While the details have varied, the pattern has been similar: after several years of strong financial support, commitments fall short and there is a financial crisis. The following example from 1984 is somewhat typical of many other periods.

In 1978 and 1979, the church had received over 100% of its pledges. With all conference apportionments paid in full, the church gave an additional \$4,810 in special offerings. By 1984, however, finances were becoming strained. At the January, 1984 Administrative Board meeting, the finance issue was the main topic of concern. The 1984 funding campaign was not sufficient to support the 1984 budget. To remedy the budget problem, the full-time position of Director of Education was eliminated, Pastoral Care Expenses were reduced, interest and miscellaneous

income (fees for groups using facilities) were raised, and reserve funds were drawn on for major capital maintenance.

## **Two Retirements, and the Appointment of Thomas Taylor**

In April, 1984 a dinner of recognition was held for Miriam Bruce who had retired after many years of service in the crib and toddlers' room. It seemed as though Mrs. Bruce had fed generations of young children graham crackers and watched over them while their parents were at worship.

Later, in August, the church was shocked by Rev. Patton's announcement that he was resigning. The Reverend Thomas Taylor was appointed Senior Pastor of the church on October 1, 1984. Rev. Taylor remained until his retirement on June 30, 1996.

Rev. Taylor grew up in the Cleveland area and attended Epworth-Euclid Methodist Church. He graduated from Duke University and Boston University School of Theology. Prior to coming to Brecksville, he served as District Superintendent of the Cleveland District.

## **Major Happenings in the Mid-1980s**

Rev. Taylor was welcomed to a new parsonage when, at a special Charge Conference held on October 14, 1984, the church voted to sell the 9043 Highland Drive parsonage and buy the 7780 Plantation Drive parsonage.

Two years later, at the 1986 East Ohio Conference, Rev. James K. Powell was appointed to Brecksville as the Associate pastor. Rev. Powell graduated from Case Institute of Technology and United Theological Seminary. During his two years as Associate Pastor, he worked

primarily with youth and enhanced the confirmation experience for youth.

Despite the rotations in the pastoral positions, the church members continued their quest for improving the quality of their church services. At the suggestion of organist Chris Toth, an eight-foot oboe stop was added to the swell organ, and the trumpet was modified so it would be playable on the swell, great, or pedal organ. This was the second addition to the original organ, and once again the material for this addition was supplied by Casavant. The organ was 20 years old and, although it had been described as a small two-manual organ, it was evident that it was well suited for the large room. With the addition of the oboe, and the changes made to the trumpet, the organ was better balanced and even more useful in worship.

The last major event in the mid-1980s was the development of the CARE committee. Over the years, the church was a major participant in ecumenical work in the community, not only in worship and study events, but also in developing significant service programs. In 1981, with the leadership of Rev. Tom Barson, Ethel Peck, Doris Cippola, and others from the congregation, joining with parishioners from other churches, the CARE Committee (Chemical Abuse Reduced through Education) was developed to work with young people and their families who were struggling with these issues. The first community-wide training was held in the Brecksville United Methodist Church, and it was so successful that eventually a full-time coordinator was hired jointly by the schools, the communities of Brecksville and Broadview Heights and the CARE committee itself. While this program could not have been carried out without significant support from many of the other worshipping communities in the area, it was likely that without the initial leadership from the Brecksville United Methodist Church, CARE would not have been developed.

CARE was one of the many fellowship programs that had developed during this period after the new church building was completed. In the following chapter, the rest of the major service and social organizations, including the Boy Scout Troop 175, the United Methodist Women, and the construction of Chippewa Place, are documented individually.

<sup>1</sup> The new Gifts and Memorials Committee working with the pastor and architect dedicated a number of items in the new building as memorials as follows:

<i>Item</i>	<i>In Honor of</i>
Chancel Cross	Mr. & Mrs. Clifford Bruce
Two Clergy Pews	Joseph R. Hogg
Pulpit & Lectern Bibles	John Burt
Baptismal Fount	Charles Amendt
Outside Lettering On the Church	A. B. Carmitchel
Tower Cross	Andrew Parobek

<sup>2</sup> What about postponing it further than two years? An organ was in the original construction budget approved by the Quarterly Conference and by the bank. The bank asked the committee to make a commitment within six months of the end of construction so the final amount of the loan could be established. Organ prices had been increasing at a rate equal to or exceeding the church's mortgage interest rate. Therefore, there would be no actual cash savings if the purchase was postponed.

<sup>3</sup> Who will build the organ and what specifications will be followed? Casavant was to be the builder and used the following specifications for a two manual organ:

Great Organ

Stop	Feet	Pipes
1. Principal	8	61
2. Rohrgedeckt	8	61
3. Octave	4	61
4. Spitzflote	4	61
5. Superoctave	5	61
6. Mixture IV	1 1/3	244

Swell Organ

(Enclosed in wooden box with expression louvers)

7. Viol de Gambe	8	61
8. Viol Celeste TC	8	49



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9. Gedeckt	8	61
10. Spitzgeigen	4	61
11. Rohrflote	4	61
12. Waldflote	2	61
13. Quinte	1 1/3	61
14. Cymbal IV	2/3	244
15. Trompete	8	61
Tremulant		

Pedal Organ

16. Bourdon	16	32
17. Principal	8	32
18. Pommergedeckt	8	32
19. Choralbass	4	32
20. Mixture III	2	96
21. Fagott 1/2	16	32

Although this specification is for an instrument with only 21 stops, each stop represents an independent set of pipes. It has an excellent Principal chorus. (The Principal is the characteristic "church organ" sound.) It also has a good flute chorus that is second in importance only to the Principals. It has one set of "string" pipes and a string celeste. The strings, with their plentiful harmonics and brilliant timbre, contrast with the clear simple harmonics of the flutes. The celeste adds an illusive and somewhat mysterious voice often used for the romantic organ literature. There are two sets of reed pipes: the Trompete (trumpet) in the swell and the Fagott in the pedal organ. The Trumpet is the most useful reed for a church organ, while the deep pitched pedal reed is the most impressive. The reeds demand attention and lend a voice of authority. More important than the separate individual voice, is the ensemble. Each set of pipes (with the possible exception of the celeste) had been designed to add to the organ as a whole.

<sup>4</sup> The organ was prepared for a Gemshorn to be added later. The Gemshorn is a large and expensive set of pipes that would exceed the organ budget. Note: The Gemshorn was added eight years later.

<sup>5</sup> At last, in the Fall of 1966, the new Casavant pipe organ was delivered by a large enclosed truck direct from the factory in Canada. The center section of the chancel screen had been designed to be removable so that the organ could be moved into the choir area. A crew from the Detroit area, J. A. Hebert & Son, came to install the organ. A number of people from the church were drafted to help move the large heavy wind chests up into the organ lofts. Although this was a relatively small two manual

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pipe organ, the swell chest was the largest chest Casavant had ever built. For larger organs their practice was to use two or more chests for the swell organ

The Hammond organ was moved over to the chapel and the two large speakers, which were no longer needed, were sold.

It took several weeks to complete the pipe organ installation, including tuning all the pipes. Although the workmen came from Michigan, they all spoke French Canadian as well as English with French as their first language. After the pipes were all in place Francois, one of the workmen, would sit at the console holding the key for one of the other men who adjusted the pipe to bring it into correct pitch. As the tuner moved to another section of the organ, Francois would play using large chords and frequently changing key. He said that he had been working on organs for many years but did not read music.

On December 4, 1966, Dr. Warren Berryman played the dedicatory recital on the new Casavant organ.

Early in 1967, after the organ committee was well satisfied with the organ installation, a young man showed up at the church and announced that he was here to finish the organ. He said that he was from the Casavant factory in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, Canada. His name was O'Neil Paradee and he proceeded to go over every pipe in the organ making fine adjustments in the voicing until he was satisfied with the tone and volume of each pipe. As he worked he would from time to time demonstrate what he was doing. How this or that pipe did not quite blend with the rest of its rank of pipes. When he left, the instrument sounded like a different and much finer organ.

In December 1974, the 16 foot Gemshorn was installed in the Casavant Freres organ at a cost of \$6,500. This finished the organ as originally designed. This addition was made possible by a gift from Betty and Bill Klein.

When the Gemshorn pipes were delivered, the organ company asked how we wanted them installed. Several of the large pipes extended above the top of the chancel screen. A decision was made to have those pipes mitered so the tops would be hidden behind the screen. Mitering large organ pipes does not affect the sound.

<sup>6</sup> At their July 6, 1967, meeting the Trustees voted to build an Associate Pastor's office in the northeast corner of the panel room. This work was done by volunteers from the church. The project was completed by March, 1968.

<sup>7</sup> On September 16, 1968, a committee was appointed to check into the reorganization of the church structure resulting from the merger. A plan was made that starting in January 1969, the monthly Official Board

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meeting would be changed to a quarterly Administrative Board meeting with a Council on Ministries meeting the other months. The Council on Ministries to consist of the heads of all the church commissions and committees that were involved in the various church programs. The Council on Ministries, and Trustees would report to the Administrative Board. These changes were made at the January 30, 1960, Charge Conference. Other important changes made at this time were: There would be 60 members at large, a rotation plan would be implemented, and the official church year would be January 1 through December 31. The new organization would include the following committees: Parsonage, Music, Ushering, Auditing, Lay Personnel and Communion Stewards. The Communion Stewards were to be appointed by and responsible to the pastors. Gifts and Memorials to be elected by and responsible to the Administrative Board and continue as constituted in the Resolution of the Quarterly Conference of 1964 that instituted the committee.

<sup>8</sup> The Couples Club ended as a church organization on September 29, 1969. Their function was turned over to the new Family Life and Fellowship Committee.

<sup>9</sup> The church bus has been sanded, undercoated, painted, decorated, refloored and carpeted. Needless to say, many hours and much effort by many people accomplished all this. A letter from Jean Bain and Jim Bain, Senior UMYF Advisors is as follows:

"A special thanks to Jim Marsh for his knowledge and his willingness to give countless hours of his time. It all would have been accomplished eventually, but not nearly so soon and so well! Betty Marsh kept the crew well fed. She often brought lunch to everyone and every workday kept us well supplied with dozens of cookies and donuts.

Rev. Patton gave many hours and his encouragement. (That bus at least doubled in size as we worked!) He also acquired the wool carpeting for a very modest cost. He also did a fantastic job of cleaning and installing the carpeting.

Thanks to all the marvelous young people of the Junior and Senior UMYF who looked as if they had a bad case of jaundice after sanding yellow paint all day. As time went on, they wore the colors of our bus home on their clothes, hands and sometimes all over their bodies! Thanks to Rev. Dessem, Ruth and Bill Long, Betty Koeppel, Dorothy and Ferrel Phelps and Dan Moore. Thanks to Bob Tschannen who was our contact for paint. Thanks to Ernie Wiese who tolerated bus seats piled all over his maintenance room plus various and sundry cans of paint,

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containers, etc. Thanks to our parents who brought the young people to work and then cleaned paint off their clothes when they got home.

It was hard work, but great fun, too. We hope everyone involved enjoyed the fellowship and spirit of accomplishment that we felt.”

<sup>10</sup> One Friday evening Bill Long was driving it with a load of Jr. UMYF youth to Camp Klein. As he pulled off I-90 up to Rt. 44 and stopped, the brake pedal slowly went all the way to the floor. The brakes had failed. After a brief whispered conversation with Rev. Dessem he decided to cautiously continue and slowly pulled out on to Rt. 44 and headed for the Camp just a short distance down the road. All went well until the bus approached the camp driveway. At that point the bus was going down hill. Although it was traveling very slowly, it was still too fast to make the turn into the driveway. As the bus rolled past the driveway the youth made fun of the driver for missing the turn. At the bottom of the hill Bill turned the bus in another driveway and went back up the hill and turned into the camp stopping on the level in front of the building.

When notified of the problem, Rev. Patton drove out to the camp, crawled under the bus and replaced a section of the brake line that had failed.

Some time later on a Saturday morning, Bill Long was driving the bus in Pennsylvania taking Troop 175 to Minister Creek for a weekend camping trip when the engine failed. This time Hank James came to the rescue with one of his Brecksville Road Transit buses.

<sup>11</sup> The plaque reads “Holy, Holy, Holy...” Isaiah 6:3. The Brecksville Methodist Church, Founded 1823. About that time a small piece of land bordering on the north side of the creek was deed to the church.

<sup>12</sup> Before building the educational building, there were no offices in the church. The new educational building, however, included two offices. The outer office was (and still is) for the church secretary and the smaller inner office was for the pastor, and is presently the equipment room. Just beyond the pastor’s office was a room designated as a conference room. The pastor’s office had a door to enter either the secretary’s office or the conference room. For several years the conference room was used as the toddler’s room. The toddler’s room started in the room that is now the cloakroom on the lower level, but that room was too damp and cold. When the last stage of construction was complete, the toddlers moved to a new room at the west end of the building. The former toddler’s room then became the pastor’s office.

The April, 1975, *Good Word* featured changes in the church building. Two of the rooms across from the office area were changed

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from classrooms to a conference room and the pastor's office. This was a volunteer project of members including Hank James, Barbara and Tom Moore, Harry Dennis, Walt Roberts, Don Kissel, Will Elmore, Bill Ross and Dave Patton. The former pastor's office became the associate pastor's office while the office in the corner of the panel room became an office for the Director of Christian Education.

A new conference table was purchased through Gifts and Memorials and a Bronze Building Plaque was mounted on the new building as a memorial to Leona Bittner and Adela Becker.

<sup>13</sup> The fund was opened when \$25,000 was transferred from the General Fund.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Boy Scout Troop 175, United Methodist Women, and Chippewa Place**

Each of these three organizations has had a significant impact on the life of the church. Boy Scout Troop 175 has provided the boys of the church and community with a wholesome, energetic scouting experience. The United Methodist Women are an active community of women who develop creative, supportive fellowship and expand the concept of missions as they participate in the global ministry of the church. Chippewa Place, an independent senior citizens' residential complex, represents one of the most significant contributions the Brecksville United Methodist Church has made to the community of Brecksville.

#### **A History of Boy Scout Troop 175**

Boy Scout Troop 175 was first chartered on June 25, 1924 and sponsored by the Congregational Church of Brecksville (now the United Church of Christ).<sup>1</sup> John Conant was Scoutmaster at the time of charter. In 1937 Bill Klein first registered as a member of the Troop Committee. Bill was a well-known friend of scouting throughout Cleveland as well as a stalwart member of the Brecksville Methodist Church.

From 1938 through 1942, Troop 175 was sponsored by a group of citizens. The Troop met for three years at the Village Hall, one year at the Brecksville School, and at the home of Assistant Scoutmaster Bill Klein for one year. During this five-year period James Barrett was Scoutmaster for one year, Bishop H. McDonald for two years and Sam W. Fish for two years. Members of the Troop Committee included Bob Klein, Ralph Biggs, Larry Steiger, and Ernest Green, all members of the Brecksville Methodist Church. Sons of these men also appeared on the Troop enrollment.

On December 16, 1942, Bill Klein brought to the Official Board a request that the Methodist Church sponsor the Boy Scout Troop. The Board approved his request, so in 1943 the Troop began a long history of sponsorship by the Brecksville Methodist Church. Under the leadership of Scoutmaster Bill Klein, who served until 1952, the Troop flourished and prospered. Bill Klein proved to be an enthusiastic Scoutmaster who always thought big but, at the same time, kept the Troop's priority focused on the boys and their growth in scouting. At one point when the Troop Treasury was flush, Bill suggested a meal of steak at the weekend camp rather than the usual hot dogs.

During the late 1940's, the scout troop sponsored quarterly parties in Old Fellowship Hall. These parties were held on Friday evenings, and the boys could bring their girlfriends. One of their favorite games was musical chairs. Bill and Betty Klein were the chaperones.

In 1952 Robert Perry became Scoutmaster for two years. In 1951 Dean Webb became a member of the Troop Committee, and in 1952 Dean's sons, Bob and Bill, were enrolled in the Troop. The years 1954 and 1955 saw Alfred Bream as Scoutmaster followed by Pres Edwards from 1956 through 1964. Future mayor Jack Hruby joined the Troop in 1957 followed in 1960 by his brother, future mayor Jerry Hruby. Church members on the Troop Committee included

Luke Scudiere, Clifford Bruce, and Robert Blaine (whose two sons achieved Eagle rank).

In 1965 Dick Roeger became Scoutmaster, mentored by committee-member Chet Taylor whom the boys called "Uncle Dudley." It was then that the foundation was laid for a boy-led, primitive camping troop. About 1965, Brecksville had just achieved the status of a City but contained mostly vacant land. Where Bradford Village and The Timbers are today was part of the Hoffman farm where the Troop established one of its favorite camping areas that they called "Camp Dudley." Monthly camping involved walking or biking, but almost never automobile transportation, to carry gear.

Assistant Scoutmaster Bob Deunk, a talented photographer, filmed a wilderness canoe documentary that featured Troop 175 Scouts and was used throughout the region to promote the Cleveland Council canoe base on the French River in upper Ontario. The troop enrollment during this period exceeded 60 boys even though there were four other Scout Troops in Brecksville. Troop Committee members included Bill Craig and Jack Conyers, along with Les Matheson, Bob Porter and Tom Moore, whose sons achieved Eagle rank. During this period the Troop invested in light-weight, two-man tents that were very useful for backpacking. The old canvas tents were used primarily for the long-term Summer camp.

When Dick Roeger was transferred out of the area in 1968, Bob Deunk became Scoutmaster for a year, followed by Jim Marsh until June, 1969 when Tom Moore led the Troop through 1981. During this period Bill Long and Bill Webb were active Assistant Scoutmasters as well as David James, who was first a Scout, then, an Assistant Scoutmaster. Bob Tschannen, whose son achieved Eagle in 1971, was Chairman of the Troop Committee during many of these years in which the troop enrolled as many as 83 scouts and regularly held 1,000 camping nights per year (number of boys times number of nights camped).



Traditionally, Troop 175 has been able to keep older boys active in Troop activities, which has helped to provide examples for the younger boys.

In the 1970s, the church bought a bus, and the scouts from time to time used the bus for travel to distant campsites. Some of the more distant favorite places were Minister Creek, Sandy Beaver, Tar Hollow and the Mohican River, where the scouts canoed.

One of the highlights of 1971 was a trip to Japan for the thirteenth World Boy Scout Jamboree. Bob Gerseny, Peter Moore, Jeff Simpson and Robert R. Tschannen made the trip. After they returned, they presented a slide show and discussion of their experiences at the jamboree. They spent three weeks in Japan including two weeks of sightseeing before going to the Jamboree at Mount Fujiyama.

A year later, on November 29, 1972, Scoutmaster Tom Moore held a most unusual Court of Honor. Four scouts, Bob Gerseny, Chris Lang, Robert Broughton, and James Thacker, received their Eagle awards at this Court of Honor. According to national statistics, in a school district the size of Brecksville-Broadview Heights, only one boy between sixth and twelfth grade would normally attain the Eagle Scout rank. Troop 175 has had 79 boys achieve the Eagle Scout status between 1931 and 1998. Appendix D is the list of Eagle Scouts from Troop 175 from 1931 through 1998.

In the Fall of 1981, Ed Miller became Scoutmaster. He has continued to lead the Troop to date except for the 1993-94 year when business commitments required him to take a sabbatical during which time Ed Ensinger was Scoutmaster. While other Scout troops in the community have desolved, Troop 175 under Ed Miller's leadership enjoyed a golden period of community-wide appeal and involved service. During the 1980s, several different camping trips were added to the schedule to places such as

Kellys Island, Greenfield Village and the Airforce Museum at Dayton.

## **The Ladies' Aid Society: An Important Force in the Growth of the Church**

Although men held most of the official positions in the church, the women were responsible for the vitality of the church since they arranged the social activities that, in many respects, held the church together. In addition, most married women did not work outside of their homes prior to World War II, so they could get together during the week for activities such as the Ladies' Aid Society.<sup>2</sup>

The Brecksville Methodist Ladies' Aid Society dates back to 1897, but its activities were only documented in detail starting in 1938. The society had modest beginnings; the treasurer's report for 1938 showed a balance of \$33.97, which included money from the sale of fancy work, quilting, white elephants and an Imaginary Bake Sale.

Besides those activities, the Ladies' Aid Society organized a banquet for the Boy Scouts,<sup>3</sup> held a bazaar in November, 1938 to sell baked goods and crafts to raise money to buy two new kerosene stoves for the church kitchen.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, the members of the society all agreed to give gifts to the kitchen that Christmas to furnish it with additional supplies, and they also found the time and money to buy a gallon of Glocoat to wax the church pews. Although their activities might seem incidental, the sense of community this group fostered was very important to the growth of the church.

## **The Women's Society of Christian Service**

On September 7, 1940, the Ladies Aid Society was changed to Women's Society of Christian Service, and a new set of rules was approved. Dr. Brown, the speaker that day, suggested that a scroll be made containing the charter women's names. There were 45 names on the scroll, and Doris Wadsworth is the only living charter member in 1998.

During the 1940s, the WSCS engaged in many community-building activities. The members bought gifts and sponsored parties for the girls at the Blossom Hill School, attended plays as a group to provide a diversion from their routine duties and supported a theatre group for children, which Virginia Klein founded.

In the 1950s, the WSCS members engaged in similar activities to those of a decade earlier. In 1957 Aileen Benninghoff, a local book reviewer and church member, gave a program on "The Life of John Wesley" and presented a Wesley Tea Service, bought in England, to the women's group. The big surprise came in 1958 when two friendship quilts were designed and made by members of WSCS for the Amendts' 39<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Each church member had paid 25 cents to have his or her name embroidered and appliquéd on the quilts. In November, the surprise potluck supper was held, and the WSCS presented the quilts to the Amendts.

In the 1960s, the WSCS continued with its service-oriented activities. At the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Brecksville in July, 1962 Betty Klein and her busy crew served several hundred barbecued beef sandwiches and gallons of iced tea. In 1969 WSCS bought drapes and chairs for the parlor. This was the last project of the WSCS because, with the church merger with the Evangelical United Brethren of 1968, the organization's name was changed to the United Methodist Women.

## **United Methodist Women**

Although the name of the organization changed as the 1970s began, the function and purpose of the organization remained the same. In 1977, members of the UMW produced the play *Merry and Martha* which delighted the audience. Mrs. Klein was the dramatist and the Church Belles, directed by Eleanor Anderson, performed. Handbell ringers included Doris Roché, Ann Loesch, Karen Kraushaar, Barbara Kaufman, Mildred Hobart and Joann Fox.

The UMW also engaged in more service-oriented activities. The Morning Circle, a family-oriented group, was started in 1977 with Deann Faulk as leader. In 1980 UMW was involved in Head Start, West Side Community House and Berea Children's Home. Toward the end of the 1980s, the UMW was involved in the World Day of Prayer, the Hunger Fund Luncheon and the Samaritan Council Conference.

In the 1990's, the UMW's involvement in both service and social activities continued. Highlights included the UMW participation in the semi-annual district meetings, a Lolly the Trolley Tour of Cleveland Churches in March, 1998 and an annual Sunday morning program which encouraged church members to donate food and supplies to needy children. Also, the women prepared weekly dinners for the Kiwanis Club that met at the church.

## **Chippewa Place**

In 1978, Reverend David Patton, then the Senior Pastor of the church, was very concerned about the many elderly residents in the area who were living alone. These folks had no one to talk to, no one to share their home, no

one to share a meal—essentially, no one for support. Rev. Patton was determined to find a solution to this problem. A solution began to present itself in a plot of land west of the parking lot that the church owned. This land was part of a larger plot that had been donated to the church many years before by George R. Klein and Bill Klein.

Rev. Patton approached Bill Klein, a leading member of the congregation, about his idea; and together they developed the idea of a home for senior citizens that could be built on the lower lot. This senior center would be a congregate living facility; it would allow residents to live independently in their own apartments, coming together for fellowship and evening meals.

Rev. Patton asked the Administrative Board of the church for a feasibility study of the project. A study committee, under the leadership of Bob Andree, investigated the possibilities and recommended that a nine-member Senior Citizen Housing Foundation be formed to implement the project.

The Brecksville Planning Committee and Town Council held a public meeting on January 29, 1981 as a first step in placing the rezoning of the property on the ballot. Both groups unanimously endorsed the plan and placed the rezoning issue on the June ballot. It was approved by the voters of the City.

After several years of ongoing investigation, development of architectural drawings and the purchase of additional land to provide better access, the church needed a strong response in a capital funds campaign. Unfortunately, the church was unable to generate the funding needed and it became apparent that the church could not build the facility alone. A developer would have to be found to finance and build the structure, and it would have to be a for-profit facility. To keep the project going, the Gifts & Memorials Committee lent money to the Foundation.

The Brecksville Senior Citizens Housing Foundation changed its focus to finding a developer and negotiating a contract. Investors were found, and soon the design for a Senior Center with 102 units (16 two-bedroom and 86 one-bedroom units) was on the drawing board. A contract was drawn giving the Brecksville Senior Citizens Housing Foundation a 2% limited partnership, with the proviso that the complete facility would be deeded to the Foundation by the year 2035. By this time the Foundation was independent of the church. All monies that had been invested in the project were returned to the respective organizations with interest. The developer, Associated Health Care, had to take all the drawings to the City Planning Department and the Zoning Commission for rezoning the property. After many months, it was then necessary to go back to the voters of Brecksville, asking them to approve a variance on the property.

Eight years after the original idea was formulated, groundbreaking took place on January 12, 1986.

With the contract in hand, the church, with approval of the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church, deeded the property over to the Brecksville Senior Citizens Housing Foundation. Because the Foundation was set up as a separate corporation, the United Methodist Church was not liable in any way for the construction, management or financing of the facility. The only tie to the Brecksville United Methodist Church was that the Senior Pastor would always be a permanent trustee of the Brecksville Senior Citizens Housing Foundation.

The building was completed and dedicated on September 13, 1987. The trustees at that time were listed as: William C. Klein, Hon. Chairman, Rev. David Patton, Robert F. Andree, Robert L. Bass, Elizabeth B. Hoffman, Gordon Markley, Beverly J. Schroedel, William A. Silverman, Rev. Thomas S. Taylor, Robert Tschannen and Michael J. Widick.<sup>5</sup>

In July, 1987 Chippewa Place opened its doors to the first occupants. After Rev. Patton retired from his pastoral duties at the Brecksville United Methodist Church, he accepted the position of director of the facility in 1988.

At first, senior citizens were slow to move into the new facility but, after two years, 90 units were occupied. Occupancy seldom dropped below 90%, and it was generally in the 96% to 98% level with a waiting list, particularly for the two-bedroom units. The facility is open to residents of all denominations. The only restriction is that the person must be able to care for him or herself.

A room on the fourth floor was designated as a chapel, but not used. With the arrival of Rev. Patton, plans were set into motion to have weekly ecumenical services to be held on Saturday evenings. The first chapel service was held on February 6, 1988, with Rev. David Patton presiding. Chapel services have continued with the leadership coming from local churches.<sup>6</sup> In many instances, residents themselves either assist in the services or have taken on a leadership role. Resident Ken MacKenzie initially acted as host of the services and his wife, Karoline, was the first organist. Karoline was forced to retire due to failing eyesight, but Ken continued in his role until failing health caused them to move to a nursing home. The Chapel was later dedicated to the memory of Karoline and Kenneth MacKenzie.

A humorous incident involving the Chapel was recalled by Marjorie Meek Craig, a charter occupant of Chippewa Place and secretary to Rev. Patton at Brecksville Church:

One Saturday evening, during the dinner hour, a bathtub's faulty drain on the third floor caused water to run down to the second floor, flooding a resident's storage area. This was not the new resident's fault but a plumber's faux pas. After

quickly changing locker assignments, and mopping up the water, the people involved retired to the chapel. Hymns had been previously selected in advance so that the organist would be prepared. As they approached the chapel the first hymn being sung was "Shall We Gather At the River." This sent the mop-up party into gales of laughter.

Marjorie Meek Craig served as the original coordinator of the chapel services at Chippewa Place. In January, 1994 Ruth Long, a member of Brecksville United Methodist Church, became the coordinator of the ecumenical services.

Over the years, many have recognized that the chapel is a unique and outstanding service to residents of a retirement community. It serves a very special need. By many accounts, residents are very appreciative of the friendships, music and inspiring words.

As a whole, Chippewa Place has been a successful mission endeavor in the Brecksville community for the past ten years and will continue well into the future. Appendix G is a list of Appointments and Symbolism in the Chapel at Chippewa Place.

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<sup>1</sup> William Blanchard was Scoutmaster for three of those years. Edwin Duchac was Scoutmaster for five years, Steven Nichols for two years and J. Barrett for one year.

<sup>2</sup> The oldest record of the Brecksville Methodist Ladies Aid is a picture of 12 members taken about 1897 in front of the home where they were meeting.

<sup>3</sup> There was a Boy Scout Banquet that April. The Sub Debs, seven high school girls, served the meal. They were members of Dolly Beckwith's Sunday School class which met in the back pew of the church. The girls were warned by their mothers, "You serve from the right and take off from the left, don't be lollygaging with the boys, and for heaven's sake, wipe off the orange Tangee lipstick."

<sup>4</sup> To better organize for the coming November bazaar, and to provide transportation for workers, neighborhood-meeting places were designated—Center, Chippewa, North, South, and Highland. Drivers



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collected a five-cent fare. Aid dues were a nickel a month. Rhoda Klein, treasurer, reassured some of the women that their dues were marked paid. She had given the money for the poorest ones. The bazaar was to be held at the Town Hall next to the church. Betty Klein was chairman of the bake sale. Betty Biggs was in charge of fancywork. Dolly Beckwith made candy. An oyster stew supper was on the menu—always popular. The night before the big event, Annie Anthony stayed up and baked 27 pies in her coal oil oven.

<sup>5</sup> The finished building is four stories high with three stories below the church parking lot level. It is near Chippewa Creek with the main entrance off Stadium Drive and a fourth floor entrance at the northwest corner of the United Methodist Church parking lot. All the suites have fully equipped kitchens, cable, carpeting and plenty of closet space. There are planned daily activities, weekly housekeeping service, and scheduled transportation for shopping and other trips. Every suite has emergency sprinklers and smoke detectors. There is an emergency call system in every bathroom and bedroom. Residents are served one meal each day in the main dining room on the first floor. The facility is operated by Associated Health Care.

<sup>6</sup> As of 1998, these volunteers were: North Royalton Baptist (first Saturday of the month), Cuyahoga Community Church (second Saturday), St. Basil the Great Catholic Church (third Saturday), Brecksville United Methodist Church (fourth Saturday), and Triune Lutheran Church (fifth Saturday). There have been clergy from St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Brecksville United Church of Christ, Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church, Disciples of Christ, Friends Church, the Mormons, Brecksville First Church Christian Scientist. These, and others, supplied clergy leadership, lay speakers and musicians.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **The Church Looks Outward**

During the late 1980's and the 1990's, the church grew in its mission emphasis by direct participation in specific projects, as well as in benevolence giving through the budget and special offerings. For several years, Brecksville was consistently either first or second in both the district and the conference in mission giving. While some smaller churches had a larger percentage of their total budget going to missions, for one of the largest churches in the conference, Brecksville had a very high percentage, ranging between 17 and 19 percent. The goal set was to achieve 25 percent of total giving for missions by the year 2000.

#### **Stephen Ministry**

In an effort to extend the caring ministry of the church, the Administrative Board voted to participate in the interdenominational, worldwide Stephen Ministry program in 1987. In 1988 Lucille Abraham (Beears) and Rev. Tom Taylor attended a Stephen Ministry leadership workshop. Ruth Dever (McDonel), June Tschannen and the Associate Minister and his wife, Jim and Karen Powell, later went for ten days of leadership training. Lucille Abraham Beears, Bill

and Abbie Betz, and Tom Taylor also joined the leadership group. The Stephen Ministry leaders coordinated the training of Stephen Ministers in the local church which involved some 50 hours of Christian caregiving training. After training, the Stephen Ministers met twice a month for supervision and continuing education to improve their caregiving skills

Over the years, 31 people have become Stephen Ministers. Each Stephen Minister is assigned to a care receiver who is currently experiencing a stressful time in his or her life. Many of the care receivers spoke openly about what a significant difference the Stephen Ministry program made in their lives; they believed the program enabled them to find the healing and wholeness that they believed was God's intention for them.

## **Hunger Fund**

In January 1987 the church donated \$803.52 to the St. Matthew's Soup Kitchen for a refrigerator. At a meeting three months later, the Administrative Board voted to continue the \$400-per-month hunger fund with \$100 to St. Matthew's, \$100 to a national hunger project, The St. Andrew Potato Project and \$200 to an international hunger project, the Child Nutrition Project in Ecuador. The \$400-per-month Hunger Fund was one of many Mission Projects outside of the church budget for many years. Each month people simply donated to the fund, and the donations averaged \$400 per month with very little publicity.

## **Parking Lot Controversy**

Lack of parking space was a problem for some time, so the church voted to purchase the house and property on

the west side of the Old Town Hall for \$85,000. This action caused a controversy among church members. Some persons in the church thought the purchase of this property was spending too much on the local church; they believed that the church should increase the budget by fifty percent and donate the excess to mission work beyond the local church. A majority of the congregation voted to purchase the land for additional parking. In September, 1987 the DeCesare Construction Company started work on the project.<sup>1</sup> When the addition was completed, it was connected to the main parking lot, thus increasing the total parking capacity by 33 spaces. Although some felt the parking lot was not needed, it was filled to capacity every Sunday. Additional parking spaces were still needed, even with the new lot.

### **New Associate Pastor, New Organist, Director of Christian Education**

James F. Winkler was appointed as Brecksville Associate at the 1988 East Ohio Conference. Rev. Winkler graduated from Ohio University and Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. During his tenure at Brecksville Church, he was instrumental in strengthening the youth program and assisting with the Disciple Bible Study. He was extremely supportive of the Appalachian Service Project and contributed greatly to its growth.

Bill Ellenberger became church organist in September, 1988 replacing Christopher Loy. Bill was a graduate of Brecksville High School and served as organist for many other churches in the area. After studying organ performance under Edwin Arthur Kraft and Walter Blodgett at the Cleveland Institute of Music, he built and serviced organs for the Blanchard Organ Company of Oberlin. He was also self-employed, building and servicing organs

throughout Ohio and several other states. In Brecksville, he built the organs for the Brecksville United Church of Christ and for Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church.

Linda Coatoam joined the church staff as Director of Christian Education in 1991 following the departure of Nancy Betz Yates who had served in that capacity for three years. Linda brought an exceptional understanding of the developmental needs of children and their readiness for religious training as well as a meticulous organizational ability. She has built on the works of her predecessors, Nancy Betz Yates (1987-1991), Karen Kraushaar(1983-87), Sheila Kane (1980-83), Barbara Moore (1976-80) and Alice Warburton (1975-76). Linda continues to serve Brecksville Church as a Diaconal Minister of Education and is preparing to become a Permanent Deacon in the Church.

## **Meals on Wheels**

In early 1990, with the help of other churches, the Brecksville United Methodist Church initiated the planning of a Meals on Wheels program for those living in the area. This volunteer-operated, non-profit program delivered one hot and one cold meal daily five days a week to those who were unable to provide their own meals. William Long has served as President and Margie Benedict as Chairperson of the Client Interview Committee since the inception of the program. For the first several years, the largest number of volunteer drivers from any one church consistently came from Brecksville United Methodist Church.

In November, 1990 Meals on Wheels started operations on faith rather than experience. Volunteers felt there was a need to start delivering meals even before some of the organizational details had been resolved. By January, 1991 the small group of volunteer drivers and hoppers had

gained enough confidence that they could handle the task, but the operation was still rough.

During the first year of operation, 2071 meals were delivered to 58 clients, which was accomplished using 1776 hours of volunteer time. All of the meals were prepared in the St. Alexis Hospital kitchen and, after two years, a change was made to Brentwood Health Care Center in Sagamore Hills, which greatly reduced the miles traveled by the volunteers. Due to increased charges, the source of meals was changed to Walton Manor in 1994, and in 1995, a further change was made to the kitchen at the Hellenic Center at St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church, which still provides meals for the Meals on Wheels program. From January 1 to December 31, 1997, 50 volunteers delivered 4642 meals to 63 clients, and they interviewed 31 new clients. By the end of 1998, Meals on Wheels had served 330 clients.

Brecksville-Broadview Heights Meals on Wheels is an ecumenical outreach from the churches in the community, and the churches remain the main source of volunteers. The most important element in the Meals on Wheels operation is unquestionably the dedicated group of volunteers. As the volunteers deliver the meals, they also provide human contact with each client and, if they encountered a serious problem during the daily visit, the volunteers call an emergency number for help. Volunteers also help to resolve minor problems for the clients such as opening food packages, cutting food, bringing in the mail and reporting a change in diet.

Although the Brecksville Broadview-Heights Meals on Wheels organization has never conducted a fund raising drive, a number of organizations and individuals have made contributions over the years. These contributions make it possible to continue to subsidize those clients who otherwise would not be able to pay for the needed meals.

## **Disciple Bible Study**

To fill the need for Bible study across the country, the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church developed an intensive 34 week program called Disciple Bible Study. The plan for the study includes a weekly class session of two and one-half hours and readings that required a minimum of a half-hour-a-day study at home. There were three courses: Disciple 1 provided an overview of the entire Bible, and Disciples 2 and 3, which were developed later, provided a more comprehensive study of smaller portions of the Bible.

Rev. Tom Taylor and Rev. Jim Winkler went for the initial training, and Rev. Winkler taught the first course in Brecksville in 1990. Since that time over 100 people have participated in the classes, while lay people such as Sam Horne, Ruth Long, Becky Gezze and Susan Hurst have become Disciple Bible Study teachers.

At Brecksville Church, the Disciple Bible Study classes proved to be much more than a study class. The small groups, meeting for many months, found a new way of looking at life. Each group formed a close knit circle of friends. The individuals found new confidence in their beliefs and in their understanding of the message of the Bible.

## **Appalachian Service Project**

By many accounts, one of the most meaningful intergenerational mission undertakings for the Brecksville congregation was the Appalachian Service Project (ASP), in which the church began to participate in 1990. The Appalachian Service Project is a ministry of the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church. Rev. Jim Winkler and Bill Ellenberger went with Chris Fowler, Nick Rajkovich, Rob Rechkemmer and Steve Urdzik to

Mingo County, West Virginia to participate in an ASP work experience. With teams from other churches across the country, they spent a week repairing the homes of people who were unable to afford having the repairs done professionally. From that initial group of six, involvement grew from both adults and senior high youth until it became a group of forty persons (24 youth and 16 adults). Eventually, the program separated from the structure of the ASP and reorganized as the Youth Service Project (YSP).

## **Mission Work**

For over 150 years, mission work has been an important part of the church. When Methodism was first taking root in America, the Mission Society published in the Conference Journal the name of anyone who contributed at least 50 cents for mission work during the year. In recent years the Missions Commission has funded Conference apportionment mission requests at between 100% and 110% and has supported a series of additional local, national and international mission projects.

A number of church members strongly believe that supporting mission work beyond the local church is one of the most important aspects of church life. In 1990 the Missions Commission set a goal of increasing missions giving to 25% of the church budget by the year 2000. In 1993, a study of mission giving revealed that the total missions budget of the church was \$45,000, but additional off-budget giving of \$38,000 had been contributed to mission work that year for a total given to mission work of \$83,000. The off-budget dollars came from special offerings as well as contributions from several church organizations such as United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men and the Appalachian Service Project. In addition, for many years the Easter and Christmas special offerings went to projects



designated by the Missions Committee. For 1993 the total missions spending was 23 percent of the budget, or 21 percent of total spending, which was approaching the goal of 25 %.

To provide a "face" for the missions activity, the church has several times selected a specific missionary to support through mission giving. When one missionary retires, the Mission Commission selects another missionary to support. Several times a missionary whom the church supports has visited and preached at the church.

One local mission project was described at the July, 1993 Administrative Board meeting. It was known as the LINKAGES program. The Eric Pruett family was in need of help. This family was living in a very cramped transitional housing apartment with very little furniture. They had an opportunity to move into a house that had been rehabilitated by the Broadway Housing Coalition working with the Cleveland Housing Network. Church members rented a van, picked up furniture donated by other members and delivered it to the Pruett's new home. The van was then used to move the Pruett possessions from their old apartment to their new house. The church members played a vital role in assistance to the family through the LINKAGES ministry.

## **The Walk to Emmaus**

In the early 1990s members of the Brecksville United Methodist Church became involved in another ecumenical spiritual growth movement, The Walk to Emmaus. The purpose of Emmaus Walk is the renewal of the church through the renewal of church members as faithful and committed disciples of Jesus Christ. Emmaus expands participants' spiritual lives, deepens their discipleship and

rekindles their gifts as Christian leaders in their home churches.

Ruth Long introduced The Walk to Emmaus to the Brecksville United Methodist Church. She attended a three-day Walk to Emmaus weekend. A year later, she sponsored two members of the Brecksville Church, Joyce Szekelyi and Bill Long, on Emmaus weekends. Ruth and Bill were both involved in the formation of the Western Reserve Emmaus Community that held its first weekend at Camp Asbury in October, 1993. Several other members of the Brecksville Church have attended the Emmaus Walk.

## **Habitat for Humanity**

Over twenty years ago Millard Fuller started Habitat for Humanity—a ministry that has spread around the world and has built 70,000 houses for low-income families. Habitat is a mission project that many people around the world support due to its unique concept of helping those who help themselves. Partner families work side by side with the volunteers. Millard has developed his Theology of the Hammer to explain this work:

“...The concept of the Theology of the Hammer is that our Christian faith mandates that we do more than just talk about faith and sing about love. We must put faith and love into action to make them real and to make them come alive for people. Faith must be incarnated; that is to say, it must become more than a verbal proclamation or an intellectual asset. True faith must be acted out.”

In 1994, the Cleveland District was planning to build four Habitat houses near Willson United Methodist Church on Cleveland's east side. The 51 Cleveland District United

Methodist churches would provide all the material and supply all the labor required to build the houses. In addition, ten percent of the cost of the Cleveland houses would go to build four Habitat houses in another country.

In March, 1994 the church had already reached the half-way point in raising pledges and donations toward the BUMC goal of \$12,000 for the Cleveland District four-house Habitat for Humanity project. In addition, more than 40 people had pledged to work on the project. The volunteers on the four-house project were supported through a lunch supplied by different churches each day at Willson Church. Because of the magnitude of the project, dozens of volunteers were recruited. On one memorable Saturday, 125 United Methodists came to work.

A number of people from Brecksville worked on the four houses. Working on the Habitat houses, they found the pace of work comfortable and free of the pressure they would experience on a commercial project. In December, 1994 the four Habitat houses were dedicated at a worship service held at Willson United Methodist Church.

In 1996, the Cleveland District was planning to build another Habitat house. The house would be in Cleveland's Bicentennial Village at the corner of East 94th Street and Central Avenue. With a one-house project it was not necessary to recruit dozens of volunteers. The house for the Tammy Cauley family was completed early in 1997.

When the Cauley family was preparing to move into their new home, members of the church discovered that they had almost no furniture. Ruth Long organized a collection of furniture from United Methodist Church members in the Cleveland District, and when all the furniture was delivered, Tammy had a completely furnished home. Providing furniture is not a part of the official Habitat for Humanity plan, but after working with the partner families, the Methodist volunteers felt that providing much-needed furniture was the final step in the process.

## Change is Constant

Early in 1994, there was an undercurrent within the congregation resulting in a number of suggestions for change becoming known. Although the requests for change were not all new, they provide interesting historical documentation of the continual desire for change. Some of the opinions expressed were summed up in the following letter from Pastor Taylor that was printed on the front page of the March *Good Word*:

“The United Methodist Church is very diverse in many ways, among them theologically.... The Staff-Parish Relations Committee placed an Evaluation/Suggestion Box on the shelf in the parlor and invited suggestions. We have received a number of responses on several different subjects. At the February 7th meeting of the Council on Ministries with 18 members present there was a lengthy, thoughtful, and healthy discussion around aspects of the worship service.... Issues that were discussed were:

- Talking during the prelude (and at times during the service itself)
- The greeting of the fellowship, announcements, and moments for ministry interrupting a meditative atmosphere set by the prelude.
- Clapping during the service.
- Selling of tickets, etc. in the entrance hall.
- Requests that the Sacrament of the Lords' Supper be observed more.”

## **Monthly Communion**

One major suggestion that had important implications was the Disciple Bible Study Class's proposal to have communion served more often. Back in the days of the circuit riders, the Presiding Elder would visit each Methodist Society four times each year and on these visits would serve The Lord's Supper. This tradition was observed for decades, even after virtually all Methodist churches had a stationed pastor. After the Disciple Class offered this suggestion, a number of other individuals spoke up in support, while others thought that the sacrament of Holy Communion should remain a quarterly celebration. The issue was resolved by using some of the new liturgy included in the 1989 hymnal "A Service of Word and Table" with five different musical settings from which to choose. The congregation seemed to enjoy the variety of these settings, and the choir and congregation together could join in the musical responses.

At the May, 1994 meeting of the Council of Ministries, there was a lengthy discussion about the Sacrament which revealed overwhelming support for a greater frequency in observing the sacrament. It was agreed that the Brecksville United Methodist Church would begin to increase the number of times for Communion to approximately 12 each year, and that the congregation would use a variety of opportunities to learn more about the significance of this central celebration of the Christian faith.

## **Seating in Amendt Chapel**

In order to develop more adult classes on Sunday morning, the Commission on Education recommended to the Administrative Board that the chapel seating be changed from pews to chairs to allow for more usable space inside

the church. This suggestion was quite controversial, since many members of the congregation did not wish to disturb the interior of the Chapel. After much discussion at a Church Conference in August, 1994, it was decided that the pews would be converted to chairs in order to increase the flexibility of the space.

### **Personnel Changes in the Mid-1990s**

At the 1995 East Ohio Conference, Rev. Michaela Brown was appointed as Brecksville Associate. From 1992 to 1995, Rev. Brown served as Pastor of Centenary United Methodist Church in Youngstown. As a lay person at East Glenville Methodist Church and again as Associate Pastor at Aldersgate Church, she worked extensively with youth. A graduate of Cleveland State University and of Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Rev. Brown also had a graduate certificate in gerontology from Georgia State University and served a one year internship in Clinical Pastoral Education at St. Luke's Hospital.

Michaela's first Sunday at Brecksville was on July 2, 1995. The following Sunday she left with the youth to go on the Appalachian Service Project. Much of her work was with the youth of the church. She left after one year as associate pastor at Brecksville Church.

Donna Box retired from her position as Director of Music in 1995. Michael Dougherty was selected to be the new Director of Music. He received his Master in Sacred Music from Emory University in Atlanta. In April, 1996, he and organist Bill Ellenberger presented a program entitled "Music Beyond Belief," again bearing witness to the strong role that musical performance played in the life of the church. The program included "Cascade for Two Organs," a world première by David Maxwell, and "Toot Suite" for organ by P. D. Q. Bach. Mr. Dougherty returned to graduate

school after one year at Brecksville Church. Dr. Richard Nelson, a professor of Music Theory at the Cleveland Institute of Music, assumed the Director of Music position following Mr. Dougherty's departure.

Rev. Tom Taylor retired at the 1996 Annual Conference session and Rev. Dr. Adriel Thrash was appointed to Brecksville as Senior Pastor and Rev. Sharon C. Carson was appointed as Associate Pastor. Rev. Thrash graduated from Westmar College, LeMars, Iowa and received his M. Div. from the Evangelical Theological Seminary, Naperville, Illinois. He received his Doctor of Ministry from St. Mary Seminary, Cleveland, Ohio.

Rev. Sharon Carson received her call to the ministry as a second career, having worked for over 15 years with the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She graduated from Baldwin-Wallace College and received a Masters Degree in Urban Affairs from Cleveland State University. Rev. Carson received her Master of Divinity degree from Methodist Theological School in Ohio in 1993.

### **Important Church Activities in the Mid-1990s**

In September, 1995 members of First Hispanic United Methodist Church came to Brecksville and prepared and served an Hispanic dinner. The youth from First Hispanic provided the entertainment. The event was a fundraiser for the First Hispanic Church and an enjoyable evening for Brecksville. It also showed a broadening interest in multicultural activities among members of both churches.

In January, 1996 24 people participated in a Clown Workshop initiated by Ruth Long. This was actually the second time Christian clowns had been introduced to the Brecksville United Methodist Church. The clown workshop was lead by Daffy Dill and was for fifth graders through adults. Daffy and friends taught the history of clowning,

clown makeup, how to clown, the use of puppets and storytelling. The participants learned that 40 denominations, including United Methodists, recognize clown ministry. Daffy also explained clown theology, and J. J. the Clown demonstrated how to create balloon animals. After lunch the new clowns shared the joy of clowning with our neighbors at Chippewa Place.

One of the United Methodist Women's favorite mission projects over the years was the West Side Community House, which was a United Methodist agency that works with families and individuals in the neighborhood. A report from *The Good Word* details some of the activities of the West Side Community House:

"The Women's Auxiliary of West Side sponsored a 'Funshine Day' in June for the children. We had a petting zoo which had animals ranging from a camel down to turtles. There were pony rides for the children and hands-on experience with the other animals. . . .

"Our clowns, under the leadership of Ruth Long, came with their balloons to make animals for each child as well as to do face painting. It was a day of mutual sharing and learning for all the children. . . .

"The Asbury-Bremeth circle helped to serve lunch to the children, furnished the makings for ice cream sundaes, gave pony rides, and just visited with the children and helped whenever help was needed. The UMW gave money to help pay for the petting zoo.

"Liz Fredrick was our leader of games and was a great hit with the children. She made sure there were no losers that day, and that each child went home with stickers all over the front of his clothing. James and Andrew Fredrick came with her and helped wherever they were needed.



“The Brecksville Kiwanis Club gave most of the money to pay for the petting zoo as well as furnished the hot dogs for lunch. The rest of our funding came through the churches of the women who serve on the auxiliary board. Many of the auxiliary ladies sent food and were on hand to help the children.”

The first “Distinguished Scholar Weekend” was held in April, 1996, and Rev. Thrash proposed bringing Dr. David Lowes Watson to speak on Covenant Discipleship. The theme of the weekend was Wesley’s General Rule of Discipleship: “To witness to Jesus Christ in the world and to follow His teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.” Following the weekend, several Covenant Discipleship groups were formed to meet weekly to discuss and to hold each other accountable for these acts of discipleship. Rev. Thrash was extremely instrumental in instituting and supporting the Covenant Disciple groups in the church. Through his efforts several groups were formed and met regularly for nurture, growth and service.

## **Youth Service Project**

For a number of years the Sr. High youth had been part of the Appalachian Service Project but, in 1997 the Brecksville United Methodist Church submitted an application that was not acted upon.

After much discussion, the group reformed under the auspices of the Youth Service Project. Rev. Sharon Carson contacted the West Virginia Conference office and was referred to Rev. Tom Clark, who was the Volunteers In Mission Coordinator for the West Virginia Conference and the pastor of the Summersville Memorial United Methodist

Church. He agreed to help the Brecksville youth by finding work projects in Summersville. In addition, he made provisions for the Brecksville YSP group to sleep in his church and for the other churches in town to provide supper each day for the group.

Twenty-two youths and eight adults drove to West Virginia in July, 1997 and completed the first Youth Service Project. One of the main differences between YSP and Habitat for Humanity projects was that Habitat created new homes while the YSP worked to refurbish old homes. For many of the youth living in Brecksville, working with such dilapidated homes was an eye-opening experience.

### **175th Anniversary Year-Long Celebration**

The 175th Anniversary Celebration began Sunday, January 11, 1998. Over the course of the year, former pastors preached, while other clergy and laymen who had been important in the life of the church came to visit. Most of them reminisced about the era during which they performed their pastoral duties at Brecksville. Although he could not attend, Rev. Robert Dieterich wrote a letter for the first ceremony. Reverends Ralph Dessem, James Powell, F. William Ross, Vernon Shepherd, Kendall Lancaster, Tom Barson and Bishop Jonathan D. Keaton all spoke at various ceremonies during February and March.

In the Spring, Reverend Tom Taylor preached, and there was a Festive Day of music in June with a performance of Felix Mendelssohn's Cantata *Hear My Prayer*, and Nevin Eilbeck's *Anthem* written especially for that day. In the Summer, Reverend David Patton preached, and in September there was a birthday party for the church on the 175<sup>th</sup> Homecoming.

In September, 1998 Rev. Donald Shank preached and the final anniversary celebration was held, which

included the preparation of a time capsule by the church youth to be opened in 25 years and the singing of an anthem written by Dr. Carlton Young, who was the editor of the United Methodist Hymnal.

Overall, the festivities were a huge success, and they appropriately represented the significance of the celebration of the church's long history.

## **A Special Wedding**

In May, 1998, a special wedding took place at Brecksville Church. The Reverends Sharon Ruth Canty Carson and William Zeyer were married by Reverend Julius Trimble, the Cleveland District Superintendent, and Reverend Benita Rollins, the Youngstown District Superintendent. The entire church was invited to the wedding and the reception. On that day the sanctuary was filled. As part of the ceremony, the two District Superintendents, as well as the bride and groom, served communion to the congregation.

Following the hour long service, the wedding party and congregation moved to Fellowship Hall for the reception. Reverend Carson was the first active pastor of Brecksville Church to be married in the church while serving as pastor.

## **Russell E. Martin**

At the 1998 East Ohio Conference Reverend Dr. Russell E. Martin was appointed to Brecksville Church as Senior Pastor. Rev. Martin graduated from Baldwin-Wallace College and received his seminary training from Duke Divinity School, where he also received an advanced seminary degree. He earned his Doctor of Ministry degree from the Methodist Theological School in Ohio.

Joining Rev. Martin in ministry, Rev. Ralph Dessem came back to the Brecksville United Methodist Church in October, 1998 as a part-time Pastor of Membership Care and Cultivation. After his retirement from the full-time ministry, Rev. Dessem served as visitation pastor in Medina and later in Hudson. During those years he continued to live in Brecksville, so this return to the Brecksville Church was an opportunity to continue this work closer to home.

In the beginning of December, Ye Old Madrigal Feast was held, featuring the Madrigal Singers of Brecksville-Broadview Heights High School directed by Charles Valley. Sponsored by the choir, this was the last official party of the year.

Christmas Eve services in 1998 took on a new look. Activities started at 5 P.M. with a Family Pizza Supper followed by a Family Worship service. The object was to offer a family with young children an intergenerational worship opportunity. The service included carols, a video designed to tell children the Story of Christmas and the making of a Christmas ornament in the pews. The 7 P.M. service was a similar service, but without pizza. The Children's Choir participated in that service.

At 9 P.M. the Christmas Eve worship service included a narration of the Christmas story led by Bill Webb and Reverend Martin. The service also included carols, choral and handbell anthems, an anthem by the Noteables directed by Donna Box, and a message by Reverend Martin. The theme of the service was "The Lights of Christmas." The service ended with the congregation lighting candles.

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<sup>1</sup> The house was torn down and proper drainage, lighting and paving brought the total cost to \$111,550.

## EPILOGUE

Brecksville Church has a rich history of dedication and devotion to the Lordship of Christ and to His service. From 1823, when Lemuel Bourne and a group of settlers founded the Brecksville Methodist Society until the present day, the faithful Methodist people of Brecksville have persevered in their desire to glorify God through deeds of Christian service. For most of the first 110 years the church did not have a full-time pastor; the laity had to be strong and determined. They knew the church was important to their lives and to the community, and they made sacrifices to see that it survived and grew.

In 1853 when the church held a revival, they were surprised to find most of the people who were converted and joined the church were their own children. This event was a wake-up call for the Brecksville Methodist Society helping them to realize that children are important. They are the church of the future.

In 1909 the congregation almost doubled the size of the church building to provide more room for Sunday school, worship and fellowship. This addition also included a bell tower for the new bell.

In the early 1930's, when the District Superintendent told Rev. Maly that he might have to close the church, the new pastor and a new layman, George R. Klein, teamed up to rescue the church from financial and numerical defeat. From that time on the clergy and laity have worked together to build a strong church. For many years their goal was to increase the church membership so that never again would it face the possibility of closing. The increased membership

posed a new but very welcome challenge—the church building was too small.

The next generation concentrated on building an entire new church building. Because they had not forgotten the lesson learned in 1853, they first built an Educational Building so their children would be welcome. Being Methodists they also included a full-sized kitchen because Methodists like to eat. Due to fiscal constraints and differing opinions on the type and size of structure to be built, the building program took twelve years to complete.

At last, with the completion of the third and last stage of the construction, the Brecksville United Methodist could be the church with adequate space for its mission and ministry. Many of the activities and programs designed to let the church serve the world continued through the building phase, but now these and more could be addressed with increased vigor. Missions outreach increased, and various organizations within the church found hands-on mission projects to be an invigorating way to involve more people in this ministry. This new direction began with FISH, but that was just the beginning. Chippewa Place, Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity, Appalachian Service Project, and Stephen Ministry are just some of the ways the church has reached out to others.

Spiritual growth was also vital for effective discipleship. For 175 years the church has relied on the clergy to move the laity in that direction. In the 1990's, several movements brought lay people into partnership with the clergy in the emphasis on spiritual growth. Stephen Ministry, Disciple Bible study, the Walk to Emmaus and the Saturday evening ecumenical service at Chippewa Place all involved lay people in one form or another of spiritual growth.

As Brecksville United Methodist Church faces the threshold of a new millennium with its challenges and opportunities, the same Lord who walked with Lemuel

Bourne in the founding of the Methodist Society will accompany the people who call themselves Methodists in Brecksville into the future. The challenges will be met and overcome; the opportunities will be acted upon and victories realized. Above all, God will be glorified through the faithful witness of his people at the Brecksville United Methodist Church!



#### The Ladies Aid Society

Members of the Ladies Aid on the porch of Mrs. A. L. Chavalier' home in 1897.

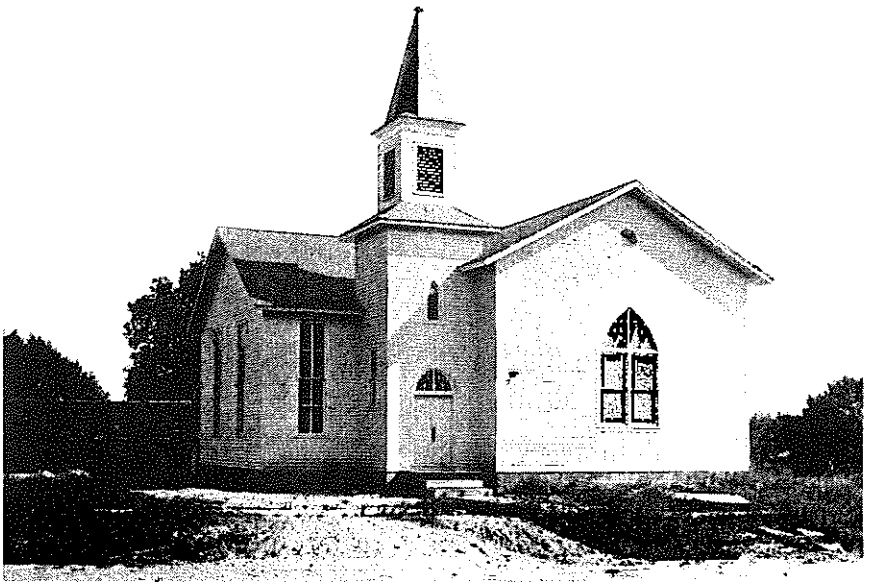
Back row, left to right: Mrs. Millett, Mrs. W.H. Brenton, Mrs. W.H. Newland, Mrs. A.L. Chavalier, Mrs. W.U. Noble, Mrs. Ella Kusse, Middle row: Mrs. Marshall, Mrs. R. Bourme, Mrs. A. Butler, Aunt Anna McCreery, Mrs. P.D. Brush, Front row: Aunt Ella (Mrs. C.G. Newland), Mrs. Geo W. Green



#### The First Church Building

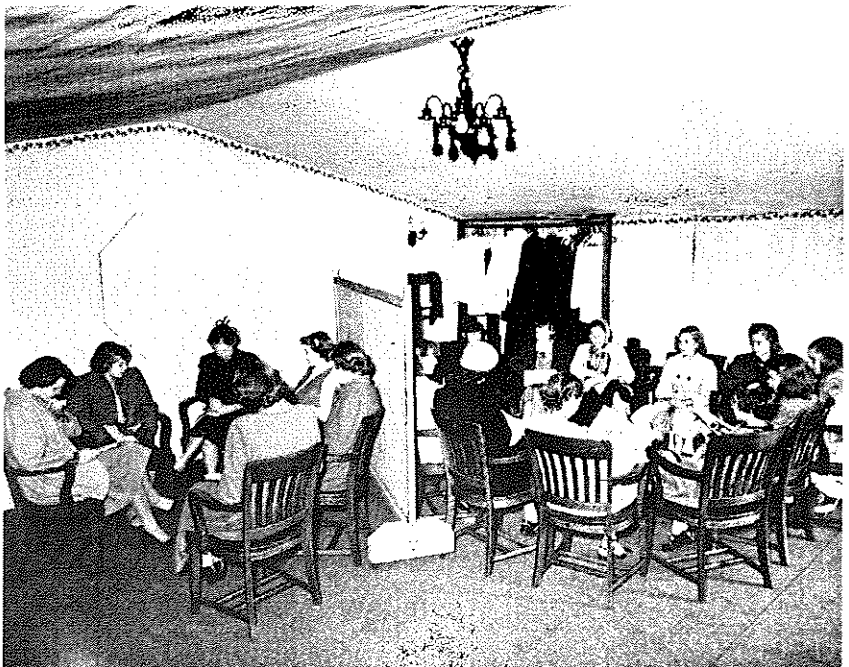
This picture shows the original church building as it was just prior to the 1908 major remodeling project. Notice the bell in the belfry and the double doors at the front.





The 1909 Remodeled Church Building

This picture was taken right after the remodeling project was completed. It had the look of a new church building. The front was completely different with the new tower entrance and the large stained glass window. The inside was very formal with the new reed organ in the center of the chancel.



The Upper Room

This picture shows the upper room with its sloping ceiling being used as a classroom but it was also used for other meetings. It was created in 1936.



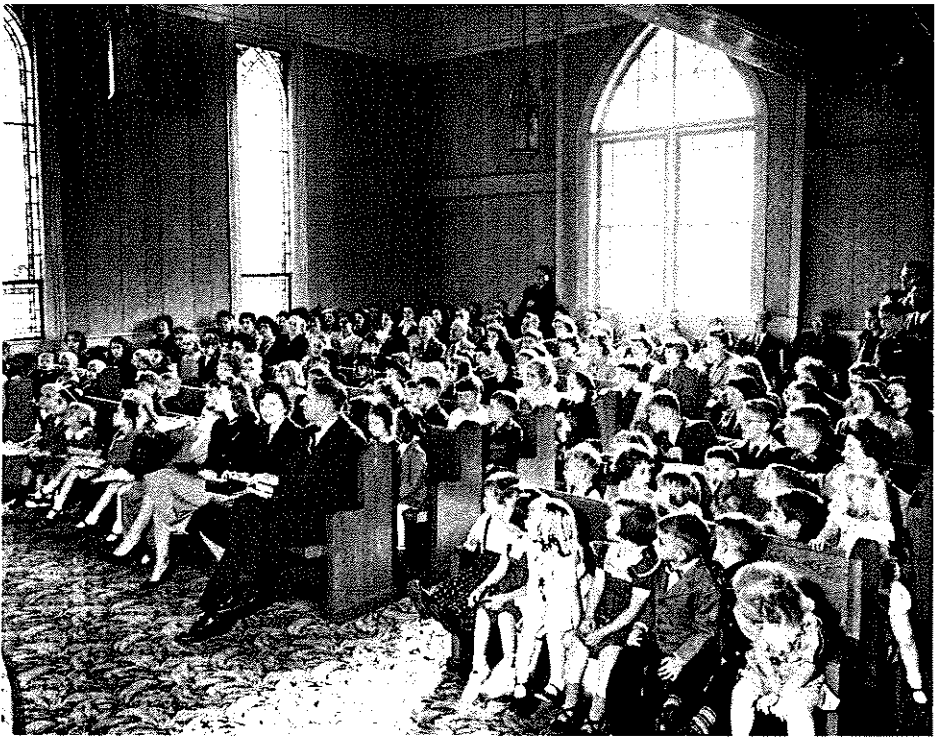
#### A Fellowship Hall Dinner

A potluck dinner in Old Fellowship Hall Left to right: Hugh Gremb, Florence Gremb, David Johnstone, Bertie Johnstone, Alberta Rose, Rev. Paul Giffin (standing) Sherwood Metzger, Janet Metzger, Winifred Schaal, Norma Kusta, Frank Kusta, Charles Rose (Lay Leader)



#### Ground Breaking for the Sunday School Building

Dr. Charles Teter turns the first shovel of earth for the new building. Behind him is Neil Frerick and Mrs. Teter with Rev. Amendt looking on.



The Old Church Was Full

This picture was taken to show that we needed a new church building because the church was full.



Edith and Charles Amendt

Edith and Charles standing in the road in front of the old parsonage



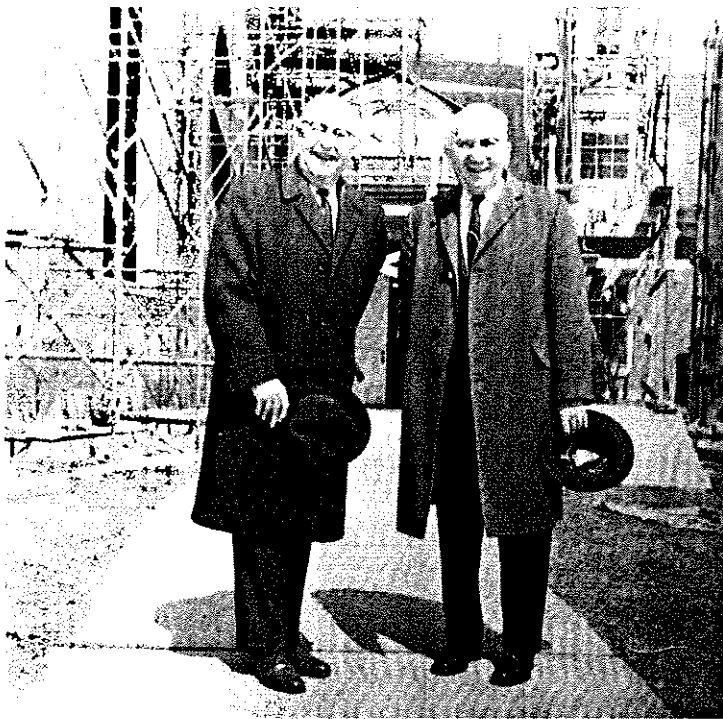
The Last Sunday in the Old Church Building

Mrs. Virginia R. Klein and daughter, Virginia Gerseny after the ground breaking for the new Fellowship Hall. The parsonage on the right and the church on the left were both razed soon after this picture was taken.



A Service In New Fellowship Hall

On June 11, Fellowship Hall was consecrated and regular church services were held once again in our building.



The New Sanctuary Under Construction  
Russ Skym and Harry Bremmer standing on the front sidewalk next to the scaffolding.



The Chancel Decorated for Christmas  
For several years a Christmas tree decorated with Chrismsons was placed in the chancel at the hanging of the greens.

## Appendix A

### Brecksville Methodist Clergy

Note: For many years Conferences were held in August or September and appointments ran from October 1 to September 30 the following year. This continued until 1941, when the Conference was moved to June. From then on appointments ran from July 1 to June 30 the following year.

Conference	District Circuit/Charge
<b>Ohio Conference Urbanna September 4, 1923</b>	
1823-1824 James Rowe	Ohio Dist; Brunswick
1824-1825 Solomon Manear & John Pardo	Portland; Brunswick
1825-1826 Orin Gilmore & Joab Ragan	Portland; Brunswick
1826-1827 John Crawford & James C. Taylor	Portland; Brunswick
1827-1828 Solomon Manear & Adam Poe	Portland; Brunswick
1828-1829 James McIntire & Henry O. Sheldon	Portland; Brunswick
<b>Michigan Conference 1836-7</b>	
1829-1830 J. McMahon & L. Gurley	Portland; Brunswick
1830-1831 Jacob Dixon & E. Yocum	Portland; Brunswick
1831-1832 John Hazzard & J. Wilson	Portland; Brunswick
1832-1833 James Wilson & Lorenzo Bevans	Portland; Brunswick
1833-1834 John Janes, & H. M. Shaffer	Wooster; Brunswick
1834-1835 J. Janes, & J. Donaldson	Wooster; Brunswick
1835-1836 G. Elliott, & G. Armstrong	Wooster; Brunswick
1836-1837 G. Elliott, & J. Porter	Wooster; Brunswick
<b>Northern Ohio Conferene 1st Sesion Norwalk 9/9/1840</b>	
1840-1841 D. M. Conant & J. S. Ferris	Norwalk; Brunswick
1841-1842 D. M. Conant & John Mitchell	Norwalk; Brunswick
1842-1843 John Mitchell & S.B. Guiberson	Norwalk; Brooklyn
1843-1844 W. Brock & J. Tibbals	Norwalk; Brooklyn
1844-1845 W. Brock & J.L. Johnson	Norwalk; Brooklyn
1845-1846 H. L. Parrish & W. H.S eeley	Norwalk; Brooklyn
1846-1847 H. L. Parrish	Norwalk; Brooklyn
1847-1848 W. Runnells	Norwalk; Brooklyn
1848-1849 W. Runnells	Elyria; Brooklyn
1849-1850 W. B. Disbro	Elyria; Brooklyn
1850-1851 John Kellam	Elyria; Brooklyn
1851-1852 William M. Hitchcock	Elyria; Brooklyn
1852-1853 Charles Thomas & Glezen A. Reeder	Elyria; Brooklyn
1853-1854 Charles Thomas & Philip Plummer	Elyria; Brooklyn
1854-1855 Marcus Newton & Douglas Reagh	Elyria; Brooklyn
1855-1856 J. M. Wilcox	Cleveland; Brooklyn
1856-1857 Glezen A. Reeder & Asbury B. Castle	Cleveland; Brooklyn

1857-1858 Ira M. Hitchcock & Albert C. Hurd  
Cleveland;Brooklyn

1858-1859 Herman Safford Cleveland;Brooklyn

1859-1860 M. L. Starr & F. N. Robertson Cleveland;Richfield

1860-1961 Abraham K. Owen & George N. Hutchins  
Cleveland;Richfield

1861-1862 Abraham K. Owen & Simon P. Jacobs  
Cleveland;Richfield

1862-1865 John W. Thompson Cleveland;Richfield

1865-1866 James Evans Cleveland;Richfield

1866-1867 James Evans & Samuel Weatherby Cleveland;Richfield

1867-1868 W. Ben Taggart Cleveland;Richfield

1868-1870 Andrew Pollock Cleveland;Richfield

1871-1872 Edward Thompson Cleveland;Richfield

1872-1873 W. W. Smith Cleveland;Richfield

1874-1876 William S. Fitch Cleveland;Richfield

1876-1877 Simon T. Dunbar Cleveland;Richfield

1877-1878 Tracy L. Waite Cleveland;Brecksville

1878-1880 Moses B. Mead Cleveland;Brecksville

1880-1881 I. W. Dwyer Cleveland;Brecksville

1881-1884 A. R. Palmer  
Cleveland;Richfield&Brecksville

1884-1885 F. D. Stevick  
Cleveland;Richfield&Brecksville

1885-1886 B. D. Jones  
Cleveland;Richfield&Brecksville

1886-1887 Eurotus H. Bush, & J. N. West  
Cleve;Richfld/Brecksville/Bath

1887-1888 C. F. Irish Cleveland;Brecksville

1888-1889 M. W. Reece  
Cleveland;Bennetts&Brecksville

1889-1890 C. E. Helman Cleveland;Brecksville

1890-1891 John F. Hastings Cleveland;Brecksville

1891-1893 Perry D. Brush Cleveland;Brecksville

1893-1895 A. C. Whitmore Cleveland;Brecksville

1895-1897 George W. Pepper Cleveland;Brecksville

1897-1898 W. H. Bryenton Cleveland;Brecksville

1898 No Appointment!

1899-1901 Jonathan Zook Cleveland;Brecksville

1901-1903 G. W. Houk  
Cleveland;Richfield&Brecksville

1903-1904 H. S. Chase  
Cleveland;Richfield&Brecksville

1904-1905 A. P. Boyd  
Cleveland;Richfield&Brecksville

1905-1907 Wesley Feldwish  
Cleveland;Richfield&Brecksville

1907-1909 Clair T. Goodwin  
Cleveland;Richfield&Brecksville

1909-1910 J. R. Carpenter  
Cleveland;Richfield&Brecksville

1910-1911	Arthur C. Horrocks	Cleveland;Brecksville
1911-1912	M. Beyer	Cleveland:Richfield
<b>North-East Ohio Conference 1912</b>		
1912-1913	H. B. Replotal	Cleveland;Brecksville
1913-1915	F. E. Kline	
	Cleveland;W.Richfield& Brecksville	
1915-1916	Robert Halsall	
	Cleveland; W.Richfld& Brecksville	
1916-1918	William G.Walters	Akron;W.Richfield&
	Brecksville	
1918-1924	William G.Walters	Akron;Brecksville
1924-1926	William G.Walters	Cleveland;Brecksville
1926-1928	William G.Walters	
	Cleveland;Brecksville&N.Randall	
1928-1929	E. D. Barnett	Cleveland;Brecksville
1929-1930	Stewart Morse	Cleveland;Brecksville
1930-1933	Franklin J. Nichols	Cleveland;Brecksville
1933-1936	Arthur S. Maly	
	Cleve;Brecksville&Elsmere-Lee	
1936-1937	Robert Clemmons	Cleveland;Brecksville
1937-1939	Robert Dieterich	Cleveland;Brecksville
1939-1942	John Bartrug	Cleveland;Brecksville
1942-1947	William H. Phillips	Cleveland;Brecksville
1947-1949	Paul C. Giffin	Cleveland;Brecksville
1949-1962	Charles C. Amendt	Cleveland;Brecksville
1963-1972	William K. Hogg	Cleveland;Brecksville
1965-1966	William Hodder	Cleveland;Brecksville
1966-1971	Donald Shank	Cleveland;Brecksville
<b>East Ohio Conference 1969</b>		
1971-1974	Ralph Dessem	Cleveland;Brecksville
1972-1984	David H. Patton	Cleveland;Brecksville
1974-1975	Jim Henery	Cleveland;Brecksville
1975-1979	F. William Ross	Cleveland;Brecksville
1980-1983	Thomas Barson	Cleveland;Brecksville
1983-1986	Vernon Shepherd	Cleveland;Brecksville
1984-1996	Thomas S. Taylor	Cleveland;Brecksville
1986-1988	James K. Powell	Cleveland;Brecksville
1988-1995	James F. Winkler	Cleveland;Brecksville
1995-1996	Michaela A. Brown	Cleveland;Brecksville
1996-1998	Adriel B. Thrash	Cleveland;Brecksville
1996-1998	Sharon C. Carson	Cleveland;Brecksville
1998-	Russell E. Martin	Cleveland;Brecksville



## Appendix B

### Sons sent into the ministry.

1. Joe Avann 1867
2. James Louzecky 1892
3. George Exoo, Jr. 1964\*
4. Kenneth J. Baillis 1971 Received  
on Trial 1974 Admitted  
Full
5. James Kuse 1971 Received on  
Trial 1973 Admitted  
Full
6. Robert Tschannen-Moran 1977# Received on  
Trial

\* Became a Unitarian Minister in Pittsburg

# Became a UCC Minister now the Pastor of  
First Congregational Church in Columbus

## Appendix C

### Church Employees

Unfortunately the church has never maintained any systematic personnel records. The list of employees is, therefore, not 100 % accurate. Most of the early information was obtained from Official Board Minutes, Sunday Bulletins, Program Notes and news clippings. More recent information was obtained from The Good Word.

#### Custodians

Carroll Bourne (sexton)  
1926-48  
Mrs Pearl Foster  
1943

Sylvia Bilek (housekeeper)  
1946-50  
Mr. Lutton 1952  
Jack Frerick 1953  
Walter Diefenbach  
1954

Dan Guist  
1955

Edwin & Gladys Trnka

Ernie Wiese 1964-75

Bradley Parker 1975

Jean Novak 1980-84

Ken Duttko 1985

Chuck Kvasnicka  
1986-89

Ohio Church Service  
1989-91

Tim Spieth 1991-93

Maggie & Alex Hegadus 1993-98

Bill Ellenberger  
1998

**Secretaries**

Mrs. Ralph Biggs  
1955-58

Marian Banks 1958-60

Ruth Schroeder 1960-71

Eleanore Anderson  
1971-83

Helen Diefenthaler  
1977

Marjorie Meek 1975-80

Pat Gordon 1985-

Joan Quade 1987-

Nancy Nahodil 1980-93

Chris Mondry 1993-98

Irma J. Agnew 1998-

**Choir & Music Directors**

Note: Some of the Choir  
Directors and Organists served  
several times in different  
years.

Fanny Snow Knowlton 1887-  
1905

C. C. Code 1913-

Dorothy Fuller 1934-36

Stanley Hall 1938-

Mr. Wadsworth 1944-45

Ruth Chase 1945-46

Mildred Heineman  
1942-48

Albert Thut 1946-

Marguerite Burnett  
1948-

Virginia Gerseny  
1954-59

Eleanor Anderson  
1959-83

Donna Box 1983-95

Michael Dougherty  
1995-96

Richard Nelson 1996-98

**Organists**

Fanny Snow Knowlton 1887-  
1905

C. C. Code 1913-?

Dorothy Fuller 1934-36

Ruth Heineman 1936-37

Betty Klein 1937-44

Mildred Heineman  
1942-48

Marguerite Burnett  
1948-62

Betty Clark 1954-62

Marilyn Claus Fraser  
1963-75

Jean Martin 1975-76

Jeanne Ross 1976-89

Katherine Baker  
1976-85

Chris Toth 1985-87

Christopher Loy  
1987-88

Bill Ellenberger  
1988-

**Directors of Christian**

**Education**

Alice Warburton  
1975-76

Barbara Moore 1976-80

Sheila Kane 1980-83

Karen Kraushaar  
1983-87

Nancy Betz Yates  
1987-91

Linda Coatoam 1991-

## Appendix D

### Eagle Scouts from Troop175

1931	Robert D. McCreery	1976	Mark R. Stouffer
1947	Charles T. Yoder	1977	John Wittenauer
1954	Richard Martin	1978	R. Hadden Hipsley
1958	Roy J. Riblet III	1980	Robert A. Martin
1959	Edward J Kramer Jr.	1980	Cary Moorhead
1959	Timothy J. Kramer	1981	Theodore F. Groth
1961	Lee T. Keenen	1981	Kris A. Nystrom
1961	Dennis O'Braitis	1982	David Hogsten
1961	Russell Tonkin	1983	Phillip J. Kucera
1962	Andrew J. Black	1985	Carl Dever
1964	Michael J. Jarus	1985	Michael A. Packard
1964	Bruce G. Ondrey	1985	Troy D. Frank
1965	David R. Roeger	1986	David P. Cofta
1966	Paul F. Blaine	1986	Colin S. Moorhead
1966	John Broughton	1986	Ralph R. Waszak
1966	Gregory T. Hutchinson	1987	David M. Franz
1966	Thomas Hutchinson	1989	Gregory E. Franz
1966	Robert A. Merring	1989	Thomas G. Miller
1967	William L. Hutchinson	1990	Christopher P. Derrick
1967	Robert J. Lang	1990	Paul Meyer
1967	Leslie P. Matheson	1991	Christopher C. M. Fowler
1967	Robert L. Porter IV	1992	Kevin P. Hughes
1967	Richard P. Reeve	1992	Jonathan H. Kruszynski
1967	Carl Roeger	1993	Bryan G. Schmidt
1968	John M. Blaine	1993	Bryan D. Holt
1968	Terry L. Marsh	1993	Jason Fitzwater
1969	Daniel J. Broughton	1993	Aaron Clark
1971	Peter D. Moore	1993	Shannon M. Burns
1971	Jeffrey R. Simpson	1994	Benjamin R. Gorris
1971	Robert R. Tschannen	1995	Nathan A. Clark
1972	Nevin Eilbeck	1995	Robert D. Vanderbilt
1972	Robert W. Broughton	1996	Christopher A. Zakelj
1972	Robert P. Gerseny	1996	Sjoerd A. VanKeulen
1972	Christopher J. Lang	1996	Jerome J. Blayne
1972	James N. Thacker	1996	William C. Ramga
1974	Richard C. Stambaugh	1997	Adam Szuter
1975	Ronald L. Juhas	1997	Brian White
1975	Michael A. Krew	1998	John Hutchinson
1976	David A. Butler	1998	Joshua Papp
1976	C. Thomas Hogsten Jr.		

## Appendix G

### **.Appointments and Symbolism in the Chapel at Chippewa Place**

Green backdrop cloth: gift of resident Mrs- Ellen Cook,

Solid oak lectern: commissioned by and gift of Mrs. Norma Kusta,  
resident.

Copper flame: materials came from the roof flashing of Brecksville United Methodist Church. It was the spirit of that congregation that made Chippewa Place a reality. Chippewa Place will always owe its life and existence to a spirit and faith that burned in the hearts of people like Bill Klein, who provided seed money for the facility; and David Patton whose vision took on the reality of Chippewa Place. The flame was made by David Patton, retired pastor, Brecksville United Methodist Church.

Biblical significance of the copper flame: Exodus 3:2 11 ....

suddenly the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him (Moses) as a flame of fire in a bush.,' This is the familiar story of Moses to whom God spoke in the flame of the burning bush. While Moses was a man of God, it is plain that he needed an occasion in which he could visualize and experience the presence of God. It was the turning point for him and for the nation of God's people. That includes all of us; though we are not all Jews, the freedom from the past and the commandments for the future apply to us all. This all came about because a flame attracted one man-to-hear.the voice of God. Exodus 27:20-21, starting in Exodus and going on into Leviticus, the rules for the establishment of the temple and the priesthood are established, along with all of the other rules for the altar drapes, etc. There is this request that pure olive oil be provided for the lamp and that it always be kept burning. The flame on that lamp has become known as the light of His presence. It burns in many sanctuaries today that when a person enters alone they can see the light and know that God is there. God speaks to those who will

listen; when we are called aside from our routines in life, as Moses was, we will see the flame and know God is there. God is in this place; the flame symbolizes a small effort to remind us as we would pause to pray in the chapel, at any time of the day or night.

Candles: one pair of tube candles gift of Mrs. Norma Kusta; gold candleholder pair, gift of Mrs. Annie McMaster. One pair of tube candles and green glass bases, blessed by and gift of Fr. Edward Camille, St. Basil Catholic Church; given by Mrs. Catherine Sansone, all three women residents.

Organ: gift of the Brecksville Kiwanis

Altar Cloth: material donated by Ken MacKenzie, symbolism's selected by Mrs. Catherine Fitzgerald, embroidered by Mrs. Marjorie Meek, lined and finished by Mrs. Karoline MacKenzie, all residents.

Symbolism on the altar cloth:

Cluster of five crosses: representation of the cross on which Jesus was crucified. Lamb: symbolic of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

Sand Dollar: known as the Holy Ghost shell. Markings recall events in the life of Christ. Cross with letter " IC XC NIKA" stand for Jesus Christ conquers. Cross with Orb: Christ's dominion over the World. Christmas Rose: the nativity of our Lord. Chalice: used to symbolize the Passion. Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. Cross Crosslet: stands for the spread of the Christian faith to the four corners of the Earth. Each cross represents (in color) one of the races in the world: red, yellow, white and brown-skin people.

Family Bible: gift of resident Mrs. Rachel Ackerman.

Second Bible: gift of Cuyahoga Valley Community Church.

Large Print Bible: gift of Ruth and Bill Long

Praying Hands (white ceramic): gift of Mrs. Ann Babcock4  
residdnt'..

Bookcase: gift of Mr. and Mrs. William Long and Miss Sue Long,  
friends. Advent figures (Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, Shepherds, Wisemen, sheep, camel, donkey, Angel) made by a group of Chippewa Place residents 1988. Ken MacKenzie made the wooden

manger. Hymnals: development of the hymnals was made possible

by Brecksville United Methodist Church. As hymns were requested by residents, or seasonal hymns needed to be added, they were ultimately collated, meticulously bound, and kept in good order by resident Miss Katherine Zimmerman.

Candlesnuffer: gift of resident Mrs. Elmira Schottke.

Three papermache Wisemen: an. anonymous gift.

## Appendix H

### Property transactions:

Almost as an afterthought, on May 23, 1835, the land that the new church occupied was sold to the church. (Quit Claim Deed Volume S-17, page 307, from Thomas and Marana Allen to Eli Osborn, Hugh Stephenson, Rusha Bagley, Thomas Mosure, Eliphalet Wyatt, Lemuel Bourne, Zina Osborn Trustees To erect a house of public worship Consideration \$10.)

On June 9, 1843, The Brecksville Methodist Society acquired another piece of land for their church building. (Warranty Deed Volume 373, page 529 from Ezra Wyatt to Trustees (filed 12/24/1884) " To have and to hold unto them the said Methodist Episcopal Church so long as they, as a Methodist Episcopal Church, shall occupy said land with a meeting house for public worship, and their own proper use and behoof." )

On October 5, 1889, yet another piece of land was turned over to the little church on Warranty deed Volume 818, page 114 for \$55 from James E. and Addie Wyatt to the Methodist Episcopal Church of Brecksville.

On November 27, 1901, another little piece of land was deeded to the Brecksville Methodist Episcopal Church recorded in Volume 818, page 115 of CC Deed Records from Breck, Foster, Eaton, Chatfield, Parsons, Choates to the M. E. Church Society.

The Village of Brecksville purchased from the Methodist Episcopal Church, a parcel having a frontage of 44.5 feet on Public Square. The cost was at the rate of \$35 per front foot for a total of \$1557.50. This is the land where the Department of Human Resources now (1998) stands. This transfer was recorded February 10, 1927, Land deeded to Village of Brecksville Volume 3558 , page 619 A year later another small parcel of land was transferred to the Village. Land deeded to Village of Brecksville Volume 3743, page 397 on April 5, 1928.

On October 28, 1941, the property transaction was recorded for the parsonage and land behind church on Warranty deed Volume 5407, page 125. The Brecksville Realty Co., Mary E. Schmitt to George R. Klein, George Jackson, Charles Teter, Wilbur Wheeler, Charles Rose, Walter Coleman, Raymond Perry, Henry Cook and Ralph Biggs, Trustees. This conveyance to the grantee Trustees is for the use and benefit of Brecksville Methodist Church and of the Methodist Church in trust that said premises shall be used, kept, maintained and disposed of as a place of divine worship of the Methodist Ministry and members of the Methodist Church and/or as a place of residence and occupancy of the preacher of the Methodist Church who may from time to time be appointed in said place; subject to the

usage's and Discipline of the Methodist Church as from time to time authorized and declared by the General Conference of said Church and by the Annual Conference within whose bounds said premises are situated.

The deed for the 4 1/2 acres of land North of the church was filed on January 4, 1952, and then George R. Klein presented the land to the church as a gift. (George R. and Virginia R. Klein by Warranty deed Volume 7437, page 496 to M. J. Cutter, G. R. Klein, Bruce McCandles, R. W. Biggs, N. T. Frerick, R. W. Perry, W. H. Phillips, M. R. Foreman, Trustees)



## Index of Names

### A

Abraham, Lucille Beears	90
Ackerman, James	63
Ackerman, Rae	63
Adams, Mrs. L. D.	16n
Adams, Augustus	11
Akers, Cora Wyatt	7, 16, 27n
Allen, William	16n
Amendt, Rev. Charles	36, 39, 43 44, 49n, 54, 72n
Anderson, Eleanor	45, 51n, 60, 68, 84
Andree, Bob	85, 86
Anthony, Annie	89
Avann, Mr. A.	10, 16n
Avann, Rev. Joe	28n
Avann, William	16n

### B

Bain, Jean	75n
Bain, Jim	75n
Baker, Katherine	68
Barnes, Alice Wyatt	27n
Barnes, J. J.	16n
Barr, Mrs. J.	16n
Barrett, J.	79
Barson, Rev. Tom	67, 71, 106
Bartrug, Rev. John W.	6, 27, 48n
Bass, Robert L.	86
Becker, Adela	77
Beckwith, Dolly	89n
Beears, Lucille	90
Benedict, Marjorie	93
Benninghoff, Aileen	43
Benninghoff, William	43, 46, 51n
Berryman, Warren	74n
Betz, Abbie	91
Betz, Bill	91
Biggs, Betty	29n, 50n, 89n
Biggs, Ralph	27, 29n, 40, 79
Bittner, Leona	77n
Blaine, Robert	80
Blanchard, William	88n
Blodgett, Walter	92
Bourne, Carroll	20, 27n
Bourne, Delia Waite	1
Bourne, Harley	30
Bourne, Lemuel 1, 2, 16n, 27n, 110- 111	
Box, Donna	68, 102, 108
Bream, Alfred	81

Breck, Theodore	6, 22
Breen, A. M.	22
Breen, Joe	20
Bremmer, Dell	65
Bremmer, Harry	31, 3, 41, 65
Broughton, Robert	81
Brown, Dr. Earl R.	49n, 83
Brown, Rev. Michaela	102
Bruce, Clifford	72n
Bruce, Miriam	70
Burnett, Marguerite	28n
Burt, John	72n

### C

Carmitchel, Bertha	72n
Carpenter, Rev. J. R.	15
Carson, Rev. Sharon	103, 105, 107
Chase, Ruth	28n
Christian, John	63
Clark, Betty	50n
Clark, Rev. Tom	105
Clark, Richard	50n
Clemmons Rev. Robert	25, 39
Cleveland, James	16n
Coatoam, Linda	93
Code, C. C.	27
Coleman, Walter	48n
Combes, Willard	45, 48
Conant, John	78
Conyers, Jack	80
Cook, Henry	48n
Courtney, Dr. Robert H.	43, 54
Cozby, Bill	41
Craig, Bill	80
Craig, Marjorie Meek	87-88
Crandell, Dorothy	48n

### D

Dennis, Harry	77n
Dessem, Rev. Ralph	59, 60, 63, 75 106, 107
Deunk, Bob	80
Dever, Ruth	90
Dieterich, Betty	28n
Dieterich, Dr. W. W.	22, 23, 25
Dieterich, Rev. Robert	26, 27, 28n, 62 106
Dillon, P.	16n
Dillow, Mrs. E.	16n
Dougherty, Michael	102
Dow, Lorenzo	1
Duchac, Edwin	88n
Dunbar, H. C.	16n

## E

Echelberger, Harry.....	50n
Echelberger, Mrs. Harry.....	50n
Edwards, Pres.....	79
Ellenberger, Bill.....	64, 92, 95, 102
Elmore, Will.....	77n
Ensinger, Ed.....	81
Evans, Rev. James.....	10
Exoo, George.....	50n, 56, 63

## F

Faulk, Deann.....	84
Fish, Sam W.....	79
Foote, R. A.....	16n
Foote, G. W.....	16n
Fowler, Chris.....	95
Fox, Joann.....	84
Fredrick, Liz.....	104
Frerick, Neil.....	41, 49n
Fuller, Dorothy.....	24
Fuller, Millard.....	98

## G

Gasser, Mable.....	27
Gerseny, Bob.....	81
Gerseny, Melvin.....	50
Gerseny, Virginia Klein 21, 32, 35, 37 49n, 68, 83	
Gezze, Becky.....	95
Giffin, Essie Hicks.....	33, 38
Giffin, Rev. Paul.....	33, 39
Green, Ernest.....	79
Green, John.....	20

## H

Hamilton, Evan B.....	49n
Harhay, Kenneth.....	64
Harned, Mr.....	34
Harris, Mayor B. W.....	22
Heineman, Mildred.....	28n0
Henery, Rev. James.....	64
Hitchcock, A. C.....	16n
Hobart, Mildred.....	84
Hodder, Rev. William.....	56
Hoertz, Leota.....	41, 43
Hoertz, Norman.....	48
Hoffman, Betty.....	86
Hogg, Joseph R.....	72
Hogg, Rev. William K. 43, 44, 47, 48 51n, 56, 61, 62,	
Hogg, Evangeline.....	43
Holmes, Rev. Charles.....	65
Horne, Sam.....	95

Horne, Sue.....	48
Horrocks, Arthur C.....	19
Hoyt, Rev. F. S.....	11
Hruby, Jack.....	79
Hruby, Jerry.....	79
Hunt, C.....	16n
Hurst, Susan.....	95
Hutches, Rev. George N.....	10

## J

Jackson, George.....	26, 28n, 48n
Jacobs, Rev. Simon P.....	10
James, David.....	80
James, Henry (Hank).....	62, 72n, 76n
James, Mrs. W.....	16n
Jarvela, Arne.....	39, 40, 48

## K

Kaufman, Barbara.....	84
Kearns, Bishop Francis E.....	54
Keaton, Bishop Jonathan D.....	106
Kemble, Blanche.....	52n
Kemble, Edward.....	52n
Kissel, Don.....	77n
Klein, Betty Noble . 22, 26,27n, 83, 89n	
Klein, Bill.....	33, 79, 85, 86
Klein, George R. 21, 23, 24, 26, 31, 34 41, 43, 48n, 49n, 64, 66, 85, 109	
Klein, Johanna.....	28n
Klein, Mrs. Virginia (see Gerseny)	
Klein, Rhoda.....	89
Kline, Rev. F. E.....	27
Koepfel, Betty.....	75n
Kraft, Edwin Arthur.....	92
Kraushaar, Karen.....	69, 84, 93
Krew, Michael.....	64
Kubicek, Robert.....	39

## L

Lancaster, Rev. Kendall.....	106
Lang, Chris.....	81
Latimer, Mr.....	16n
Loesch, Ann.....	84
Long, Bill 43, 46, 47, 51n, 58, 62, 75n 76n, 93, 98	
Long, Ruth.. 58, 88, 98, 99, 103, 104	
Louzecky, Rev. James.....	22
Loy, Christopher.....	92

## M

MacKenzie, Ken.....	87
Maly, Elsie Conway.....	24, 28n, 39
Maly, Rev. Arthur.....	23, 24, 35, 39

Markley, Gordon	86
Marsh, Betty	75
Marsh, Jim	75
Martin, Rev. Dr. Russell E.	107-108
Matheson, Les	80
Maxwell, David	102
McCloskey, Alice	41, 48
McCoy, Fran	65
McDonel, Ruth Dever	90
Mead, Rev. Moses B.	11
Merrill, Reginald Frey	28n
Meyers, Elwood	41, 48
Miller, Ed	81
Mitchell, Rev. John	12
Montieth, Jack	50n
Moore, Barbara	77n, 93
Moore, Dan	77n
Moore, Peter	81
Moore, Tom	77n, 80, 81
Morris, George	43, 51
Murphy, Rev. C. S.	22

## N

Nahodil, Nancy	69
Nelson, Dr. Richard	103
Nenadal, Andy	40, 41
Nichols, Harriett Viets	27n
Nichols, Rev. Franklin J.	21, 22
Nichols, Steven	88
Noble, Mrs. W. U.	24, 27n, 64
Noble, Eudora	27n
Noble, Mrs. Sarah May	27n
Noble, Philura	27n
Northrup, Ed	51n
Norvill, L.	16n
Norville, Anson	13
Norville, Mrs. Anson	13

## O

Oakes, Mrs. Caleb	16n
Owen, Rev. Abraham K.	10

## P

Palmer, Rev. A. R.	11
Parobek, Andrew	72n
Patton, Rev. David	61, 62, 70, 76n 77n, 84-87, 106
Peck, Ethel	71
Perry, Robert	79
Pheil, Edna	27n
Phelps, Ferrel & Dorothy	75n
Phillips, Kathleen Hessin & Wm.	39
Phillips, Marie	46

Phillips, Rev. William	31, 32, 39, 49n, 62
Plummer, Rev. Philip	8
Porter, Bob	80
Powell, Rev. James	70, 90, 106

## R

Rajkovich, Nick	95
Rechkemmer, Rob	95
Reed, Maggy	27n
Ring, David	2
Roberts, Walt	77n
Roche, Doris	84
Roeger, Dick	80
Rose, Charles	48n
Ross, Jeanne	68
Ross, Rev. F. William	65, 106
Rowe, Rev. James	2

## S

Salisbury, Dolly	58
Schaal, Mr. Marion	40
Schroedel, Beverly	86
Schroeder, Ruth	59
Scudiere, Alice Catherine	50n
Scudiere, Luke	80
Shank, Rev. Donald	56, 60, 106
Shepherd, Rev. Vernon	68, 106
Silverman, William A.	86
Simon, Rev. P. Jacobs	10
Simpson, Jeff	81
Sladky, Carol	68
Smith, Austin	58
Snow, Fanny	22
Spieth, Otto	42, 44-46, 48, 49n, 50n 51n, 52n
Steiger, Larry	79
Stenger, Dorothy	68
Stroup, Rev. P. B.	15
Swasey, William	2
Szekelyi, Joyce	98

## T

Taylor, Chef	80
Taylor, Rev. Thomas	70, 86, 90, 91 95, 100
Teter, Dr. Charles	48n
Thacker, James	81
Thiel, Ward	47
Thomas, Rev. Charles	8
Thompson, Rev. John W.	10, 28n
Thrash, Dr. Adriel	103
Toth, Chris	68, 71
Tschannen, Bob	75n, 80

Tschannen, June .....	90
Tschannen, Laurel .....	68
Tschannen, Rev. Robert R. ....	81
Turney, Mrs. Ann H. ....	16n, 27n
Tyler, Mr. ....	16n
Tyler, Mrs. A. ....	16n

**U**

Urdzik, Steve .....	95
---------------------	----

**W**

Wadsworth, Doris .....	83
Waite, Mrs. Benjamin .....	4
Walters, Rev. William G. ....	23
Warburton, Alice .....	65, 93
Watkins, A. ....	16n
Watson, Dr. David Lowes .....	105
Webb, Bill .....	80, 108
Webb, Dean .....	79

Werner, Bishop Hazen G. ....	49
West, Rev. John N. ....	11, 12
Widick, Michael J. ....	86
Wiese, Ernie .....	75n
Winkler, Rev. James F. ....	92, 95
Wyatt, Eliphalet .....	2, 16n
Wyatt, Ezra .....	2, 6, 16n
Wyatt, L. F. ....	16n
Wyatt, L. W. ....	16n
Wyatt, Lafayette .....	5, 27n
Wyatt, Marilla .....	10
Wyatt, S. E. ....	16n

**Y**

Yates, Nancy Betz .....	936
-------------------------	-----

**Z**

Zeyer, Rev. William .....	107
---------------------------	-----



*The Church by Chippewa Creek* tells the story of the Methodist people of Brecksville from its earliest beginnings in 1823. Faithful settlers met in a cabin to worship God. In 1832, the construction of the first church building on the present site of Brecksville United Methodist Church was started. As years passed, the faithful and resilient Methodist people persevered and slowly grew. The structure was remodeled and finally replaced with the current buildings to house the more than one thousand congregants who call "The Church by Chippewa Creek" their spiritual home. The book is about much more than buildings; it is about the people who were and are the church and their faithful response to God's call upon their lives. Their journey of faith is carefully traced through the triumphs and tragedies of their one hundred and seventy-five year history. Challenges arise and are met; leaps of faith are taken which issue in growth and advancement of the cause of Christ. The history is alive with the vitality of their faith.

Enjoy reading this compelling history of God's people who call themselves Methodists and who, by God's guidance and blessing, bring a life *The Church by Chippewa Creek*.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

William F. Long is the historian of the Brecksville United Methodist Church and he has been active in the church since 1956. He has served in a variety of capacities within the life of the church family and participated in several of the events detailed in the church's recent history.

A mechanical engineer by training, Mr. Long has spent two years researching the background of the Brecksville Church in preparation for the writing of *The Church by Chippewa Creek*.