# A History of Some Assemblies of Christians in the United States and Canada

Robert L. Peterson

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# Foreword

Today is built on yesterday. We are creatures of time, and although God has put eternity in the hearts of His people, each moment of time He gives us is lived out under the influence of what is past. . . history.

It is often said that the main thing we learn from history is that we don't learn anything from history. There is a measure of truth in this over-generalization, reflected in the fact that some negative patterns of behavior are repeated generation after generation.

In addition to our chronic human failure to learn what we should from history, it appears that the influence of existentialism in the Western world has robbed us of an appreciation for history. History doesn't make sense, the existentialists say. Admittedly, the complex events and obscure motives in any period of history, along with unknown or unavailable pieces of the puzzle, pose a great challenge to the student of history.

In the late 20th century mind-set, there is another ingredient to complicate things. The revisionist mentality distorts historical material in various ways with a political or ideological agenda that sadly destroys the integrity of transmission, and particularly hurts the upcoming generations.

All of this notwithstanding, there are many who value history. Whether we recognize and admit it or not, today is indeed built on yesterday. The past does influence the present and the future. Whether we are taken up with our "roots" or not, impulsive decisions as well as wise

decisions are made in a setting of and are influenced by that which is past.

Bible-believing people have a particular respect for history. The Bible is a historic document. While it speaks with supernatural authority about the future, a high percent of the Bible is history. In Romans 15:4-6, the apostle Paul tells us that only with a strong foundation in what Scripture tells us about the working of God in the past, along with the hope Scripture offers for the future, can people be prepared to live in the present for the glory of God.

The introductory statements in the book of Acts add another important perspective. The recorded events in the early months and years in the history of the Church are seen as a continuation of what Jesus began to do and teach during His earthly ministry. Even though the canon of inspired Scripture was complete when the Apostle John concluded the book of Revelation, the history of the Church continued. The ascended Christ continues His work by His Spirit and by His Word throughout the history of the Church even to our present day. We may regret the ingredients of Church history that are not honoring to God and His Work but we must not underestimate the fact the the program of our Lord in this age is the accomplishment of that which He predicted when He said, “I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18). Christ is building His Church, and the record of this eternally significant work is of great value.

There is a small and relatively unnoticed part of church history that is the focus of the book you hold in your hand. Classed by historians as a “nonconformist”

movement,[1] with a beginning in England and Ireland in the 1820s, the Brethren movement has developed as part of the mainstream of evangelical Christianity in the last two centuries. Within thirty years this movement extended to North America, and has continued to be active to the present.

For those of us who identify with the Brethren movement, the primitivistic approach to church doctrine and function is significant. The attempt to duplicate the New Testament Church in modern times is a worthy commitment.

This historical work seeks to establish a record of the local assemblies, some no longer in existence, that are part of the Brethren movement in North America. There is a particular focus of those assemblies that are sometimes identified as Christian Brethren. Since these autonomous assemblies do not have an organizational "headquarters" to co-ordinate or control their activities, there has been no central record of historical details of their existence or function. In this book, Robert Peterson establishes such a record.

I am personally grateful for the efforts of Mr. Peterson and for many who assisted him by contributing information from various areas. Mr. Peterson has done much of his research in the archives of Brethren material in the library at Emmaus Bible College, and we at the College have encouraged him in this work. But this historical piece is his work, and we commend him for making a valuable contribution to recorded information about the assemblies of North America. May the readers of this document be motivated to renew

their efforts to honor Jesus Christ and the doctrine of the New Testament Church in theory and practice.

Dan H. Smith, Ed.D.

President, Emmaus Bible College

## Notes

1. Carins, Earle E., Christianity through the Centuries, Zondervan Publishing House, 1954, pp. 436-437.

## Acknowledgments

Many people, for many years, have discussed the need for a record of the Brethren assemblies in North America. David Rodgers, long associated with Emmaus Bible College and assemblies in Iowa and elsewhere, is one of these, and is the person who has done most to promote and encourage the writing of this book. He has provided continuing encouragement and has been an invaluable help in identifying and contacting people who could provide information, and urging their cooperation.

Emmaus Bible College, in the persons of Chancellor Dan Smith, Librarian John Rush, and several of the faculty, has been indispensable to this project: the Chancellor with his encouragement; the Librarian with his willingness to put the resources of the library at my disposal and for answering lots of questions; and the faculty who in several ways have encouraged me along the way and critiqued portions of the manuscript at various stages of writing.

Many respondents to the questionnaires sent to them have done much more than provide information about their own assemblies; they have provided assistance in the form of information and contacts for other assemblies. Many people have patiently responded several times to my repeated questioning.

When I have been reasonably satisfied with a draft for a certain region of the continent, I have sent it to a reviewer for comments, corrections, and additions. The assistance provided by the reviewers has been invaluable. Many reviewers have supplied a great amount of additional information and have obviously

spent a considerable amount of time and energy in doing so.

To all these people, indispensable to this project, I give my heartfelt thanks. Special thanks go to my wife Jane who has traveled with me on various tasks related to the gathering of information; she has helped in interviewing people and has been patient and tolerant as I have put this all together.

And finally, I give my thanks to my Creator and Savior, Who put it in my heart to undertake this task, and Who has sustained me during its progress.

# Introduction

On several occasions, Moses told the readers of his book of Deuteronomy to remember – to remember what God had done for them, to remember from whence they had come, to remember the promises and covenants of God. As William Oliver[2] has phrased it, Moses wanted to encourage forward movement as a result of a backward glance.

That desire among many of us has given rise to this book.

## Who is this book about?

The question is not simple to answer. Briefly, we are writing about the histories of a linked set of evangelical local churches that are autonomous but not independent, whose central teaching is that of the Bible, whose central worship is at the Lord's Supper, and whose governance is by plural leadership.

The word 'linked' is important here. The churches whose histories are described in this book are part of a network of local churches that have no central governing body. They interact through shared speakers, Bible Camps, Bible Conferences, Bible Schools, and many publications. They follow a pattern of governance and worship similar to that found and espoused in the New Testament. They typically celebrate the Lord's Supper each Sunday. They promote the New Testament principle of the priesthood of all believers; that is, neither clergy nor any others are required as intermediaries between God and the believer.

The characteristics mentioned in the first paragraph of this section are met by a great number of churches, such as some of the nondenominated Bible Churches. But many of these are not a part of the network of local churches discussed in this book, some because they are not aware of them, and some by choice.

This network of churches began in the 1820s in England and Ireland, and soon spread to the rest of Britain, the European continent, and the world. It was a ‘back to the Bible’ movement, a breakaway from the idea of a state church, and a repudiation of the legalism then prevalent among many of the independent churches.[3] It was a movement convinced that the Body of Christ should not be divided into sects or denominations.

Believers should take no name that tends to separate them. They are Christians, and brothers and sisters in Christ. Thus, these churches collectively prefer not to have a name. They are not a denomination, if by that term one means having a central headquarters controlling the local churches. Nevertheless, a name is practically inevitable when writing about a particular subset of Christians or churches. Many of these linked churches refer to themselves as ‘brethren.’ Although that term is very general, ‘brethren’ is the term I will use throughout the book to mean specifically the linked churches under discussion. These churches have a habit of calling their churches ‘assemblies,’ another very general term; in this book ‘assemblies’ always means these individual linked churches.

This book is about those linked churches in North America. A convenient directory is provided by Walterick Publishers of Kansas City and called Address Book of

Some Assemblies of Christians.[4] That directory contains a listing of the great majority of these churches in North America and the Islands of the Caribbean.

The ‘brethren movement’ divided into two sections in the 1840s along church governance lines. One segment felt that a ‘circle of fellowship’ of local churches should exist to which those local churches were collectively responsible. Others disagreed with this, asserting that local autonomy is of greater importance, and these are the ‘open brethren.’ This book is about the ‘open brethren.’

The churches organized into circles of fellowships are sometimes labeled ‘exclusive,’ which refers to their concept that all churches except those in their circle are excluded from their intimate fellowship. I make no attempt in this book to chronicle the history of the ‘exclusive’ assemblies on this continent. However, interaction between the two groups has been significant in the past, and in several instances I find it necessary to include a brief discussion of some ‘exclusive’ assemblies.

However, even the ‘open brethren’ churches are not uniform in their attitudes and procedures. For purposes of this book, I have included any assembly considering itself to be ‘open brethren’ and which has responded to our request for information.

## Why This Book?

This book is intended as a source book of the origins of some assemblies in the United States and Canada. It is nonjudgmental. I have chosen not to analyze or editorialize. This is primarily a book of names, dates, how individual assemblies formed, and ‘the way things

were,’ though I have tried to make it readable as a story. At the end of this volume, I compile a few statistics gleaned from this study, but leave it to the reader to interpret.

Several books have been written about the history of the brethren, but none has been devoted to a history of individual assemblies in North America. Many people have lamented this lack, particularly about the pioneer assemblies, or those with interesting histories that soon may be forgotten.

David Rodgers, Assistant to the Chancellor of Emmaus Bible College, has felt and expressed this need perhaps as much as anyone. When he first approached me about undertaking the task of developing the histories of assemblies on the North American continent, my first reaction was to point to the book My People, by Robert Baylis, then recently published.[5] Soon we realized that Mr. Baylis’ book did not address local assemblies, but rather took a broad sweep, beginning with the origins of the movement in the 1820s in England and Ireland, discussing brethren philosophies, institutions, and personalities, and their successes and failures.

So I was not able to shrink from the task on the grounds that it had already been done. Then I pointed out that it had taken me two years, with my wife’s help, to write the history of just the Colorado assemblies.[6] And I threw up other objections: many assemblies will not want their history told; memories are inaccurate; people and assemblies will be hurt because they have been omitted or because I didn’t get the story right, or because I said too much or didn’t say enough. But these hesitancies gradually faded as I prayed and considered

the project. And so at the beginning of 1996, I committed before the Lord to undertake the work.

When we first undertook the writing of this book, we (David Rodgers, myself, and others) felt that by contacting perhaps a few dozen key people who knew much about developments in past generations, we would have gotten most of the information we needed. But we quickly learned that this was not to be, for several reasons. Some of the people so identified claimed to be too old to help. Some did not reply. Some gave information at odds with that from others.

We realized that we had to greatly expand our information base, and so we have contacted, or attempted to contact, every assembly in Canada and the United States listed in the Walterick Address Book for 1998. We have also contacted assemblies listed in later editions and have contacted people from assemblies listed in earlier editions, assemblies no longer in existence. Many of the current respondents have supplied information about those assemblies. Much information has been obtained from journal articles, newspaper articles, and from books.

Though some portions of the book will read as a story, much of it is simply documentary, containing not much more than names and dates. The coverage is uneven and there are significant gaps. About 45% of the assemblies contacted in the U.S. and about 38% in Canada have responded to our requests for information. That is why the word ‘some’ is used in the title. This book describes those assemblies that have responded to our inquiries, or that we have knowledge of from other sources. Among those who responded, some gave minimal

information, while others sent much material. The latter naturally get the most space in this book. The space given here to a particular assembly is thus not necessarily indicative of the vigor or importance of that assembly.

Many respondents have sent me histories of their assemblies that were prepared previous to or concurrent with the present project. These are identified in the appropriate sections. The reader will find much more information in those histories than I have been able to put into this book, much of it quite fascinating. These histories may be available from their authors or their assemblies.

In many cases, knowing that I couldn't improve upon the writing used in those histories or reports, I have used phrases or sentences taken from those histories, with little editing. Articles published in magazines such as Letters of Interest and Uplook have been consulted, and in some cases I have used wording that I found there.

## Terminology and Titles

The brethren have developed their own words and phrases for many functions of the church, and so it is useful to identify some of these here.

Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Supper, Remembering the Lord, the Remembrance Meeting are all ways of identifying what most churches call communion. In this book, I use initial capitals to identify this service of worship.

In fellowship is brethren nomenclature for those people who are accepted as 'members' of the assembly according to some standard, always with the

understanding of a God-honoring life, but sometimes with a more restricted meaning. It is the near-equivalent of membership in other churches.

Commendation is similar to the idea of ordination as used by many churches, though ‘ordination’ there has a more formal connotation. Not all assemblies use the word ‘commendation’ in the same way. Commendation, at its root, means an expression of confidence by the leadership of the assembly that the person is suited to a task, having been identified by the Holy Spirit as such. In some assemblies, it means little more than that; in others it implies an obligation to provide at least some financial support and perhaps a requirement of accountability to the commending assembly. I use the word in this book if the responding assembly has used it.

In most cases, I do not identify by name the workers commended to foreign fields or to ministry on the continent, for several reasons: there are thousands of these workers and their names can be found in various missionary publications; on occasion commendations have been withdrawn; in many cases, the list of names sent me was stated to be incomplete. So I usually avoid giving these names. However, exceptions have been made in a few cases for well-known missionaries from earlier days or because some other connection made it seem desirable.

Many of the people in this history have the secular or theological title “Dr.”, which can refer to Ph.D., Th.D., Ed.D., M.D., or other degrees. In this book, all such titles are omitted. Within the Christian community, I believe we should not use such titles, for they tend to separate

us into classes. I use the neutral designations Mr., Mrs., and Miss, and their plural forms.

Many of my respondents use the very acceptable terms “brother” and “sister.” I certainly have no objection to this, but repeated and continual use make the narrative seem stilted after a while. So I usually replace them with Mr., Mrs., or Miss, or use no designation at all.

The size of the various assemblies is of interest to many people. Exact size is difficult to measure, since most assemblies keep no formal membership lists. Sometimes different respondents have estimated differing numbers for the size of their assembly. The numbers can also change significantly from one year to the next. Nevertheless, I feel that the size of the assemblies collectively is of general interest, and in those cases where such numbers have been supplied, I use them, and attempt to say whether the number refers to average attendance or to those in fellowship. And when I say, for example, “About 100 are in fellowship. . .” it must be understood that this refers to the situation near the end of the 20th century.

Names of individuals were often presented to me with variant spellings, and I have attempted to use the spelling I think most likely. The starting dates of assemblies frequently differ by a year or two, depending on the respondent.

Without question, many errors will be found in this book, along with significant omissions. Readers are encouraged to contact the author with such information. If a sufficient number of significant changes and additions become available, a published (paper) edition may be created at a future date.

## Notes

2. William Oliver, in Our Heritage: Assembly History in the Philadelphia Area, March 7, 1999; audio tape

3. There are many books about the origins of the brethren. Two among the more recent ones are The Origins of the Brethren, by Harold H. Rowdon, Pickering & Inglis (1967); and History of the Brethren Movement, by F. Roy Coad, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan (1968). The biography of Robert Chapman by the author, Robert C. Chapman, A Biography, by Robert L. Peterson, Loizeaux Brothers Publishers, New Jersey (1992) also has useful information about origins.

4. Address Book of Some Assemblies of Christians, Walterick Publishers, Kansas City, Kansas; published annually.

5. My People, by Robert H. Baylis, Harold Shaw Publishers, Wheaton, IL (1995).

6. Christian Assemblies on Mountain and Plain, a History of the Brethren in Colorado, by Robert L. Peterson, self-published, Boulder, CO (1992).

## About the Author

Robert L. Peterson lives in Boulder, Colorado with his wife Jane. They have five grown children and many grandchildren. Mr. Peterson is an elder at Fairview Bible Chapel, east of Boulder, and is the author of several books and articles on Christian themes.

He obtained a Metallurgical Engineer degree from the Colorado School of Mines in 1952, followed by a Master of Science degree from Lehigh University in 1954. He was then drafted into the U.S. Army in which he served for two years. He returned to Lehigh and received a Ph. D. in theoretical physics in 1959.

He joined the faculty of Case Institute of Technology in Cleveland in 1959, and then the research staff of the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Boulder, Colorado in 1963. He is the author of some 60 scientific papers on topics in magnetism, optics, semiconductors, and superconductors.

He retired from his research career in January 1996, and has continued his career in writing.

# U.S. – Pacific

This section contains the States on the Pacific: California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and Hawaii, in that order. The 1999 edition of the Walterick Address Book lists 99 assemblies in this grouping.

## California

We begin with a description of assembly history in San Diego, then move northward through the state.

In 1904, J. G. Traggardh with his wife and son moved to San Diego from Pittsburgh. In the next year, William Brunner and family arrived in San Diego from their farm in Iowa. The two families met and soon began to Break Bread and study the Bible together each Lord's Day at the Traggardh's home. When others joined them, the group moved to a larger home on the corner of 12th and Market Streets.

The need for yet larger quarters necessitated planning for the erection of a hall, the first assembly building in San Diego. Though the families possessed little means, they were able to obtain a vacant lot on Texas Street, north of University Avenue. William Brunner and others with building experience made the Bible Truth Hall in San Diego a reality.

In most of the ten nearby homes, at least one person, and in some cases a whole family, came to know God's salvation. Many sought fellowship at the Bible Truth Hall, and the building was soon outgrown. In about 1919, a vacant lot was obtained on the west side of 30th Street just north of University Avenue. The hall was

moved to this site and enlarged. Living space was added to provide lodging for itinerant evangelists, and here the brethren enjoyed happy fellowship for a number of years. They engaged in evangelistic work, visiting homes and holding street meetings at the corner of 30th and University each Sunday evening before the Gospel meeting. The young people visited the hospitals and jails to sing and pass out tracts. Many gathered in homes for Bible study and Christian fellowship.

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A group including the Brunners left Bible Truth Hall after some disagreements. They bought an old Baptist church building on Marlborough Street with ample auditorium and living space to accommodate visiting preachers. This became known as the Marlborough Gospel Hall.

The assembly grew; during World War II, more than 200 were meeting in a building meant for 100. Busses were purchased to bring children to Sunday School. Busses and automobiles were used to pick up servicemen stationed in San Diego and bring them to the meetings at Marlborough. Many of the servicemen were saved as a result.

The group met at Marlborough Gospel Hall until 1957, at which time they relocated to a building on Laurel Street in San Diego and changed the name to Laurel Bible Chapel. The servicemen's ministry continued at Laurel for a number of years. The strong Sunday school program for children and young people that had been developed at Marlborough was continued at Laurel until about 1971. Hundreds of children were brought on five

busses. Evangelism was a primary emphasis in all the children's programs.

From 1939 to 1963, the brethren at Marlborough/Laurel had summer camp programs at Forest Home in the San Bernardino Mountains in conjunction with other southern California assemblies. When the rent became too high, those involved in running the camp program formed a corporation with brethren from other assemblies in southern California and with financial help from Steward's Foundation, purchased Verdugo Pine Bible Camp in the Los Angeles National Forest. Laurel Bible Chapel continues to use Verdugo Pines.

The large number of Hispanics in the San Diego area led to the formation of a Spanish-speaking congregation meeting at Laurel Bible Chapel. George Mora began the work among the Hispanics by means of a Spanish Bible Class at Laurel, involving an unsaved neighbor family whose children were attending the Sunday School. All of the ministries among children have provided a means of reaching the parents of the children involved; some have been saved as a result – for example Jaime and Letty De La Vega, serving the Lord in Guadalajara, Mexico.

As Laurel grew and thrived in the 1970s, thought was given to hiving off to other areas of the county. As a consequence, East County Bible Fellowship in El Cajon was formed in 1976. In the mid 1980s a second hive-off occurred – Cornerstone Bible Church in La Mesa. Although Cornerstone ceased to function at the end of 1994, it was instrumental in the salvation of a number of people and in the spiritual growth of many of those who formed this group.

Both hive-offs involved the loss of sizeable groups from Laurel, but the Lord gave them a vision for reaching out materially and spiritually to the increasing number of refugees, especially those from Southeast Asia. Many of those were saved. The refugee ministry resulted in the establishment of a Cambodian and a Laotian group of believers at Laurel Bible Chapel. At the beginning of 1994 a group of Korean believers, originally from the Los Angeles area, asked to meet at the Chapel.

As a consequence of the formation of the other ethnic groups, the number of believers meeting at Laurel in 1990 exceeded the number which existed in the 1970s when Laurel was almost exclusively a Caucasian church.

The existence of five ethnic groups at Laurel has produced unique situations and problems. From the beginning, all the ethnic groups preferred to conduct meetings in their own language, and this was agreed upon to allow worship unhindered by problems of language comprehension and cultural differences. Separate meetings facilitated evangelistic efforts to reach people of the same ethnic background. Breaking Bread together two or three times a year is arranged, at which time all five languages are used. Elders from all of the groups meet together only to deal with special situations which affect all the groups.

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East County Bible Fellowship in El Cajon began in 1976, a hive-off from Laurel Bible Chapel in San Diego. Meeting first in Nebo Hall in La Mesa, the believers soon moved to the El Cajon Women’s Club, then to the La Mesa Masonic Lodge, and finally to their own building at 496 3rd Street, El Cajon. The Fretz, Mear,

Warren, Linfoot, Coombs, Harris, and Even families were those starting the assembly. Over the years, elders have been Charles Fretz, Richard Fretz, Gary Coombs, Jim Catalano, Henri Warren, and Clay Berry. About 80 adults and youngsters attend East County Bible Fellowship today.

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James Mader had been saved while serving in the U.S. Army Air Corp in World War II. After his discharge, he attended the Providence Bible Institute in Rhode Island and Prairie Bible Institute in Canada, followed by another short course in practical training in Los Angeles. Then he came to San Diego as the Assistant Director of the Christian Servicemen's Center (CSC), with a desire to go full-time into the Lord's work.

The CSC was run by the Christian Businessmen's Committee, and one of its board members was Ralph Barker. He and his wife were in fellowship at Marlborough Gospel Hall. Mr. Barker lived north of San Diego in a converted barracks and operated a dairy farm on Mission Gorge Road. He and his wife had started a Sunday School in their home before World War II. The parents would bring them in, then waited for the classes to finish. Karl Hammond from Los Angeles had on occasion come to down to preach to the parents. Mr. Barker, having observed James Mader preach at the CSC, asked him to preach to the adults, and this was the start of what would soon become the Mission Valley Community Chapel.

In the early 1950s, Mr. Barker replaced the barracks with a purchased submarine trainer, which after remodeling became the present home of the Chapel. Mr.

Mader was by then teaching Bible classes in various homes. The population in the area was increasing. One by one, people were saved and the need for a church home became evident. An assembly was formed and incorporated in 1953 as the Mission Valley Community Chapel.

Allied Gardens had been established after the war to provide affordable housing for veterans. The wife in a family in the new church did much visitation in the Allied Gardens area, assisting the young families. Many of them came into the assembly. In 1954, the assembly bought a 35-passenger bus to pick up children in Allied Gardens. The bus was also used as a Sunday School room.

Clyde and Kenneth Hammond, brothers of Karl Hammond from Los Angeles, were early leaders in the assembly besides Mr. Mader and Mr. Barker. Doug Thomson from New Zealand was much involved in the work.

The assembly has always had active youth programs, and its focus today is prayer and missions. It has sent missionaries to many foreign countries, including countries in Africa and Indonesia, and to the Philippines, Paraguay, and France. About 110 adults and children attend Mission Valley Community Chapel today.

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Several other assemblies came into existence in San Diego in these years. The Front Street Gospel Hall was located near the present University Hospital in Hillcrest. This assembly later moved to a new location on Twain Avenue in Allied Gardens. The Imperial Avenue Gospel Hall in Logan Heights continued for a time.

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In the fall of 1893, W. J. McClure held tent meetings in Los Angeles. Following those meetings, he and others established one of the earliest assemblies in the state, meeting at 806 Temple Street. The assembly later moved to 1231 West Jefferson Boulevard and built the West Jefferson Gospel Hall, where they remained for many years. In 1959, the assembly relocated a short distance away to 11138 Venice Boulevard in Culver City, and became the Culver City Gospel Hall. However, was still called the West Jefferson Boulevard Assembly in the history written for the 1993 centennial celebration.

Conferences were a steady feature of the assembly, the largest being in the mid 1930s when more than 300 people attended. For many years, the West Jefferson assembly held Saturday night street meetings, and sponsored tent meetings of one to two month’s duration.

In 1926, John and Nettie Ruddock were commended by the West Jefferson assembly to the Lord’s work in Guatamala and Honduras, continuing for 52 years. Also commended in 1926 were Ida and Margaret Last, to the West Indies. Harold and Mabel Richards were commended to the work in Alaska in 1937.

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In 1922, John Ruddock of the West Jefferson Gospel Hall began a work among the Spanish-speaking people of East Los Angeles, mainly among the children. In 1924, he was joined by Adam Thropay, and many were saved in these efforts. In 1950, a Spanish speaking assembly, the East Los Angeles Gospel Hall, was established, and from it a children’s work was begun in El Monte.

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The Pomona Assembly was started at about the time that the West Jefferson meeting began. When the Gospel tent used in the Los Angeles meetings by W. J. McClure was taken down in September 1894, it was shipped to Pomona, 40 miles to the east, where a small assembly was already meeting in a home. A campaign was opened there, continuing nightly until December. By the end of the campaign, 18 were meeting as an assembly in rented space. In 1957, the Pomona Gospel Chapel was erected at 1041 N. Weber Street, with a main auditorium seating 182. Henry Petersen and William Bush had meetings at the official opening of the chapel.

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In the early summer of 1925, brethren from the West Jefferson meeting put up a Gospel tent on the north side of York Boulevard at Avenue 48, with Sam Greer and William Grierson as the preachers. Because of the large number of converts, property at 1100 North Avenue 54, Highland Park, was donated for construction of a church building. The Avenue 54 Bible Chapel in Los Angeles was completed by December 1925.

The Lord raised up many workers from the Avenue 54 assembly. Among the earlier workers were Sam and Dorothy Gallagher, Irene Gallagher, and Harold and Mabel Richards (the latter also commended by the West Jefferson meeting) in the 1940s and 1950s, and Dorothy Cornish to the work in Guatemala in the 1960s. Many others have been commended to the Lord’s work locally and abroad.

The Avenue 54 assembly supported a Missionary Home and an Old Folks Home in South Pasadena in the 1940s

and 1950s. In the early 1960s, the property at 5415 Buchanan Street, adjoining the Chapel, was purchased to be used as a Missionary Home. From the 1970s, the Avenue 54 Christians have run an inter-city mission to under-privileged kids. In 1983, classrooms and a small auditorium were added to the Chapel, and a Missionary Apartment was completed and opened. The small auditorium is used by Iglesia Evangelica de Highland Park, and the dining room is used by the Avenue 54 Korean Assembly. Currently, about 110 are in fellowship in the English Meeting.

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Iglesia Evangelica de Highland Park in Los Angeles began in the late 1970s as a neighborhood Bible study conducted by Stan Hanna and then Irene Gallagher. In 1989, Richard and Nancye Yarrall, who had been commended by assemblies in New Zealand for the Lord's work in Colombia, arrived to work among the Latinos in the Los Angeles area. Being re-commended to this work by the New Zealand assemblies and Avenue 54 Bible Chapel and Westminster Bible Chapel, they commenced working with the Iglesia Evangelica de Highland Park group. Visitation and Bible studies among Latinos in the Westminster area led to the formation of Iglesia Cristiana de Westminster, CA closely associated with Westminster Bible Chapel. (See Ethnic Section)

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The assembly in Fullerton, in the Los Angeles area, had its start in 1955. A few believers living in Orange and Los Angeles counties and attending Elm Avenue Gospel Hall in Long Beach met to discuss starting a testimony in Orange County. Agreeing on the need, they held their

first meetings as the Garden Grove Assembly in a rented store in Garden Grove, with Sunday School and the Family Bible Hour in the morning, and Breaking of Bread in the evening. Wednesday evening meetings were at a motel that could accommodate the twenty or so people. For a number of months Harold Kesler came from Riverside on Wednesday evenings for ministry at the Garden Grove Assembly.

A partially completed cement-block house in the area, on Dale Avenue south of Katella Boulevard, was found to be for sale and was purchased. Volunteer work made the building suitable for meetings, and a house trailer was converted into three Sunday School rooms.

Around 1960, a larger facility on two and one half acres in Fullerton was found to be available. The decision to move the testimony to Fullerton was unanimous, and Grace Bible Chapel came into being. To facilitate the transportation of Sunday School children to Fullerton from the former areas, two old buses were purchased and operated each Sunday morning.

After several years, those living south of Lincoln Boulevard decided to start a new testimony in that area, and rented a Club House on Harbor Boulevard in Westminster. This move reduced the number in the original congregation by over 50%, but with so many moving out of Los Angeles to Orange County at that time, it did not take long to build the numbers back up again. In a few years, expansion and remodeling of Grace Bible Chapel were necessary again.

In 1977, Bruce Merritt took early retirement to take over administrative responsibilities at the assembly. In 1985, Kenneth Daughters, then attending BIOLA

College, took over these duties until he left to attend Dallas Seminary. Then Andrew Holloman, a graduate of BIOLA, worked full time for a year, setting up the office, supervising the youth groups, and visiting the Christians in their homes. After that, Harold Barrington, who had helped Laurel Bible Chapel in San Diego reorganize, came to Fullerton for several months, running the office and visiting most of the congregation and making recommendations. The assembly declined for a time, but recovered under the leadership of elders Christo Ayoub, Micahel Carter, Charles Cox, and Robert Norris. Grace Bible Chapel in Fullerton is active today.

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In 1947 several brethren from Goodyear Gospel Hall in Los Angeles began a Sunday school work, pioneered by Karl Hammond, among the children on West Adams Street. Interest and attendance grew and a building was erected, which became La Brea Gospel Chapel. The work prospered, and the building was later enlarged to accommodate the Sunday School.

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The Christians at Goodyear Gospel Hall also helped to establish the Bethel Gospel Hall in Los Angeles in March 1953. By 1954, more than 50 were in fellowship at Bethel. The assembly disbanded in the early 1980s.

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In 1951, construction of the spacious Western Assemblies Home for the Aged was completed at Claremont, 15 miles from Los Angeles. The brethren living in the area then constructed Claremont Gospel Chapel for assembly meetings. In 1954, about 80 were

in fellowship and the Sunday school and Family Bible Hour attendance was over 100. In 1961, when the assembly fellowship had grown to 150, the Christians added a Sunday school wing.

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The assembly in Riverside, east of Los Angeles, began in 1925, the offshoot of tent meetings held by evangelists John Hunt and Herb Harris. A small assembly was formed soon after. John Hunt convinced his brother, A.E. Hunt, to move into the area to help teach and support the newly formed body. The Christians purchased a small church building on 6th and Park, calling it the Riverside Gospel Hall. They met there from the late 1920s to the early 1940s. Believers traveled from the cities of Ontario, Redlands, and Hemet to fellowship in the assembly. Among the others who began the Riverside Gospel Hall were the Argleban, Newman, Bourbonnais, Leest, Scott, DeYoung, Hill, and Manchester families.

In the 1940s, because of gas rationing brought about by World War II, many people could no longer attend. The Gospel Hall was sold, and the remaining believers began meeting in neighboring Rubidoux, after having some tent meetings there. Harold Kesler moved his residence into Riverside during the war years. He and L.G. Winfrey devoted much time to the work, and shared leadership with M. Mellinger, C. Bishop, N. Moore, and Jack Bourbonnais during that period.

In 1952, the assembly constructed the Riverside Gospel Chapel at 8045 California Avenue. Later they changed its name to Bethel Chapel. The assembly has more than

200 adults and youngsters in attendance, and has commended several missionaries to foreign fields.

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San Bernardino Gospel Chapel, about 50 miles east of Los Angeles, was completed in late 1952. This testimony resulted from the pioneering labors of Karl Hammond. In 1952, John Hathaway of the La Brea Gospel Chapel in Los Angeles moved to San Bernardino to devote his time and effort to pastoral care of the San Bernardino assembly.

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From San Bernardino, Karl Hammond moved to Montebello to open a business and to establish a testimony there, about 10 miles from Los Angeles. The Montebello Assembly was formed, meeting in the Women's Club Building. It has disbanded.

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In 1951, several of the saints attending the Riverside assembly began a work in Colton, east of Los Angeles, between Riverside and San Bernardino. They purchased and remodeled a church building, calling it Colton Gospel Chapel, and met as an assembly there. It is still active.

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In 1950 several of the believers in Glendale and the San Fernando Valley bought an old Jewish synagogue and remodeled it into Glendale Gospel Chapel. Tom Westwood through his radio ministry was instrumental in bringing several of the Lord's people into the Glendale assembly.

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With approval of the Glendale assembly, several young men and women from there began a new testimony in the San Fernando Valley, the Valley Gospel Chapel, North Hollywood. The assembly met initially in the YWCA building on Tujunga Avenue on Sunday and in various homes for the mid-week prayer and Bible study meeting. It has disbanded.

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In 1952, several families in the Valley Gospel Chapel, North Hollywood assembly held Bible classes and cottage prayer meetings in the west end of the San Fernando Valley. In fellowship with the North Hollywood brethren, these families began an assembly testimony in the Woodland Hills/Canoga Park area in July 1952. Meeting at the local Women's Club, 7515 Winnetka Avenue, the Christians called it West Valley Gospel Hall. They changed the name to West Valley Gospel Chapel in 1958, still at the Women's Club. In 1961, the Christians built their own West Valley Bible Chapel at 20703 Chase Street.

The principal people starting the assembly include Dennis Mellinger, William Glaser, Dale Munier, E. Davies, Joseph Morrow, Jr., Frank Westfall, George Rake, Charles Lundsford, David Hunt and others. In active leadership over the years have been Dennis and Larry Mellinger, Jack Bitler, George Rake, David Hunt, Ben Werle, Archie Ross, David Brooks, Howard Muir, and Clarence LeLong, and others. The assembly has about 35 adults and children.

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About 100 miles up the coast from Los Angeles at Santa Barbara, evangelist Neil Fraser took up residence some time before 1954 to help the little assembly there, which lasted for a short while.

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Antelope Valley Bible Chapel in Lancaster, north of Los Angeles, began in 1994 and meets in homes. Three families, those of Brian and Malyn Sanders, John and Billie Cattermole, and Mike and Christina McMillan, some of whom had been in fellowship at West Valley Bible Chapel in Canoga Park, formed the group that started the assembly, which consists of about 40 adults and youngsters. Messrs. Sanders, Cattermole, and McMillan share leadership responsibilities. Several Air Force service men stationed at Edwards Air Force Base join the fellowship as their terms of service permit.

* * *

In Atascadero, a town halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, a work begun in 1949 as a children's and young people's effort, developed into an assembly testimony by 1950. A building was leased in the town's shopping district in 1951, and in 1954, the assembly's own chapel – the Atascadero Gospel Chapel, CA – was constructed with an auditorium seating 168. Bert Young pioneered the work at Atascadero. The assembly commended its first missionary – Bob Young to Northern Rhodesia – in 1954.

* * *

Charles Montgomery came to San Francisco from Ireland in about 1869, began a hotel business, and in a year or two began publishing The Evangelist. The 1873

San Francisco City Directory , referring to ‘Christian Brethren,’ states: “…They meet simply to the name of Jesus. Meetings held every Lord’s Day at 11 AM for Breaking of Bread. Preaching in the evening at half past seven o’clock in the Hall, 155 New Montgomery Street near Howard by Charles Montgomery.” The assembly is not given a name in the 1873 edition of the Directory, but the 1888 edition calls it Gospel Hall (San Francisco). A Bible Depot was also commenced in the neighborhood in the 1870s, moving through various locations.

Donald Ross visited San Francisco in 1887, holding meetings in a tent, and was assisted by the San Francisco assembly. Several were saved, among them some living in Montgomery’s hotel. The same year, tent meetings were held in Oakland, at which time the present Bethany Gospel Chapel in Oakland had its beginning. In October 1887, the first California Conference was held in San Francisco, and this conference, now convening at Thanksgiving time, has continued to this day.

In 1888, the San Francisco Gospel Hall was meeting at 866 Mission Street, with Charles Montgomery listed as correspondent. During the next three decades, the assembly moved through about a dozen locations, all of them at rented store fronts in the general area. The San Francisco earthquake and resulting fire storm of 1906, with subsequent dynamiting in an attempt to halt the fires, destroyed the area. The assembly could save only a few hymn books and other small items. At that time, a Mr. McFie was one of the leaders, and the assembly met in his home for a time. Open air meetings were held on Sunday afternoons and evenings in some of the refugee camps around the city.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the San Francisco Gospel Hall held many Gospel campaigns, some in tents in the city. Street meetings prior to the evening indoor meeting, and Saturday meetings, were common. A membership list in 1911 shows 50 to 60 in fellowship, which grew to about 80 by 1926. In 1927, a decision was made to construct a building at 910 Santiago Street, and in December 1928, the first Breaking of Bread was held in the Parkside Gospel Chapel in San Francisco. Wednesday night meetings at the Victorious Gospel Mission on Howard Street were commenced in 1931. The assembly continues today at the Santiago address. The assembly has commended many workers to the foreign field.

* * *

An assembly in Oakland began in a home in the early 1870s through the efforts of John McIntyre. From there the Christians rented a storefront for a time, and in 1912 constructed the Bethany Gospel Hall in Oakland on San Pablo Avenue. This beautiful building graces the cover of the book My People, written by Robert Baylis. In 1955, the assembly built the Bethany Gospel Chapel on Tompkins Avenue in Oakland. Bethany has commended William Spees, William Deans, Ruth Johnson, Fred and Jenny Kosin, William MacDonald, and Clifford Beggs to the work of the Lord.

* * *

In April 1954, a group left Bethany Gospel Hall to build the Castlemont Bible Chapel at 90th Avenue and Thermal Street in the Castlemont district of Oakland. About 25 men and women formed the initial fellowship.

An auditorium seating about 200 with a lot of Sunday school rooms was ample for many years of progress.

A variety of outreaches brought steady growth. In 1959, the Castlemont Christians bought a half-acre site in the neighboring community of San Leandro. The new Fairhaven Bible Chapel was constructed and occupied in 1962, having 300 fixed seats. Houses were added to extend the youth work and Sunday School facilities.

Fairhaven Bible Chapel, with the inspiration of William MacDonald, established a nine-month full-time leadership training program called the Discipleship Intern Training Program. It graduated over 200 men in over 20 years. The program continues today as a five-month program with reduced numbers, largely from other countries. The assembly developed a very popular set of Bible Study Training manuals, which have been effective cross culturally all over the world and published in 25 languages. The assembly operates an Emmaus Prison Ministry, reaching about 4000 men and women. Fairhaven has commended many workers to the foreign field.

* * *

The Alameda Gospel Chapel hived off from Bethany Gospel Chapel in about 1970, the result of a Sunday School outreach in that area. Fairhaven helped start this and three other assemblies – the San Lorenzo Bible Chapel, the Santa Rosa Assembly, and the Valley Bible Church in Pleasanton.

* * *

The Hayward Bible Chapel is one of the older assemblies in the Hayward area. The first assembly meetings were

held in a barn in Palomares Canyon. The believers later built a chapel on Meekland Avenue in Hayward. Kenneth Wakefield was one of the leading brothers there in its early days.

* * *

Community Bible Chapel in Hayward began in about 1962 as a hive-off from Hayward Bible Chapel. It was begun by three or four young men, one of whom was Marlin Wakefield, a son of Kenneth Wakefield. When these young men left after three or four years, some of the men at Hayward Bible Chapel went there to maintain the testimony. These included Kenneth Wakefield, Chester Paulson, Joe Wunch, and Avery Wilson. Bob Bruton was a full-time worker there for a time. The assembly is active, with about 80 adults and 40 children, and has commended workers to Zambia, Pakistan, and Indonesia, and to Clairmont College.

* * *

The Hayward Home Bible Fellowship began in about 1977 as a ministry to the older residents at Bethesda Home who were unable to leave because of physical conditions. Ten couples started the assembly, including Dan Kennedy, A. Noble DaShiell, Avery Wilson, Robert Livingston, Carl Swanson, Jack Osterhaus, Robert Scott, and Stan Wallace, and their wives. Some of these had been in the Hayward Bible Chapel. The assembly has commended workers to Russia. About 50 adults are in the Hayward Home Bible Fellowship.

* * *

Valley Bible Church in Pleasanton began in 1988 in San Ramon as a hive-off from Fairhaven Bible Chapel in San

Leandro. The originators of the new assembly were Jack Davies, Bill Greenaway, Dean Gossett, and Mark Porter. The latter two are the current leaders. The assembly met in various schools until they were able to purchase a 30,000 square-foot facility, in which about 1200 adults and youngsters now meet. Valley Bible Church has commended workers to the foreign field.

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During 1978 and 1979, Bob Bruton, who was a full-time worker at Community Bible Chapel in Hayward pioneered the start of a church in Fremont in the San Francisco Bay area. By October 1980, seven families (the Brutons, Rumrills, Luckerts, Hulls, Browers, Sowers', and Berthiumes) were developing the basis for fellowship. On the first Sunday of January 1981, the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper was begun, and the Mission Peak Bible Church in Fremont was underway.

The first fruits of the work became evident in February, when a couple professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. In May 1981, the first baptismal service was conducted. Sixty six persons, constituting 24 families, were in the assembly in 1996. The assembly now occupies quarters at 32701 Falcon Drive in Fremont.

* * *

The Sun Valley Bible Chapel in Lafayette on the east side of Oakland, hived off from the Gospel Auditorium of Oakland. It was started in homes in 1951 by the families of David Gerke, David Jones, Harry Fisher, Travers Welch, Bain Jackson, and Edna Soroka. Outgrowing the homes, they rented space in downtown buildings

(Portugese hall, Town Hall, Veterans Building) in Walnut Creek, and then moved to their present location at 1031 Leland Drive, Lafayette. In 1996, there were about 100 in attendance. Several workers have been commended by Sun Valley Bible Chapel.

* * *

San Jose Bible Chapel was started in the late 1950s by families moving into the rapidly growing area. Most of these were young families from assemblies in other places, including Bob and Bernice Miller, John Payne, Bob and Barbara Sherrard, and Gordon and Christine Westwood. The Family Bible Hour and Sunday School were initially held in an American Legion Hall, and the Sunday evening Breaking of Bread and midweek Bible study and prayer meetings were held in homes. The assembly has relocated to Hillview Bible Chapel in Cupertino, at 1160 S. Stelling Road. It has over 200 in attendance and has commended many people to the Lord's work. Elders have been Bob Bunce, Wallace Carroll, Gordon Westwood, Phil Hamilton, Bill Davis, Pedro Dillon, Rick DeVaul, and Jim McCarthy.

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The Twelfth Avenue Gospel Chapel in Sacramento was built in the late 1940s. After a series of meetings with Neil Fraser in June 1954, 23 were baptized and Sunday school attendance was well beyond the 200 mark. It has discontinued.

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The Sacramento Bible Chapel assembly at 1931 Silca Avenue, Sacramento's second assembly at the time, expanded its facilities in 1959. It continues today.

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In the middle of the state, White Avenue Gospel Hall in Fresno began in 1911. Evangelists Sam Greer and Fred Hillis are credited with starting the assembly. Meeting first in a home on Divisadero Street, the Christians moved later into the Fresno Gospel Hall, their present location at 2818 Olive Avenue. Leadership over the years has been held by Tom Mulligan, John Royer, Harry Thorpe, J.C. Drake, Roy Argleben, Roy McDonald, Robert Leerhoff, and Gene Paulson. About 55 persons attend the assembly.

* * *

Valley Bible Chapel in Napa began in April 1966 in a home. At the end of the year, the believers rented an abandoned church building at 1747 Second Street for their meetings, and in 1971 they purchased and moved into a building 1550 Second Street, their current location. Those initiating the assembly were the families of Homer Williams, Charles Arthur, Edward Parker, Dean Chase, Clifford Olson, and Byron Bradford. Leadership over the years has been shared by Homer Williams, Michael Westfall, Edward Parker, Byron Bradford, August Lanum, and James Wright. About 30 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

* * *

At the beginning of 1953, a few believers began meeting to remember the Lord in the northern California mountain community of Loomis, forming the Loomis Assembly. In mid 1954, about 25 were in fellowship. In addition, the assembly supported a Sunday school work at Peardale, 35 miles east of Loomis, where 25 children regularly attended. David Sharp was commended to the

work in northern California by the brethren in Bethany Gospel Chapel in Oakland and labored in and about Loomis. He carried on an extensive visitation program at Auburn, and labored also in the Sacramento assembly.

* * *

Crescent City is in the far northwest corner of the state. It was there that Samuel Cardy, who had spent many years as a full-time worker in Ireland, began the assembly in 1993 called the Crescent City Christian Chapel. The assembly met in a single room in the Fishermen's Hall. Mr. Cardy and Pearl McJimpsey were the leaders of the assembly, which had grown to about 30 adults and 15 children before it disbanded after just a few years. A weekly Bible study continues in homes, and Mr. Cardy continues with a local television ministry.

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## Oregon

The first known Breaking of Bread in Oregon was in 1887, held in the Joseph Marshall home on Hoyt Street on the west side of Portland. Four or five Christians were present.

In 1892, Donald Ross arrived in Portland for a tent campaign, bringing with him his son-in-law James Harcus, another evangelist. The tent was pitched on the corner of Seventh and Ash Street in East Portland, as Mr. Ross reported in the June 1892 issue of his monthly magazine Our Record.

A year later, the little Portland Assembly rented and met in Parrott Hall. Donald Ross, James Harcus, W. J. McClure, and John Monypenny ministered the Word at the first Bible Conference of the assembly, held in 1895. The Christians continued to meet in various rented quarters until 1904, when a small Gospel Hall was built on S. E. Eight Street. The numbers in the assembly increased slowly to about 40 by the turn of the century.

In 1915, the assembly erected a building on East Stark Street at 29th in Portland. The building was known as the Stark Street Gospel Hall. By about 1950 it was called Stark Street Gospel Chapel. In 1957, some 165 were in fellowship and Sunday School attendance was about 85 children. The mid-week prayer meeting attendance averaged 40.

In 1958, the assembly bought a large building site in an area of new homes much farther east at 114th and Stark Street, and built Eastgate Bible Chapel in Portland, the current location of the assembly. The assembly has commended the Floyd Schneiders to the Lord's work in Austria and elsewhere. Walter Purcell, Jim Hislop, and Eliseo Lopez have served as full-time workers in the assembly. About 275 are in the assembly today.

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In 1929, a Sunday School work was started in a goat barn in southeast Portland, as an evangelistic outreach of Stark Street Gospel Chapel. Andy and Beth Schroth were among the first of many workers from Stark Street to help with the growing children's work. The Sunday School moved from its goat barn in 1934 to a rented facility on Southeast 87th Avenue near Powell Boulevard. Preaching meetings there began to attract the parents of many of the children. Dave Masson and Joe Murray shared the preaching responsibility. The Stark Street assembly took over ownership of the 87th Avenue facility in 1948 and added more Sunday School rooms.

By 1952 the band of about 20 committed workers formed an assembly meeting in the building, calling it the 87th Avenue Bible Chapel in Portland. In 1957, there were 50 in fellowship and 115 children in the Sunday School. In the 1960s, the building was enlarged. Leadership at that time consisted of Dave Jannsen, Bob McNicol, Dean Sigler, and Jon Marks.

The growing assembly moved into a larger building at 76th and Irving in Portland in 1975, calling it the Laurel Park Bible Chapel. Bruce McNicol and Rex Koivisto were

its first commended workers. Growth continued, and in 1980 Laurel Park hived-off her daughter church, West Side Bible Chapel in Beaverton; this assembly is now located in the Hillsboro section of Portland and is known as West Side Bible Fellowship.

Laurel Park continued to grow and moved into McGuire Auditorium at Warner Pacific College in 1985. While at its numeric peak, the assembly experienced internal trials, and many people left. In 1990, the remaining Christians sold their building on 76th and Irving and purchased land at 122nd and Mather Road in the southern reaches of Portland. The assembly constructed the Spring Mountain Bible Church in Clackamas, having its first meeting there in 1994, with a common goal and new priorities.

Spring Mountain Bible Church and its predecessors have commended workers to Chad, Rwanda/Uganda, Russia, Austria, Peru, Uzbakistan, and to Interest Ministries and International Teams.

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Before 1909, a small group of Christians associated with the Grant ‘exclusive’ brethren met in various homes in the St. Johns district of Portland for Bible study and the Breaking of Bread. Some of those who met together were Hans Jackumsen, his brother Mads, and J.P. Andersen and family, all of whom had moved west from New Jersey. Through the years, they met in homes and rented storefronts on North Halladay Street and on East 4th and Burnside, and even met in a dance hall.

In 1920, evangelist Fred Elliot teamed up with E.K. Bailey for a series of meetings in a large tent in Portland. Several people were saved and added to the

assembly, which was known then as the Grace and Truth Gospel Hall. In 1926, the Christians purchased a building at 602 NE Prescott, and met there for over 30 years until they outgrew those facilities. In 1932, the decision was made to break away from the Grant brethren and become associated with the 'open' brethren.

In 1957, about 120 were in fellowship and 110 children were in the Sunday School. The present building of the assembly was erected in 1960 at 12420 NE Siskiyou Street, Portland, and the name was changed to Grace and Truth Chapel. Since 1996, the assembly has been known as Grace Bible Fellowship.

Missionaries have been commended from Grace Bible Fellowship to Peru, Ecuador, France, and Zaire; others have been sent to work among native Americans and with Hospital Chaplains' Ministry of America. Gilbert and Sue Gleason have been commended to pastoral ministry at Grace Bible Fellowship.

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An assembly in Bonita near Tigard on the southwest edge of Portland started with a Sunday School in the farm home of Mrs. West in 1912. The Bonita Gospel Hall was built in 1927 and 1928 with volunteer labor and was enlarged from time to time. There were 25 in fellowship in 1957, with an average of 75 in the Sunday School. The Stark Street Gospel Chapel in Portland supplied some workers over the years. The assembly has disbanded.

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An influx of believers from North Dakota led to the start of the Forest Grove Gospel Hall in the town of Forest Grove, west of Portland (see North Dakota). Dick and Fanny Goff arrived first and purchased a farm in the Hillside district eight miles northwest of the town. A few weeks later the Hazlitt family arrived and settled on a farm in the Thatcher district. The Alex Hunter family came with the Hazlitts and bought a house on the Gales Creek Road.

On the last Sunday of 1901, this little group of eight first met to Remember the Lord in a rented house on 17th Avenue in Forest Grove. Within a few weeks, Mrs. Emma Goff and her son Edward arrived. Edward purchased a farm in the Hillside district. For the next eight years, the assembly met in that home.

In the spring of 1902, James Harcus and W.C. Arnold held a series of Gospel meetings in the Thatcher Community Church, at which many were saved. Over the next decade, a steady flow of brethren preachers, including J.J. Rouse, Alex Matthews, David Scott, and W.J. McClure, as well as Messrs. Harcus and Arnold, held Gospel meetings in the area. A Sunday School work was established, at which upwards of 30 children attended. Nevertheless, the assembly remained small. From 1911 until 1919, the assembly met in the Jacob Hazlitt home on Thatcher Road.

In 1919, the assembly started meeting in the Thatcher Community Church and met there through 1946. They neither owned the building or paid rent, but maintained and improved the building, sometimes with help from neighbors. This was their Gospel Hall, and they would refer to it as Community Hall or Thatcher Hall. Gospel

meetings were held in a hall on Pacific Avenue that B.B. Goff had purchased in 1922. In 1946, the Christians moved into their newly built Forest Grove Gospel Hall at 21st and Cedar Streets, where they still meet.

At the end of 1920, although only about 13 were in fellowship, some 70 were attending the Sunday School. The assembly grew slowly but steadily. Records show 48 in fellowship in 1947. In 1958, the Sunday School and Sunday Bible Class reached 144. In 1964 there were 79 in fellowship. However, that year was also a time of testing for this and other assemblies in the state and as far away as Seattle, and numbers decreased.

In 1969, a new assembly was begun in Salem, some 50 miles to the south. The Salem Gospel Hall and Forest Grove Gospel Hall are in happy fellowship.

B.B. Goff, W.C. Arnold, and E.G. Goff were the principal leaders of the assembly at Forest Grove for the first 50 years. B.B. was the energetic leader, Ben Arnold was the teacher, and E.G. was the shepherd. Other leaders have been Harry Goff, Ralph Goff, Frank Goff, John Robertson, David Williams, and Richard Goff. Gaius Goff joined Herbert Harris in Newfoundland to work on his Missionary Gospel Messenger boat for the summer of 1960, and has continued to minister there and elsewhere on the continent. The assembly commended Fanny Mae Goff to the field in Venezuela, where she eventually became director of the Colegio Evangelico in Puerto Cabello. About 30 are in fellowship at Forest Grove today.

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An assembly at Linnton Gospel Chapel near Portland began in 1932 as a result of personal work by Will Hall

of Vancouver among Italian families in the district, as a follow-up to Sunday School work among their children. Stark Street Gospel Hall was involved in the early days of the assembly. At first the meetings were Italian-speaking, but by 1957 were entirely English-speaking. This assembly has since discontinued.

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An assembly in Gresham on the east side of Portland began in 1958 as Clinton Street Bible Chapel. The families of Darwin L. Kirchem and Ralph N. Morris from the 87th Avenue Bible Chapel in Portland began the new work with the blessing of the elders of that assembly.

Later, the Christians shortened the name Clinton Street Chapel, and then changed it to Cascade Community Church. The assembly has commended workers to the field in Colombia, Indonesia, and other areas abroad, and others to ministries in the States. Rick Simmons has been commended for work at Cascade Community Church.

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An assembly began meeting in 1895. in the home of the Bates family on the Columbia River Highway, 18 miles east of Portland. Helping in the beginning were Clement and Amos Crowston, along with the S.S. Bates, Lucos, Chamberlain, and Shelley families, among others. A local school was used later for the Sunday school and special meetings. The W. D. Close, Conzler, Charles Berney, and James Berney families became active in the assembly. In 1914, the Christians built the Springdale Gospel Hall. Years later the name was changed to Springdale Bible Chapel.

The assembly has commended workers to the field in the Congo, Peru, and Europe. James and Berney has been commended as Director of Intervarsity Christian Fellowship in Canada. Others have been commended to serve with Operation Mobilization and Interest Ministries. Springdale Bible Chapel is small at this time.

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In 1940, several Christians met in the Michael Keefe home at Eugene to Break Bread. They continued there until the late 1940s, when Fred Elliott and Neil Fraser held a series of tent meetings on the edge of the downtown area. Following those meetings, five or six couples met as an assembly in the Presbyterian church on Sunday afternoon for worship; they also started a Sunday School and an adult Bible class in a gymnasium in a neighborhood school.

The principal persons who devoted themselves to the building of the assembly in the early years were Michael J. Keefe, Clarence Caudell, Dick Taylor, and Phillip Gossard.

The Christians purchased the lot across the street from the school, at the corner of East 33rd and Donald Street, and in 1952 construction began on the Willamette Gospel Chapel under the supervision of Walter McAfee of California, who had done the same work for many assemblies of the West coast. The chapel was completed in 1953. In 1957, there were 50 in fellowship and 125 children in the Sunday School.

Visiting speakers from Portland came frequently after the move into the building in 1953, including R. Fred Elliot, David Masson, and Wally Johnson. Neil Fraser came to live in Eugene from 1956 to 1968, committing

himself to the building up of the assembly. Throughout the 1950s, the chief evangelistic outreach was through neighborhood visitation, youth meetings, and the very large Sunday School, which reached into many unbelieving families. The name was changed to Willamette Bible Chapel in the late 1960s. Additional classrooms were added later.

Through the years, various young persons have gone on short term missions to India, Kenya, France, and Papua New Guinea. Along with Eastgate Bible Chapel in Portland, Willamette Bible Chapel has commended workers to Europe, Papua New Guinea, and the Samuel Zwemer Institute.

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Two families from the Stark Street Gospel Chapel in Portland moved in 1944 to Seaside, on the northwest tip of Oregon, and began meeting to Remember the Lord in the home of Joseph Murray. In 1950 they were offered use of a vacant Baptist community church building in nearby Gearhart, which was later deeded to them. In 1957, there were 20 in fellowship and 60 in the Sunday School. This assembly has disbanded.

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## Washington

Hope Bible Fellowship in Seattle has its roots in an assembly that was in existence by 1921, and that met then at Taylor Avenue Gospel Hall. The families of Coy, Greenhill, and Hitchman are remembered from that time; they had earlier met to Remember the Lord in a store front in the Fremont area. The parents of Daniel Hayden were saved in 1924 and joined the fellowship at Taylor Avenue. Arthur and Winnie Knight and their family joined with Taylor Avenue in 1930, coming from the dwindling local Grant 'exclusive' meeting.

Harry Penman, a Scotsman who began a successful advertising business in Seattle, was a true leader and encourager at Taylor Avenue. He had a large vision and was instrumental in inviting well-known ministering brethren from the 'old country' to have week-long ministry and evangelistic meetings at the Gospel Hall. Initially the assembly consisted mostly of brethren of Scottish, Irish, and English extraction. A.L. Ritts, a well-known Bible teacher from the Midwest, moved to Seattle with his family and helped out in the early days.

At that time the Taylor Avenue Gospel Hall was situated on the summit of Denny Hill, near the present Seattle center. When Denny Hill was sluiced into Puget Sound to make way for a level northward expansion of downtown Seattle in 1930, the assembly purchased and moved into an existing church building nearby at 40th and Whitman Avenue N; they called it Hope Gospel Hall.

The assembly was blessed with a vibrant young people's group of about 40, out of whose number some were later

commended to missionary service, including Ernie and Helen Crabb to Alaska; Dorothy Munce to India; Ken and Helena Fleming to South Africa; Peter Fleming to Ecuador; Paul and Helen Flint to Emmaus Bible School; Lloyd and Linda Rogers to Ecuador; and Mark and Carol Mattix to Bolivia. Also in those decades missionary meetings were easily arranged, and scarcely a week would go by without a visiting missionary exposing the saints to the needs and triumphs of the Gospel in many parts of the world.

Frank Hitchman, Charles Joss, James Greenhill, Ray Knowles, Ray Anderson, and Doug Kazen are some of those who have been active in leadership through the years. Many of the Lord's servants involved in itinerant ministry visited the assembly during the 1930s to the 1950s, holding week-long evangelistic and ministry meetings, and sometimes special children's meetings. These men included A. N. O'Brien, George Landis, Alfred Mace, Inglis Fleming (who had moved to Seattle), E. K. Bailey, Walter Purcell, Leonard Sheldrake, Harold Harper, A. P. Gibbs, and Henry Petersen.

Because of the proximity of both Army and Navy bases to Seattle, Hope Gospel Hall enjoyed the fellowship and stimulation of many servicemen during World War II years. These visits were a source of enrichment and increasing awareness of world-wide needs. Annual inter-assembly Labor Day Bible Conferences, rotating among the Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland assemblies were also a source of growth and encouragement.

In the late 1940s, the name was changed to Whitman Avenue Gospel Chapel, reflecting its location. At that

time, adult attendance was often up to 250, with a Sunday School close to 100 children and teen-agers.

In July 1987, Whitman Avenue Gospel Chapel and the Wedgewood Bible Fellowship in Seattle merged, and changed the name to Hope Bible Fellowship, but remaining at the Whitman Avenue address. Adult attendance in 1996 was a little over 50. In late 1996, Michael Vederoff was engaged as a full-time worker for the assembly. Current elders are Dex Sederstrom, Aaron Vederoff, Terry Dickerson, and Mike Lytle.

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During World War II, the Whitman Avenue Gospel Chapel planted a new assembly in Des Moines, some 15 miles south of Seattle. It was called at first the Highline Gospel Assembly, meeting at the Odd Fellows Hall. The assembly moved in 1955 into their own building in the center of Des Moines and named it the Des Moines Gospel Chapel. Growth in this young assembly occurred largely through a series of home Bible studies, using the Emmaus Correspondence Courses What the Bible Teaches and Lessons for Christian Living. Beatrice Kosin was commended from Des Moines Gospel Chapel to the work of the Lord in Laos, where she was killed by the Viet Cong.

As the Des Moines Gospel Chapel continued to grow, the building was enlarged in stages. Attendance at the Lord’s Supper was about 150 in 1997, with some 250 to 300 present on Sunday morning for the Family Bible Hour. Sunday School classes for all ages are well attended. The assembly administrative staff consists of a full-time pastoral worker, two youth workers, and a secretary.

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In about 1970, the Des Moines assembly thought it would be wise to consider a hive-off, so they purchased property in the Federal Way area, about 10 miles south of Des Moines. In 1973, the new assembly was planted and began meeting in the Brigadoon School. Shortly thereafter construction was begun on Evergreen Bible Chapel in Federal Way at 21st Avenue SW. Robert Arthur, Tom Parks, Bill Erickson, Russell Howard and George Mathews were the original elders there. Others involved in establishing Evergreen Bible Chapel were William Mitton, William Erickson, and Homer Grob. Other leaders have been Marchant King, Jerry Schwartz, and Dean Mills.

About 110 adults and youngsters were in attendance at Evergreen Bible Chapel in 1996. The assembly has seen blessing in a good Awana Club ministry, as well as Vacation Bible Schools. Workers have been commended to radio station HCJB in Texas and to Papua New Guinea.

* * *

In October 1949, some brethren who were affiliated with the testimony at Hope Gospel Hall, and living in the north end of Seattle, began meeting in homes for prayer and Bible studies, with E.K. Bailey and Alec Ainslie as teachers. In May 1950, they purchased a building in the Northgate area from a Lutheran group and immediately began building up a Sunday School as well as reaching adults in the neighborhood. Northgate Gospel Chapel in Seattle was established in mid 1950 with the full fellowship and cooperation of the Hope brethren. Besides Messrs. Bailey and Ainslie, the people involved

in establishing Northgate Gospel Chapel include the families of Bob Flint, Les Reitz, Bill Hitchman, Frank Fulton, and Bernie Salins. Celoa Brown was one of the original group, and Olive Liefeld (Ainslie) was the first Sunday School teacher. Ray Anderson and Delbert Slattery also helped with the fledging assembly. Leading brethren from the earlier days include, besides those above, Lee Miller, Sumner Osborne Sr., Virgil Holterman, Edwin Wald, Henry Soderlund, Max Johnson, and Bob Hess.

By May 1951, the Sunday school had grown to more than 100 children, and 60 to 75 adults attended the morning preaching service. An addition providing more classroom space was built in late 1952; remodeling in the late 1950s added more space. Attendance in 1996 was about 150 adults and youngsters. Workers have been commended by the assembly to Chile, Bolivia, and Australia.

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North Lynnwood Bible Chapel, WA began with six families meeting together in 1978. At that time the name South County Bible Fellowship, WA was chosen, since the families expected to be located in the south part of Snohomish Country, north of Seattle. The first meetings of the group were in a home for Wednesday evening Bible Studies and fellowship. By September 1978, they decided to meet as a church, on Sundays. During the first year, the group doubled in size and moved from one rented house to another and then to a YMCA. In 1981, they purchased property north of the town of Lynnwood, and changed their name to the present one. They met in

rented space in a grade school until moving into their own completed chapel in 1986.

Gordon Strom, who has worked with several Seattle-area assemblies, was closely involved with the group during the early years. Among other leaders have been Dan Covert, who grew up in the assembly at Cosmopolis Gospel Chapel, and James Gray, a product of Emmaus Bible College and the Discipleship Intern Training Program. North Lynnwood Bible Chapel has commended workers to church planting and building in Puerto Maldonado, Peru.

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The Bainbridge Bible Chapel is an assembly which meets in the gymnasium of a school on Bainbridge Island in Puget Sound. In 1997, there were approximately 35 adults who regularly came together for the Lord's Supper, and approximately 120 adults and children for Sunday School and Family Bible Hour. A Monday evening adult Bible study is held in the Law Offices of a brother in the meeting, with about 30 to 35 attending. Other meetings are held in homes.

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Sunrise Fellowship in Edmonds, on the north edge of Seattle had its beginnings in the 1960s. Composed largely of young families and singles, it is a growing church fellowship in the 1990s.

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In the 1950s, the assemblies in the Seattle area purchased the site for a camp on a lake on Whidbey Island, 30 miles north of Seattle. Lakeside Bible Camp through the years has been a great blessing to young

people and adults as well. Camps and retreats are held the year around.

A monthly Missionary Focus meeting for all the greater Seattle area assemblies is held in north and south Seattle assemblies on a rotating basis. This has been continuing for the past 40 years, and has been an important factor in stimulating local missionary interest. Missionary speakers are usually drawn from those who may be on furlough.

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In 1901, a business man invited evangelist James Harcus, then living in Portand to come to Everett, then a small town north of Seattle, and hold meetings. With the help of W.C. Arnold, Mr. Harcus pitched a tent in Everett and held meetings for several months. A number found Christ during the meetings. Mr. Harcus later moved his family to Everett and continued to work in the region for many years; he is buried in Everett.

Some of the Christians there, who included Lawrence Kane and William Harcus, a son of James, built a small hall and started a Sunday School. The Everett Gospel Hall first met in Riverside, the eastern, older part of the town. Mr. Kane married William Harcus' sister Mary, joined William in the printing business, and became one of the strong leaders of the assembly. In 1926, the assembly moved into Parkside Bible Chapel in Everett at 2427 Lombard, its present location. Parkside Bible Chapel has commended workers to Paraguay.

* * *

The Arlington Gospel Hall had its beginning at about the same time. In the early 1900s, several families, all

related or acquainted, moved from Illinois to the area near Arlington, north of Everett. These families were all accustomed to attending the Dutch Reformed Church, but because the distance of the nearest church was too far to go by horse and buggy, they met in one another's homes.

Three Klein brothers, John, Richard, and Otto, and their families, were among these early settlers. The Otto Klein family settled in Everett in 1900. One day Otto saw James Harcus' tent pitched near his home so he stood near it to listen and liked what he heard. When Mrs. Klein passed away at about that time, Otto asked Mr. Harcus to share the funeral service. His daughter Mary (later Mrs. Peter Kazen) began attending the Sunday School in the Everett Gospel Hall, and they both attended Gospel meetings there, but did not join the fellowship.

In the fall of 1905, an evangelist held Gospel meetings in the Arlington Baptist Church. Several of the Illinois settlers attended the meetings, with the result that some trusted the Lord. Learning of the interest in the Word of God among these believers, Mr. Harcus began having Bible studies in the home of Otto Klein, who had moved to Arlington, teaching them about believer's baptism and about New Testament assemblies.

In 1907, Mr. Harcus and W.C. (Ben) Arnold put up a tent on Olympic Avenue and held gospel meetings for six weeks. Souls were saved, but there was also some fierce opposition to the gospel. When the tent was taken down and readied for shipment to another area for meetings, the Northern Pacific Railway agent refused to receive it. Since the only way to send items then was by rail, Ed

Eylander and John Klein loaded the tent on a hay wagon and took it to the agent at the Edgecomb Station.

Early in 1908, John Klein found it necessary to go to a medical clinic in Kansas City for surgery. Mr. Harcus, being well acquainted with the Kansas City brethren, gave him a letter of introduction to Caleb Baker and his associate Mr. Lockwood. John Klein and his wife Carrie were entertained by the Christians there and attended the assembly meetings. They became thoroughly convinced concerning the doctrines of believer's baptism and gathering to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. After their return home later in the spring, sixteen believers were baptized in the river near the Lincoln bridge. In the fall of 1908, these believers met for the first time in assembly capacity in the home of John and Carrie Klein in Arlington. The assembly was composed mainly of the Klein, Kazen, and Kroeze families.

In 1909, Louis and Rose Hoy moved with their family to Arlington. They had been in assembly fellowship in Minnesota and Seattle prior to coming to Arlington and were most helpful to the saints in the newly formed Arlington assembly. Mr. Hoy was a faithful teacher and shepherd in Arlington for many years. The assembly meetings were held in the Hoy home until the Christians rented a tire store near the north end of Olympic Avenue. David Scott and Albert Payne held a six week series of meetings in that tire store. Mr. Scott was the initiator of the first Conference, held for two days at Thanksgiving time in 1912. The speakers, in addition to David Scott, included Albert Payne, Harry Fletcher, James Rae, and William Rae.

In 1913, the assembly moved to a building at 324 North Olympic, the first Arlington Gospel Hall. The number of Christians in fellowship continued to grow, and after about seven years they needed a larger building. When the Baptists ceased holding services in Arlington in 1920, the assembly rented their building at Third and McLeod. Three years later, Harry Fletcher of Vancouver purchased it and the assembly rented it from him. Mr. Fletcher employed Hector Alves to oversee much-needed renovation. The assembly was able to purchase the building from Mr. Fletcher in 1946.

Others of the Lord's servants who ministered to the saints and held Gospel meetings during the early years include Alexander Matthews, Ed Stack, J.J. Rouse, George Duncan, C. Willowby, and David Oliver.

In 1931, Albert Joyce and Herb Harris held a series of Gospel meetings which resulted in many souls being saved, baptized, and received into fellowship. One of these new believers was Mrs. Maude Cumbow, who soon developed an outreach to the neighborhood children. For many years, youth services were held on Friday evenings in the Arlington Gospel Hall.

During the late 1940s, a burden developed among some of the Christians regarding the unsaved people living in the neighboring areas. In 1950, a portable hall was built under the direction of Hector Alves. This building was first used in Mount Vernon for a series of Gospel meetings conducted by Hector Alves and William Warke.

In the late 1950s, the Arlington Gospel Hall on Third Street could no longer accommodate the crowd attending the annual Labor Day weekend conference. The high school auditorium was rented for the services,

and the meals were served at the Gospel Hall. The Hall became increasingly inadequate for regular meetings and Sunday school activities, and the believers began looking for a suitable lot. Vern and Helen Pickett then sold about two acres on South Stillaguamish to the assembly. The hall had a total seating capacity of 700 and 10 Sunday School classrooms.

In 1974, the assembly purchased a 60 x 40 foot tent for Gospel services, which has been used almost every summer in the Arlington, Marysville, and Mount Vernon areas, or has been loaned to other assemblies for gospel work. Beginning in 1978, a booth was set up each year at the Skagit Valley Fair in Mount Vernon where contacts are made with people in the Burlington and Mount Vernon areas. Many pieces of literature are handed out each year in this Gospel outreach. Gospel meetings were held in the tent at Mount Vernon for two summers, and a Youth Bible Hour was held there each Monday evening.

Two other evangelistic outreaches began in 1976. Several Christians started a Youth Bible Hour on the Swinomish Indian Reserve in LaConner. Many Indian children attended and after a few years an adult class was also held. The second evangelistic effort was a radio program on KWYZ in Everett.

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Sometime before 1909, Otto and Louisa Timmreck moved to Everett after a fire destroyed their tavern and hotel. In that city they heard the Gospel preached by W.C. Arnold and James Harcus. Louisa Timmreck was saved, among many others. Later, the Timmrecks moved to farm in the Okanogan valley, which was then a remote

area in north-central Washington. In 1911, Mr. Arnold came to Okanogan and held Gospel meetings in a schoolhouse, at which time seven people were saved. His daughter, Mrs. John D. (Betty) Robertson, later wrote: “In the fall of 1911, Dad took Mother with him to Okanogan. It was a trip she never forgot and she would tell of the terrifying stagecoach ride into that country. Dad had Gospel meetings in a schoolhouse. Very few folks knew the hymns and Dad could not carry a tune, so Mother led the singing.”

In 1924 and 1925, Mr. Arnold returned for more meetings at which several more were saved, including Lester P. Hinde, who was many years later commended by the assembly to minister throughout the region, and was instrumental in starting the Grants Pass Gospel Hall in Oregon.

In 1926, Henry Clifton of the Penticton Gospel Hall in British Columbia, came to the area for cottage meetings and visited extensively. In that same year, Lester and Leone (Timmreck) Hinde visited for a time at the Forest Grove Gospel Hall in Oregon, the home of the Arnolds, to learn of New Testament principles of meeting. Returning to Okanogan in early 1927, they started a meeting to Remember the Lord in their home, and the Okanogan Gospel Hall came into being. Seven people comprised that first assembly, the Hindes, Mr. and Mrs. Sterley, Mrs. Martha Moss; Mrs. Amy Moss, and Mrs. Louisa Timmreck. Garner and Nellie Garrett joined the assembly soon after that.

Soon, Lester Hinde and Henry Clifton began preaching together. Henry Clifton and W.C. Arnold are considered to be the pioneers of the Okanogan Gospel Hall. Of

several others who led the assembly through the years, we mention Lester Hinde, Alvah T. Williams, Hubert C. Hitchner, J.W. (Chuck) Klein, and more recently Farel Hitchner.

In 1929, the assembly moved into a one-room schoolhouse at 1033 S. Seventh Avenue. In 1939, the Christians built their present hall at 304 Conconully Street. The assembly has always been small, and helped by men such as Hector Alves, Ralph Goff, and Charles Summers. Many others also worked in the area and strengthened the assembly.

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The Shoultes Gospel Hall in Marysville was an outgrowth of the work at the Arlington Gospel Hall. The portable building used by Hector Alves and William Warke in the Mount Vernon area in the 1950s was later used for Gospel meetings in the Marysville area north of Everett. Because of the interest, the portable hall was erected on the Steen farm and used for weekly youth meetings. In 1960, a building for this work was erected on land donated by the Steens. Children's meetings were held there on Friday evenings, and Gospel series' from time to time. In 1981, Sunday evening Gospel meetings were added. Then in 1984, nine acres at 116th Street and 51st Avenue N.E., Marysville, were purchased. A building was constructed and an assembly was established at Shoultes Gospel Hall in 1994.

Some of brethren involved in the early outreach were Fred and Chuck Steen, John A. Klein, Jack Saword, Al Flett, and George Styles. Later, Ken Kroeze, Phil Kazen, Jim Klein, and Tom Hoy joined to help carry on the Gospel outreach in Marysville. Leadership was carried

by Phil Kazen, Tom Hoy, and Tony Flett. The assembly has commended workers to El Salvador. Shoultes Gospel Hall has about 100 adults and youngsters in attendance.

* * *

The assembly now meeting at Tieton Drive Bible Chapel in Yakima had its start in about 1908, when a group of families started meeting in the Yakima area in south central Washington, following the pattern of the early churches of the New Testament. They probably met first in homes. In 1910, the group moved into an old Methodist church building on North 4th Street. The name Yakima Gospel Hall was probably used then, although they did not legally incorporate until some time later. Some of the men involved in this early group were Robert Stanton, Otto W. Elder, Charles Peterson, and Harry Guthrie; these had no connection or interchange with brethren assemblies at that time. John Mallett and a Mr. Duffield came from ‘exclusive’ assemblies in England.

In the period 1910 to 1913, two events occurred which had a major effect on the believers at the Gospel Hall. David Little came to Yakima from Spokane and preached on the second coming of Christ, then a radically new notion in the area. As the result of his teaching, area churches split over the issue. Some individuals then came over to the Yakima Gospel Hall, which was in full accord with Mr. Little’s teaching. Among these were J.V. Mohr and his daughters.

George L. Hunt, a dynamic evangelist-preacher, had also come to Yakima at that time and held a series of tent meetings in the Fruitvale district. He moved to Yakima and joined with the group at the Gospel Hall. His

ministry drew many people to the assembly. Among the outreach ministries that Mr. Hunt helped foster were Sunday afternoon meetings in country school houses. O.W. Elder, Bert Stewart, J.V. Mohr, and Ira Meyer helped in this ministry. Baptisms during this period were in the cold and gravelly Yakima River, and in an irrigation ditch on Park Avenue.

Around 1914, the building on North 4th Street was sold. The assembly met in various homes until about 1917 when a building was rented on west Yakima Avenue near 8th Avenue. In 1918 they rented a wood frame house on the southwest corner of 10th and Yakima Avenues.

The well known writer and teacher A.C. Gaebelein visited the area around 1918, staying in the home of Harry Guthrie. While there he taught in the Yakima assembly. Many people were attracted to the Yakima Gospel Hall through his teaching.

Saturday night street meetings were a regular part of the evangelistic outreach of the assembly from its earliest days, usually at 2nd Street and Yakima Avenue. These continued until the 1930s when automobiles became popular and dominated the scene.

By 1920, more space was needed to meet the needs of the new families that had come into the assembly. The old building was moved out and a new building was completed in 1921. In May 1922, the assembly was incorporated and officially took the name Yakima Gospel Hall. Records show that Breaking of Bread took place on Sunday evenings.

The numbers continued to grow. New family names were the Sweets, Mickelsons, Purviances, Cramers, Franksons, Davidsons, Martha Winchester, Louise

Walker, Charles Hamilton, and Percy Hamilton. Yakima Gospel Hall was also a center for the main social life of the people involved. The annual Thanksgiving Conferences were highlights of the year for the assembly. The platform was ‘open,’ meaning that any brother could speak. The meetings began in the morning and lasted into the evening.

Itinerant preachers came often to hold series’ of meetings, sometimes every night of the week. John Smart, Neil Fraser, and Wallace Logan, are remembered. Henry Petersen had a series on Pilgrim’s Progress that lasted for three weeks. In the 1930s, Edward G. Dillon held a series of meetings and was instrumental in getting the assembly involved in door-to-door distribution of tracts. Leonard E. Brough and H. Allister Thompson were effective workers at the Gospel Hall in that period.

The 1940s brought dramatic change. World War II took many away, into the military service or ship building or aircraft facilities. The assembly founders passed from the scene. The itinerant preacher era began to phase out. The number of men in the assembly dwindled and did not revive much until after the war. Then John E. Crawford and Harold Buckley returned with their families. These men were much used in the assembly.

In 1950-51, the Christians remodeled their building and changed the name to Yakima Gospel Chapel. In the 1960s, Ernie and Helen Crabb and their family, who had served as missionaries in Alaska, came to live in the community. Mr Crabb was a real driver for gospel outreach and he involved the assembly in door-to-door visitation. People were saved and added to the assembly.

With the growth and also the movement of the city population toward the west part of the city, the elders decided that the assembly should buy a property on Tieton Drive. Total attendance was running around 150 at that time.

In November 1970 the move was made to the newly constructed building and the name was changed to Tieton Drive Bible Chapel. The time of construction was one of the most cooperative and supportive times of the assembly life. Through it all the visitation program continued and the new neighborhood canvassed.

The assembly recognized elders and deacons in the 1990s, and was growing again after a period of decline. Workers over the years have been commended to Malawi, Argentina, Mexico, Africa, and to Immanuel Mission in Arizona.

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The Cosmopolis Gospel Chapel on 3rd Street in Cosmospolis, 100 miles southwest of Seattle had its beginning through the work of E.K. Bailey. In the fall of 1922, Mr. Bailey held a three-month series, with meetings every day in the schoolhouses of the North River lumbering and farming area. He drove his Gospel Car over the precarious plank roads to reach these places, but God’s Word found an entrance into hearts, and an assembly testimony was established at North River.

At about that time, he purchased a tent and set it up in Cosmopolis, some 15 miles from North River. The little assembly of the Lord’s people moved from North River to Cosmopolis and met in a small hall there until the building of the Cosmopolis Gospel Hall. An apartment

was built at the back of the Hall in which Mr. and Mrs. Bailey could spend the winters when tent work was impossible.

P.E. Pearson, who worked in a pulp mill, obtained employment at the mill for several people in the Cosmopolis assembly; he was instrumental in the formation of the assembly and was its treasurer for many years.

In July 1930, an inaugural Conference was held in the completed Cosmopolis Gospel Hall, with Harold Barker from London ministering the things of Christ. In May 1938, another Conference was held at Cosmopolis with Alfred Mace, George Landis, Harold Harper, and Henry Petersen ministering the Word. This time the gospel tent had to be set up in the lot adjoining the Gospel Hall to accommodate the crowds attending.

In the late 1950s, the assembly moved to their current location and changed their name to Cosmopolis Gospel Chapel. The Cosmopolis assembly was primarily responsible for the building of Shiloh Bible Camp in the mid 1970s and still is the main supporter of the 70-acre facility.

During the 1960s and 70s, the assembly had a Friday night program for kids that drew more than 100 to hear the Gospel. In the 1990s, the assembly produced a weekly half-hour children’s program that aired over the local access cable TV station. About 40 adults were in fellowship in 1996.

Other men active in leadership in the assembly have been John Covert, Charles Smith, Al and Gary Geddes, Robert Smith, and Don Norkoski. The assembly has had several full-time workers over the years: Leroy and

Debbie Junker, Jack and Irene Heseltine, Ray and Lynne Wald, Sam and Margaret Stewart, Larry and Wincie Anderson, Peter and Louise Daley, Scott and Marsha Blair. Paul and Helen Flint worked in the assembly before moving to Emmaus Bible School.

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The Centralia Bible Chapel in Centralia, south of Olympia, began in 1962 through the efforts of Richard and Nora Barada, and Ken and Anne Schrier. First meeting in rented space in the Carpenters Union Building in Centralia, the assembly moved in 1970 to a vacant shool building, and then in 1973 to its present location at 209 North Pearl Street. Mr. Barada was a chaplain at the local hospital at the time of the formation of the assembly. Centralia Bible Chapel has commended workers to Bolivia, Thailand, Peru, and other areas, including a military chaplaincy.

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The assembly at Longview, near the Oregon state line, was established in the early 1930s and for many years continued in rented quarters. In 1950 the brethren started building the Evergreen Terrace Gospel Chapel in Longview, using largely their own labor. They completed the building and moved into it in the fall of 1952, but within a few months fire completely destroyed the chapel. E.K. Bailey was on his third weekend visit to Longview when he suffered a stroke which took his life in June 1953. He had been asked to come for weekend meetings through June and July in the Gospel tent that the Longview assembly was using during the summer because of the destruction by fire of the chapel. The loss was covered by insurance, and after meeting for some

time in the tent, the brethren rebuilt Evergreen Terrace Gospel Chapel. The Longview assembly continues today.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Recollections Concerning the History of Tieton Drive Bible Chapel, 1996

History of the Arlington Assembly, undated but probably late 1980s

A History of the Okanogan, Washington Assembly from 1927- 1995, by Jean Hinde Klein and J.W. Klein

Letters of Interest, August 1953, p. 19; January 1954, p. 7; June 1959, p. 11

## Alaska

Alaskan assemblies, in the order of their establishment, were formed in Cordova, Chitina, Wasilla (Palmer), and Fairbanks. The efforts in Cordova and Chitina were Gospel works for the most part, the stable believers in both places being imports to the community for the express purpose of evangelizing and teaching the Word to the local people.

There were five or six open assemblies in Alaska in 1975, with fewer than 150 Christians in fellowship. Five assemblies are listed in recent address books, three in Anchorage and two in Fairbanks.

The work in Alaska in the beginning, and to a great extent now, was a missionary effort among the native peoples who lived and died by the shaman taboos and oracles. Most natives were dualistic in their attitude toward the new Christianity – it was just another and

new phase for religious practice. Many of the white inhabitants were immigrants who had come for adventure and quick wealth and did not want to hear the Word or think about eternity. However, there are many compelling stories of genuine conversions among the native peoples, including Henry Bell and his wife Etta who have solid testimonies among their people and are leaders in the work in the Copper River region near Cordova.

The summer season in Alaska is relatively short and many of the Christians must work during this time. Thus it is difficult for even the gifted among the local believers to reach the scattered population during the mild summer weather.

The Ernest Crabb and Harold Richards families were pioneers who served God faithfully amid rejection and persecution. They would often team up and cover many miles to reach the unreached.

Ernest and Helen Crabb spent 10 years in the Chitina area. Several others followed in the work in the Chitina Assembly and environs after the Crabbs moved to Fairbanks. May McKeller of Alberta, Ethel Zinn of Michigan, the Robert Fentys from New Jersey, and Ray and Mabel Heaton were among the faithfuls.

In 1937, Harold and Mabel Richards, commended to the Lord’s work by six Los Angeles area assemblies, arrived in Cordova, on the Gulf of Alaska and 150 air miles east of Anchorage. There they were able to establish a small native Indian assembly. By 1939 they were operating a children’s home. The Richards moved to near Wasilla to begin the Valley Christian Home for Children after World War II. This home was a ministry to welfare children of

Alaska. In 1945, the Lord sent Mr. and Mrs. Robert Fenty from New Jersey to replace them in the Cordova Assembly work.

When the orphanage system was ended in Alaska and placement of welfare children was done to private homes, the Richards began North Star Bible Camp on the Hatcher Pass Road out of willow.

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Bible Truth Gospel Chapel in Anchorage, the largest city, was established in 1964 in the following manner. Richard Stevens, one of the Indian converts of Harold Richards, had moved to Seattle. Richard Stevens' brother, William J. Stevens lived in Anchorage, and encouraged his brother to come there to establish a Sunday School work. The 1964 earthquake had destroyed so many properties that no rental property could be found for the Sunday School. So William and Elinor Stevens opened their large home for a Daily Vacation Bible School, conducted by Elinor and Richard's wife Marjory, filling it with 50 to 60 children. That encouraged them to begin the Sunday School, and soon they had nearly 100 people in the house.

An assembly was established that year, meeting in the William Stevens' home. From there the Christians rented a basement room in the Carpenter's Hall, where they met until 1971, when they moved into a second floor room of a dairy plant in the Spenard area of Anchorage. Clara Eccles, a missionary at Chitina, came and helped until she went to be with the Lord. During that period, the children's work diminished and the number in regular fellowship dwindled to just a few believers.

Then in the mid 1970s, Jim and Janet McCormick arrived in the area as managers of North Star Bible Camp when Harold and Mabel Richards left for health reasons. They brought John Walden tapes and got instruction classes going. Fred Steenmeyer came into the assembly and started a Christian witnessing course. People were being saved, and the assembly began looking for land. In 1977, the assembly purchased and moved into an attractive church building at 7206 Lake Otis Parkway, where they are now located. Their new location encouraged the believers to work more energetically for growth. An aggressive program was begun, combining visitation, extensive newspaper advertising, and an evening Bible school. The school was staffed by men from the assembly, and moved into its own building, bearing the name Anchorage School of Bible Doctrine.

Stuart and Linda Steenmeyer came in 1977 to help at the assembly and Bible School, and assisted at North Star Bible Camp. Dale and Lois Brooks were commended by the Bible Truth Gospel Chapel to work full time there. Dale Brooks became the President of the Bible School in 1979. The assembly congregation experienced a surge from its earlier handful to 116 in 1979.

Elders have included the Stevens brothers, James McCormick, Fred Steenmeyer, and Robert Fenty. Others active in the assembly have included Larry and JoAn Davis, Spencer and Carol Steenmeyer, and Larry and Cindy Kitchen.

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The Anchorage Bible Fellowship was begun in the mid 1980s by some members of the Steenmeyer family.

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The first effort to begin a work in the Fairbanks area was in 1948 when Ernest and Helen Crabb moved to Esther. This gold mining community was the first location of a youth work, and was the site of a summer Bible camp in 1949. The Crabbs moved to a location nearer Fairbanks in 1950 and lived there for the next 17 years. Don and Ruth Sauer of Buffalo, New York moved to Fairbanks in the early 1950s. Don was a good minister of the Word, and talented in music and youth work. The camp work was turned over to him. For several years, the camp work was held at Harding Lake. When Leonard Platt donated 40 acres of land for the use of a Bible Camp ministry, Camp LiWa was begun.

Denali Bible Chapel in Fairbanks was established in about 1950. Dwight Mattix and family played a significant role in the development of the assembly. Besides the Crabb, Sauer, and Mattix families, John and Doris Miller were important in the early work at Denali Bible Chapel and have provided a stabilizing force. Others leaders over the years include Greg Johnson and Winston Burbank. Denali Bible Chapel has some 200 in attendance on a Sunday morning. Denali Bible Chapel has commended several to the work of the Lord out of the state.

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In the early 1960s, the Crabb family developed a work on the north side of Fairbanks. The assembly – Country Bible Chapel – that formed from this work is considered a hive-off of Denali Bible Chapel. Located on Old Chema Hot Springs Road, it was first called Chema Bible Chapel. The assembly was started in 1970 by Doug

Crabb, William Herning, and Guy Herning. Doug Crabb and his family served the Lord there for three years. Bill Herning has taken basic leadership of Country Bible Chapel since 1973. Its Sunday attendance is now about 45.

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Everett Bachelder was a faithful itinerant witness of the Gospel in Alaska beginning in the middle 1940s. He and his family moved to Nome in the late 1950s and began a Gospel work in that community of 1500 souls on the edge of the Bering Sea. Many were saved in his various ministries. His family and perhaps others Remembered the Lord in his home for a time, and the gathering was listed in the Address Books of the time as Gospel Home. Mr. Bachelder had a literature ministry in which he placed Gospel floats on the sea ice during the winter. These floats were literally found around the world and even into the Mediterranean Sea.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Letters of Interest, May 1953, p. 11; April 1954, p. 3; July/August 1975, p. 8; Nov 1977, p. 20; Nov 1979, p. 5

## Hawaii

Though not a part of North America geographically, Hawaii is nevertheless the 50th of the United States and belongs in this volume. Older Address Books have listed two or three assemblies, while recent editions list four. All have been on the island of Oahu. Neither the ‘Big Island’ – Hawaii, nor the smaller islands have had a brethren assembly to our knowledge.

In 1946, there were two assemblies in Hawaii. At Palolo Chapel in Honolulu, at 3462 Kaau Street, a work had been carried on since before World War II, led by Mr. and Mrs. Ephraim Field, formerly of Bethany Gospel Hall in Oakland, CA. The Honolulu Assembly was in the home of Mr. O.A. Larson, 1132 19th Avenue, Honolulu. In 1962, Joe Spacek mentioned that the believers at Friendly Bible Center meeting at Radford High School, were seeking a lot in the Honolulu area on which to build a chapel.

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Oceanview Bible Chapel in Pearl City, adjacent to Honolulu, may be the outgrowth of one of these. It and Waialae Kahala Chapel in Honolulu are the oldest of the assemblies existing in Hawaii today. Haleiwa Gospel Hall on the north shore of Oahu, existed for many years but disbanded in the early 1990s. Today the Waianae Gospel Hall is on the western shore of Oahu and may have a connection with Haleiwa Gospel Hall; information about them was not made available to us.

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Believers Bible Fellowship in Pearl City began in 1996. Dennis Medeiros, Louis Tory Sr., Richard Chaves, and LouisTory Jr. were among those who started the new assembly. Most of those in Believers Bible Fellowship were at one time in fellowship at Oceanview Bible Chapel. Louis Tory Sr. was at one time an elder there. Dennis Medeiros has been commended to local pastoral and teaching ministry. About 50 adults and youngsters were in the assembly at one point. When Louis Tory St. and his Louis Tory Jr. left the fellowship in 1999, the continuance of the assembly came into question. The

remaining dozen Christians now meet in the garage of one of the believers.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Letters of Interest, November 1946, p. 30; April 1962, p. 10

## U.S. – Mountains and Desert

This section contains Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico. Apart from Colorado, these states have the smallest population density of those in the U.S., and inter-assembly interactions are not simple. The 1999 Walterick Address Book lists 39 assemblies in this grouping.

We begin in the north with Montana and proceed southward to the desert states.

### Montana

In 1973, Doug and Jeanne Crabb moved to Montana, where they lived for 10 years in the Helena area. They began a Bible class that grew to several couples and youth. Eventually, Alvin and Gloria Shawver moved there and helped with the work at the newly formed assembly. They helped build the Helena Bible Chapel while living there. The meeting has ranged from 20 to 60 people. The assembly is now called Community Bible Fellowship. Walt and Marilyn Kertulla and Darreld and Brenda Scott and their families carry on the work at the present. Christians from this assembly travel to Basin, MT to preach the Gospel on Sunday evenings at a campground/ trailer park. These Gospel meetings usually have good attendance.

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Prior to the founding in 1975 of the Plains Bible Chapel in Plains, its four founders were attending a new Christian fellowship and had not yet been incorporated.

When the time came to formally organize, there was discussion and disagreement among those in the fellowship as to whether they should be a nondenominational, autonomous church or whether they should organize as a church with the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

The four men started looking into the Scriptures to see what the Biblical guidelines for meetings and leadership of Christian believers in the New Testament were. They concluded that the New Testament pattern for church leadership was to have a group of elders leading and serving the church together. The majority of the fellowship decided, however, that they should organize as a denominational church. The four men opted not to be a part of it, but began meeting together with their families in a separate weekly Bible study. A few other families joined them, making a total group of approximately 35 people.

The four men, Dwayne Bauer, Lynn Ausland, Ken McGann and Dennis Olson were chosen as the elders of the new assembly. They shared the preaching and leadership. The first meeting and a children's church were held in March 1975. Children's church was held at the home of Ray Steinbach, while the main service, with 39 people in attendance at the initial service, was held at the home of Larry Steinbach.

In time, the church outgrew home meetings and met in the Fairground Pavilion until the Plains Bible Chapel was built in 1979, constructed entirely from old, dead timber that was considered no good. Church members did all the logging and carpentering needed to erect the chapel.

In 1988, Joel Banham was invited to pastor the church. He is affiliated with the American Missionary Fellowship, a Christian service organization which allows home missionaries to be placed in small communities across the USA. Its goal is to assist in the growth of individual churches, developing them to the point of being self-supporting. Ken McGann and Dennis Olson still hold their positions as elders.

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The Glacier Bible Fellowship, MT was established by Doug and Jeanne Crabb in 1985 with as many as ten at the Breaking of Bread. The assembly first met in the basement of the Eagles Club in Kalispell, near Glacier National Park. When the Crabbs moved to nearby Whitefish, the assembly met in their home with a few local families. By 1987, all but one of those families had moved to other places for employment purposes, but seven were still Breaking Bread every Sunday morning. The assembly survived until about 1992 after the Crabbs left the area.

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The Bible Chapel in Stevensville, near the Idaho state line south of Missoula, began in 1977 at the instigation of Robert Sykes, Nathan Luibrand, and Jonathan Luibrand. In its own building, the assembly has a weekly attendance of about 80. The Bible Chapel is a hive-off from Mountain View Chapel in Missoula.

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Corvallis Bible Chapel in the small town of Corvallis, near Stevensville, hived off from the Bible Chapel in Stevensville in 1997, with six families. Leaders were

then Nathan Luibrand, Peter Daley, Russ Koch, and Jim Gardner.

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In 1975, several saw the need for a Bible camp, and so the Crabbs began what has become Frontier Bible Camp, which has been a blessing to many kids. Doug Crabb also began High Trails Expeditions in 1975 with three young teens. These camps have grown to the point where some 100 youth attend these wilderness trail camps annually. Rick Norman of Stevensville directs these camps now. Doug Crabb also used the local Ham Radio Club as a means of witness in the area.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Uplook, February 1987, p. 63; March 1989, p. 104

Letters of Interest, April 1962, p. 10

## Idaho

The Walnut Avenue Gospel Chapel in Coeur D'Alene was established in about 1935 by William E. Rae from the Portland assembly, and Ernest F. Unruh. Robert and Donald Unruh have shared leadership with these over the years. Meeting initially at the Ft. Sherman Hall, it moved through two other locations before coming to its present location at 2nd and Walnut in Coeur D'Alene. Walnut Avenue Gospel Chapel has about 20 in fellowship.

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The Westside Bible Chapel in Boise has also been in existence for many years, occupying rented quarters. In

the early 1990s, it changed its name to Westside Bible Church.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

## Wyoming

As in all sparsely populated regions, assembly work in Wyoming has always been difficult to maintain. The earliest known assembly in the state was in Fort Washakie, population 250, on the Wind River Indian Reservation.

Wesley and Gladys Kosin were missionaries to the Shoshone Indians for 23 years. They began Breaking Bread in their home in about 1959, and soon several of their converts joined in the fellowship, meeting as the Fort Washakie Assembly. However, many of these converts were drawn into Pentecostal fellowships over the years, and when the Kosins retired to South Carolina in 1981, the assembly discontinued.

Mr. Kosin worked with Wycliffe Bible Translators and taught classes at the Summer Institute of Linguistics in North Dakota for several years. He was the first to analyze the Shoshone language and did considerable Bible translation into that language. The Kosins had a Scripture literature booth at the Wyoming State Fair for many years, and had a local radio Gospel program in simplified English. They suffered the loss of a daughter, Beatrice, who with another commended missionary, was martyred by Viet Cong during the Viet Nam war.

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The Kosins were an influence on Stark Wilson of Casper, north of Cheyenne, who established the Casper Assembly in his home for several years. In 1989, one source says there was an unlisted meeting in Casper, probably this one. It has discontinued.

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A family in the small town of Upton in the northeast corner of the state, had the Upton Assembly in their home for a time.

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By 1970, Robert and Betty Twing were Breaking Bread as a family in their home near Buffalo in the north-central part of the state. They had been introduced to brethren meetings by Betty's parents who lived in Tennessee and had been with an assembly started by T.B. Gilbert. In 1977, Rodney Parr moved his family to nearby Sheridan from Garden City, KS to help the Twings establish an assembly in northern Wyoming. The two families began regular assembly meetings in the Parr home in late 1977, and two other families joined with them a little later. The assembly was called Cloud Peak Bible Chapel.

Mrs. Parr developed a sizeable neighborhood Sunday School, but after the Parrs moved to a different area, that work came to an end. The assembly moved to the Twing home near Buffalo in 1982 and continued for just a few more months, discontinuing in May 1983.

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The Cheyenne Bible Chapel, WY started in Cheyenne in the home of Roy Huffman in 1987 and lasted a year or

two. Each of these assemblies consisted of just a few believers.

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In 1985, the Bread of Life Fellowship in Laramie was meeting in the home of Robert Koenig in Laramie in the southern part of the state. It closed in the early 1990s when the Koenigs moved away, but has resumed in the Koenig home at 519 S. 4th Street, with the Lawrence Thomas and Matt Lundberg families.

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A larger assembly formed in 1997 in the sizeable town of Powell, east of Yellowstone National Park. The Powell Assembly of Believers began in June 1997 through the efforts of the Tillotson, Kinkade, and Krevo families. The Olsens soon joined, then Nordlands, Schmidts, and Ottos. John Tillotson, Lloyd Olsen, Mark Nordland, Kevin Schmidt, and Don Otto are the current elders. Meeting first in the Tillotson home, the group subsequently moved to a funeral home, then to Powell Hospital, and currently meets at Northwest College. The Tillotsons and Olsens had been associated with Park Bible Chapel in Everett, WA. Others had some contacts with brethren assemblies, and others did not, and simply wanted to meet as a New Testament church. As to its start-up, "The Lord brought us all together; there is really no other way to explain it," according to John Tillotson. The young assembly has commended a worker to Immanuel Mission in Arizona. About 40 adults and youngsters attend the Powell Assembly of Believers.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses and Letters

## Colorado

The Brethren in Colorado apparently had two independent beginnings, one of them the effort of an Englishman who had recently broken from the ‘exclusives’ in England, and the other by farming families from Kansas.

The Englishman, H. R. Sadler, had moved to Denver to set up a business. Together with a Mr. McIlven, he established an assembly in 1901 known as the Denver Bible Hall but often called the Sadler Meeting, which met first in rented space in downtown Denver.

The assembly later moved to 2428 Ogden Street, now one of the oldest residential areas of the city, but then a new area. Among the men in leadership at the Denver Bible Hall besides Sadler were Will and Tom Henry, Edward Brown, a Mr. Desch, and a Mr. Brookman. Tom Henry was one of the principal preachers. In 1923, John and Nan Scroggie came from Scotland and joined the group. John Scroggie was an able preacher.

The Christians at the Denver Bible Hall decided to move to a newer residential area in about 1930, to South Pennsylvania near Bayaud Avenue. The meeting, however, was then in a period of decline. When Mr. Sadler moved in 1938 to California, only the John Scroggies, Edward Browns, and perhaps two or three other families were left.

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Another assembly formed in Denver in about 1908, probably a split-off from the first. It became known as the 6th Avenue Gospel Hall after it had moved through several locations. Some of the first people associated

with it were Fred Kenney, Annie Van Wyk, and a Mr. Dale.

Its first meeting place was in rented quarters on Kalamath Street just south of downtown Denver. In about 1912, the group moved into the Charles Building at 15th and Curtis Streets in the central shopping district of Denver. After a time, they moved into another building at 13th and Curtis. At that location, John Chambers, a Mr. Kiddey, and a Mr. Fleming joined the assembly. Ted and Grace Ball from western Kansas joined them in about 1920, and Ted Ball soon became one of its leading figures.

In 1923 the group moved to 222 South Broadway, a commercial district in south Denver; this was several years before the Denver Bible Hall moved to that vicinity. They stayed there only two years, then moved to an old stone church building on East 6th Avenue and Detroit Street. This was an upper class residential area in east Denver, and may indicate a growing affluence among some of the members. They were known as the 6th Avenue Gospel Hall at that period. Among the many who joined the assembly in those days were Joshua Summerfield and Chester Burrows, who came in 1932. John Chambers was one of leaders in that period and did much of the preaching.

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When it was clear that the struggling Denver Bible Hall might have to close its doors, the two groups decided to merge. The merger took place in 1938, shortly after Mr. Sadler left, and the assembly took the name Denver Gospel Hall, and moved to a new location in the 300 block of South Pearl, just two or three blocks from the

South Pennsylvania site. Perhaps the new group had learned some lessons from the declension, for subsequently it developed into a strong and stable assembly, able to pass leadership to succeeding generations.

Fred Kenney, John Scroggie, Chester Burrows, and Ted Ball were the early leaders at the Denver Gospel Hall. David and Cecile Horn moved to Denver from Longmont and joined with the Christians at the Denver Gospel Hall in its earliest days, although David was an itinerant preacher. Among the leaders a little later at the South Pearl Street site were Herb Stowell, Howell James, and Jesse James. Many of the families in fellowship at the Denver Gospel Hall in the 1940s were converts of David and John Horn and had come from eastern Colorado and western Kansas. Some of those families had moved to Denver because of the Dust Bowl and economic depression, and their influence on the subsequent development of the brethren in Denver and other parts of Colorado was substantial.

Around 1946 the Denver Gospel Hall was joined by some families from the Ford Meeting, and in 1949 by some families from the Oldtrogge Meeting, when those meetings closed. We discuss these two vigorous but short-lived meetings now.

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William Ford moved to Denver from Illinois in the 1930s. He was not accepted by either of the two existing meetings, the 6th Avenue Gospel Hall and the Denver Bible Hall, because he encouraged the use of a piano during the meetings, and held that the Lord’s Supper was open to all believers. In about 1938, Ford erected a

building at Evans and South Lincoln and started a new meeting. If it took a specific name, that name is lost, and only ‘Ford Meeting’ is remembered. It was joined by Chester Burrows who had decided not to stay with the newly formed Denver Gospel Hall. Ford at first did all the preaching, and was said to be very good at it. He also did much personal work among Jewish people in Denver, and was instrumental in setting up the West Side Center of the Denver Hebrew Mission. The Ford meeting was very evangelistic, had an active Sunday School, visited in the neighborhood, and distributed tracts; it had about 55 in fellowship at its largest, comparable in size to the Denver Gospel Hall.

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Victor Oldtrogge, a graduate of Moody Bible Institute, was an ordained Baptist minister who had decided to leave the Baptists. He had preached often in Denver and had become acquainted with William Ford. A short time after Mr. Ford started the new assembly, he invited Mr. Oldtrogge to join them, which he did. Victor Oldtrogge was also a very able speaker and attracted many new people to the assembly. But tensions developed between these two powerful personalities. In the early 1940s, Mr. Oldtrogge and a number of families left the Ford Assembly and started meeting in the Oldtrogge home. After a short time, they began meeting in the Trevino Mortuary at Alameda and South Logan, and after that rented a church building in the 2100 block of South Milwaukee. They called their assembly the Bible Fellowship Chapel. This church was also very evangelistic. As were those in the Ford meeting, they were active in Jewish evangelism, and had a program of

visiting prisons on Sunday afternoons. The meeting had about 60 or 70 in fellowship at its largest.

Mr. Oldtrogge had preached in Baptist and Presbyterian churches in Denver and became well known for his abilities. In about 1948 he was offered the presidency of the Arizona Bible Institute, which was affiliated with The Bible Institute of Los Angeles (Biola). However, Oldtrogge had made no provision for developing other leaders in his assembly, and when he accepted the Arizona offer and left Denver in 1949, the meeting dissolved.

The Ford meeting had been greatly weakened when Oldtrogge left, and it disbanded in 1946. Some of its remaining members then joined the Denver Gospel Hall on South Pearl Street, the only remaining assembly in Denver.

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As the Denver Gospel Hall grew, it needed more space, and in 1949 purchased the Olinger Mortuary at 1475 South Broadway and converted it into a chapel. The assembly had about 75 people in fellowship at that time. Parking soon became a problem, and in 1952, the assembly found a church building for sale at 1405 South Vine Street in southeast Denver. Some called it the Denver Gospel Chapel from that time, and others simply the Vine Street Meeting. There the assembly remained for another decade, growing to about 100. Lucas Wilson, who had broken from an ‘exclusive’ assembly in Denver, joined the leadership at the Denver Gospel Chapel at about that time.

The assembly thrived and soon a group hived off to start a Sunday School work in Littleton, just south of Denver

(see below). Even then, the Christians at Vine Street soon had outgrown their building, which could seat only 100 people. In about 1960 they purchased a lot in southwest Denver at Florida and South Ames. To help finance the construction, the Christians sold the building on Vine Street and rented an elementary school nearby at Florida and Wolf, where they stayed for about eight months until the Southwest Bible Chapel was ready for occupancy. Henry Van Ryn, who with his wife had come to Denver in 1961 and was an able preacher, oversaw the construction.

The first meeting in the new building was in 1963 and the leaders then were considered to be Fritz Hatch, Lucas Wilson, and John Scroggie. Since 1983, when the by_laws were rewritten, Southwest Bible Chapel has had recognized elders and deacons.

Henry Van Ryn was an active teaching elder at Southwest during the 1960s. He preached in other Colorado assemblies and had a very successful Ladies' Coffee Hour at Southwest for many years. Other brothers prominent in the ministry of the Word were Greg Koehn, David MacLeod, Paul Wright (then teaching at Western Bible Institute), and more recently, C.N. Tokatlouglou, and Thomas McAnally.

The active numbers have declined due to many younger families migrating to the outskirts of the metropolis, but neighborhood outreach through Kids' Club and the Sunday School/Bible Hour continue. Southwest Bible Chapel hosts the Prison Ministries operation for Colorado, Wyoming and western Nebraska, and many assembly members are active in the grading and mailing

of Bible courses and literature for that ministry. Approximately 100 are in fellowship now.

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In 1970, A. K. Varghese came to the United States and to Southwest Bible Chapel from Karela, India, and was the first of many to follow; thus began a long relationship with brothers and sisters from India. The Abraham George family was welcomed in 1974, then the Thomas', Daniels', Matthews', Kapp's and others. In about 1994, some of these families began the Believers Assembly in Denver, meeting in rented quarters and having a special outreach to other Indian families, some of which have been added to their fellowship.

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In the early 1950s, the Sunday School of the Denver Gospel Chapel on South Vine Street was large. Several carloads of children were being brought from the Littleton area. John and Edna Todd lived in Littleton and began having Friday evening outreach meetings for the children in their home in 1953; in this, they had the blessing of the Vine Street assembly. These meetings became so popular that the Todds began holding Sunday School classes in their home. In 1955 the Todds rented the 4_H building on the Arapahoe County Fairgrounds for the Sunday School, and by this time several adults were involved; these included the families of Cecil Beck, Roscoe Turner, Robert Hogland, Dick Taylor, Joe Schwaller, Francis Orange, Jackie Folks, and DeVada Wells.

It was not long before Remembrance Meetings were being held at the 4_H building, and in July 1956 the workers voted to form a new assembly. The assembly

took the name Belleview Bible Chapel since the 4_H building was located on Belleview Avenue. They remained there for several more years. In the late 1950s, Sunday School attendance was 75 to 100 children. Earl James, LeRoy Hinkle, John Todd, and Roscoe Turner were viewed as the principal leaders.

The Christians felt that the 4_H building wasn’t sufficient for their needs, and in early 1960 rented a small church building. Bill and Charlene James joined the meeting at that time, having moved from Phoenix. Herb and Alice Banks had also joined by then. However, after only a few months, the Christians moved back to the 4_H building, a sizeable group having split off (see below). Property at 991 W. Prentice Street in Littleton was purchased and a chapel was finished in early 1963. At about this time and a little later, the families of Sam Dalton, Don Fleet, Larry Swenson, and Robert von Spiegel had joined the fellowship. Henry Van Ryn preached and gave assistance at Belleview Bible Chapel.

In 1975, the Belleview Christians traded for property at 937 Belleview Avenue, consisting of a house and small chapel. The families of Danny Ee and Bob Copley joined the fellowship in this period, along with many others. Then the Christians purchased land much further east at 9550 E. Belleview Avenue. The first meeting in the new chapel was held on Thanksgiving day in 1978. The assembly grew, nearly filling the building within a short time. The assembly supported a half-time worker, Dan'l Hollis, who ministered at the assembly from 1984 until 1990.

The elders have included Bill James, Courtney Hemenway, Roger Henderson, and Brian Young. Mark

and Fay Plaza are supported full-time in the assembly, and work especially with the youth. In 1999, the assembly sold their building on Belleview and purchased five acres in the rapidly growing area of Parker, south of Denver. The Christians took the name Parker Hills Bible Fellowship and met in an elementary school until the new chapel was completed. About 80 adults and children attend the assembly.

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In 1961, a number of families left the Belleview assembly because of differences in leadership philosophy. They included Herbert Banks, Herbert Stowell, Phillip Harrison, Cecil Beck, John Henry, and Cecil Westfall. With the encouragement of some at Vine Street, the initial group of about 30 people began a Sunday School work, and began Breaking Bread at the Littleton YMCA at 2233 West Shepard Avenue. They incorporated in 1962 as Littleton Bible Chapel.

The group decided to have recognized elders from the beginning; the first were Herbert Stowell, Herbert Banks, and Phil Harrison. Other elders in the next few years included John Henry, Cecil Beck, Cecil Westfall, Don Wilson, and William Lansdown. The elders shared most of the preaching ministry in the early days.

After about three years, the assembly began meeting at the Mark Hopkins Elementary School in a new residential area in Littleton, where it stayed for about a year, then moved back to the YMCA. The Banks home was used for Wednesday night meetings. The church was growing, so they purchased land in 1965, and constructed a new chapel at 6023 South Datura, their present location. The official opening took place in

March 1969. At that time the congregation numbered about 125. Littleton Bible Chapel continued to grow; and a lower level was added in 1976, and a new auditorium in 1985, at which time about 300 were attending the Remembrance Meeting.

Alexander Strauch joined the Littleton fellowship in early 1969. In January 1970, Marilyn James, David MacLeod, and Debbie Larson began attending the Chapel and helping with the youth group, which quickly expanded to 70 or 80, about half of the entire assembly population at that time. Soon David MacLeod and Alex Strauch were doing most of the expository teaching at Littleton Bible Chapel.

When Marilyn James and Alex Strauch married they opened a home for troubled young men, and maintained it for five years. Alex became an elder at Littleton Bible Chapel in 1975. He is the author of several books, including the popular Biblical Eldership. For about three years Kent Wilson was the sole full_time worker at Littleton; several others have served full time for shorter periods. Many elders have served the assembly over the years. Littleton Bible Chapel has commended seven families to ministries in Mexico, Indonesia, and South America Currently about 300 families are in fellowship at Littleton Bible Chapel, making it the largest in the state. On a typical Sunday morning, about 400 or more people are in attendance.

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An assembly called University Christian Center in Denver started with the blessing of Littleton Bible Chapel in about 1980. The families of William Lansdown and Bruce Hayes were the prime movers, and two other

families joined them in the new work. The group had a Breaking of Bread service at the Lansdowns house adjacent to the University of Denver campus in south Denver, along with a preaching service, gave a Sunday meal to students, and had an active work among them. But the group was never able to attract families from the area, and after about four years decided to close as an assembly, although the work with students continued.

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In 1950, James Reynolds was in the military service at Lowry Air Force Base on the east edge of Denver. He and his family joined with the Christians at the Denver Gospel Chapel then meeting at the former mortuary on South Broadway.

Jim Reynolds had a burden for a work in a low-income district to the northeast of downtown Denver. With Lucas Wilson from the Denver Gospel Chapel, he began house-to-house visitation in the area along with home Bible studies. Sam and Pearl Dalton moved to Denver from Chicago in June of 1952 and joined the effort. Six or seven people were saved, and the small group decided to form an assembly for Breaking of Bread. They began meeting in 1952 in the Masonic Lodge at 2800 Welton St. The assembly decided to take the name Denver Gospel Hall, since the Denver Gospel Chapel was no longer using that name. Caleb and Detra Gates moved from Kansas City, Kansas at about that time and became active at the Denver Gospel Hall.

The principal leaders at that time were Jim Reynolds, Sam Dalton, Andrew Jones, James Lanier, and Isaiah MacDonald. Sam Dalton preached often at the new

assembly, developing his gift so that by 1967 he was in full-time work as a traveling preacher.

In 1955, the Denver Gospel Hall purchased a former Lutheran church building at 1631 Martin Luther King Boulevard. The assembly still meets there and has about 40 households in fellowship. It has recognized elders. When the University Christian Center dissolved, the Lansdowns began attending the Denver Gospel Hall, where William Lansdown joined the leadership, with Curtis Holmes and others.

The Denver Gospel Hall has always had a strong concern for youth. Neighborhood Ministries, organized by Ted Travis, had its beginnings at the Denver Gospel Hall in about 1980. Soon after that, Colorado Uplift was started by Jim Reynolds and a Christian man from a different church, with help from Curtis Holmes. This was a program designed to help disadvantaged inner_city youth find careers, and at the same time bring them the Gospel of Christ.

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Steve and Joanne Bennett had been saved in the assembly work in Alamosa (see below) in the late 1960s. After marrying, they moved to Denver and Broke Bread in their home alone for six months. When Rick and Vickie Dindinger, then in fellowship at the Littleton Bible Chapel, found them out, they joined with them. In the fall of 1970, after a year of prayer and counseling with brothers from Littleton Bible Chapel and the assembly in Alamosa, the two families decided that the Lord would have them begin a new fellowship of believers in the north or west areas of Denver.

A program of evangelism and visitation resulted in several couples being saved in north Denver and so subsequent evangelism was concentrated there. The Dindinger family moved to a large house in north Denver to accommodate the growing fellowship. At about this time the group took the name Fellowship Bible Chapel.

The assembly continued to grow and the Dindingers moved to a yet larger house. Evangelism and discipleship were focal points of the fellowship. Evangelism at the Denver Cascade Mobile Home Park near North Federal Boulevard led to the availability of the clubhouse there for Sunday morning services. The fellowship then purchased a modular building and moved it onto a lot at the Mobile Home Park, using the clubhouse for the Remembrance and Family Bible Hour meetings and the modular building for the large Sunday School work and nursery. About 180 to 200 people attended on Sundays at the time of their largest numbers, which was in the early 1980s. Several small_group Bible studies were held in homes in the middle of the week.

During the early years, the families of Jeff Wilson, Phil Dindinger, Mike Hamil, Gary Blankenship, Jeffrey Wilhelm, and many others joined in fellowship at the thriving assembly. Others who came in the late 1970s and had leadership roles were Don Valentine, Paul Knott, Lon Gregg, and Leonard Dare. Four families were commended to full_time service in Spain and elsewhere during these years.

Looking to the future, the assembly purchased several acres of open land in the suburb of Westminster in 1984.

But a doctrinal issue then divided the leaders and congregation, and many left. In 1988 the assembly closed, and several families joined with Fairview Bible Chapel in Boulder. The assembly had thrived for nearly two decades.

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This completes the Denver-area meetings, and we turn to assemblies derived from the farming areas of Kansas, Nebraska, and eastern Colorado.

The assemblies that formed in eastern Colorado had their roots in brethren from central and western Kansas and indirectly from Iowa. In 1916 or 1917, J. E. (Ned) Brown moved from Long Island in north_central Kansas to the area of Kanorado, a small town on the Kansas_Colorado border (see Kansas). Soon after arriving, he started an assembly that became known as the Kanorado Gospel Hall. A good preacher, he held Gospel meetings at several different school houses in western Kansas and eastern Colorado.

Ned Brown hired two young men, David and John Horn, to help him on his farm and in preaching the Gospel. Their pattern was to work in the fields during the day and preach at night. The two were soon full_time Gospel workers. They were the principal carriers of the Gospel into western Kansas and eastern Colorado.

In 1919, David Horn married Cecile Brown, a daughter of Ned Brown, and moved to Longmont. John Horn moved to Imperial, Nebraska where he was instrumental in starting the Imperial Gospel Hall. Don and Harold McCormick farmed near Imperial and with their families joined that fellowship, along with the families of Floyd Miller, George Long, and Ken Hayward. Several of these

came many years later to Colorado and joined the assemblies there.

Ned Brown took in another young man after the Horns left – John Walden. While living with the Browns, John helped with the farm work, but preaching God's Word became most important to him. Shortly after John Walden and Nan DuBauge were married in 1931, they moved to Denver and then Colorado Springs. John Walden was one of the leading brothers among the assemblies in Colorado during his years of ministry.

Many of the traveling preachers who came to the Kanorado Gospel Hall and to other assemblies in the area for special meetings were from Kansas and included C.W. Ross, Don Charles, Jack Charles, Leonard Linsted, and Richard Burson. These brethren had a strong influence on the conduct and attitudes of these meetings in Colorado and western Kansas.

The Dust Bowl and the Great Depression of the 1930s induced many farming families to move off the farms to the towns and cities along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. There they affiliated with existing assemblies and had a considerable influence. The Nohr, Stevens, Turner, and Ted and Ed Anderson families were among those active at Kanorado who moved west and became active in new and existing assemblies along the Front Range.

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Some refer to the Longmont meeting as the oldest brethren assembly in Colorado, but it seems to have gotten started at about the same time that the earliest meeting in Denver began. In the early 1900s, Longmont was a small farming community 30 miles north of

Denver. William Milner and his family lived on a farm east of the town. In 1902 his two sisters and their families – the Mike Hardesty family was one of these – moved to the area from north central Kansas, where they had been in fellowship in an assembly in Republic County. Shortly after they arrived, they and the Milners began Breaking Bread in their homes in the country.

A few families joined with them, and after a time the group rented a large room over a store in the 300 block of Main Street in Longmont. When that building was sold, the Christians rented a room in a building just across the street. William Milner's son David moved his family there from Kansas at about that time, and Joseph Milner, another son of William, joined the meeting when he arrived in January of 1920.

That same year, David Horn, then in his mid_twenties and already an itinerant preacher, moved to Longmont with his wife. In 1921, C.W. Ross from Kansas City, pitched a tent on the Horn's lot and with David and John Horn, canvassed the town. For a week or two, they preached the Gospel, and many were saved and joined the meeting, including some members of the Mahagan and Lambert families.

In March 1924, John Mahagan built a one_room frame building for the growing assembly on the corner of Sixth and Sherman Streets in Longmont. John and David Horn held three or four weeks of Gospel meetings at the Longmont Gospel Hall soon after it was opened. Others who held special Gospel meetings at the Hall in its early days were Tom Olson and John Walden. Although most men of the assembly would take their turn at bringing a lesson from the Bible on a Sunday, adhering to traditions

brought in from Kansas and elsewhere, the principal preaching was done by the traveling preachers, such as those mentioned. Men would also come up from the Denver meetings to preach.

Leaders in the meeting in the 1930s were the Milners, Hardestys, John Mahagan, and Hase Nesmith. The Lamberts had moved to California, but when Albert (Bud) Lambert returned in 1937, he began taking an active part in the assembly. The Longmont assembly initiated a number of Bible Conferences. The first of these was held in a tent on the Horn's place in 1925.

In 1960 a basement and an addition to the front were added to the chapel. The name was changed to the Longmont Gospel Chapel at about that time, and later to Longmont Bible Chapel. Leaders during this later period included Ted Anderson, Charles Mar, and James Steele. The assembly disbanded in 1997, after more than 90 years of ministry.

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Many Colorado families in the Kanorado assembly were driving a long distance to go to the meetings there, and decided to start up their own assembly in Burlington, about 12 miles inside the Colorado border and about 30 miles from the Kanorado Gospel Hall. The prime mover in this was Ben F. Parmer, with Lyle James as an enthusiastic collaborator. With the fellowship of the Kanorado meeting, they initiated the building of the Burlington Gospel Chapel, whose seating capacity was 154. The two men were the first leaders of the assembly. The first Remembrance Meeting was in February 1949.

As the Kanorado meeting had done years earlier, the Burlington meeting grew rapidly. Sam and Mae Morrow

joined the assembly and Mr. Morrow later became one of its principal leaders. For many years, the Burlington meeting sponsored annual Bible Conferences at the chapel, which attracted many people from Colorado, Kansas, and Nebraska.

Ben Parmer relinquished his responsibilities at the Burlington assembly in 1967 to establish a new work in the town of Limon, about an hour's drive east of Denver. Over the next two decades the Burlington assembly slowly declined, and in 1989 the Burlington Gospel Chapel disbanded. It had been in existence for 40 years of service, seeing much blessing of the Lord. Its people had been among the initiators and strong supporters of the work at Camp Elim, in the mountains west of Colorado Springs, and were supporters of the Christian Home for Children in Colorado Springs, supplying both with farm produce and beef.

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Ben Parmer began outreach meetings in Limon in 1964. In 1965 he pitched his tent there and held three weeks of Gospel meetings, at which about a dozen people were saved. The Vernon Plants came from Colorado Springs to help in these tent meetings. Weekly Bible studies were begun almost immediately after that, and within a few months several men felt that the Lord would have them start a new assembly in that town of 1800 people. They incorporated as the Limon Bible Chapel, and by February 1967 the newly built chapel was completed and regular Sunday services had begun. The assembly continues to hold a two-day Annual Bible Conference each spring.

Ben’s son Paul Parmer has taken the main responsibility for several youth outreaches, including an annual camp for children. Others who have taken responsibilities in the assembly over the years include Terry and Carol Jaques, Clem and Betty Wiechman, Richard and Cherie Parmer, Don and Janice White, Dan and Sarah Goodsma, and Curt Parmer. The attendance varies as workers migrate from Limon to Denver in their quest for better jobs, but the assembly is active, with about 90 adults and children in attendance on an average Sunday.

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At about the time that the Burlington Gospel Chapel was formed, Roy Rinn started a meeting for Breaking of Bread at his home near Yuma in eastern Colorado, about 80 miles northwest of Burlington. Soon the Copley family, many of whom had been converted under the ministry of Ken Baird, began meeting with them, and perhaps one or two other families as well. The group later moved their Remembrance Meetings into a former chicken hatchery. The Yuma Assembly continued until the late 1950s, after which they began to attend the Haxtun Gospel Hall.

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The Roy Harrah family had lived near Champion in southwestern Nebraska, but moved to a farm near Haxtun in the 1940s. With a few other families, they soon began meeting for Breaking of Bread in their home. When William Morgan, originally from Iowa, and Arthur Rodgers of Omaha, Nebraska learned of the assembly interest near Haxtun, they came to the town and held Gospel meetings on the streets. Thus encouraged, the Harrahs bought the Concord school

house and moved it into Haxtun in 1948. The Haxtun Gospel Hall was under way in October 1948. Arthur Rodgers, Bill Morgan, and John Elliott spoke at the opening, and the latter two stayed for three weeks of Gospel meetings.

The assembly had the encouragement and help of families living near Imperial, Nebraska – especially the families of Casper and Frank Cook, Andy Banks, and Pearl Ridlen. The Ridlens moved to a farm about 25 miles east of Haxtun, and helped with young people's meetings in their home.

The Haxton assembly consisted of about nine or ten families at its largest and did not have much local preaching gift to draw on. Nevertheless it hosted a Bible Conference in 1952. Ken Baird came every other week from Boulder to minister the Word. Joe Balsan and Ben Parmer conducted evangelistic meetings at the Haxtun assembly. J.O. Brown, Roy Harrah's uncle, visited the area in his Gospel Bus, and Richard Burson came from Kansas for ministry.

The assembly kept up an active midweek Bible study in the town, but few of the townspeople who came to these studies joined with the Haxtun assembly. When the Bereans started a church in the town, many of the people in the Bible studies joined that church, and this had a negative effect on the assembly. The Haxtun Gospel Hall closed in about 1981 after 30 years of existence.

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By about 1925, just a couple of years after the Kanorado Gospel Hall was built, the families of William R. Plant and Leroy A. Hinkle were meeting together to

Remember the Lord in the community church building at Fondis, a small farming community about half way between Limon and Colorado Springs. They also started a Sunday School in order to reach out into the community.

Being in a sparsely populated rural area, the Fondis Assembly never grew to large numbers and never had more than a few families. Ira and Clara Daharsh, and Roy and Bertie Vote were among those in the Fondis Assembly. Traveling evangelists came frequently to help encourage the work, including Arthur and Willard Rodgers from Omaha, John and David Horn, and John Walden. Families from Colorado Springs and Denver assemblies would drive out to worship with and encourage those in the Fondis Assembly. Ned Brown.preached there occasionally; J.O. Brown would come through with his Gospel Bus for gospel meetings; Frank E. Hathaway, who had been with the 'exclusive' brethren until about the mid 1930s, would come out from Colorado Springs to preach.

In 1936, the Hinkles moved into the town of Elizabeth, not far away, where Lawrence Allen and his wife Acile lived, and the meeting decided to move there. It stayed there just four years, until 1940 when the Hinkles moved to Denver. Lawrence Allen was an active member of the meeting while it was at Elizabeth. The assembly then moved back to Fondis, and continued until about 1949 at which time the work was turned over to a Baptist group.

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John Walden felt led of the Lord to establish a full-time itinerant ministry among the assemblies. He and his wife

moved first to Denver and used it as their home base as they traveled about the state, pulling a trailer which John had built. In late 1935 or early 1936, they were invited by William Irvine to come to Colorado Springs and help with a small assembly then meeting in the Lucerne Hotel. These Christians met in a tiny room at the rear of the hotel, which was in the 400 block of East Pikes Peak Avenue.

The origins of that assembly are not remembered. A Kanorado Gospel Hall connection is evident because Leroy and Venus Stevens from the Kanorado assembly were early in fellowship there. Besides the Irvines and Stevens', some of the Hotel meeting's earliest members were William and Janet Cosgrove, the Sam Barclays, and Caroline Prosence.

Many in that assembly had a vision for outreach and further growth, and so the Christians decided to build their own meeting place. The East Side Bible Hall in Colorado Springs, at 749 East Pikes Peak Avenue, was completed in 1940 and seated about 100 people. After not many years, the growing assembly bought an existing church building on the west side of the city to provide more room, keeping the East Side chapel for Sunday school work and Friday night children's meetings for children from the east side.

An influx of several committed families in the late 1940s and 1950s greatly strengthened the assembly. Ken and Ruth Baird had moved to Colorado Springs in 1945 to join the work at the Christian Home for Children, which had been founded by John and Nan Walden. They did much visitation for the work on the east side and did much to build up the assembly. Jack and Ruth Pegler,

Bob and Jeanette Wilson, Jim and Ruth Hasty, William and Hilda Plant, Milton Weir, and Roger and Dorothy Cocking with their families were other additions to the assembly. Roger Cocking ministered often from the pulpit and was one of the early elders. During the 1940s, leaders at the assembly included Carroll Brown, Ken Baird, and Bob Wilson.

Needing more room, the Christians in 1952 sold both existing buildings and built Southside Bible Chapel at 1725 South Wahsatch Avenue. The Southside Bible Chapel is still at this address, and is the parent or grandparent of all the assemblies in the city today.

Bob Wilson and Carroll Brown had a Sunday School class of up to 75 high school and college age young people at one time. Jim and Louise Wright arrived in Colorado Springs in 1961 and took responsibility for the young people's work. Jim Wright traveled often to Greeley and the San Luis Valley, encouraging young men who were endeavoring to see assemblies started in their areas. He became the Director at Camp Elim in 1965.

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Soon after Southside Bible Chapel was built, John Walden was urging an outreach into the northeast part of the city. He had broken with some of the traditions of the plains brethren by this time, espousing such things as recognized leadership and the openness of the Lord's Supper. In 1956, several families met together for prayer for the Lord's leading. These families met in Bob Larson's home, although they continued Breaking Bread at Southside. In October 1958, the group had its first meeting as an assembly, at the Larson home.

Construction of Northeast Bible Chapel in Colorado Springs, seating up to 125 people, was finished in 1960. The group decided to have recognized elders from the outset. The first elders were Lester Dolan, Bob Larson, and William Plant.

Northeast Bible Chapel has had several outreaches. In 1971, Mae Larson, Marilyn Parker, Jan Hollingsworth, and Jerri Holmes started a coffee hour for ladies in the assembly and in the neighborhood. As many as 80 women were attending at one point. For eight years beginning in about 1970 several men in the assembly manned a booth at the Colorado State Fair in Pueblo, distributing literature and talking to anyone interested in the Gospel.

John Walden held city_wide Bible classes beginning in about 1973 which were sponsored by Northeast Bible Chapel. The attendance at one point reached 96 people, and during a series on prophecy, 23 people were saved. These classes were a driving factor for growth at Northeast. Another factor was the work at Camp Elim. When Paul Sapp was Director at the camp, he fellowshipped at Northeast and was very active there for several years until he moved from the area in 1988. To accommodate the increasing numbers at Northeast, an addition consisting of a sanctuary seating 300 people was built in 1980.

Northeast Bible Chapel has about 300 adults and youngsters in attendance, with about 200 at the Lord’s Supper weekly. The active assembly has men’s and ladies’ prayer groups, a missionary support group, a co-dependency support group, and youth and seniors programs.

A few families left Northeast Bible Chapel in 1969 to begin the Black Forest Bible Chapel in an area of that name, but that effort disbanded after a short time. Other derivatives of Northeast have been Rustic Hills Bible Chapel, Westside Christians, Cimarron Hills Bible Chapel, and Harvest Bible Fellowship.

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In 1970 about six young families from Northeast decided to form a new assembly in Colorado Springs, to be called Rustic Hills Bible Chapel. At its largest, this assembly had 60 to 70 people. Elders had been recognized by the group, and were active in counseling, teaching, and evangelistic outreach in the community. The assembly also had the counsel of older brothers and sisters from the established meetings.

For the first two or three years, the church met in the homes of the families. After that they rented space in office buildings for their meetings. They had very few financial resources among themselves and were unable to obtain financial support for purchasing land or for a building of their own. In 1980, after a decade of struggles and financial leanness, they decided to close their work, return to Northeast, and wait upon the Lord for His leading in starting a new work again.

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Another 40 people hived off from Northeast Bible Chapel in about 1975, calling themselves the Westside Christians. The initiators of this move were William McCotter, Brian Michaux, Daryl Valdois, and Kerry Langness. Meeting first in the home of Ron Reavis, they soon moved into rented quarters on the west side of the city, and now occupy rented space in the Bridge Club

building. Ray Coons and William McCotter are the current elders of the fellowship, which consists of about 75 people. The Westside Christians have always emphasized discipleship of young men. About 50 Air Force cadets have met in the home of William McCotter for weekly Bible studies.

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In 1980, at about the time that Rustic Hills closed, two young men returned from the Discipleship Intern Training Program at San Leandro, California, desiring to form a new evangelistic thrust in the Colorado Springs area. Together with Marion Michaux, they began meeting together for Bible study and decided at the end of 1982 to form a new assembly. The Cimarron Hills Bible Chapel east of Colorado Springs had its first Remembrance Meeting in early 1983, meeting first in an elementary school, and then in rented space in a shopping mall as they grew. In late 1985 they purchased land, assisted by a substantial gift from Northeast Bible Chapel and a loan from Stewards Foundation. Some 15 to 20 families were then in fellowship at Cimarron Hills Bible Chapel, but after disagreements as to direction, the assembly disbanded in about 1990, many of the Christians returning to Northeast.

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In the late 1980s, several families at Northeast Bible Chapel, including some from the former Rustic Hills Bible Chapel, desired to start a new work again in the northern part of Colorado Springs. In 1990 they began meeting for prayer and planning. The core group included Andy Boucher, Jay Brady, Harvey and Betty Brewington, Dan and Teri Faulkner, Bob and Brenda

Larson, Walt and Barb Masel, Dave and Lynn Michaux, Brian and Anne Moe, and Gene and Connie Theilig. This group chose the name Harvest Bible Fellowship in order to keep before them the desire to see people saved and brought up in the faith. In October 1991 they had their first meeting as an assembly at the Rockrimmon elementary school, with approximately 60 people in attendance.

In 1992, elders and deacons were selected to oversee the work of the church. In May 1994, Harvest appointed Dan Faulkner as a full-time worker to assist the elders in administration, music, and worship. Plans were made to move from the school to space at Berkshire Centre in the northeast part of Colorado Springs. After renovation of the space, the first services were held in the 6400 square foot facility in November 1994.

Missions have been a driving force for Harvest Bible Fellowship. Over the course of their history, short-term missions have been sponsored to Indonesia, Bolivia, Jamaica, Mexico, Russia, Israel, Lebanon, Canada, India, and Zimbabwe. In addition, local ministries have been heavily supported, including Camp Elim, Colorado Springs Pregnancy Center, and Japanese student homestay programs. Attendance averages around 140. Elders in the assembly have included Dan Faulkner, Dean Folkerts, Bob Larson, Dave Michaux, Brian Moe and Kent Wilson.

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Leslie and Winifred Sandberg had been serving the Lord among the Spanish speaking people in Arizona for many years. They moved to Pueblo, a sizeable city about 40 miles south of Colorado Springs, where there was a

large Spanish speaking population and began a Gospel work there. As people were saved, they were taught further in the Word, and formed an assembly, called Saloń Bíblico in Pueblo, which conducts its services in Spanish. (See Ethnic section)

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Four families living in and near Woodland Park, a small town in the mountains west of Colorado Springs and eight miles south of Camp Elim, formed the Woodland Park Assembly in the spring of 1967. These families were Bruce and Diane Hintze, Jim and Janet McCormick (then the caretakers at Camp Elim), Avery and Charis Harbaugh, and Frank and Pat Willie.

They met initially in the one_room cabin of the Hintzes. After that they held their meetings for a while at Camp Elim, and lastly at the home of the Harbaughs. At their largest they had about 30 in fellowship, although visitors and workers at Camp Elim would swell the numbers to as many as 60 in the summers.

In about 1970, a hippy commune took up residence in the area, and would cut wood near the Camp to support themselves. Al Donegan was then the caretaker at the Camp and witnessed to them whenever he could. In 1971, two of them, Rick Jackson and his wife, accepted Christ. They soon began meeting with the Christians at the Woodland Park Assembly and grew rapidly in the things of the Lord.

Most of the preaching was carried out by men in the assembly, but men from the Colorado Springs assemblies would often come to preach. In the mid_1970s, the assembly decided to recognize their

elders, and these were Bruce Hintze, Avery Harbaugh, and Rick Jackson.

Employment in Woodland Park was difficult in the 1970s, and several of the families moved away. When a door_to_door visitation campaign in the town seemed to produce no fruit, the Christians agreed to dissolve the assembly in the spring of 1978. Most of those in fellowship then chose to associate themselves with the assemblies in Colorado Springs.

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Bob and Carmen (Barkey) Copley moved in the spring of 1967 from the Yuma_Haxtun area of eastern Colorado, to Del Norte. This small town in the broad San Luis Valley in southern Colorado is 35 miles west of Alamosa. The Copleys began Breaking Bread in their home from their first days there. This was not unusual in their experience since the Rinn family of Wray, where the Copley family was converted, had done the same.

Rich Bishop, in fellowship at Northeast Bible Chapel in Colorado Springs, began attending Adams State College in Alamosa in the fall of 1967. He learned of the Copleys and drove to Del Norte each weekend to Break Bread with them at their log cabin home. Before long, they were joined by other Adams State students, and included Bible study in their time together. The Del Norte Assembly was thus the first in the San Luis Valley. The Christians continued to meet there for the winter and spring quarters of the school term.

Billy Graham had held meetings in Alamosa that fall of 1967, but the local churches were not providing adequate follow_up for those who had professed salvation or interest in the things of the Lord. So Rich

Bishop and Bob Copley obtained the list of follow_up names and contacted them all. Midweek Bible studies were soon begun with several of these families, some of them from Monte Vista, a town lying half way between Del Norte and Alamosa. Two of the Monte Vista families were Jim and Juanita Magness and Eldon and Jan Daniel.

The Christians decided to move the assembly from the Copley home to Alamosa in the fall of 1968. There it met in various homes, including that of Rich and Betty Bishop. The meeting grew rapidly among students. At the same time, there was a growing spiritual interest among people living in Monte Vista. Six ladies invited Rich to come there to conduct a ladies' Bible study and coffee. It was not long before three of their husbands were saved. These and other Monte Vista families convinced the Christians to move the assembly to their town after about another year. The new Monte Vista families included the Rumseys, Alan and Joanne Getz, and Butch and Rita Simpson. They met in the Daniel's home until the Daniels moved to Colorado Springs; after that they met in the Getz's garage.

After several months of meetings by John Walden in the Rural Electric building at Monte Vista, at which about 125 were in attendance, the assembly was well established. They decided to recognize elders, and had as many as six in the mid 1970s. The Monte Vista Assembly was a vibrant meeting, with many being saved and baptized. Marion Michaux and Jim Wright from Colorado Springs would come three or four times a year to give help. Bill MacDonald from California ministered there for a week. Even with opposition from other churches, the meeting grew. By the time Rich Bishop graduated in 1972, he was the principal leader in the

Monte Vista Assembly. He began a furniture re_upholstering business along with David Gouge in order to support himself and his new family.

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Don Anderson came to Alamosa in 1971 to start a new independent church. To help support himself and his family, he also took the pastorate of a Baptist church in the small town of Hooper, about 20 miles north of Alamosa. He soon met Rich Bishop, and after many Bible studies, came to the conviction that he should associate himself with New Testament style churches rather than those he had been associated with. He gave up the pastorate of the two churches in 1973. This cost him his income and housing but he had assurance that the Lord was behind his decision.

Don Anderson and his family moved to the small town of Mosca, near Hooper, where Don supported himself as a laborer, and later, with David Gouge's help, as a furniture re_upholsterer. He began Bible studies in Mosca, but at the same time began attending the Monte Vista Assembly and continued there for about half a year. Several families in the Hooper and Mosca area soon came to know the Lord. One of these was the Chester Jones family. Mr. Anderson decided then to start the Mosca Assembly. About six families in the Monte Vista meeting joined the effort. The first elders in the Mosca meeting were Don Anderson, David Gouge, and Chester Jones. The latter was a school teacher in Mosca, and had a great influence among high school students there with Bible studies.

At about the time that Rich Bishop graduated from Adams State, John Walden and others began to

encourage him to plant a New Testament church in the Grand Junction area at the western edge of Colorado. Thus, the Bishops left the San Luis Valley at the end of 1973, at about the time of the formation of the Mosca Assembly. Another of the leaders at the Monte Vista meeting moved to Wyoming shortly thereafter. These departures from Monte Vista and the leaving of the several families to help start up the Mosca meeting, had the unintended effect of weakening the Monte Vista meeting. In the mid_1980s, the Monte Vista assembly decided to close and join the new assembly in Alamosa.

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Don Anderson and Chester Jones wanted to begin Bible studies anew in Alamosa; this work was underway by 1975, largely led by Chester Jones. Quite a few people were saved in these studies. Seven core families decided to start a new Alamosa Assembly, CO which had its first meeting in the spring of 1976 in the home of Lloyd Wright. In the fall they moved to the larger home of David Lickteig. Growing rapidly, they moved to the Senior Citizen's Center in 1977, where they stayed for six years. During this period, the Mosca Assembly decided to merge with the Alamosa Assembly, and this was done with almost no loss of people. Jim Wright and John Walden were of great encouragement, coming often to preach and counsel.

The Alamosa Assembly Christians had wanted to start a Christian school. When the time came to build a chapel, they decided to combine the school and chapel into a single building. The first meeting in the Calvary Bible Chapel in Alamosa, which is located on the eastern edge of the town, was in January 1983. The chapel was free of

debt at the time it was first occupied. The first elders were Don Anderson, Chester Jones, and John Landen.

The Christian school never developed according to expectations, and was closed in the late 1980s. Though this was a disappointment, the assembly has continued its strong testimony in Alamosa, and has grown to about 150 to 200 people in fellowship.

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When the Bishops arrived in Grand Junction in December 1973, they had been preceded by the prayers of many. John Walden had also had a radio tape ministry in the area for the preceding three years. Door_to_door visitation resulted in a few families joining with them to form an assembly, which met at first at the Bishop's home on Elm Street for Breaking of Bread. Several other families soon joined, including the families of Ken Staton, Terry Kline, Dick Shellabarger, Tom Wilkinson, and Harold Ault. Steve Midkiff came from California, where he had gone through the Discipleship Intern Training program at San Leandro.

The Grand Junction Assembly had recognized elders by 1976. It grew and moved into the Lollypop Tree Play School in Grand Junction. The first half dozen years were filled with struggles. The initial families had different ideas about how the work should proceed, and six of those families left during this period. Steve Midkiff married and left the area. In 1980 the Grand Junction Assembly was down to about six remaining families.

But these did not lose faith in a work in the area. Marion Michaux and the leadership of Camp Elim were of great assistance, sending teams of young people to visit and recruit, making many new and fruitful contacts. The

meeting began to grow again. Anonymous gifts enabled the Christians to purchase a building in Clifton on the eastern edge of Grand Junction. Rich Bishop and Jim Thomas did most of the remodeling and the Clifton Bible Chapel was ready in the early 1980s. Jim Thomas was a great help at Clifton until he moved to Arizona. Rich Bishop, Ken Staton, and Fred Haitz have been the elders since about that time. About 150 people attend the assembly.

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A hive-off from Clifton Bible Chapel occurred in 1997, when the families of Ron Beers and Rick Beers took the initiative in establishing an assembly in the home of Ron Beers in Paonia, a small town about an hour's drive east of Grand Junction. Called North Fork Bible Fellowship in Paonia, the assembly meets now in the Paonia Town Hall. About five families are in the assembly at present, including Don and Nona Perrault, retired from service at Immanuel Mission in Arizona.

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In 1974, Don and Ann Watt moved from Boulder to Cedaredge, a small mountain town in west central Colorado. Harold and Mary Frazier also moved to the area after the conclusion of the 1974 camping season at Camp Elim where they had served as caretakers. The two families began a weekly Remembrance Meeting along with a Bible study in their homes. The Jim Wrights soon moved there, and shortly after that, Delbert and June Dyck arrived from Immanuel Mission. As other Christians joined them, the group became too large for home meetings, so space was rented in the Senior Center building in Cedaredge.

Alan and Lou Gates, Dick and Ava Jay, and others came from Montrose, some 40 miles to the south, and joined in the assembly activities. Sometimes the attendance at the Remembrance Meeting was as high as 65; several people were baptized during this period. The assembly took the name Surface Creek Valley Bible Fellowship.

In the early 1980s, the economics of the area crashed when both the oil shale and coal industries closed down. Many people had to move from the area. The Christian school begun by the assembly lost most of its students and Surface Creek Valley Bible Fellowship lost many of its people. Since many of the remaining families were traveling from Montrose, the decision was made to move to a more central location near Delta, a town of 3000 about 20 miles south of Cedaredge. The relocation took place in 1987, and with it a name change to Grand Mesa Bible Chapel.

The first meetings of the relocated assembly were in the home of the Bruce Halversons, who later served as missionaries with Teen Missionary International. Door_to_door visitation, ads in the local newspaper, and a phone book insertion announced the formation of a new work in that town. However, not many responded to these efforts. With families still leaving the area, the Christians decided in mid_1988 to cease the attempt at an assembly work in Delta. The Christians living in Montrose met at the Gates' home for a while, but it was not long before all these had been transferred from the area, and the assembly ceased.

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Lucas Wilson of Denver owned a ranch near Gypsum, in the mountains on Interstate 70. Several other assembly

families owned ranches in the area, including Dorothy Brown, John and Myrtle Wilkinson from Colorado Springs, Harold Ault, and the Weirs and Brittans. When Lucas Wilson and his wife Kay retired to their ranch, Mr. Wilson organized these Christians into an assembly fellowship in about 1970. He purchased the town's one-room schoolhouse and converted it into the Gypsum Bible Chapel for the assembly to use.

Jerry Maurer came over from nearby Eagle to join in fellowship, and did most of the preaching and working with children. When the Maurers moved to Denver in 1972, Willard Rodgers and his wife, originally from Omaha but then living in the mountains west of Denver, moved to Gypsum. For about three years they were the main workers, very good with children. Their son David Rodgers conducted the Vacation Bible School for four consecutive years at the Gypsum assembly. The first of these had an attendance of over 100 children. After the Rodgers' retired and moved back to Omaha, Del and June Dyck came from Cedaredge to help out. Another active young man was Dave Bradford. The Bob Kohrmans from Fort Collins also moved to the area, and took an active interest in the assembly. The Gypsum Bible Chapel grew to as many as 50 people during some summers.

The Wilsons left the meeting in the early 1980s. After that the Christians met in the Gypsum fire house, since Del Dick and Bob Kohrman were both volunteer firemen for the town. Bob Kohrman was seriously injured in a fire at about that time and his help ceased. The remaining Christians decided to close their meeting after about another year, in the late 1980s.

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In the late 1950s, Fort Collins was a farming town about sixty miles north of Denver. A few Christians began meeting at that time in the home of John Robinson on South College Avenue for Breaking of Bread. These included the families of Cecil Stevens, Dick Taylor from Estes Park, and Harry Rosenberg.

Within a short time, Roger and Dorothy Cocking of Colorado Springs found out about this work and made trips to Fort Collins to help out with Bible studies. A good number of people, including university students, came to these studies. During this period, Howard Kohrman came to Ft. Collins periodically on business, and met with the group.

In the mid 1960s these Christians began meeting on Sundays in the Carpenters Union Hall on Whedbee Street, but after a time moved back to the Robinson's home. In 1968, both the Cockings and Kohrmans moved with their families to Fort Collins, and the Fort Collins Assembly was well underway. The Cockings worked extensively with the university students.

Others who joined the assembly shortly after that were the families of Leroy Stevens, originally from the Kanorado area, Ed Beidleman from Cheyenne, Roger Hathaway, and the Epples who came from Iowa. By 1969, the meeting was large enough that it had to move into larger quarters. The Christians rented a gymnasium in the Forney building on LaPorte Street on the north side of Fort Collins and stayed there about two years. During that period, the Dick Fishers, Dee O'Dells, and Henry Schoenigs were among those who joined the assembly. The Cockings moved to the Pacific northwest

in 1971, but the gap they left was filled by the Willard Taussigs who moved to Fort Collins at about that time.

In early 1972, the group purchased and moved into an old church building on Whedbee Street in northeast Fort Collins, and took the name Fort Collins Bible Chapel. Others who joined after that were the Russell Harrahs from Nebraska, and the David Andrews' who moved up from Boulder. The meeting was characterized by the presence of many married young couples, many of them students at the University. The assembly thrived for many years, and had a full_time worker for a time. But eventually a leadership difficulty caused discouragement, and in 1990 the assembly disbanded. Most of these Christians still have occasional social meetings, and are active in the work at Camp Elim.

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Greeley lies about 25 miles southeast of Fort Collins. In 1964, Jim McCotter, Brian Michaux, and Bill Taylor, all from Colorado Springs, began attending the university in Greeley. Together they rented a house and started a Bible study. The study was successful, grew rapidly, and many students were saved. Jim McCotter along with Bill Taylor instituted a Remembrance Meeting on Sundays, establishing the Greeley Assembly.

Don Pegler and his wife moved to Greeley shortly that, where Don enrolled in the university. The new assembly then began meeting in their home, which provided a needed stability. The meeting consisted mostly of students, many of them with Campus Crusade. Don Neilsen, who had been brought to the Lord through Campus Crusade, began meeting with them, and led

Brooky Stockton, who afterward served in Las Cruces, NM, to the Lord.

When this first wave of young people graduated and left, the assembly had no permanent meeting place, and nearly became extinct. Don Neilsen and his new wife Donna felt that the Lord would have them return to Greeley to help the work there. They moved back in early 1970 and invited Donna's parents, the Donald Norbies of California, to come and help.

The Norbies arrived in June of 1970. They purchased a house near the campus with a large room in the basement, which was used for the meetings of the assembly. The Lord blessed and a number were saved, and the meeting grew to the point where new facilities were needed. In 1972 a large house adjacent to the university campus was purchased; this served as a meeting place and as housing for about twelve students who were in the assembly. They called their house Koinonia House. Baptisms were frequent and were often held in Seeley Lake north of the town.

The group grew to about 70, at which time some felt that a hive_off would be good. It was tried, but the experiment was not successful, and the two groups rejoined. Feminism was strong on the campus in those years, and caused a deep split in the assembly, with a majority of the young people leaving in the fall of 1977 to form another meeting. That meeting however lasted only a short time before dissolving.

The remaining assembly struggled through years of uncertainty. Because of the depleted numbers, the meeting ceased Breaking of Bread for two years and met with the assembly in Fort Collins. Then in 1989, two

other families that had been saved covenanted with the Norbies to restart the work.

A jail ministry, which was begun in the early 1970s, has been productive and continues. Some now in the assembly were saved while in jail. A ministry with international students is underway. The assembly is now called Fellowship Chapel, and Don and Marie Norbie still help with the work. Don has a camp ministry, speaks at conferences, helps organize the annual Worker's Conference held at various location throughout North America, and is the author of many books and articles.

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Don and Ida McCormick had moved from Nebraska to a farm between Lyons and Longmont in about 1940. After attending the Longmont Gospel Hall for a brief period, they felt led to set up a brethren testimony in Boulder, located 25 miles northwest of central Denver. When a few other families agreed, the McCormicks moved into Boulder. The group rented an old business building at 14th and Water Streets in downtown Boulder, near the former train depot. The first meeting of what was later called the Boulder Bible Chapel was held there in 1943. Ben Tuininga had meetings there in 1944, and John Horn conducted a Vacation Bible School in 1946.

Eldon Baird moved his young family to Boulder in 1945. The Bairds joined with the assembly and Eldon was soon considered one of the leaders. Bud and Bernice Lambert moved to Boulder in 1947; they continued to fellowship at the Longmont assembly but after about a year joined with the Boulder group. Ken and Ruth Baird moved to Boulder in 1950 and joined the fellowship.

The assembly knew they would have to have larger quarters, so in about 1950 they purchased a lot at 7th and Evergreen in northwest Boulder. Many families were moving to Boulder in those days. Among them were Don and Ann Watt and their children, who came in 1951. Don was soon one of the leaders in the assembly and helped draw up plans for a chapel. The men in the assembly did most of the construction work and finished construction of Boulder Bible Chapel in 1952.

Helen Baird and Bernice Lambert had started weekly after_school Bible classes for youngsters at the home of the Eldon Bairds. When the chapel was completed, this effort was moved there and expanded to include crafts. The classes lasted for many years and saw many children saved. Henry Van Ryn often came to Boulder to teach at these sessions.

The assembly leaders in the 1950s were considered to be Don Watt, Ken and Eldon Baird, Don McCormick, and Bud Lambert. The Don Valentines came in 1952. Lee Ridlen moved his family to Boulder in 1956 from Nebraska; in about 1960, the families of David Andrews, Byron Blair, and Al Sapp came to Boulder and the Boulder Bible Chapel, followed soon by several other young families, including the John Portmans, Arnold Farstads, and Robert Petersons.

As early as 1961, the growing assembly was laying plans for a hive_off. Because several families lived in the Fairview subdivision east of Boulder, an acre of land there was purchased. In 1967 the friendly hive_off took place. Of those who remained at Boulder Bible Chapel, Don Valentine, Hubert Schmidt, and John Portman assumed leading roles along with Don McCormick,

Eldon Baird, and Bud Lambert. Ken Baird ministered to both assemblies, as well as having a preaching ministry throughout the state.

In the 1970s, several leading families who had stayed with the older assembly moved from Boulder. Hubert Schmidt and Byron Blair then assumed leadership in the assembly until they both passed away. Elders are now recognized, and consist of Paul Lambert, Tom Bell, Lloyd Kneebone, and Jim McCormick. About 40 persons consider Boulder Bible Chapel to be their home church.

* * *

The assembly that split off from Boulder took the name Fairview Bible Chapel in Boulder. The chapel was built on 76th Street, five miles east of the Boulder city limits. A great amount of carpentry work was done by the men in the new assembly, notably Dave Andrews, Lee Ridlen, and Byron Blair. The first meeting was held in April 1968. For many years, Boulder Bible Chapel assisted Fairview with mortgage payments.

Leadership was by an informal oversight at first, with Don Watt and David Andrews taking the main preaching and leadership responsibilities. In the early 1970s, Dave Andrews moved from the Boulder area and Byron Blair returned to Boulder Bible Chapel. A recognized eldership was agreed upon, and Arnold Farstad, Robert Peterson, Lee Ridlen, Don Watt, and Lionel Wood were recognized at that time.

Keith Heck served as a commended worker at Fairview for about three years, beginning in the late 1970s. A few years later Jonathan Smith was commended for work at Fairview. He left in the mid 1990s to establish the Rocky Mountain Bible College. Jonathan and Priscilla Hopkins

are presently commended to the local work. The assembly has commended workers to missionary service in Mozambique and to short-term missions.

Fairview developed a strong craft class program for children in the neighborhood, which at times attracted nearly 100 children. This program was started in homes of Dave Andrews and Norm Frank before the chapel was built. The Frank, Farstad, and Peterson families, with help from many others, were active in continuing it for some twenty years. The craft classes fed children to Camp Elim in great numbers.

Many members of Fairview have been active in evangelism and Bible studies. Several young men and women have led large youth groups within the assembly, including Bonnie Frank, Jim and Cyndi Eakins, Don Watt Jr., and Lars Peterson. Bob and Fleta Hathaway have been leaders in the interdenominational Bible Study Fellowship for many years, and Fairview has supplied many teachers for that work. Bud Lambert, Ed Arguello, and Doug Agee have long been active in the Gideons. Bud Lambert and Denny Petersen had an active prison ministry for many years. The assembly has about 100 people in attendance on Sundays, with a midweek meeting numbering about 50. Elders over the years, in addition to those mentioned above, have been Jim Eakins, Bud Lambert, Ed Arguello, Steve Thomson, Bob Hathaway, Gene Erwin, Dennis Petersen, and Mike Brewington.

* * *

Grace Church in the Denver suburb of Arvada was started as an assembly in 1989 with the encouragement of Fairview Bible Chapel in Boulder and especially the

efforts of Jonathan Smith. At the beginning, the group consisted partly of people who were left after a large Bible Church dissolved. Though Grace Church has elder rule, it does not now consider itself to be part of the brethren association of assemblies. Its Sunday attendance is typically several hundred.

* * *

A graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, Stephen Holmes had pastored churches in California and in the Denver suburb of Aurora on the east side of Denver, but came to realize the importance of adopting the New Testament pattern of church governance. At about the time he resigned his Aurora position in 1977, he and his family met the Peter Marcus family who had moved from Little Rock, Arkansas.

The two families visited assemblies in the Denver area. They decided to try to initiate an assembly work in Aurora, and with the help of Ed Beidleman visited in the area near their homes and were able to interest a small number of people. The group met on Sundays for Breaking of Bread at the Holmes's home, and on Wednesdays for Bible study at the Marcus's. As they grew they rented space for their Sunday meetings, and located at the Village Green Recreation Center in Aurora. The group incorporated as Grace Bible Chapel in 1980.

They grew to their largest number in the late 1980s, consisting then of about a dozen families. Doctrinal differences split the leadership at about that time and a number of families left, including the original families. The assembly continues though small at the time of this writing.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Colorado Assemblies on Mountain and Plain, A History of the Brethren in Colorado, by Robert L. Peterson, 1992

Letters of Interest, April 1944, p. 31; June 1954, p. 22

## Utah

No assemblies are listed for Utah in recent Address Books, though there have been listings in the past. Two were listed in the early 1970s. These had both discontinued by the late 1970s, and none have been listed since that time.

In 1962, evangelist Sam Stewart spoke of having nightly meetings spanning three weeks at a small assembly in Salt Lake City. This may have been Bethesda Bible Chapel or Salt Lake Bible Fellowship.

Sources:

Letters of Interest, June 1962, p. 10

## Nevada

Sagebrush Bible Chapel in Sparks meets in homes and in a church building. It began in the early 1990s. The homes of the believers are scattered widely, some living in Carson City, 30 miles to the south.

Sources:

Uplook, February 1987, p. 63

## Arizona

(See the Ethnic Assemblies section for additional details of work among the American Indians.)

Mr. and Mrs. James P. Anderson, in fellowship with the assembly at the Gospel Auditorium in Oakland, CA, were commended to work among the Hualapai Indians of Arizona. They established their home in Valentine, a small village near the reservation, in October 1916.

In addition to their missionary efforts, the Andersons started the Kingman Gospel Chapel. Kingman, a considerably larger town than Valentine, is some 30 miles southwest of Valentine. Their first meetings were out in the Indian camps, but in 1919 Mr. Anderson was able to build a small chapel on the outskirts of Kingman, where they held the meetings for the Indians for a couple of years. They then purchased an old house at 417 Park Street in Kingman, and rebuilt it for use as a Gospel Chapel. Non-indians who were hungry for the real Gospel started coming to the meetings, and gradually it turned into a white work almost altogether. Mr. Anderson ministered the Word there once a week while able to do so. Many others worked at the Kingman Gospel Chapel; George Baxter and Harold Kesler both preached and worked there when not elsewhere preaching.

In 1929, it was necessary to erect a chapel for the Indians at Peach Springs, due to the fact that the Hualapai had been told to get out of Kingman, where they were only squatters, and move up onto the Reservation. Peach Springs was the only town on the Hualapai Reservation. In 1937 the believers began Breaking Bread at the Peach Springs Assembly.

When James Anderson died in 1942, Mr. and Mrs. George Baxter helped with the work among the Hualapai and at the Kingman Gospel Chapel. In 1943,

about 16 were in fellowship at the Gospel Chapel. The assembly at Peach Springs was all Haulapai except for Mrs. Anderson and her daughter, with 10 Indians in fellowship. Mrs. Baxter had an Indian women's meeting on Wednesday afternoons at the Kingman Gospel Chapel. Several missionary women also spent some time working among Indians and Mexicans in connection with the Chapel.

In 1946, Tom Carroll ministered the Word at the Kingman Gospel Chapel for two weeks and also helped in the Gospel at Valentine and Peach Springs. In 1947, A. LeRoy Livingston worked among the Hualapai and lived at Peach Springs. The U.S. had a good schooling program, so the Livingstons were able to reach them in English, albeit in a simple form. The Livingstons were conscientious to keep the assembly geared to the Indians, and just one white school teacher met with them to Remember the Lord.

In 1952, the assembly at Peach Springs still remained but was small. During World War II and the Korean war, many Hualapai boys from Peach Springs went overseas and their chaplains wrote Mrs. Anderson commenting on their Christian testimony and knowledge of the Word. Faithful Indian converts included Rupert and Rachel Parker, both Sunday school teachers; Grant Tapiaga, a Hualapai preacher, and his Apache wife, Fanny; and the Tomanatas, a four-generation Christian family.

The Kingman Gospel Chapel and the Peach Springs Assembly have both disbanded, the Kingman assembly continuing until the late 1980s.

* * *

The work at Winslow, 200 miles east of Valentine and 50 miles east of Flagstaff, was initiated principally by Carl Armerding and his daughter Minnie. They labored among the Indians at Winslow and vicinity for more than 25 years. Mr. Armerding built a chapel at Winslow in 1934, which had gospel meetings, Bible studies, and Sunday schools, attended largely by Indians of the Laguna, Hopi, and Navajo tribes. The work continues today as Immanuel Bible Chapel in Winslow.

* * *

In 1951, Mr. and Mrs. George Baxter, who had been commended by the Midland Assembly in Detroit (later Bethany-Pembroke), started the Arizona Indian Mission of Flagstaff. The Eldon Miners came to help after several years. Later Mr. Joseph Paulick, commended from Norwood Gospel Chapel in Chicago, and Miss Betty Hollman, commended from New Haven Gospel Hall in Hamden, CT, came to help at the Arizona Indian Mission of Flagstaff.

Messrs. Baxter and Paulick erected the Third Avenue Gospel Chapel in Flagstaff. The workers and native believers met there regularly for the Breaking of Bread, preaching of the Word, Bible study and Sunday School.

* * *

Immanuel Mission, an outreach to the Navajos, was established in 1924 in the extreme northeastern corner of Arizona in what is known as the Four Corners country. A school for the Navajo children was begun in the fall of 1948 by Miss Evelyn Varder. Many of the Navajo children were saved, and some Remembered the Lord on Sunday mornings with the staff and Christian Navajo neighbors. In 1971, Don and Nona Perrault cared for

over thirty girls at the school, and Delbert and June Dyck looked after nearly the same number of boys in the large, two-winged dormitory building.

Navajo Immanuel Chapel began as a regularly meeting assembly in the early 1970s. The principal people involved in starting the assembly were Eugene and James Nataches, Navajo brothers. Leadership has been shared by these and Willy Howe, Wesley Begay, Donald Perrault, and Greg Staley, the latter two associated with Immanuel Mission. About 90 adults and children are attend Navajo Immanuel Chapel, which is now usually called Immanuel Navajo Chapel.

* * *

The Tucson Bible Chapel began sometime in 1936, meeting first in rented space in DeMolay Hall. It started through the Gospel outreach of T.B. Gilbert with effective visitation, home Bible studies, and a radio program. The Gilberts had moved to Tucson for Mrs. Gilbert's health, and when she and their only son died in 1937, Mr. Gilbert moved back to Chicago as a home base, returning each year to Tucson for lengthy visits. The initial 12 believers continued to meet as an assembly. Mr. Gilbert returned in 1945, married Lena Spessard, and spent most of his time strengthening the assembly, which had grown and was in need of their own building. In 1947, the chapel at 1802 East Grant Road was finished, and is the present location of the assembly.

The principal families in the establishment of the Tucson Bible Chapel were those of Lloyd C. Donaldson, Kermit C. Oestreich, and Clifford Livingston. Subsequent leaders have included Fred Murray, Earl Mowen, Hank

Donald, Richard Bayless, Wesley Grimes, Homer Grob, and Alex Laos.

There have been two hive-offs from the assembly, one in about 1959 and another in about 1980. Both maintained fellowship with the Tucson Bible Chapel, but both were relatively short-lived. Tucson Bible Chapel has commended several to the Lord's work at home and abroad.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Letters of Interest, August 1943, p. 23; March 1946, p. 21; December 1947 p. 26; December 1948, p. 10; May 1952, p. 19; August 1952, p. 8; September 1952, p. 4; February 1957, p. 11; February 1962, p. 11; March 1971, p. 4

Uplook, March 1994, p. 10

## New Mexico

There are presently six assemblies in New Mexico: three in the Albuquerque area, one in Las Cruces 225 miles to the south; a small assembly in Clovis on the eastern edge of the state, an equal distance away from Albuquerque; and one in Los Alamos, northwest of Santa Fe and about a two-hour drive north of Albuquerque. Thus, inter-assembly interaction is difficult in the state.

The work at the Clovis Gospel Chapel, was begun by David Metler and his wife, missionaries to the Indians. Mr. Metler is now with the Lord, but his wife carries on in the small assembly.

* * *

The Los Alamos Christian Fellowship was formed in 1975 by Elwood Jordan, Ralph Dahlstrom, James Patterson, and Jack Jacobson. Meeting in the Patterson home until 1986, the assembly has met since then in the ROTC Room at the Pueblo School Complex. Leaders have been Andy McEwin, Paul Mendoza, Steve Hanson, Todd Haines, and Steve Booth. In 1996, the assembly had about 30 adults in fellowship and 20 youngsters.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

## U.S. – Midwest

The U.S. Midwest consists of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. We group them geographically in what follows, beginning in the north with North Dakota, working our way south to Kansas, then step over to Missouri and back north to Minnesota, then east to Wisconsin and down to Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and end with Michigan.

### North Dakota

In 1883, Henry and Emma Goff moved their family from Herefordshire, England to farm about 20 miles northeast of Langdon on the eastern side of North Dakota and not far from the Canadian border. They had been saved a few years prior to this. Henry was a staunch Church of England man, whereas Emma had been raised by two aunts who were in fellowship in assemblies in England. Soon after arriving, the Goffs initiated a community project to build a church building on their property at which any itinerant preacher could preach. Emma, who had known many of the brethren leaders in England, soon became dissatisfied with this arrangement.

The Goff's second son, Alfred, had been saved under the preaching of Henry Craik, the colleague of George Müller in Bristol, before the family moved to North Dakota. Fleming May of Ontario came to the area to visit his brother, and became good friends with Alfred. He took Alfred with him to preach the Gospel, mainly in North Dakota, Minnesota, and Manitoba. With Fleming

May, the Goffs started a Sunday School and prayer meeting in their home, and in 1887, a group of six began to Break Bread there. This may be the first assembly testimony in North Dakota.

In 1888, Emma Goff heard that the fiery preacher John Grimason was working in the prairie states and invited him to come to their area. Several were saved as a result of his preaching, and the small assembly became established. This assembly was identified with the village of Bealieau near Walhalla, five miles from the border of Manitoba.

A few miles northwest of Langdon, in the Woodbridge area, near what is now the town of Sarles, another little group of Christians gathered to Remember the Lord in one of their homes. These families had come from Ontario. The Loynes and Hazlitt families were among these, and became acquainted with the Goffs. Some of them would drive the 50 miles by wagon to visit the Goffs, and the two assemblies became closely tied. John Grimason and Alfred Goff held Gospel meetings in the Woodbridge area in 1900, and many were saved, including the Hazlitt girls, one of whom, Fanny, married B.B. Goff. They soon moved to Oregon (see Oregon).

At about that time, others of the extended Goff family began to move west. When Alfred and Henry Goff died (Alfred died at the age of 35), the two assemblies lasted only a short while longer. Thus the current assemblies in North Dakota are not derived from these early works.

In the late 1890s, Charles Hoehler, an immigrant from Germany, had been hired to help at the Goff farm, and through the influence of the Goffs, was saved. About the turn of the century, he moved to Iowa and was

influential in the early development of assembly testimonies in northern Iowa (see Iowa).

* * *

The assembly in Harvey in the central part of the state had its beginning in 1922 in rooms above the Pioneer Mercantile store, and became known as the Harvey Gospel Hall. Mrs. A. N. Beiseker had visited in Minneapolis that year and heard Paul Roder speak at one of the assemblies. An invitation was given him to come to Harvey for Gospel meetings. Harold Harper responded, coming and holding meetings in the English Congregational Church on 9th and Adams. Harold Harper and August Hasse came several times to have meetings, and a good number were saved.

Fred Bischke, Harry Sommer, Ludwig Huber, and Fred Liebelt were those who had most to do with the establishment of the assembly. The Gospel Hall in the Pioneer building flourished for a time, with up to 100 in the Sunday School and 30 or more believers for Breaking of Bread services each Lord’s Day morning; Gospel services were held on Sunday evenings. Among those active in leadership have been Fred and Alvin Bischke, Fred Liebelt, J.J. Reimer, Virgil Sommer, Arland Frost, and Marvin Mertz. In early fellowship, in addition to those already mentioned, were members of the Beiseker, Zweigle, Graser, Stein, McCarthy, Billigmeier, Spielberger, Schroeder, Fiskum, Revell, Wolf, Harris, Steinhaus, and Adams families.

Because of the steep stairs going up to the room above the store, the Christians purchased a building on 8th Street in July 1944, and remodeled and enlarged it to suit the needs of the assembly. The assembly is still at

that location and is now known as the Harvey Gospel Chapel. Many speakers have visited the Harvey assembly, among them Neil Fraser, Edward Dillon, Ben Tuininga, and Alfred Gibbs, in addition to Harold Harper and August Hasse. About a dozen people attend the assembly.

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The Hurdsfield Gospel Hall, south of Harvey, existed for many years. The hall was damaged by a tornado in July 1953. The brethren quickly built a new auditorium, and repaired and remodeled the old building into Sunday school quarters and furnace and utility room. By 1977, it was called the Hurdsfield Gospel Chapel. The assembly ceased in the early 1990s.

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The assembly which meets now at Southwest Bible Chapel in Valley City in the southeastern part of the state was started in about 1930 by Paul Clark and his father. Paul Clark's parents, Henry and Ella Clark, had moved with their family to Valley City in 1925 to operate a grocery store after a lifetime of farming. They were affiliated then with Baptists but had friends in 'exclusive' assemblies in Minnesota. In about 1930, they formed a small assembly, meeting in their apartment at the rear of the grocery-store, and probably affiliated with the 'exclusive' assemblies in Minnesota. Orval and Edna McConoughey and Oscar Peterson came out of the Baptist Church to meet with the Clarks, followed soon by others. When the elder Clarks died, their apartment home was converted to a one-room Valley City Gospel Hall. Later, a building nearer downtown Valley City was

rented for the assembly, and connections with the ‘exclusive’ brethren were broken.

An assembly preacher, John Farquharson from Canada, held Gospel meetings at the Gospel Hall in 1935. After that, he and F.W. Swartz from Detroit went to the northern part of the state to preach the Gospel wherever they were accepted. They preached in school houses and the homes of Will Conn and Henry Halvorson near the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation. Many people were saved in these meetings, including members of the Fauske, Noakes, Turneir, and Keif families. In 1936, Paul Clark followed up on John Farquharson’s work in the Turtle Mountain area. Paul Clark held meetings at Crary, and for a time the Crary Assembly met.

In about 1932, a small assembly was formed in an old church building in the tiny town of Hurd, about 60 miles west of the Turtle Mountain area. The Hurd Assembly essentially consisted of the Schoenig family and Otto Anderson from Lansford, the Cools from Newburg, and Ayars from Russell. John Farquharson also had meetings in the Lansford area in the northern part of the state. The August Schoenigs, Ray Cools, Ollie Varco, and Otto Anderson responded to these meetings. In inclement weather the Hurd Assembly met in the August Schoenig home and later moved to that home. The assembly ceased functioning in the mid 1940s.

Several from these families in the northern part of the state joined the assembly at Valley City over the years, and others continued to sponsor meetings in their homes for assembly preachers from Canada. Hector Alves from the west coast held meetings in Inkster. After

that, the families of Don Hulst and the Wagars met for Bible study, but an assembly was not formed.

The Valley City Gospel Hall changed its name to Southwest Bible Chapel and introduced a piano after World War II, which caused a few people to leave. In 1966, the assembly sponsored a two-week evangelistic campaign, in which many were saved.

* * *

A home assembly met in the home of Robert Hewitt in Grand Forks for many years, beginning perhaps in the 1960s. Wes and Gladys Kosin, missionaries to the Shoshone Indians in Wyoming, would spend their summers in Grand Forks, where Mr. Kosin taught linguistics at the University of North Dakota, and they helped out at the assembly. The Grand Forks Assembly discontinued in the mid 1980s. From the mid to late 1980s, a small home assembly, the Bismarck Bible Chapel, met in Bismarck, the state capital, with Mike Kopp, Brian Young, and David Bartlett as elders. In the town of Washburn north of Bismarck, the Washburn Bible Church was formed as an assembly in the late 1980s, and continues.

* * *

Meadow Ridge Bible Chapel is the largest assembly in North Dakota. Paul Hipps had been in the Zion Christian Assembly in Sheboygan, WI and moved to the Fargo area in about 1970. He and his family, with Myron and Jean Losey who were Methodists, and Ron and Glenna Weidmann who were Baptists, began a Bible study as a follow up to a Billy Graham crusade in the Fargo area. The Hipps began to share New Testament assembly principles with them, which were quickly embraced. The

group began Remembering the Lord at the old YWCA building in Fargo, and called their meeting simply An Assembly of Christian Brethren at the beginning.

At about this time, John Dabill, who had been in an ‘exclusive’ assembly in Minnesota, met one of the sisters in a Bible book store. He joined with those in the new Fargo assembly and had a passion for equipping the Christians there with books of the brethren writers.

The Hipps moved to St. Louis in the early 1970s, but preachers such as Ben Tuininga and William MacDonald came and ministered the Word. At that time, Mr. MacDonald was president of Emmaus Bible School, and Mr. Tuininga taught Greek there, although his principal interest was in preaching throughout North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri. Jean Tuininga led ladies’ meetings when she and her husband were in the area.

The assembly operated a coffee house ministry in the early days. These were the days of the ‘Jesus People,’ to whom the ministry was principally directed. Several were saved in this outreach.

In the early 1980s, the Christians built their present chapel at 2198 Second Avenue E., calling it Meadow Ridge Bible Chapel. The elders have included Frank Brown, Kevin Brown, Gary Clark, Mark Wagar, and Myron Martinson. A feature of the assembly is that they retain the ‘open platform’ idea in the main Bible teaching time on Sunday mornings. This was taught by A.N. O’Brien from Duluth, and Ben Tuininga was a strong proponent of the open platform. Boyd Nicholson and John Phillips are among those who have preached at the assembly.

Teaming up with assemblies in Baudette, MN; Virginia, MN; and some in the Minneapolis area, the Christians at Meadow Ridge virtually rebuilt Story Book Lodge in Minnesota, making it a premier Bible Camp. They help staff the Box T Ranch, near Bismarck, each summer. The Meadow Ridge assembly holds a Bible Conference each year and sponsors Youth Conferences. In the last few years, spearheaded by Gary Clark and Myron Martinson, they have organized week-long Gospel campaigns to nearby cities, such as the 1998 campaign in Grand Forks where fifty young people gave a week to blanket the city with Gospel witnessing in conjunction with nightly evangelistic meetings in the Grand Forks civic center. The assembly has consistently had about 100 in fellowship throughout the years, and has commended missionaries to the Lord's work in Bolivia.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Golden Lamp-stands of Northern Iowa, by L. DeBuhr, Ackley Publishing Co., 1985

History of the Forest Grove (OR) Assembly, by R. Goff, 1965, revised 1976

Report from Gaius C. Goff, 1999

Letters of Interest, November 1949, p. 3

## South Dakota

South Dakota and North Dakota, are predominantly Lutheran and Catholic, and their people are primarily German and Norwegian. It is a region where endurance counts.

Assemblies in South Dakota have historically been difficult to establish and maintain. The Drummonds Bible Chapel in the small town of that name was formed in the late 1970s but lasted only a few years. In the early 1990s, Tim Jordison established the Sioux Falls Assembly. Two or three families joined with his family, but the work lasted only a few years. David and Kathy Possing started an assembly in the little town of Pickstown. They Remembered the Lord in their home, as the Pickstown Assembly, but were not able to persuade any others to work with them for very long. Both the Jordisons and Possings have since moved out of state, and no assemblies are currently known to exist in South Dakota. While living in Pickstown, David Possing had a good ministry at the prison facility in Yankton, some 70 miles away.

Sources:

Conversations with several Christians

## Nebraska

The assembly known today as Keystone Bible Chapel in Omaha began in perhaps the late 1890s or early 1900s. It was likely started by one or more of the traveling evangelists of the time, possibly Alexander Broadfoot, who was then working in western Iowa. The parents of Arthur B. Rodgers, Sr. were among the first in the assembly, as was a Mrs. Olbert. Don Charles was in the assembly in the period around 1909.

Known in the earliest days as Omaha Gospel Mission on 26th Street between Douglas and Farnham Streets, the assembly moved in about 1915 to 813 North 40th Street. In 1920 the Christians moved into their new building at

45th and Hamilton Street and changed the name to Omaha Gospel Hall (but it was often called the Hamilton Street Gospel Hall). At some point, the designation Omaha Gospel Chapel came into use. In 1970, the assembly moved to 7840 Maple Street, calling their new meeting place Keystone Bible Chapel.

By 1920, the assembly was well established with about 60 in fellowship. At that time it was the only assembly in the city, and even in the state except for small works in farming communities in the western part of the state. However, the Omaha assembly had frequent fellowship with assemblies in Iowa and Kansas City, and was visited regularly by the itinerant preachers. Legal documents show that W.A. Bradford, I.M. Roman, and J.A. Shopen were among the leaders in the 1920s.

The assembly did not have designated elders in the 1920s, but leadership was provided by O.M. Nelson and Price Patterson in addition to the three just mentioned. It would appear that Arthur B. Rodgers Sr. was the most influential man in the assembly for many years. After service in the army during World War I, he became an itinerant preacher but lived in Omaha most of the time and considered the Omaha Gospel Hall as his home assembly. In spite of his travels, he maintained a strong voice in the affairs of the assembly until his passing in 1961.

In the mid 1920s, Ken Baird moved to Omaha from Greenfield, IA and his gifts were used. Willard Rodgers began taking an active part by about 1930 when in his late twenties. In 1932, Glen Plowman arrived and developed into a good preacher. James Gilbert came into the assembly at about the same time and became a

definite leader. Others in the assembly in its early days include the familes of Phil Olbert, Harry Hamilton, Bill Jones, Don Flat, Henry Peterson, Les Kent, Waldron Scott, Floyd Weaver, Wes Fox, Lyle Rockhold, and Earnie Rockhold.

In the decades of the 1920s, 30s, and 40s, the assembly was very active. Besides a full slate of Sunday and week-night activities at the Hall, the assembly did hospital visitation every Sunday afternoon and held street meetings on Saturday nights in nearby towns. They held annual Bible Conferences almost every year from 1909. In the early days, the conference had an open platform, with as many as 20 speakers participating.

Keystone has commended a worker to Burundi. About 120 adults and children attend Keystone Bible Chapel today.

* * *

In about 1962, the Grandview Gospel Chapel in Omaha began as a friendly hive-off from the Omaha Gospel Chapel, and resulted from children's meetings being held in the neighborhood. The family of Willard Rodgers was instrumental in its founding. The assembly had an effective children's work during its short lifetime. In the late 1960s, leadership conflicts caused the Grandview Assembly to disband and sell its building.

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Another hive-off of the Keystone Bible Chapel is the Council Bluffs Bible Chapel in Council Bluffs, IA, established in about 1980 (see Iowa).

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Northwest Bible Fellowship in Omaha was established around 1980, and purchased the building formerly occupied by the Grandview Gospel Chapel. William Fear is one of the leading men at Northwest.

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Hollywood Heights Chapel in Lincoln was established in the 1950s. Although a few assembly people lived in Lincoln prior to that, not until Ralph Swanson from Sioux City, IA moved there and built a chapel did the assembly begin. Andy Joye moved to Lincoln from Omaha and helped in the work, which continues today.

* * *

The brethren were active in central Nebraska in the late 1800s, but information is sparse. A family history[1] relates that J.A. Dahlgren and a Mr. Wahlstrom preached in the area. We quote: “These two men were real Bible scholars and held meetings wherever they went. They had spring and fall conferences and would have one certain place to meet. Folk would come from far and wide to hear the word of God. J.A. Dahlgren spent many a day and night in the Maline home. Mr. Dahlgren was a painter and paper hanger by trade. . . Mr. Dahlgren was a very kind man. He was a man that was a true friend and was respected and loved by many friends.” The Gustaf Malines and others were converted under the ministry of these men and an assembly was likely begun, but its location in the early days is not known – likely the Maline home or a rural schoolhouse near Gothenburg or Cozad. Gustaf Maline is remembered to have preached at the Gothenburg Free Mission church when its pastor was unavailable. There is no ‘open’ assembly in the area at this time.

* * *

In about the 1920s, John Horn moved to Imperial, a small town in the southwestern corner of Nebraska, where he was instrumental in starting the Imperial Gospel Hall. Don and Harold McCormick farmed near Imperial and with their families joined that fellowship, along with the families of Floyd Miller, George Long, and Ken Hayward. Several of these families moved many years later to Colorado and joined the assemblies there. This assembly has since disbanded.

* * *

The Palisade Gospel Hall developed at about the same time in the small town of Palisade not far away. Dan McCormick was the leader for many years, followed by Ray D. Ridlen. The Palisade Gospel Hall continues to meet though small.

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Sources:

Conversations with Christians

## Kansas

Atchison is situated on the Missouri River, about fifty miles northwest of Kansas City. In the fall of 1901, Mr. and Mrs. John V. Davis and Mrs. Will Tietge began meeting regularly on the first day of each week to Remember the Lord, the beginning of the Atchison Gospel Hall, KS. Some years later their number had doubled, and the six began to pray definitely for the Lord to send His servants to labor in the field. Several Kansas City brethren took up the challenge and consistently visited this city to supply the needed help.

Several brothers from the Troost Avenue Gospel Hall in Kansas City, MO went to Atchison on the third Sunday of every month to minister to and encourage the fledgling assembly while it was still meeting in the various homes of the believers. Among these were Wayne Matthews and Ralph Littlefield.

The first series of nightly meetings to be held by the assembly in Atchison was in 1936 when John and David Horn preached to large crowds in a schoolhouse at the edge of town and several were saved. That summer the Horn brothers returned for tent meetings, and the interest increased. In the fall of 1937 the assembly added a regular prayer meeting to its testimony. Jack Charles frequently came to help. Special meetings were again held in the homes and in two different schoolhouses across the Missouri River. Arthur Rodgers gave valuable help in one of the schoolhouses and also at various times in Atchison.

In February 1938 the assembly opened the Gospel Hall, an unpretentious rented building on a prominent street. For six years it served as a place of blessing. Many in the neighborhood attended the meetings and frequently the capacity of the building was taxed. Several itinerant preachers visited and gave special meetings, and also helped at the annual Easter Conferences; among these were David and John Horn, David Lawrence, Arthur Rodgers, E. G. Matthews, and Leonard Sheldrake.

During this time the Lord added to the number one by one, and the old rented building became overcrowded and was otherwise inadequate. When another group of people purchased the building, the assembly met for several months in the Masonic Hall, which had already

been used for two conferences. Plans were undertaken for constructing a chapel. A corner lot was provided in a residential district where there was no other church building. In April 1944, the new hall was opened with a prayer meeting. Eight months later, the basement facilities were used for the first time at an all-day meeting, and in 1945 the fifth annual conference was the first to be held in the new building. John Horn and his wife moved to the city and remained there until the Lord took them home. It was at the Atchison Easter Conference in 1961 that Arthur Rodgers passed into the presence of the Lord. The assembly continued until about 1977.

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In 1950 or 1951, five families who lived on the Kansas side of the line between Missouri and Kansas hived off from the Troost Avenue Gospel Hall to form an assembly in the Overland Park area of Kansas City, KS. William and Ruth Hayward, and Wayne and Ruth Matthews were those who lived there, and when three other families moved to the area, the decision was made to start an assembly. Some of the early families, besides the Haywards and Matthews, were those of Russ and Doris Farwell, Lloyd Staley, and Robert Buelick and his mother. Among those who came a little later were the families of Jim Petersen, Harry Sommerville, and John Schultheiss, followed by Duncan Sommerville.

The assembly has occupied the same building – Overland Park Chapel – at 64th and Floyd since its inception. At its largest, in the 1960s, about 200 people were in fellowship. A division in the early 1970s caused a serious decline in numbers, but today about 75 are in

fellowship. Leaders in past years include Harry Sommerville, Duncan Sommerville, Gifford Knapp, Truman Page, Harlan Baldwin, Glenn Lee, and Russ Farwell. Don Herrington, Ray Miller, and Nelson Cook are among the leadership today.

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The first assembly in Wichita was started by Will Thomas, a full-time evangelist from Wales. A document written by Mr. Thomas in 1929 is extant, referring to this assembly. After his early death in 1931, his widow and two small daughters moved back to Perry, where a small assembly existed at that time. The Wichita Assembly struggled after that, but is said to be the beginning of subsequent brethren testimony in the area.

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Leonard Lindsted was commended to full-time service in 1939 by the Fernwood Gospel Chapel in Chicago. Encouraged to come to Wichita by the Myron Lakes', Leonard Lindsted and Tom McCullagh pitched a tent on the Meridian School ground in August 1941. The Lord blessed with fruit and they made contact with other Christians. By October 1941 Leonard had moved his family to Wichita. The Christians met as an assembly in a rented store on West Maple until the war started in December 1941.

At that time, the Lindsteds moved to Goessel, 35 miles north of Wichita. During this time Leonard held Bible studies in Newton, Canton, and in his own home. In the summer he had tent meetings in many Kansas towns with Joe Balsan, Ben Parmer, and other workers.

Under the leadership of Leonard Lindsted and Dean Jensen, the Wichita assembly was incorporated in April 1946 and met at the East Kellogg Gospel Chapel at 1933 E. Kellogg. The incorporators were Charles Cissel, Dean Jensen, and Bert Brower.

Dean Jensen urged William Horn, then at Drake University in Iowa, to move to Wichita to help out at the Wichita assembly. Bill Horn came in July 1948 and with the Lindsteds again started Bible studies in Wichita, using the Charles Cissel home on North Grove. They soon moved the studies to the Labor Temple downtown to accommodate the people.

Street meetings in Wichita and surrounding communities several evenings a week were held until legal restriction closed them down. Tent meetings continued and special Gospel meetings continued through the following years, and the assembly continued to grow.

In 1971, the construction of Highway 54 forced the church to move, and a new South Emporia Bible Chapel was erected at 2100 South Emporia. Soon after the new chapel was built, Leonard Lindsted's son, Robert, returned to Wichita from Vermont to take a position at Wichita State University. Many college students were saved and brought into the fellowship of the assembly. Leonard and Robert, with the help of the South Emporia meeting, started a "Pioneer House" where young men could live and also attend special Bible classes in the evenings. These classes were designed to train them to be Christian leaders and speakers.

Several workers were commended to the Lord's service by the South Emporia Bible Chapel, to Thailand, Immanuel Mission in Arizona, and to local ministry.

* * *

After about a dozen years, some believers in the assembly at South Emporia hived off to start a new work on the east side of the city. They also began a school, which at the beginning had quite small classes. Robert Lindsted had moved to the northeast side of Wichita and the assembly began in his home and was incorporated in 1982. The number multiplied and in 1983, Sunrise Bible Chapel was built. The Sunrise school has been quite successful, with about 750 students enrolled at this time.

The Sunrise meeting divided in the mid 1990s. Most of the believers relocated nearby to Northside Bible Chapel in Kechi in 1996. The assembly has continued to grow at Northside, and has an active children's program. In active leadership in the assembly over the years have been Leonard Lindsted, Dean Jensen, William Horn, Louie Becker, and Robert Lindsted. Randy Horn and Will Nuse are the current elders at Northside, which has also recognized several deacons. About 200 adults and children attend Northside.

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The other group from the former Sunrise Bible Chapel started in May 1996 in the home of Troy and Mary Jane Campbell. The believers moved to another home after a few months, then rented the Bel Aire Rec Center for almost a year. They now meet as Believers' Bible Chapel at the Sunrise Christian Academy. This assembly has commended Robert Linsted for local ministry, has

sponsored several part-time mission trips involving some 50 individuals, and has commended workers to full-time missionary work abroad. Believers' Bible Chapel has about 150 adults and children in attendance.

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The assembly at South Emporia Bible Chapel remained in their building for a time after the hive-off to Sunrise took place. Some couples living on Wichita's west side began meeting in a home for mid-week prayer and Bible study in 1981. Dan Linsted was one of the leaders. The Eddie Buchannan family and Darold Peters family were among this group. Land was purchased but no building was erected. The group gradually disbanded and by 1990 most had returned to South Emporia Bible Chapel.

Overcrowding in the South Emporia chapel induced the assembly to erect a building on the land that had been purchased on the west side. Pending completion, the assembly met in rented space in a mall. In 1995, they moved into the new building and changed their name to Westside Bible Chapel. The present elders at Westside are Eddie Buchanan, Arnold Burkle, Duane Denny, and Whitney Reader. Average attendance is around 100.

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A small racially mixed meeting began fellowshipping in Augst 1963 and incorporated in 1966 as Grace Bible Chapel in Wichita. The incorporators were Donald Govan, Duane Denny, and D. Wayne Becker. This meeting continued until January 1981 when the Govan family moved to Jackson, MS to work with Voice of Calvary Ministries. Their daughter and son-in-law moved to California to work with World Impact, and Carol Denny was commended to the work at Immanuel

Mission in Arizona. The South Emporia assembly continued the commendation of Carol and her husband Rick Khol after Grace Bible Chapel closed.

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Richard Burson was a Baptist preacher working in Salina in the late 1930s and early 1940s. While he was helping some widows clean out their attic, he found old copies of Help and Food, published by Loizeaux Brothers, which he read, learning the principles of a New Testament church.

In about 1943, he moved to the city of Hutchinson, southwest of Salina, and took the pastorate of a newly formed Baptist church at 4th and Main. He set up a bookstore in the front of the building, had the services in a middle room, and had living quarters in the rear of the building.

In 1945, Lawrence Littlefield, who was then stationed at the Hutchinson Naval Air Station, and his wife Betty, found the bookstore. Conversations with Mr. Burson about the New Testament church ensued, and Mr. Burson became eager to change his church to the New Testament pattern. He contacted Loizeaux Brothers in New York City for help, and they in turn contacted Ralph Littlefield of Kansas City, who had already been informed by his son Lawrence. Ralph Littlefield spent much time in discussion with Richard Burson. Leonard Linstead and Tom McCoullagh also gave advice, and soon the Hutchinson Bible Hall was a reality at 4th and Main. Later the name was changed to Hutchinson Gospel Chapel to avoid confusion with the local Jehovah Witnesses hall.

Some of the families left to join a nearby Baptist group after the change. The remaining four or five families moved to an old funeral home at 228 W. 2nd. There Richard Burson set up a print shop, in addition to the book store and an apartment and meeting rooms for the assembly. After a few more years, the Christians rented a building on East 2nd Street, and later purchased a building at 212 N. Lorraine. Six families were then in the assembly, but felt that God was leading them to start a Sunday School with a bus for transportation.

In the late 1960s, the assembly, still small, purchased the Presbyterian building at 6th and Elm. In the 1970s, the families in the Hutchinson Gospel Chapel moved into that building, where it still meets today at 334 E. Sixth Street. Growth began at about that time, until today the assembly is the second largest in the state, with about 180 adults and children.

Those in active leadership over the years include Richard Burson, Leslie Jantz, Orville Hopper, Jim Gardner, Lowell Ramsey, Lane Scott, Billy Asberry, John Meinzinger, William Newcome, Darell Valdois, Steve Burson, John Bloom, Wayne Dudley, and Duane Schmidt. Workers have been commended by the assembly to Peru, Mexico, Immanuel Mission in Arizona, and to Kansas Bible Camp.

Hutchinson Gospel Chapel is closely associated with the work at the Kansas Bible Camp in Stafford, some 40 miles to the west, which Richard Burson started in 1946 and was the director for many years. Following Mr. Burson, John Bloom became director of the camp, and after him, John Denny.

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Near the Nebraska border, north of Salina and Wichita, is the town of Belleville. In about 1915, the Belleville Meeting was started by a Mr. Bachelor and Carss Nesmith, both of them business men. The small group of three or four families met in the second floor of a retail establishment. A little later, Eldon Baird moved to the area from Iowa and helped with the young people. Others who joined with the group were the families of Carl Ball, Charles Wilson, and Willie Hay. The assembly disbanded in about 1935 following the deaths of Messrs. Bachelor and Nesmith.

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By the time the Belleville Meeting ceased, Eldon Baird had married and moved to nearby Concordia. He, with Charles Wilson and Ed Korkill began Remembering the Lord in the Korkill home in Concordia. Soon they rented an old church building for their meetings, calling it the Concordia Gospel Hall. These three men did the preaching on Sunday mornings, and also had Sunday evening Gospel meetings. John and David Horn, Jack Charles, John Walden, and Arthur Rodgers are remembered as preaching at the Concordia Gospel Hall. The meeting, however, was short-lived, disbanding in the early 1940s.

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The history of the Coal Creek Gospel Hall stretches back to the 1880s, when three men – one of them Alex O'Brien – started meeting for prayer in the rural Coal Creek school house, south of Lawrence. Some time after this, Mr. O'Brien began pastoring at a church in nearby Perry, but soon realized he was not saved. He was

brought into contact with brethren from Kansas City and was later saved through the truth of Acts 13:38.

The O'Brien family farm was near the Coal Creek School House, and Alex O'Brien pitched a Gospel tent on the family farm in about 1903. During three weeks of meetings, some of the O'Brien family were saved, including Alex's brother James and his wife Edith. Soon after that, a few Christians began Breaking Bread in the farm home. They enjoyed fellowship with other small gatherings in Perry, Garnett, and Kansas City.

In 1918 and 1919, Charles Leonard held meetings in the Coal Creek School House, and several were saved. In 1921, the Remembrance Meeting began to be held there. In 1920 and 1922, Oliver Smith held meetings in the neighborhood, with many professing Christ. Ira Hird and many of his family were saved at about this time. Other evangelists who came were William Grierson, Will White, Charles Stow, Arthur Rodgers, John Horn, J.O. Brown, and Ernest Washington.

The Coal Creek School was closed in 1947, but the assembly continued to meet at the school house. The building later became known as the Coal Creek Gospel Hall. When a tornado destroyed the building in 1977, the Christians rented the American Legion hall in nearby Baldwin City until 1981, when they built their own hall on the crest of Baldwin Hill, north of town.

James O'Brien was a true shepherd of the Coal Creek assembly through the early years. With his passing, his son-in-law, Ed Rockhold led the assembly until 1950. At that time, the O'Briens and Rockholds became associated with the Lawrence Bible Chapel. Those engaged in shepherding the assembly in more recent

years include Delbert Hird, LeRoy Olmstead, David Olmstead, Peter Naber, Curtis Naber, and Daniel Stewart. An unusual outreach of the assembly is to Russian-speaking families who attend the Sunday School and the Gospel meetings at the Coal Creek Gospel Hall each Lord's Day. The messages are translated into Russian by some of the Russian visitors. Mr. Caleb Baker's chart The Two Roads and The Two Destinies has been printed in matching English and Russian and are on display in the hall. About 50 adults and children attend these meetings.

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Those who gathered in Garnett were George DeWolf, E.N. Miller, Will Craig, Harry McAfee, Walter McAfee, John Thomas, Wilbur Thomas, and Sam Thomas. The Garnett Assembly met last in the home of Sam and Emily Thomas.

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Oliver Smith started the Perry Assembly in about 1920 in the town of Perry, 13 miles north of Lawrence. The Christians gathered in the home of Charles Bradford. Conferences were held at Perry for several years. With Mr. Bradford were Mr. Jennings, his son Tracy, Fred Lakin, and Mr. Liggett. Will Thomas' widow and daughters, one of whom later became Mrs. Gordon Wakefield, were in fellowship there from the early 1930s.

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The Lawrence Bible Chapel in the university town of Lawrence just west of Kansas City, was begun in 1944 as a home meeting, first in the home of Jack and Mary

Marquette, and later in William Sommerville's house. It began as a result of gasoline rationing during World War II. Gordon Wakefield attended there after being saved at the University of Kansas in 1950. From 1951 to 1984, the assembly met at 1001 Kentucky in Lawrence, and in 1984 moved to its present location at 505 Monterey Way. The principal people involved in the start-up were Jack Marquette, Lawrence Littlefield, and Arthur Hird and their families. Those in leadership over the years include William Sommerville, Pete Youngberg, Ron Nadvornik, Dave Drelory, John Scollon, Don Schonberg, Russ Farwell, Terry Morgan, Larry Sherraden, and Dean Jordan. The assembly has commended several to the Lord's work abroad. About 230 adults and youngsters attend Lawrence Bible Chapel, which is the largest assembly in the state.

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The Baldwin City Gospel Chapel, south of Lawrence, was established in 1967 by Ray Jones and Ed Rockhold. Not a hive-off from another assembly, it met first in a home at 819 Indiana Street. The Gospel Chapel has commended workers to service at the Turkey Hill Bible Ranch Camp in Missouri and Immanuel Mission in Arizona. It sponsors an annual open Bible Conference. The assembly has about 40 adults and young people in fellowship.

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The Topeka Gospel Chapel began in the Charles Bradford home in 1948, and later met in the home of Lloyd and Betty Walterick. The assembly moved into a newly built facility in 1958, where it resides today, at 5010 SW 20th Terrace. The Bradford, Leishman, and

William Korkill families were those chiefly instrumental in the start-up. Also active in leadership have been Ted and Gene Everhart, Jim Stewart, and Jim Springer. About 25 adults and children attend the assembly today.

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Osage City is south of Topeka. Gospel meetings were held there by John Walden, followed by J.O. Brown. The Osage City Assembly was formed as a result and met in the home of Paul and Mattie Lauback for several years.

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Alexander (Sandy) Broadfoot from Iowa came to Kansas in the period 1910 to 1917 to visit and hold Gospel meetings in schoolhouses in the area south of Abilene in mid Kansas. The Bonnacord schoolhouse was one of these. Many were saved. Mr. Broadfoot instructed Robert Robson and others about the Lord's Supper and plural leadership, and an assembly was begun. The Christians met first in the large home of Alexander McBoyle and took the name Bonnacord Assembly. For many years, the Christians met in homes; Bible Conferences were held in tents. In 1918, the assembly built Grace and Truth Gospel Hall on donated property in the Holland area, which is still the assembly's location some eight miles south of Abilene. One of the leading men in the assembly at that time was Frank Nicholson. Some of the early families to fellowship at the Hall were the Roggendorffs, Gruens, Millers, Emigs, and Jurys, in addition to the Deerdorffs, McBoyles, Nicholsons, and Robsons. In the 1930s, the assembly changed the name to Grace and Truth Gospel Chapel.

In 1942, Jay Walden of Minneapolis was in the army at nearby Fort Riley. He fellowshipped at Grace and Truth,

and was a great help in the assembly. Other men who came to the Chapel from their military bases were Ed Kellner, Toby Brocker, Marvin Studnika, and David Silver. Joe and Jan Gummel came during the Desert Storm conflict. Orville Robson was the long-time correspondent for the assembly; he and his wife Lois were known for their hospitality. Elders at Grace and Truth have included Orville Robson, Menno Dyck, Keith Engle, Kenneth King, and Jerry Lahr.

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When Gordon Wakefield was stationed at Fort Riley near Manhattan in the 1950s, he started an assembly which initially met in his home, then moved to a rented room in downtown Manhattan. This Manhattan Assembly consisted mostly of soldiers stationed at Fort Riley and students at Kansas State University. It lasted only about three years.

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An outreach of Grace and Truth Gospel Hall to an area south of the town of Carlton resulted in a group of believers meeting in the Elm Springs school house. Frank Nicholson from Grace and Truth held gospel meetings in the mid or late 1920s in area schoolhouses east of Roxbury. Interest grew and home Bible studies began. The Elm Springs school, a little way northeast of Roxbury, was the first meeting place for the new assembly. Others from Grace and Truth who came to help were Robert Robson and Dan Emig. Ed Buchenau and John Walden were among others who came to minister the word.

In 1937, a plot of ground a mile south of the school was donated to the assembly; lumber from a building in

Carlton was used to build a meeting place on the property. The assembly Christians called it the Elm Springs Bible Hall. The assembly numbered about 60 at its largest. An annual three-day October Bible Conference was a highlight. Migration of farmers to the larger towns in the 1950s and 1960s caused a declining attendance at Elm Springs Bible Hall, and it disbanded in the late 1970s.

Some of the speakers at the Conferences sponsored by the two assemblies were Harry Ironside, George MacKenzie, Tom Carroll, Walter Wilson, Ed Bucheneau, Leonard Lindsted, Tom McCullagh, O.E. McGee, and Richard Burson. Missionary work was important to the believers at the two assemblies. They supported work among the Navajo Indians at Immanuel Mission in Arizona, making many trips there with supplies and co-commending workers for that work. Others commended include Kenneth Engle to the work in the Phillippines in 1951, and Kevin and Eloise Dyer to the Southeast Asia Literature Crusades in 1959.

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Sunset Bible Chapel in Salina, not far from Abilene, has connections to the work in Lawrence. Four men and three women now with Sunset were in Lawrence and attending Bible studies in the home of William and Marie Sommerville in the 1950s. Gordon Wakefield, Richard Burson, Paul Little, and Alice Kitchen were frequent in attendance at these meetings. George Easter was one of those attending these studies, and when he moved to Wichita in 1957, he was encouraged to give help at Grace and Truth Gospel Chapel south of Abilene. When Mr. Easter moved to Salina in about 1960, Richard

Burson and John Walden encouraged him to begin a work there. He and others began with Sunday evening and midweek meetings, while still in fellowship at Abilene. Several couples from the Elm Springs Bible Hall met with them, and after two years, some 50 were meeting in Salina, about the same number as at Abilene.

The assembly was officially formed in 1969, and known simply as The Chapel. The assembly met alternately in the Easter home and Marvin Johnson home. After several years, they rented space in a school building while accumulating a building fund, and in 1979 built the Sunset Bible Chapel at 760 Hancock, which they occupy now.

Elders at the beginning were Marvin Johnson, Everett Johnson, Dale Becker, Lawton Owen, and George Easter. These with their wives, and Earl and Alberta Blair, and Dave and Karen Smith, have continued in active roles in the assembly. Paul and Greg Johnson and Chuck Thornburg have been added to the leadership. The assembly has commended and co-commended workers to ministry in East Europe, Ireland, St. Lucia and St. Thomas, and Immanuel Mission in Arizona. Others have received short term commendations to Kansas Bible Camp and elsewhere.

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In 1916 or 1917, J. E. (Ned) Brown, a wheat farmer then 60 years old, moved from Long Island in north_central Kansas to the area of Kanorado, a small town on the Kansas_Colorado border. Ned Brown had his roots in Iowa where he had helped establish the Berea Gospel Hall; when he moved to Long Island, his first concern was to begin a meeting in that town. So when he moved

to his new farm a few miles from Kanorado, he directed his strong evangelistic concern toward planting a new work in that area also. Soon after arriving, he started an assembly that became known as the Kanorado Gospel Hall and which met initially at the Graybill school house north of Kanorado. A good preacher, he held Gospel meetings at several different school houses in western Kansas and eastern Colorado.

Ned Brown knew of two young men from central Kansas and hired them not so much to help out on his farm, as to help him in the evangelistic work. These were David and John Horn. Their pattern was to work in the fields during the day and preach at night. They both were soon full_time Gospel workers.

Many souls were saved in those years at the school house meetings and at tent meetings. Soon the assembly meeting at the Graybill school house was big enough to warrant its own building, and with volunteer labor built a chapel in about 1923 in the country northeast of Kanorado. They called it the Kanorado Gospel Hall. On a neighbor's land adjacent to the Gospel Hall, the Christians would put up a large tent for their annual Bible Conferences, and a smaller tent where the farmers would bring produce and beef as an added attraction.

The Kanorado meeting grew rapidly, and numbered about 200 by 1929, remarkably large for a church out in the country. The Kanorado meeting had an oversight but not recognized elders.

Ned Brown took in another young man after the Horns left. This was John Walden. While living with the Browns, John helped with the farm work, but preaching God's Word became most important to him. Shortly after

John Walden and Nan DuBauge were married in 1931, they moved to Denver and then Colorado Springs. John Walden was one of the leading brothers among the assemblies in Colorado during his years of ministry.

John and David Horn frequently traveled and preached. They were the principal carriers of the Gospel into western Kansas and eastern Colorado. During their first series of meetings at the Happy Hollow school house in 1928, Ben F. Parmer, then 11 years old, was saved, with other members of his family. The Parmer family joined with the Kanorado meeting. After a few years Ben Parmer was teaching a boy's Sunday School class there and sharing in the Gospel on Sunday nights.

Traveling preachers who came to the Kanorado Gospel Hall and to other assemblies in the area for special meetings included C.W. Ross, Don Charles, Jack Charles, Leonard Linsted, and Richard Burson.

The Dust Bowl of the 1930s caused much hardship; this together with the general state of the economy due to the Great Depression induced many farming families to move off the farms to the towns and cities along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. There they affiliated with existing assemblies and had a considerable influence. The Nohr, Stevens, Turner, and Ted and Ed Anderson families were among those active at Kanorado who moved west and became active in new and existing assemblies along the Front Range. The remaining Kanorado brethren moved their meeting to Goodland, Kansas, a few miles east of Kanorado, in the late 1950s. The meeting dwindled and was dissolved in the early 1980s, after about 60 years of existence which had seen multitudes of people saved and strengthened.

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The Garden City Assembly has recently been established in the town of Garden City, toward the west side of the state.

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## Missouri

Caleb J. Baker had become a prosperous tent and awning maker following the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. But before that, he had been saved and had developed a passion for the Gospel. In perhaps 1879, he met Donald Ross, who had set up a Gospel tent near Mr. Baker's place of business in Chicago, and soon became associated with him. An assembly met to Remember the Lord in that tent, and Mr. Baker and several of his employees soon were in fellowship in that assembly.

In the 1880s, Donald Ross started westward. After being in Kansas City for a time, he encouraged C.J. Baker to

relocate there because he recognized it as a logical center for reaching out to the southwest and west.

Deciding to separate from his business partner and move to Kansas City, Mr. Baker invited several of his Christian employees to move with him, chosen for their ability to help establish an assembly. The first assembly in Kansas City, MO, began the day after the group arrived, and met in the main room of the new canvas factory for several months. After that, they met successively in a number of rented places, usually above a store, sometimes on the third floor. Mr. Baker did not approve of buying a place and thought the assembly should never stay in one place more than about two years. He envisioned the assembly as a roving Gospel outreach, moving among neighborhoods. During his lifetime, Mr. Baker supplied tents, not only to the evangelists who engaged in pioneer work, but to missionaries around the world.

Mr. Baker was indefatigable and the assembly was active. Mrs. George Rendall, one of those brought from Chicago, was an excellent Sunday School teacher for the assembly. C.J. Baker instituted street meetings and started a Christmas Bible Conference, much like the Thanksgiving Conference initiated in Chicago by Donald Ross. C.J. Baker's grandson, William Baker Sommerville, remembers it thus:

"…[the] conferences always lasted three days and sometimes four. The preaching services lasted at least an hour and a half in the morning, two hours or more in the afternoon, and an hour and a half again in the evening. The people all ate together, at least for the noon and supper meals. And there was a great deal of

‘conferring’ in the conferences which had nothing to do with the preaching services. There was a great deal of discussion among the elders of the various assemblies regarding their problems, whether theological or practical. It was a very great unifying exercise among the people in the assemblies in various parts of the country.… I don’t know that I ever heard about Santa Claus when I was very little. And since we were always at meetings on Christmas day, … Christmas to me as a small boy meant Conference. And this meant meeting interesting people, hearing interesting things, seeing things. It was the big point of my life in those days…”

The Christians met for a time at 14th and Main Streets. Eventually they desired more comfortable accommodations and began renting church buildings; the first of these seems to have been an old building at 16th & Holmes. After that they rented a church building at 31st and Charlotte. In the first decade of the 1900s, the assembly had about 150 people in it. In 1906 or 1907, Mr. Baker and his associates invited C.W. Ross, Donald Ross’ son, to move to Kansas City, labor among them, and make it a center for his ministries.

Finally, in 1918, the Christians constructed their own building on Troost Avenue at 28th, which became well known as the Troost Avenue Gospel Hall. It was one of the leading assemblies in the area for many years. Assemblies in Spruce Hill, MO; Overland Park, KS; and Kansas City, KS are descendants of the Troost Avenue Gospel Hall. The Troost Avenue Christians opened the Servicemen’s Canteen during World War II. Troost Avenue Gospel Hall disbanded in the early 1980s.

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Spruce Hill Bible Chapel at 11501 E. Bannister Road began in 1962 as a hive-off from Troost Avenue Gospel Hall. Those responsible for its establishment were Lawrence and Betty Littlefield, John and Betty Littlefield, John and Barbara Schultheis, Robert Beulick, and Viva and Ewart Gunn. For the first year, the assembly met in the home of Lawrence and Betty Littlefield. Then John and Betty Littlefield donated a small acreage adjoining their home for the construction of Spruce Hill Bible Chapel.

George and Gloria Martin joined the fellowship at Spruce Hill about a year after the chapel was completed, and have been pillars in the assembly. Those active in leadership over the years include George Martin, Ross Ragland, Lawrence Littlefield, Robert Cowan, amd James Robertson. About 65 adults and young people are in Spruce Hill Bible Chapel. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord’s service.

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The roots of the Bible Chapel in St. Louis, on the opposite side of the state from Kansas City, go back to 1873 when a 31-year-old James Campbell arrived in the city from Scotland and preached the Gospel. Several were saved in these meetings, including Mr. Donald O. Macleod. Mr. Campbell also instructed the believers in the principles of the New Testament church. Mr. Campbell went from there to St. Charles, MN, but returned to St. Louis in 1879 with Donald Munroe for more Gospel effort. They found a group meeting for Bible study in various homes and encouraged them to begin Remembering the Lord, which they did in the home of John Kerr. Others from various denominations

joined with them, and the believers continued to meet for some time in that home as the South Side Assembly. They later moved into an old rock building in the 3000 block of Pine Street.

In 1895, the surnames of some of those meeting as the South Side Assembly were Brown, Bothwell, Buss, Couser, Dyke, Hughes, Macleod, Morey, and White.

At about that time, Mr. Buss left the assembly to form another, which met in a building at the corner of Florissant and O'Bear. This meeting lasted only a short time. In November 1901, the South Side Assembly moved to Jefferson and Pestatozzi Streets in South St. Louis.

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In 1902, tent meetings were held by brethren Currens and Camp from Chicago, at which many were saved, including members of the Henrich, Masek, James, and Todd families. These Christians immediately formed an assembly which met in the rented Power House at 7th and Lami Streets, then shortly moved to the Shaving Shop on 2nd and Sidney Streets. This structure had wood shavings on the floor, wrapping paper over the rafters, and home-made wood benches. This assembly later moved to a storefront at McNair and Lynch Streets, then met in various homes. Messrs. Edward Allan and I.R. Dean were in fellowship there, as was Mr. Buss, who however left again and formed an assembly meeting at Newhouse and Blair. In 1910, Mr. Buss built Bible Hall on Finney Avenue. Some time after that, a group left Bible Hall to form the North Side Assembly.

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So in 1906 there were three groups, the South Side Assembly at Jefferson and Pestatozzi, the unnamed group at McNair and Lynch, and the group that followed Mr. Buss. Mr. Allan of the McNair group went to see Mr. Macleod of South Side to discuss a merger. This was agreed upon, and the merger took place at the end of 1906. The merged group, still called South Side Assembly, met in a large number of places in St. Louis over the next two decades. In 1926, the assembly moved to 5021 Morganford Road, rented it for many years, then purchased and remodeled it in 1940. This was known as the South Side Gospel Hall. Other family names during these years are Thiel, Horst, Suess, Luethge, Judd, Newkum, Ostertag, Bonham, Richardson, Blackshaw, and Miller.

When Morganford Road was to be widened, the assembly built and moved into the South Side Bible Chapel on Leona Avenue at Bowen. The assembly now calls its building simply Bible Chapel. In 1973, the assembly started the Victory Christian School in this building for children from kindergarten through 1st grade. In 1982, the Christians purchased a school building on Musick Road, which is the present location for the assembly and the Victory Christian School, which now teaches kindergarten through 12th grade with around 200 students.

The assembly commended O. Morey as a medical doctor to Africa in the early 1900s; he worked with F.S. Arnot. Others have been commended for ministry in the U.S.

* * *

Prior to the establishment of the present Maplewood Bible Chapel in St. Louis, a small group of exercised

Christians from the Bible Hall and the South Side Assembly met for prayer and fellowship in various homes. The group first met in 1921 at the home of Mr. Reister, 2119 Alameda, with 30 present, but soon moved to a rented room at 7016 Manchester. In mid 1922, a lot at 7138 Southwest Ave was purchased; within a few months, a basement was finished enough to hold meetings there; an above-ground auditorium was not completed until 1930.

During the 1920s, the Maplewood Gospel Hall, as it was then called, held evangelistic tent meetings on an adjacent lot, with many visiting preachers. In the 1930s and 1940s, street meetings were common and held in St. Louis, Maplewood, Webster, and East St. Louis, IL. A Young Men's Prayer and Bible Study was started in collaboration with other assemblies. A yearly Young People's area-wide Conference and a bi-yearly area-wide Sunday School Teachers Conference were begun.

In 1935, Maplewood Gospel Hall published the Exhorter and a Chorus book. Radio ministries have included a KSTL Family Bible Hour and a broadcast by the young people of the assembly. Bible studies for Jewish friends were held in homes. Messianic Forum on Pine Street in downtown St. Louis was held weekly in May 1948. Palabras Fideles (Spanish Faithful Words) was started by Carl Ostertag. The assembly has commended many people to the Lord's work at home and to countries such as Ecuador, Peru, Korea, southeast Asia, and Ireland

In 1949, several assemblies – Maplewood, South Side, Kossouth, and Bible Hall – began the Masokobi Bible Camp for children. Now called Dayspring Bible Camp,

the facility was purchased by the St. Louis assemblies in 1987.

* * *

The assembly meeting at the Richmond Heights Gospel Hall in the St. Louis area seems to have begun in the 1920s, assisted in its early days by Maplewood Gospel Hall. The Christians have changed the name of their meeting place twice while staying at the same location – 7902 Dale Avenue. In the mid 1980s, the name became Richmond Heights Gospel Chapel, and in 1994 The Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Leaders have included David Woods, Donovan Case, Marvin Curry, Joseph Crenshaw, Harold Spiller, and Untra Northern. Mr. Northern was commended by the assembly to the Lord's work in 1982.

* * *

Emmaus Bible Chapel in St. Louis began in 1956 and has been at the same location in the Ferguson area since that time. George Nelson, Donald Walter, Frederick St. Clair, and Harvey Decker were those involved in its formation. George Nelson, E.T. Mauger, and Lester Collins have been among the leaders. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord's vineyard in Ecuador, Phillippines, and Italy.

* * *

Grace Bible Chapel in St. Louis was formed in 1986 by the merger of two home assemblies meeting in the southwest part of metropolitan St. Louis – the Moriah Assembly and Believers Church. Moriah was started in 1979, and Believers Church was formed in 1984.

The Moriah Assembly in St. Louis was started by John and Sue Callan and Lee and Shirley Holtgrewe, none of whom were present at the time of the merger in 1986. Believers Church in St. Louis was begun by Jim and Karen Frankel, Randy and Donna Gruber, and Joe and Mary Vogl. The primary leaders at Grace Bible Chapel have been Jim Frankel, Randy Gruber, Mark Keller, Dave Kozeny, Steve Leary, Brian Railey, Jim Robertson, Cordell Schulten, and Joe Vogl.

Grace Bible Church has rented and met in several facilities since its inception. Since 1990, the Christians have met at Parkway Northeast Middle School at the intersection of Ladue Road and Interstate 270. The assembly now has about 100 adults and youngsters associated with it.

Grace Bible Chapel has commended Cordell Schulten as a resident worker in the assembly. Other commendations have been to Set Free Ministries of Missouri and to Japan.

* * *

A store front on St. Louis Street in Springfield, in the southwest part of the state, was the first home in 1933 of the Southeast Gospel Hall. John Elliot and Tom Cullaghough were the principal people involved in the start-up. The assembly moved to its present location at 1051 South Crutcher in Springfield in about 1936, and later became the Southeast Gospel Chapel. Those in leadership over the years include John Elliot, Carl Carey, Charles Brooks, Mark Newberry, Lewis Bigbee, Robert McWade, Don Thompson, Walter Cary, Ross Ragland, and Wendell Kerr. The assembly has commended

workers to itinerant ministry in the U.S. About 45 adults and young people attend Southeast Gospel Chapel.

* * *

Jefferson City Bible Chapel began in 1978 on Industrial Drive in Jefferson City, in the middle of the state, and moved to its present location at 2804 Sue Drive in 1996. James Allan, Stephen J. Allan, Stephen R. Allan, Alan Braun, Curtis Cox, Tim Rockhold, and Tim Adkerson were the principals involved in the start-up, and have served as the leaders of the assembly. Stephen R. Allan has been commended by the assembly to full-time work at Turkey Hill Ranch Bible Camp near Vienna.

* * *

Brookfield is a small town in the northern part of Missouri. A Bible study that started in 1974 in the home of Bill and Georgeanna Howell in nearby St. Catharine developed into the Brookfield Christian Fellowship, which was officially incorporated in 1977. The men of the assembly built a chapel in Brookfield in 1984 at 409 S. State Street, which the assembly still occupies.

Besides the Howells, those involved in the start-up of the assembly were Jack and Sharon Anderson, and Mary Brammen and her daughter Ann. Leadership has been vested in B.D. Howell, Herb Huck, Rod Libby, Jon Mendenhall, and Bruce Haley. William R. Howell was commended to the Lord’s work as Camp Director of Story Book Lodge as well as other ministries. Tom Brammer has been commended to work in the assembly. Brookfield Christian Fellowship also commended others to the Lord’s service in Russia. It now has about 130 adults and youngsters in attendance.

* * *

Hazelwood Christian Fellowship Assembly Church started in April 1998, meeting at 126 Flora in Hazelwood, having split off from an independent Bible church in which women held positions of authority. Clarence E. Jackson, Ron Smith, and Jimmy Russell are those who began the new assembly and are the leaders. About 35 adults and children comprise the assembly.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Reminiscences about Our Family, by William Baker Sommerville, 1978.

Letters of Interest, January 1982, p. 18

## Iowa

The assemblies in Iowa started from two different sources. The coal mines in southern Iowa attracted miners from the British Isles and other parts of Europe. The coal there was not of the best quality, but was used by railroads and by people for fuel during the winters. These miners were a tough group, living in many instances from paycheck to paycheck, but many were devoted Christians and preached the Gospel. They and their families would meet in the local Miner’s Hall or a lodge hall, and often had a large Sunday School work.

Itinerant preachers, primarily from Ireland and Scotland and other parts, were the other source of assembly influence. These carried the Gospel to the farmers in the northern and western sections of the state, preaching in pitched tents and rural school houses, sometimes

staying for weeks at a time, and establishing small assemblies before they moved on.

## Northern Iowa

Assembly testimony in northern Iowa began in November 1891 with a visit of John Blair from Ireland, to his sister who lived near the village of Dunkerton. While there, he held meetings in a school house, where several were saved. Mr. Blair made other visits in 1893 and in 1895, holding meetings in a school house and a church building in Dunkerton. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Dunkerton were greatly blessed at these meetings and it was in their home that an assembly – the original Dunkerton Gospel Hall – was begun in about 1893. Later, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Nesbit were saved and Remembered the Lord with the Dunkertons and Mr. Blair.

Following John Blair's pioneer efforts, others came to help and encourage the little gathering. In about 1896, Mr. E. G. Matthews, a businessman, began coming to Dunkerton for weekends where he could Remember the Lord and give help in the Gospel. A number were saved at a special Gospel effort conducted by Messrs. Bultmann, Lockwood, and Matthews in the Town Hall in 1896.

In 1898, a meeting to Remember the Lord was begun in the Matthews home in the city of Waterloo. C.W. Ross came to Waterloo with his tent for several summers. Messrs. Harcus, O'Brien, Broadfoot, and others helped in those days of pioneering. The result was that a large assembly developed in Waterloo and many assemblies were started in the surrounding districts.

The Christians met in other homes besides the Matthews home, and rented public buildings, among which were a funeral home at East Fifth and Mulberry Street, and an upstairs room on Commercial Street. In 1921, the brethren felt led to build a permanent building and purchased a lot at the corner of Western Avenue and Pleasant Street in Waterloo. The building is known as the Western Avenue Gospel Hall but is often called the Waterloo Gospel Hall. The first meetings to Remember the Lord there were in 1922.

The Dunkerton and Waterloo meetings were only fifteen miles apart and were closely associated in the early gospel efforts. The Dunkerton meeting joined with the Waterloo assembly in about 1922, when automobiles came into general use. The work was strengthened by the moving of the Leask family from Mason City in northern Iowa, and the Charles Herman family from Manchester, east of Waterloo. The help of young men who had good voices for street work was sought, and Jack Charles, Donald Charles, Tom Olson, and others responded. Thousands heard the Gospel in the open air in Waterloo.

Leaders in the Waterloo assembly in the early years were E.G. Matthews, Fred Lakin, William Leask, Glen Holloperter, Ray Nesbit, and Cliff Smith. Recent leaders include Richard Orr, Dilmer Stickfort, Ronnie Wessells, and Fred Cirksena..

About 38 adults are in fellowship now, with 13 children in the Sunday School. The Waterloo assembly became Oliver Smith’s home assembly, and he was commended to the Lord’s work by the assembly. Mrs. Mable Gillette has been commended to the work in Ireland.

* * *

In the 1890s, Charles Hoehler, an immigrant from Germany, had been hired to help at the Goff farm in North Dakota, and was saved through the influence of the Goffs. In late 1895, Mr. Hoehler came to the Dubuque area looking for a place to hold Gospel meetings. He found a school house, and at those meetings, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Herman and Mrs. John Haltmeyer were saved.

The Hermans later moved to Manchester, and after that to a farm near Waterloo, adjacent to a dairy farm owned by Oliver Smith. They presented Christ to the young farmer, and in about 1913 he too joined the ranks of the saved.

Oliver Smith soon became so engrossed in Gospel activity that he gave up farming and devoted all his time to the Lord's work. Many in the country districts around Waterloo were reached through his efforts. Oliver Smith became the towering figure among the assemblies of northern Iowa. Largely through his obedience to the Lord, several good-sized assemblies were established in northern and northeast Iowa. A feature story in the Des Moines Tribune in 1935 estimated that one thousand persons had been saved through Oliver Smith's evangelistic efforts.

* * *

In 1916, Oliver Smith, then still a farmer, hurt his hand badly in a corn sheller. While recuperating, he went to the village of Clayton on the Mississippi River, six miles north of Garnavillo, where he preached twice. At the end of that year, he returned to Clayton with John Dahlgaard, and preached through the following year,

with many professing salvation. Among those saved were Henry Ramsey and Susie Ricker.

An assembly of believers was formed at Clayton in August of 1918, meeting at their Clayton Gospel Hall. One of the eventual leaders of the Clayton assembly was Ed Ostoff, saved under the witness of Oliver Smith. The assembly continued until 1951, when Ed Ostoff died. At that time the remaining believers joined with those at Garnavillo.

* * *

Susie Ricker worked as a hired girl for Mrs. Fred Kramer in Garnavillo, and Oliver Smith went in 1919 to that village to meet with her. This led to Gospel meetings in Garnavillo in June 1919, and soon Mrs. Kramer, Mrs. John Dehn, and Mrs. Louis Brandt were saved, among others. In July 1921, six believers from the Garnavillo area – Elmer and Laura Brandt, Tillie Kramer, Louis and Nettie Tischhauser, and Amanda Brandt – Broke Bread for the first time, meeting in Elmer Brandt's home. Louis Brandt, later to become an active preacher, was not saved until about 1922.

For a time they met in various homes; in the spring of 1922 they were able to meet in the West Side school house. A building fund for constructing a Gospel Hall was started in 1924, and in 1930 the believers built and met for the first time in the Garnavillo Gospel Hall.

The Christians at Garnavillo were diligent in the spread of the Gospel to surrounding areas. The brethren held street meetings and sponsored tent meeting for evangelists. The first Bible Conference at Garnavillo was in 1936 and has been an annual event since then. The Gospel Hall was enlarged in 1949 and again in 1983, at

which time the number of adults and children associated with the assembly was about 100. Louis Brandt, Henry Wahls, and Joel Portman have been commended to ministry by the Garnavillo assembly.

* * *

During the years 1913 to 1920, a number of men – Charles Hoehler, Tom Olson, A.N. O'Brien, Fed Hillis, William Grierson, Oliver Smith, W.W. White, and others – preached in the Manchester area and many souls were saved. In the spring of 1920, Messrs. Hillis and Grierson began a series of Gospel meetings in the North Manchester Union Church building, and continued for six weeks. It was while this series of meetings was in progress that 13 believers gathered for the first time, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Tharp to Remember the Lord. The Christians continued to meet in various homes, in the North Manchester Church building, and at one time above one of the business establishments in downtown Manchester. In 1929, the brethren purchased a lot at the corner of Union and Wayne Streets and built the Manchester Gospel Hall, where the assembly met until 1990, at which time they moved into their new hall. Some 55 are in fellowship in the Manchester assembly, with 25 to 30 children..

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Stout is a small town west of Cedar Falls and Waterloo. It was to that town that Oliver Smith, Lloyd Smith, and Ward O'Neil came for street meetings in the summer of 1922. The response was good, and some local men – Herman Brandt, Alrich Brandt, and George Meyer – urged them to return for more meetings. Many were saved in these tent meetings which extended through

the fall. As winter approached, Mr. Ubbie Reiter offered the use of an old church building that he had purchased. The meetings lasted about 14 months in Stout and nearby Parkersburg, during which time about 100 souls were saved.

In July 1923, about 30 believers gathered in assembly capacity to Remember the Lord. The assembly continued in the old building until 1937. At that time, the Christians tore it down and built the present Stout Gospel Hall on the same site. In 1979, an addition was built onto the south side of the hall. Several improvements have been made to provide for wheelchair accessibility.

Since 1926, a two-day Bible Conference and Thanksgiving Day meeting have been held annually. The Meyer and Stickfort families have played leading roles in the assembly over the years. Among the many who have ministered at the Stout assembly are Eric McCollough, Leonard deBuhr, Albert Hull, and Gauis Goff. About 100 adults are in fellowship at the Stout Gospel Hall.

* * *

In the summer of 1925, while holding tent meetings in Aplington, Oliver Smith secured permission to use a United Brethren church building in nearby Hitesville for Gospel meetings. The meetings began in March 1926 and continued for nearly a year with much fruit. Farmers, business men, and people from all walks came under conviction of sin, and over 70 were saved. Two wives of the trustees of the church – Mrs. Leona Christopherson and Mrs. Ed Uhlenhopp – were the first saved in these meetings. They were followed by

Chauncey Yost, Lawrence Christopherson, August Brinkman and his parents, Bert Street, Walter Eltjes, and a host of others.

When the meetings concluded, the young believers came together on Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings for Bible readings, prayer, singing, and fellowship. When Mr. Smith knew this, he came and taught them truths about the Church. In October 1927, these believers, about 55 of them, first sat down around the Lord's Table. The believers purchased the building that had been used for the Gospel meetings, and this became the Hitesville Gospel Hall. The building has been enlarged and improved several times since then.

The first Hitesville Bible Conference was held in 1931, and has been a continuing feature of the assembly. Open-air preaching in surrounding towns was common in the early days. In the 1930s, the small town consisted of just a few homes; today, Hitesville has just a cemetery and the Gospel Hall. About 75 are in fellowship, plus Sunday School children.

* * *

Aredale, 15 miles northwest of Hitesville, has a population of about 100. In 1928, Harm Harms and George Uhlenhopp secured use of the Aredale town hall and presented the Gospel, with some interest shown. Chauncey Yost moved onto a farm south of Aredale in 1930, and continued spreading the good news of Jesus Christ in the area. In 1931, Oliver Smith put up his tent for Gospel meetings. Many were saved in this period, and in September of that year, 35 were baptized.

In the fall of 1933, several believers in Aredale came together to Remember the Lord. About seven couples

and several single people constituted the assembly meeting at Aredale Gospel Hall in its early days. About 35 others have entered the fellowship since that time. The small Gospel Hall has been improved through the years, and is still at its original location in Aredale. The assembly has grown recently through the addition of 15 people from the Hampton area.

* * *

Cylinder is a small town on Highway 18, 60 miles west of Mason City. Marlo Olson was born and grew up there, and had been converted during Gospel meetings at the Garnavillo Gospel Hall. He took employment in Washington, DC after graduating from college, but kept in touch with Oliver Smith by letter, urging him to go to Cylinder to preach. Mr. Smith came in the summer of 1933 for two weeks of meetings with fruit being seen. He returned several times through the summer and fall for more work in the Gospel. A letter written from Cylinder by Mr. Smith to Marlo Olson mentions 27 having been saved since the summer meetings.

Mr. Smith returned to Cylinder in March 1934 for Gospel meetings, and again in May, this time accompanied by Louis Brandt from Garnavillo. At that time, about 10 local believers, with some 40 from other assemblies, sat down together to partake of the Lord’s Supper. That first meeting was in the Odd Fellows Hall. After that, the meetings were held mostly in the Olson family home. The assembly increased to about 30 believers in fellowship at one point, but now consists of about a dozen. In 1967, the present Cylinder Gospel Hall was built.

* * *

Hampton is a sizeable town south of Mason City. Henry and Mary Wohlenhaus and their daughter Rose moved there from Lyman, IA where they had been saved in meetings at the Lyman Gospel Hall. After coming to Hampton, they and the Malones fellowshipped at the Hiteville assembly, some 23 miles away.

In 1933, Oliver Smith rasied the Gospel tent in Hampton and continued with meetings for five weeks, with other brothers sharing the ministry. About 12 persons were saved in those meetings. The baptized believers formed an assembly at Hampton in 1934, meeting initially in the home of the Wohlenhaus and Malone families. Soon they rented rooms over a grocery store, where they continued until 1941, when they moved into their newly completed Hampton Gospel Hall, with 20 then in fellowship. Oliver Smith and William Warke conducted meetings at Hampton in the early days of the assembly, and many others since then. About 30 believers are in fellowship there now.

* * *

Mason City is the business center of North Central Iowa. In the late teens and early 1920s, the Gospel was brought into the area by men such as E.G. Matthews and Mr. Robertson, followed by Samuel Keller, Oliver Smith, A.T. Stewart, and Samuel Hamilton. In 1932, Elgie Jamison and William Warke pitched a tent which drew large crowds, with several saved.

In September 1934, sixteen believers first gathered in Remembrance of the Lord, meeting in a rented basement on 4th and North Federal. Later they met in the YMCA and YWCA buildings. In 1952, an old church building was purchased by the assembly and became the

Mason City Gospel Hall; it was sold in 1967 and another purchased on Maple Drive, the present home of the assembly of about 25 believers.

* * *

West Union lies northeast of Waterloo and west of Garnavillo. Louis Brandt, Hy Wahls, William Warke and others pitched their tent in several localities in the area from 1941 through 1947 with some fruit and much opposition. The Christians from the Garnavillo assembly supported these meetings. Among those saved during this period were Gene and William Brainard, William's wife Doris, Melvin Nutting, and his mother, Lester and Leta Crain, and Mrs. Lila Barnhouse. The first baptism was in 1945 and more followed soon. In March 1947, the West Union Christians met for the first time as an assembly in the Crain home.

They met from home to home for a while, then purchased the Freiden School at auction and moved it onto a lot at the end of East Elm Street, still the location of the West Union Gospel Hall. Forty two believers were in fellowship in 1985.

* * *

The city of Cedar Falls borders Waterloo. Oliver Smith and others had Gospel series' there several times beginning in 1941, in which many professed salvation. In 1962, a church building was purchased by the local believers, who included several in fellowship at the Waterloo and Stout assemblies. In February of 1963, Eric McCullough and William Warke began a series in the Gospel at this location. When several more were saved, the believers felt this to be God's seal of approval for their desire to plant an assembly in that city. About

45 local believers Remembered the Lord for the first time as the Cedar Falls assembly in July of that year.

Since then, more have been saved and in 1985, about 60 were in fellowship, worshipping at the Cedar Falls Gospel Hall. Some 75 to 80 attend the assembly now, and expansion of the Hall is planned. The Waterloo and Cedar Falls assemblies jointly sponsor an annual Bible Conference, the two Gospel Halls being less than 10 miles apart.

* * *

By 1956, the Western Avenue Gospel Hall in Waterloo had grown to the point where either a hive-off or an enlarged building was needed. The decision was made to forego remodeling and establish a Sunday School outreach in the Alabar Hills area of Waterloo. Thus a Sunday School work began in that district at the Black Hawk school in August 1956. At an April 1957 meeting of Western Avenue Gospel Hall, the decision was made to begin Breaking of Bread at the school and to form the Downing Avenue Gospel Chapel in Waterloo . The Western Avenue Christians helped with the purchase of a lot, and by January 1958 the new chapel was finished and the first meeting there was held.

Howard Dunkerton and Henry Anderson were the principals in forming the new assembly. Wendell Lockhard and the Ahreholz family were also involved in the start-up. Those in active leadership at Downing Avenue Gospel Chapel include Howard Dunkerton, Willis Jepperson, Oscar Ahreholz, Henry Anderson, Ed Dempster, William Farber, Ernie Matthias, Doug Dunkerton, and Bob Smith. Several people have been

commended to the Lord's work at home and abroad by Downing Avenue Gospel Chapel.

In 1998, the assembly relocated and became known as Bethany Bible Chapel in Cedar Falls. Nearly 300 people attend the assembly.

* * *

Antioch is a small community north of Cedar Falls. Many believers lived in the Antioch area, which led to Gospel meetings being held in the old Antioch church building and surrounding areas. Russell Nesbit Jr., Duane Wessels, and others labored in the area for a number of years. The desire to plant a new assembly in Antioch reached fruition in April 1974, when 15 believers first gathered to Remember the Lord in the old Antioch church. Soon four more were added. These believers were all from the Hitesville, Stout, Cedar Falls, and Waterloo assemblies, and were driving quite a distance to attend their assemblies.

Later in 1974, these believers bought a lot adjacent the Antioch cemetery. In October 1975, they were able to move into the Antioch Gospel Hall. About 40 were in fellowship in the Antioch assembly in 1985.

* * *

The Mason City Christian Assembly began in 1991, having split from nearby Gospel Halls. Located at 1819 South Coolidge in Mason City, the assembly was started by Glenn Lightfoot and Joe Balsan. Leadership has been shared by Eldon Finer, Dave Platz, and John Muldoon. The Mason City Christian Assembly has about 10 adults and youngsters in attendance.

## Eastern Iowa

In the early 1950s, Oliver Smith, Paul Elliot, and William Warke held Gospel meetings in the area south of Manchester. Those saved in these meetings generally went into fellowship at the Manchester Gospel Hall. As employment opportunities grew in the Cedar Rapids area, these believers became exercised about establishing a testimony there. Herbert Dobson spent many weeks at various intervals in his labors in the area and was a large influence in the start and early days of an assembly in Marion, on the north side of Cedar Rapids. James Smith and Hector Alves also labored in the area.

In 1957, the believers rented a large upper room in the Memorial Hall in downtown Marion,. There they held Sunday night Gospel meetings and a weekly prayer meeting. They often enjoyed the fellowship and help of the Manchester brethren. In March 1962, with Ronald Borrett, Verle Smith, and Irvin Toenjes as initiators, the believers gathered as an assembly. Shortly thereafter, Albert Kampman also served as a leader, along with others.

The Marion Gospel Hall was built in 1967, a few blocks away from Memorial Hall. Adjacent to the Marion Gospel Hall is the Linn Manor Care Center, administered by believers from area assemblies. About 100 adults and youngsters currently attend the assembly, which has experienced recent growth. Workers have been commended to the Lord’s service in Zambia and to ministry in the U.S.

* * *

Prior to 1966, the only assembly in the Cedar Rapids area was the Marion Gospel Hall. Three families not associated with that assembly were meeting together weekly to study the Word of God and enjoy happy fellowship. After careful consideration and counsel from Mr. Ben Tuininga, the three families decided to start Breaking Bread together as the Cedar Rapids Assembly, meeting in the home of Richard and Beth Plowman.

In that same year two other families moved to the Cedar Rapids area and began to meet with this small assembly along with two or three single people. With these additions there were nearly fifteen adults and about twenty children.

The assembly learned that a congregation on the northeast side of town wanted to sell their building to enable them to build a larger one. Stewards Foundation agreed to provide a loan to the new assembly if they could come up with a down payment. The Lombard Gospel Chapel in the Chicago area, which had been the home assembly of David and Ann Rodgers, provided what was needed to make the down payment for the new group in Cedar Rapids. The move was made in October of 1967.

In the mid 1970s, about 75 people were regularly attending the various meetings at the Cedar Rapids Assembly. Elders were recognized and functioning. Souls were being saved and the saints were being taught. Then two of the four elders became seriously ill and died, and the assembly declined. In the meantime some of the families attending the Marion Gospel Hall contacted the Cedar Rapids Assembly to see if a merging of the assemblies could be worked out.

Eventually three of those families joined with the remnant of the Cedar Rapids Assembly and a new assembly was formed in 1989, using the same building but changing the name to Oakland Road Bible Assembly. By 1999, the assembly had grown to about 125 people, and had changed their name to Cedar Rapids Bible Chapel.

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An assembly of believers was meeting as early as 1887 in the home of C.W. Cross, seven miles from Grandview in southeast Iowa, close to the Mississippi. In 1896, the believers were meeting in Grandview, in various locations. This assembly discontinued in 1920, but at Letts, six miles northwest of Grandview, a small group seems to have been meeting to Remember the Lord. Whether this was connected with the work soon developed by brothers from Omaha is not clear.

Not long after Glen Plowman was saved, he moved his family to Omaha to find work. He knew nothing about the assemblies, or any other church for that matter; he just knew that he was a Christian and needed help to grow. In Omaha, he discovered the tent meetings that Harold Harper was having in conjunction with the Omaha Gospel Hall. Soon, he and his family were a part of that assembly.

He greatly desired that his relatives in eastern Iowa come to know about the Lord. Arthur and Willard Rodgers and others in the Omaha assembly, took the Gospel to Glen Plowman’s former home area near Letts, and several were saved. An assembly was formed, meeting in various places in Muscatine, Grandview, and

Letts. J. P. Patterson labored at the assembly when it met in Muscatine.

In 1932, after fifteen were baptized in the Mississippi River, the group obtained a building for their assembly in the country two miles east of the village of Letts. The testimony at the Letts Gospel Hall continued until about 1990.

* * *

In 1952, the Garnavillo brethren learned of assembly interest in the Grandview/Letts area, and Louis Brandt and Dale Hyde began meetings in the Letts Town Assembly Hall , which was a country school house. Mrs. Becky and Mrs. Kent responded to the Gospel. In 1953, a tent was set in Letts, but without much local response. The tent was then moved into Grandview, where a number were saved, including Dan Gast and Ruth Cocklin. Gospel meetings were held in subsequent years in the Gast home and in tents. In 1959, the believers gathered as an assembly. The Grandview Assembly continued to meet in the Gast home until a hall was completed in 1972. About 20 were in fellowship in 1985.

* * *

The Davenport Assembly began in the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Egger on West Locust Street in about 1936. Ten adults and three children were in that initial meeting. Others responsible for starting the assembly were Helen and Eldon Baird, Mr. and Mrs. C.W. Iverson, and Mr. and Mrs. Morris. Some of those in leadership over the years are mentioned below in connection with hive-offs.

The Davenport Assembly later rented a remodeled garage on Laurel Street. While there, they held a one-day Bible Conference at which Arthur Rodgers was the speaker. After that, they met in four different rented places until 1949, when they built Harrison Gospel Chapel in Davenport at 3025 Harrison Street. The first Bible Conference at the new building was in September 1950.

The Harrison assembly purchased a seven-acre plot in about 1990 and built the larger High Point Bible Chapel in Davenport at 2600 63rd Street, at which about 75 attend now. Recent elders include James Iverson, Fred Scott, Bill Kuhl, and Tom Daly. Harrison/High Point has commended several to the Lord's work.

* * *

Harrison Gospel Chapel has hived-off three other assemblies. Robert Vogel and Lawrence Fors started the Community Christian Fellowship in Moline. Ray Routley, Jerry Stonehouse, Carl Trent, and August Stevens started Oak Ridge Bible Chapel in Milan, IL. Others started a home meeting in Davenport in about 1995 called Davenport Bible Fellowship. This group continues to meet in the basement of the Andy Parker family.

A recent hive-off from High Point Bible Chapel is the Fulton Assembly at Fulton, IL, started by Abe Chacko, Steve Geddin, and Jim Larson; that group meets in a Christian school in Fulton.

* * *

Shortly after Emmaus Bible College moved to Dubuque, two assemblies were established in that city. The Asbury Road Bible Chapel, begun in 1984, meets at the college

and has about 50 faculty and staff families, 50 townspeople, and 100 students in attendance during the school year. The Asbury Community Chapel started in 1986, meets in the nearby village of Asbury, and has a fellowship of about 40 townspeople, 40 faculty and staff families from Emmaus Bible College, and 130 students.

## South Central Iowa

Christian coal miners from Scotland immigrated to the coal mining area of southeast Iowa perhaps as early as 1885. They formed little assemblies and began to preach the gospel to fellow miners and farmers. Forbush and What Cheer were among the early assemblies; then Rathbun, Mystic, Numa, Jerome, Hocking, Melcher, and Williamson; then Centerville and Albia. By removals these pioneers or their descendants became the nuclei of assemblies in Des Moines, Eddyville, Ottumwa, and Davenport. The last named had an earlier history, on a different basis, but its later strength was largely due to influx from Centerville. At one time, the assembly at Ottumwa was the largest and most influential in the state of Iowa; it disbanded in the mid 1990s.

The What Cheer Assembly was formed some time prior to 1888, making it the first or second in Iowa (see Berea). It quickly grew to a company of fifty or more Christians. When work in the mines ran out at What Cheer some of these brethren moved to Carbondale and Excelsior. They continued their Gospel activity and worked underground to pay expenses. When the mines closed in those places, they moved further afield into southern Iowa.

Around 1890, a few of the coal miners from What Cheer came to Forbush to work in the mine there, establishing

an assembly there. Among them were James Whittem, John Moffat, and W.A. Wilson. They worked in the mine during the winter months, saved their money, then rented tents to use for Gospel meetings during the summer, in many small towns. As people trusted the Lord, small meetings were started. A feature of the work in these towns were joint quarterly meetings consisting of one-day ministry.

* * *

When these towns lost population with the loss of industry, these assemblies moved to Centerville. They bought the Swedish Baptist Mission for meetings, calling it the Centerville Gospel Hall. In 1904, the old Methodist building on the corner of Main and Washington was purchased and became their meeting place until the present building was built in 1950, at 828 South 12th Street.

The Centerville assembly was a fairly large group for a small town; it was a leader among several other assemblies in the area. Their Labor Day conferences were highlights of the year, with several hundred people in attendance. In the late 1990s, only a handful of adults were in the fellowship.

Among those who worked and preached there were William Sommerville, John Moffat, W.A. Wilson, John McGee, John K. Wilson, John Hargrave, James S. White, W.W. White, and Thomas McCully. These men carried on for a long time before any of those giving their whole time to the Lord’s work arrived on the scene. Mr. Sommerville was a true shepherd and a good gospeller. John Moffat and W. A. Wilson were gifted men and spent their later years in full-time service. They were used in

establishing the original testimony in Centerville in about 1897. W. W. White helped Mr. Moffat and others in tent work at Centerville, Numa, Jerome, and other places. The Welshmen David Lawrence and his brother-in-law were prominent in the assembly later; David Lawrence was an itinerant preacher who traveled often with Arthur Rodgers. John Lewis was another itinerant preacher who was associated with Centerville. George Jones is the current leading elder in the Centerville assembly, now called the Centerville Gospel Chapel.

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Williamson was an active mining town in South Central Iowa when its coal mine was in operation, but scarcely exists today. The assembly meeting at the Williamson Gospel Hall was started in about 1929. The group met first in the Williamson High School auditorium and had about 45 to 50 people in fellowship. Two years after the meeting was started, the group moved a building from Numa to Williamson for their fellowship. Mark Avitt's truck was used to move the building. The Gospel Hall had a large sign on the outside with John 3:16 in bold letters.

Most of the brothers in the assembly were coal miners. Some had moved from Albia and other area meetings when those mines were closed. The Williamson Gospel Hall closed in the mid 1950s after the Williamson mine closed.

Speakers that helped in the meeting included David Lawrence, W.W. White, Albert Orcutt, James Stell, and David and John Horn.

## Central Iowa

The towns of Pella and Sully, near Des Moines, were settled mostly by farmers from Holland. Still, the assemblies that started there were influenced by the assemblies begun by the coal miners. The Pella Gospel Hall was established in 1941 by James Steele, Walter VanDer Hart, and Gradus DeCook, and has always been on Union Street. The VanDer Hart family, Gradus DeCook, and George Pinches have shared leadership of the assembly, which has about 25 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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The Bible Truth Chapel in Oskaloosa was established in 1974 by Milo and Harold VandeKrol and Willis Veldhuizin. It was first located at 7th Avenue East, Oskaloosa. In 1991, it moved to a new building east of Oskaloosa on Highway 92, and changed its name to Hillside Bible Church. Milo and Harold VandeKrol, Elmer Roorda, Ray Plowman, Willis Veldnuizin, and Rick Johnson have been active in leadership.

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The assembly which meets today as Cornerstone Community Church in Des Moines at 3200 Lincoln Avenue, had its beginning on May 19, 1912 when a small group of believers met in the the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Green, who had moved to Des Moines from Centerville. That first group consisted of the Green family, John Moffat of Centerville, and Mr. and Mrs. C.W. Hodges of Hocking. Soon the Robert D. Livingstons of Hocking, and the J. H. Whites of Centerville began fellowshiping with this small group, which consisted primarily of coal mining families.

The meeting moved to the Livingston home at 1418 E. Court Avenue in November of 1912, where they continued to meet until May 1913. The assembly was strengthened by other families moving to Des Moines, among them Thomas McCully from Albia.

The first Des Moines Conference was held on May 30 - June 1, 1913 in a tent erected in what was then Governor Square Park. Ministry at the conference was provided by Messrs. Wilson, Moffat, Greer, Broadfoot and Pinches. The assembly soon became known for sponsoring Bible Conferences.

Immediately after the first conference, a store building was secured for assembly meetings. In the fall of 1913, Messrs. Greer and McCracken held a series of meetings there. The assembly grew, so an old storage building was found at 1315 E. Walnut, which served as the meeting place for a time. The “Neighborhood House” at 513 E. 13th St. was obtained for the Conference in 1914. The assembly continued to meet at the “Neighborhood House” for about 18 months.

John Green then rented a shop at 1309 E. Walnut Street, which became the Des Moines Gospel Hall. For two years the Bible Conference was held there, and to accommodate the larger crowds on Sunday, services were held at the Masonic Home Lodge at E. 6th and Locust.

In 1921, an old church building at 800 Des Moines Street, near the State Capitol, became available and was purchased. The assembly was then named Central Gospel Chapel. In these early years it was not uncommon for as many as eight or ten speakers to be in attendance.

The numbers attending the Conferences grew so large that the chapel could no longer accommodate them, and in about 1936 the Conference was moved to the Iowa State Fairgrounds, where attendance often reached 700 to 800. The Conference continued at the fairgrounds until 1954 with the exception of three years (1942-1944) during World War II.

By 1953 the assembly required still more space. Land was obtained at 3200 Lincoln Avenue and the construction of a new chapel was begun. The old building at 800 Des Moines St. was sold, and for approximately 16 months services were conducted in the gyrnnasium of Valley High School in West Des Moines while a new facility was being built.

The first Sunday services were held in the new chapel in May 1955, where the assembly presently resides as the Cornerstone Community Church. Elders since then have included Tom Baird, Jim Green, Jim White, Jack Bernard, Ray Johnson, Andrew Crawford, Albert Orcutt, Lew Clarkson, and Corwin Dawson. About 300 adults and youngsters attend the assembly. Many workers have been commended to the Lord’s service locally and abroad. The assembly has been known for its active youth program.

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In the late 1930s, E.F. Washington of Kansas City, KS, with help from Dale Inhofe and Harry Ferris, then associated with Central Gospel Chapel in Des Moines, held gospel meetings on the east side of Des Moines, a racially mixed neighborhood. A few were saved, and a group began to Remember the Lord at a location on W. 12th Street near University. In 1940, the Christians

purchased a lot and built a hall at 1400 De Wolf Street, the present location of the De Wolf Street Gospel Hall. An addition was built later to accommodate the growing Sunday School. Dale Inhofe, Harry Ferris, Jack Bell, and Carroll Connett have been leaders over the years. About a dozen people are in the assembly at present.

* * *

The Ames Gospel Chapel, north of Des Moines, began as a congregation consisting largely of university students from various Iowa assemblies. Robert Arthur helped in its early days, and Ansel Bolt was associated with the assembly for many years, until it disbanded in the 1990s.

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In about 1915, an assembly began in the home of Frank Payne at Fort Dodge. However, the Good News Chapel in Fort Dodge is considered to have begun in about 1930. In that city, for many years, Light and Liberty and The Fields, as well as much other Christian literature, were produced by Walterick Publishers, which later moved to Kansas. Here the Gospel Perpetuating Fund originated two great hymnals: Choice Hymns of The Faith, and Hymns of Worship and Remembrance, as well as Alfred Gibbs' chorus books. Close to Fort Dodge is Twin Lakes Camp, where Karl Pfaff and others began a series of annual camps and conferences, principally for the young. The Good News Chapel discontinued in the early 1990s.

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From the Good News Chapel in Fort Dodge, Wayne and Carol Messerly went in 1963 to the Story Book Christian

Camp in northern Minnesota to serve as volunteer counselors and teachers. In 1967, they felt that the Lord was directing them back to Iowa, so they settled near the small town of Stratford, close to the larger town of Boone, where Wayne took a position as managing editor of a local newspaper. They did not join any of the local churches, but simply Remembered the Lord in their home, praying for a revival in the area and the establishment of a new testimony.

By 1970, the drug and hippy culture had invaded central Iowa, and many of the area high school and college students were deeply involved. Some churches around Boone became alarmed and jointly sponsored a revival crusade. God was already working in the lives of some of the youth, and several were saved and others renewed at the crusade.

Two of the young men who were saved, Andy Crim and Carl Dorner, sought out the Messerlys, knowing of their Christian walk. The Messerlys were happy to work with them and their friends, opening their home to crowds of young people, most of them still in a hippy life style. They instructed the young people in the things of God, and showed them how to lead Bible studies.

At the end of 1970, 22 young men gathered to Remember the Lord in the Messerly home, and were soon joined by young women and others. Andy and Carl became enthusiastic evangelists, able to speak the language of their compatriots. Within a few weeks, the area was exploding with Bible studies, in what has become known as the ‘God Awakening’ in that area.

The fellowship in the Messerly home was incorporated in August 1972 as the Stratford Bible Chapel, with

Wayne and Tom Messerly, Andy Crim, Carl Dorner, Kevin Chalfant, Steve Huffman, and John Berglund as its leaders. The group at that time had 30 core believers, while up to 125 would come to midweek praise and study meetings.

A hive-off occurred in 1977 when some of the believers began the Boone Assembly. However, the two groups soon decided to re-unite. They purchased an old farm house on three acres between Stratford and Boone, remodeled it, and in 1982 incorporated as the Countryside Bible Chapel. In 1996, about 150 people were in fellowship at Countryside.

## Southwest Iowa

The Berea Gospel Hall, in the small town of Berea nine miles from Anita in southwest Iowa, may be the oldest in the state. The Gospel was brought there in 1884 when Alexander Broadfoot moved to that area. Souls were saved through his efforts and the labors of others, among them Messrs. Both, Little, Gotchel, and McLarian. These brethren carried the Gospel to the neighboring towns of Mt. Etna, Massena, Fontenella, Anita, Greenfield, and Atlantic, holding meetings in country school-houses.

The assembly at Berea first met to Break Bread in the Berea schoolhouse not long after Mr. Broadfoot’s coming. Never a large assembly, it is yet the parent of the Lyman; Greenfield; Palisade, Nebraska; and Long Island, Kansas assemblies.

Prayerful exercise on the part of S.A. Brown resulted in Alexander Broadfoot and Don Charles coming to bring the gospel into the district near Lyman. In 1906, these

two brethren began meetings in a church building and the schoolhouse. Jack Charles later held meetings in an old creamery building, using planks on top of pop boxes for seats. This building was purchased and made into the Lyman Gospel Hall shortly after the work started in 1907 or 1908. Later the assembly moved an abandoned rural church building into Lyman and have used it as their hall ever since. Annual Conferences were begun soon after the work started, and continue to the present. At the first Conference in 1909, the speakers were Alexander Broadfoot, Don Charles, C.W. Ross, Arthur Rodgers, John Moffat, and C. J. Baker.

In the early days, the assembly at Lyman numbered about 120 for special meetings. In active leadership over the years have been Cal Lindeman, Will Meyer, Lewis Lindeman, Fred Meyer, C.G. Lindeman, Harold Meyer, Edgar Kunze, and Jim Nichols. The assembly has commended workers to Korea and Brazil.

Many other of the Lord's servants have labored faithfully ministering the Word and preaching the gospel in this district, among them C.W. Ross, James Erskine, John Moffat, A.N. O'Brien, William Thomas, A.B. Rodgers, John and David Horn, David Lawrence, C.J. Baker, W. Wilson, and James Gilbert, in addition to those already mentioned.

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The Mayflower Gospel Chapel in Cumberland, a small community a few miles northeast of Lyman, was formed in the 1950s, an offshoot of the Lyman Gospel Hall. Joe Johnson and Agnes Erickson are credited with starting this assembly. Larry Johnson has been its leader. About 20 adults and youngsters attend the assembly, which is

now located one mile south of the original hall in Cumberland.

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The Atlantic Gospel Chapel, begun in 1954, is also an offshoot of the Lyman Gospel Hall. The Christians of the assembly met for a year in the Assembly Room at the county Courthouse while their chapel was being constructed. William Howell, Lyman Worthington, Lewis Lindeman, William Morgan, Don Wohlenhaus, Bob (Arnold) Lindeman, Bud (Lloyd) Lindeman, and Gene Mallette were those involved in the initiation of the assembly. Elders have included Ed Hill, Clair Wohlenhaus, Don Hartkopf, George Heuss, Ned Brown, Duane Brown, Jim Freeman, Johnny Mitchell, and Stefan Johnson. The Atlantic Gospel Chapel has commended several missionaries to foreign and local fields. About 160 adults and children attend the assembly.

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From 1932 through 1934, several men conducted Gospel meetings in various country school houses in Adair County during the summer months, and in a large tent pitched in the Greenfield city park. Among those who preached during this three year period were James Gilbert and Glen Plowman of Omaha, and the Horn brothers of Atchison, Kansas. Kenneth and Eldon Baird spent their summer vacations preaching in the Schofield country school house east of Greenfield, and in a rented vacant church building in Greenfield. J.G. Charles of Kansas City held meetings in Jackson Center school house, west of Fontanelle. As a result, an interest was created and some were converted to Christ.

In the summer of 1936, a group of believers Broke Bread for the first time in the home of Eldon and Helen Stowell in Greenfield. Others present at this first meeting were Erskine and Grace Broadfoot, Had and Edna Sivage, Adeline (Jisa) Fils, Henry and Clara Limbaugh, Herb and Ona Stowell, Harold and Tillie Stowell, Herbert and Maurine Stowell, Bertha Baird, Merle (Jr.) Baird, Gwendolyn Baird, Mrs. J.H. Yeates, and Helen (Stowell) Hohertz. All of these had been baptized and received into fellowship at the Berea Gospel Hall prior to the beginning of the Greenfield Assembly.

Erskine Broadfoot and Had Sivage, because of their qualifications and long time association with the believers at Berea, were acknowledged to be the elders and Eldon Stowell was asked to be correspondent. Home meetings continued for about a year. Then it was decided to rent the old vacant Christian Church building and establish the Greenfield Gospel Hall. Even then, over forty people gathered in homes for Bible readings.

For a few years following the starting of the new assembly, speakers from other assemblies came on Sundays once a month to help, and a number of special meetings were conducted, mostly in the form of one or two-week series of evangelistic campaigns.

In the late 1940s, the assembly began meeting in the court room of the Adair County Court House for their Sunday meetings. In 1950, land was purchased on Highway 25 at the north edge of the town, and a country church building was purchased, moved onto the property, and remodeled. The assembly changed its name then to Greenfield Gospel Chapel. In 1962, they traded buildings with the local Lutheran Church at 401

E. Iowa Street in Greenfield. The assembly numbered about 80 in fellowship in 1998. Among those in leadership over the years have been Eldon Stowell, Ken Baird, John Guikema, and Gerald Reed, and many others.

In 1976, the Greenfield Gospel Chapel started sponsoring a 15-minute Radio Bible Studies program with Ken Baird every Sunday morning on a local radio station. Bruce Collins of Waterloo, IA took over the program when Ken Baird retired.

The Greenfield Gospel Chapel has joined with Berea Gospel Hall, Lyman Gospel Hall, Atlantic Elm Street Gospel Chapel, and Atlantic Sunnyside Bible Chapel in commending several people to the work of the Lord in Brazil.

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The Council Bluffs Bible Chapel, across the Missouri River from Omaha, was established in about 1980 as a hive-off from Keystone Bible Chapel in Omaha. Lloyd Andrew and Richard Lewis are the leading men in the small assembly. Though in a poor neighborhood in a poor building, they maintain the testimony and have seen blessing.

## Northwest Iowa

Sioux City was the American home of the Robert Hoys, missionaries to France. On their first furlough Mr. Hoy pitched a Gospel tent and called Harold Harper as the evangelist. Omaha brethren began a course of Gospel preaching and follow-up, which continued for years. One winter was a real harvest time among farmers north of the city, followed later by an ingathering from the city.

Arthur Rodgers baptized 21 one Sunday morning. The believers first rented a store building for their assembly meetings, then built their own Washington Heights Bible Chapel in Sioux City. George T. Pinches and William Trotter also did early work in the area.

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Sam Hayes and others of Sioux City had been saved in 1960 through the preaching of William Jackson, from an assembly in Kansas City. Following this, Sam Eadie faithfully instructed the new believers in the Word of God every Friday night, driving from Omaha to Sioux City, a journey of 100 miles one way. Mr. Eadie was in fellowship at the Omaha Gospel Hall. Others in this faithful ministry included Bill Fear and Messrs. Randolph, Petherick, Whitehouse, and Harvey. This continued for 17 years, until in 1977 an assembly was established in the Sam Hayes home. Sam Eadie and Louis Smith were also involved in the start-up of the assembly, which became known as the Sioux City Gospel Hall.

The assembly now meets at 120 South Leonard. Sam Hayes and Bernie Mertens are the current leading brothers in the small assembly of about a dozen believers.

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## Minnesota

Vernon Schlief records that the first assembly in Minnesota was located in St. Paul Park, south of St. Paul, and was started by his great-grandfather in the 1880s. This assembly, however, does not seem to be the antecedent of any of the current assemblies in the area. The Vernon Schliefs also started an assembly in South St. Paul, probably in the 1930s, which grew to 35 at one time. It would seem that this assembly dissolved soon after the Schliefs moved to Louisiana.

Mr. Schlief also records that he attended the Sunday School at the Cedar Avenue Gospel Hall in Minneapolis in 1924. That assembly later met at the 42nd Street Gospel Hall in Minneapolis. Harry Ironside ministered there on occasion. Thus, this assembly as well as the above may have been associated with the 'Grant exclusives.'

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The six current assemblies in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area – Believers Bible Chapel, Long Lake Community

Church, Maryland Bible Chapel, Northeast Gospel Chapel, Northwest Bible Chapel, and Plymouth Bible Chapel – jointly meet in a Bible Conference over the Labor Day weekend each year, a tradition that began in the early 1900s. These assemblies also meet quarterly for joint Missionary meetings. Bible camps in three locations in Minnesota – Chandler, Paynesville, and Virginia – are supported in part by these and other assemblies. Co-commendation of missionaries to the Lord's work abroad is common among these assemblies. Through the leadership of Homer Payne, Minneapolis assemblies have been helping an assembly in Bolivia, sending work teams for short terms.

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An assembly that eventually became Longfellow Gospel Chapel was meeting in various rented locations in the downtown section of Minneapolis in the early 1900s. These Christians called their various meeting places the Gospel Tabernacle during the early period. The first meetings were held in 1909 or 1910 and the first Breaking of Bread was in September 1911. Carl F. Leverentz and Henry Gilkerson were among those starting the assembly.

Nine people were in attendance at that first Remembrance Meeting. After 1911, records show the families of Walter Purcell, James Innes, Fred Beadle, O.E. Dunkerton, Carl Leverentz, August Leverentz, O.E. Magee, Carl Bergstrom, and R.D. O'Brien in the assembly.

Later leadership included Robert Wilson, Ted Bailey, William Denham, Paul Leverentz, Dan Leverentz, and William Western. Current elders are David Denham,

Glen Ellis, and Philip Leverentz. Christians from Northeast Gospel Hall in Minneapolis apparently gave help in Gospel work in the early years.

From the early days, a Gospel outreach was made into South Minneapolis. When a lot in that area was given to the assembly, the believers moved their meetings into a temporary building there, in 1925 or 1926, and erected and occupied the Longfellow Gospel Hall at 3012 Longfellow Avenue S. Since then, the neighborhood has changed, but the assembly remains active at the same address in the inner city. In 1959, the assembly was incorporated as Longfellow Gospel Chapel.

Longfellow has been the prime sponsor for the Minnesota prison ministry of Emmaus Bible College in recent years. The ministry of distributing Bible courses to inmates in Minnesota prisons, is headed by David Denham. Brothers and sisters from various area assemblies correct these courses and conduct weekly classes in a prison in Moose Lake, MN. About 50 adults and youngsters attend Longfellow Gospel Chapel today.

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By 1923, several people were meeting to Remember the Lord in a rented storefront building at 1103 Johnson Street, N.E., in Minneapolis. The assembly was incorporated in October 1923 and called the Northeast Gospel Hall. The original trustees were W.A. Upton, L.W. Anderson, O.A. Anderson, J.A. Innes, W.E. Purcell, O.E. Magee, and W.R. Simpson. Some of these had been in fellowship at the Gospel Tabernacle/Longfellow Gospel Hall.

The trustees had already identified a lot at the corner of 29th Street N.E. and Ulysses Street for purchase.

Construction of a basement was begun the next spring and the assembly moved into it; the upper portion was completed in 1929 or 1930. In 1966, an addition was constructed, enabling the provision of six Sunday School rooms. The assembly today is known as the Northeast Gospel Chapel.

Among the many men who have been in leadership at Northeast Gospel Chapel and its predecessors are Albert Upton, Truman Manning, J.S. McLellan, Joe Reavis, Jay Walden, Harold Crawford, Brad Biddle, John Block, Milton Haack, and James Green. With other assemblies in the area, Northeast has commended missionaries to the Congo, the Philippines, Brazil, Japan, Greece, and VietNam. About 85 adults and children are in the assembly today.

Northeast Gospel Hall and Longfellow Gospel Hall carried on cooperative efforts to spread the Gospel in the early years. This was a work for hundreds of children, held on Sunday afternoons on 45th Street between Heawatha and Snelling. The two assemblies also conducted joint open-air meetings at what is now called the ‘Seven Corners’ area.

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It was the burden of John and Ruth Clift of Northeast Gospel Chapel to begin a Sunday School work in the Golden Valley suburb on the west side of Minneapolis. In 1951, they challenged the newly married Don and Vi McLellan to assist them. The afternoon Sunday School commenced with 18 children in attendance. Teachers and helpers from other assemblies assisted in a temporary capacity and also were active in a Tuesday

evening Good News Club. A ‘fun night’ was a happy activity at the Clift home.

An assembly then began, meeting at Westview School and then at Mission Farms. Those initiating the new assembly were John and Ruth Clift, Don and Vi McLellan, Robert and Marge McLellan, Bob and Mary Wilson, and Stan and Janette Tjomsland. In 1955, the Christians erected the Westview Good News Chapel. In 1970, the assembly moved to its present location in Plymouth as Plymouth Bible Chapel.

The assembly has always had a strong youth program, which included Sunday Schools, Christian Service Brigade, Pioneer Girls, Released Time Classes, and an Awana Club. Over the years, leadership of the assembly has been provided by John Clift, Bob Wilson, Arnold Petersen, Don McLellan, Scott Henderson, Jay Swisher, B.J. Tuininga, and Gary Campbell. Plymouth Bible Chapel has commended missionaries to Japan, Papua New Guinea, and elsewhere. About 150 adults and youngsters attend the assembly, making it one of the largest assemblies in Minnesota.

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In 1961, a group of families in fellowship at Northeast Gospel Chapel purchased a wooded one-acre tract on Long Lake Road at Sunnyside Terrace, in the rapidly developing residential area of New Brighton on the northern edge of Minneapolis. The Zedicher family had moved nearby a year earlier and started a children’s work in their basement, a work which was picked up by the new assembly when it began. Joe Balsan from Iowa set up a tent on the property in 1962 for a Daily

Vacation Bible School, which was well attended by the neighborhood children.

A new building was erected later that year. The first meeting of the assembly at Sunnyside Bible Chapel in New Brighton was in June 1963. Fourteen families constituted the initial gathering, including the families of Lloyd and Lois Brandt, Claire and Karen Dean, Ken and Irene Manning, Grant and Helene Zedicher, Arthur and Audrey Redling, James and Mary Upton, Melvin and Coral Jacobson, and Sherman and Delores Camp. These shared in early leadership.

Recent leadership has included C. Ted Grant, Dennis Katterhenry, Kenneth Manning, Grover Sayre III, and David Wagner.

In 1987, the name was changed to Long Lake Community Church. An addition in 1989 doubled the capacity of the building, which is next to a high school; the assembly rents space in it for Sunday School overflow.

Two area assemblies have derived, all or in part, from Long Lake Community Church – Believers Bible Chapel in the Coon Rapids area of Minneapolis in 1987, and Northwest Bible Chapel in Minneapolis in 1994.

Bruce and Cheryl Ewing were full-time workers at Sunnyside from 1977 to 1984. Bill and Ginny Anderson came as full-time workers in 1989, until retiring in 1996. David Corbin and family came in 1996 to devote full time to the assembly. In 1999, Karl and Marcy Schmithe accepted a staff position to work with junior and senior high youth. With an active musical program and many young people, Long Lake Community Church has about 140 persons.

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A few brethren in fellowship at Longfellow Gospel Chapel and Northeast Gospel Chapel were burdened to start an inner-city ministry in St. Paul, which then had no assembly testimony. An assembly was formed in 1984 and met in rented space on Como Avenue as the Como Bible Chapel. Ted Gliske, Kurian Abraham, and Bruce Wahlin were among those who began the assembly. Scott Bourquin later joined in the leadership.

The work grew and a chapel at 606 E. Maryland Avenue in St. Paul was found and purchased, the present Maryland Bible Chapel. Approximately 60 persons regularly attend the assembly, whose principal burden is evangelization in that part of the city.

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Northwest Bible Chapel is the newest assembly in Minneapolis, and is located in Brooklyn Park. This assembly currently meets in a school facility but plans to build. The original members of Northwest Bible Chapel came primarily from Plymouth Bible Chapel and Long Lake Community Church. Rocky DeYoung is currently a full-time worker for Northwest.

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The assembly now meeting at Hinckley Gospel Hall, north of Minneapolis, began in 1985 in the home of Roland and Amelia Ekstrand. Some of the initiators had been in fellowship in assemblies at Willmar (130 miles distant) and Minneapolis (85 miles distant). The Hinckley Assembly was not derived from those, but was the result of numerous Gospel meetings and three years of home Bible studies. In 1990, the Christians purchased

a building at 401Lawler Avenue South in Hinkley, their present meeting place. The brethren involved in the start-up, and who continue in leadership, are Roland Ekstrand, David Klar, and Raymond Grazin. The assembly consists of about 30 adults and youngsters.

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Evangelist A.N. O'Brien lived in Duluth for several years in the 1920s and 1930s, and was considered to be one of the elders at the Duluth Gospel Hall. For many years there was no assembly testimony in the city. The Duluth Bible Fellowship was begun in 1988 by Tim Blazevic, Leo Wittenberg, and Don Peterson, and these have been the elders. About 18 are in the assembly.

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There was a small assembly at Hibbing, 40 miles northwest of Duluth, at which Vernon Schlief held Gospel meetings. A larger assembly existed at that time in Alexandria, with a large chapel, possibly the forerunner of Manor Park Bible Chapel, which disbanded in the early 1980s.

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The Meeting House in West Virginia, MN, north of Duluth, was the home of an assembly that was established in about 1941 by Neil Fraser, Walter and Lois Neff, Selma Quade, Earl Perala, and Basil Ward. The assembly has since moved into the town of Virginia and meets at the Virginia Bible Chapel. Other individuals in leadership over the years have been Raymond Andersen, Eino Peralo, Ted Johnson, Roland Rogers, Elwood Abramson, and Martin Backman. A worker has commended by the assembly to the service

of the Lord in Uruguay. About 80 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

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The Gospel Halls of the northern U.S. have a number of small testimonies in the state. The largest of these is the Willmar Assembly, some 90 miles west of Minneapolis, meeting at East 13th Street and Trott. The Warren Ramseys, in fellowship with the Willmar assembly, started a meeting in the late 1990s that meets now at the home of David and Dorothy Van Hal in Sunburg, north of Willmar.

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In the 1980s, unable to find the kind of fellowship in which they could wholeheartedly involve themselves, Dean and Ruth Lindstrom, daughter and son-in-law to Ben and Jean Tuininga, opened their home in Rochester in the southern part of Minnesota to Bible studies. In 1987, they began Breaking Bread together in their home. By 1989, the work had grown with five other households and some singles. The home assembly is today called the Rochester Bible Chapel.

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The Minnesota assemblies sponsor three Bible Camps in the state: Story Book Bible Camp in northern Minnesota, Lost Timber Youth Camp in southwest Minnesota, and Koronis Bible Camp and Conference near Paynesville on Lake Koronis.

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## Wisconsin

“One of the earliest assemblies in this area was probably LaCrosse. On June 9, 1890, they met for the first time to remember the Lord.” So wrote Val Brandt in 1996 of the LaCrosse Assembly. “I remember going to conference in LaCrosse. I remember Mr. Redpath who had a kind of whistle when he prayed. There was Frank Hussman. . . Some of the preachers there were Grandpa Gould (father of George Gould Jr.), John Ferguson (father of William Ferguson, editor of Words in Season), John Conoway (often used nature to illustrate), and W.P. Douglas (a stately gentleman from Cleveland).”

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The assembly initially called Bible Truth Hall in Cudahy was established in 1929 or 1930 by Harlan Vintage and P.A. Orloff. Those and Frank Gilanyi, Ralph Hartfield, Ray Routley, and Fremont Brauch were in leadership over the years. By the 1970s, the assembly had been renamed to Grace Chapel. After the last of the above named leaders had moved or died, the assembly closed in November 1996.

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Wauwatosa Community Chapel in the Wauwatosa area of Milwaukee was established in about 1920 by William Graf, Albert Cutting, and L. Andersen. It was first

located on Wisconsin Avenue in Milwaukee, and after that at three other locations before coming to its present address at 220 N. 67th St. in Wauwatosa. Other individuals active in leadership over the years have been John Hale, T. E. McCully, Gus Quindt, and Frank Brown. Among the many that Wauwatosa Community Chapel has commended to the Lord's service, we mention Vernon and Gladys Schleif to work in the U.S., and Ed McCully to the work in Ecuador. About 200 adults and youngsters attend Wauwatosa Community Chapel.

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Oconomowoc Bible Fellowship, in the town of Oconomowoc between Madison and Milwaukee, began in the early 1990s in the home of Frank Brown. The Browns were involved in weekly neighborhood Bible studies, while continuing their fellowship with Wauwatosa Community Chapel in Milwaukee, some 35 miles away, where Mr. Brown was an elder. Several other families, including Alan and Kay Gustin, were also making the Sunday journey to Milwaukee. With the blessing of Wauwatosa Chapel, the Oconomowoc group started Sunday evening Remembrance and Family Bible Hour meetings in the Brown home. Most of these Christians continued to drive to Wauwatosa Chapel for the Sunday morning meetings.

After some months, they rented a Baptist facility, and met there for about a year. Then they rented a local Senior Day Center and began Sunday morning meetings, and have continued in that location. About 50 adults and youngsters attend on Sunday mornings. The Christians of Oconomowoc Bible Fellowship meet in homes for three different prayer meetings and Bible studies; some

attend other Bible studies to meet and help Christians and the unsaved outside the assembly. Frank Brown, Wayne Scheppele, and Mike Brinkman have been elders in the assembly.

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The town of Appleton in east-central Wisconsin saw the Appleton Assembly begin in about 1930 in the home of James Simpson. The principal people at that time were the families of James Simpson, Lynn Carey, John Watson, Richard Watson, and Joe Alberts. These men together with James Watson, Oliver Krull, Harold Felten, William Gibson, Earl Asman, and Donald Abel have been the elders. The assembly moved in 1940 to 412 E. Wisconsin Avenue and took the name Appleton Gospel Chapel. In 1966, the Christians moved again, to N. Mason Street, taking the name Appleton Bible Chapel. The assembly discontinued in 1968. The Appleton Assembly has commended a worker to the Congo.

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In 1956, a group left the Appleton assembly to form an assembly in Kaukauna. The Christians met for a little over two years in an empty store on 2nd Street, while building Community Gospel Chapel in Kaukama at 1717 Main Avenue, which they opened in 1959. The principals in starting the Kaukauna assembly were R. Watson, J. Watson, K. Nichols, and Earl Asman. The latter three were the elders. The assembly commended a sister to work with Asian wives of U.S. service men in Colorado Springs. Community Gospel Chapel discontinued in 1976.

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Fox Valley Bible Fellowship in Appleton was established in early 1996 by Tim and Susan Geske and Ralph and Vicky Wells, and meets in the Geske home in nearby Kaukauna. Although there had been assemblies in Appleton and Kaukauna in years prior, the Fox Valley Bible Fellowship began independently of them. About 30 adults and youngsters attend the assembly. Leadership includes the Geskes and Wells'. Robert and Lois Sawyer, former missionaries to Spain, work in the assembly.

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When the Felten family came to Sheboygan, north of Milwaukee, from Germany in 1893, they found other families of believers and came together for Bible study and prayer. Assembly meetings were soon begun and were held from house to house. As more families were added, the Feltens built a house at 1628 Georgia Avenue in about 1912, and this became the permanent home of the assembly. Services were in the German language until 1916 when the change was made to English. At first the assembly met in the dining room, but as the numbers grew, it was necessary to enlarge the upstairs to accommodate the meetings. As many as 100 persons were present on some occasions. They continued to meet there for 33 years.

In June 1941, these families incorporated as Bible Truth Chapel in Sheboygan and started a building fund. But in 1942, a sad division took place. The 22 believers still remaining in fellowship leased and remodeled a store at 1226 Georgia Avenue and moved there.

Early in 1949, having more than doubled the membership and having well-attended Sunday School classes, with Friday night meetings that drew as many

as 140 children, the believers determined to build on the lot they had purchased years earlier on Broadway Avenue. With volunteer labor, help from other assemblies, and assistance from Stewards Foundation, the Broadway Avenue Gospel Chapel was constructed and occupied in December 1949.

The Lord blessed the testimony beyond expectation. Most of the families that left in 1942 returned, souls were saved, and Christians from churches around were added to the company. There were about 70 in fellowship in the early 1950s. The assembly continues today as Zion Christian Assembly.

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Grace Fellowship in Madison came into being in 1977, starting in the home of David Brauch and moving shortly to the Conference Center of a Quality Inn on Madison's southeast side. Those involved in the start-up include David Brauch, Dick Matthews, and Jerry Barr, and those in leadership include David Brauch, Gerald Kurtz, Randy Jorgenson, George Jones, Dick Peik, and Al Schirmacher. Messrs. Matthews and Peik are former pastors of denominational churches. Grace Fellowship has commended workers to Portugal and Romania. About 30 adults and youngsters attend Grace Fellowship.

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The assembly at the Beetown Gospel Hall began in 1926 in the town of Beetown in southwest Wisconsin. Stephen Nick and Samuel Hamilton are those to whom the start-up is attributed. Stephen Nick, a preacher who lived in Boscobel, Wisconsin, was the leader in starting several Gospel Halls in Wisconsin. The first overseers at Beetown were Roy Barr, Adam Jamison, Buzz Jamison,

and Sam Dixon. About 20 adults are in fellowship at present.

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The assembly called Believers Gathered Together in Beloit, almost at the Illinois state line, began in 1972, the result of efforts of Tom H. Ruff, Tommie Ruff, Leroy Ruff, and Thurston Sandlin. The latter was the correspondent for many years. A second assembly was was formed in the mid 1980s, meeting at Beloit Gospel Hall with Tommie Ruff as correspondent. The two assemblies existed together in the town until Believers Gathered Together disbanded in the mid 1990s. The Athlone Street Gospel Hall in St. Louis, MO was involved in the beginnings of the work of the Beloit Gospel Hall, which has an attendance of about 50 on Sundays. Leaders over the years include Tom and Tommie Ruff and Major Cain.

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Mt. Sterling, Lynxville, and Prairie du Chien are towns in the southwest part of Wisconsin, near the Mississippi River.

The Lynxville Gospel Hall was established in 1940. The assembly moved to the Mt. Sterling Gospel Hall in 1980 and continues today.

In 1993 a group split off from the Mt. Sterling assembly to form the Prairie du Chien Christian Assembly. These Christians, some of them elders from the Mt. Sterling assembly, first met in a home for about five years and now have their own building in Prairie du Chien. Daryl Asperson and Robert Borne were among those initiating the new assembly, which has about 40 to 45 persons

attending. Daryl Asperson and Robert Borne are the elders.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Untitled Report by Val Brandt, 1996

Letters of Interest, February 1950, p. 1; January 1953, p. 7

## Illinois

The establishment of the early assemblies in the Chicago area is intimately associated with tent meetings and conferences, the transplanted Scotsman Donald Ross being the driving force for these. In 1879, he was holding tent meetings in the west side Union Park neighborhood, and publishing his newsletter, The Barley Cake. In it, he suggested holding a Bible Conference and mentioned two assemblies as possible conference sites. One of these was at 517 West Madison in Union Park, and the other at 2912 South State Street on Chicago's south side. These unnamed assemblies were apparently the first in Chicago and the entire Midwest, and would have been formed before 1879, perhaps by several years. The first Bible Conference in the Chicago area was held in 1880, the first in a long series there.

When K.J. Muir left Canada in March 1880 to seek employment in Chicago, he sought out like-minded Christians. Not long saved in a Gospel campaign conducted by the Scots preachers John Smith and Donald Munro, Mr. Muir helped in tent meetings held that summer by Donald Ross and the remarkable business man and tent maker, C. J. Baker. When the tent campaign and subsequent Gospel meeting were finished,

“the assembly” (not further identified) moved to a hall at the corner of May and Fulton Streets, where many of the early Chicago Conferences were held.

In March 1887, K.J. Muir established his home in Avondale, then a suburb of Chicago. In the fall of 1888, John Arnold, Cuthbert D. Potts, and K.J. Muir with their families formed the nucleus of the Avondale Assembly.

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The fellowship currently known as Palos Hills Christian Assembly in Chicago has its roots in the South State Street Assembly. In the next decade, that assembly moved through several locations, all in the area of 30th and State Street, steadfastly observing the Lord’s Supper, prayer, and teaching. In 1891, the Christians met on East 43rd Street, and then further south near 69th and Carpenter. A year later they were at 59th and Wentworth Avenue, and in 1894, at the corner of West 69th and South Wentworth Avenue, where they called their meeting place Alberta Hall. This served as their home until 1918, when they moved into a larger nearby building. For a time they were at 69th and Halstead Street. In 1923, the assembly divided, one group moving to a rented old church building at 66th and Normal, becoming known as the 66th and Normal Assembly, and another moving further west to start the Laflin Street Gospel Hall.

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The Laflin Street Gospel Hall, at 6617 S. Laflin Street, had as its early leading brethren Jim Humphrey, Ken Widener, and Messrs. Miller, Arnot, and Parker. As the demographics of the neighborhood changed, most of the assembly moved to Oak Lawn in 1959. However, a few

stayed, notably Jack and Charlotte Mostert. They invited the black people in the neighborhood to join with them, and a few did so. Steve Thompson, saved while in prison in Japan, came to work with the Mosterts. He and Jack Mostert are the leading men in the integrated assembly, which is the most integrated assembly in Chicago.

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Perhaps in the early 1920s, some brethren, with the full accord of the brethren at 66th and Normal, commenced an assembly in Roseland on the far south side of Chicago, which became known as the Roseland Gospel Hall. The Roseland assembly was started by the Hoekstra brothers, of Dutch descent, along with Messrs. Faber, Boldt, and Slager. That assembly was active for many years, but eventually closed. The building sat idle for some time until a group of brethren asked permission to take over the building and start a new assembly, perhaps in 1926. Later they moved a few doors west on 111th Street. The assembly is now known as the Roseland Bible Church, with a good children's work in the community.

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The group at the 66th and Normal Assembly stayed at that location until 1929. By the mid 1920s, the growing assembly was seeing the need for permanent quarters. The Christians purchased a lot and constructed a hall at 86th and Bishop, and in the summer of 1929, the first meetings of the Roberts Memorial Gospel Hall – or as most people called it, the 86th Street Assembly – were underway, ending forty years of nearly constant moving.

The 86th Street Assembly frequently had tent meetings in the southwest suburbs, conducted by visiting and

local brethren. Traveling preachers who visited at 86th Street and its forerunners include many of the well-known brethren of the day. Herbert Dobson and William Warke were full time gospel preachers who made 86th Street their home assembly.

The Christians remained at 86th Street for about 35 years, through the Great Depression and World War II, and into the changing scene of the 1960s. At that point, the elders felt a move further out was desirable, closer to where the majority of the members then lived. A plot of land in Palos Hills was purchased and a new chapel built in 1969 at 10600 South 88th Avenue, the new and present home of the Palos Hills Christian Assembly.

Among the leaders in the earliest years of the assembly were William Dunnett, Thomas Pollard, Alfred and John Stevenson, and Messrs. Barth, Bassett, Weston, and Shewan. Since 1950, elders include Andrew Cotton, John Pollard, Bill Gould, Phil McKendrick, Tom Sendzimer, and Tom Carrick.

Palos Hills Christian Assembly and its antecedents have commended many workers to the Lord's service abroad and locally, and have been substantial supporters of missionary efforts. About 140 adults and youngsters attend the assembly today.

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In 1894, Winsor Chase and James K. Fea of the Avondale Assembly explored the Austin area on the west side of Chicago, and that fall moved their families to Austin to pioneer a new testimony. Others followed, and early the next year a store was rented at Ontario (now Ohio) Street and Parkside Avenue for assembly meetings. Gospel campaigns were held with such preachers as

Donald Ross, James Harcus, John Smith, Donald Munro, Alexander Marshall, John Monypenny, Charles W. Ross, and W. J. McClure.

In 1900 the Austin assembly moved into a small building at Laramie and Chicago Avenues. Because of losing two leading brethren, the believers temporarily closed their meeting in 1901. They met with the Colorado Avenue Assembly in Chicago but continued the Gospel and Sunday School efforts in Austin. In 1903 they returned as an assembly and rented a hall on Chicago Avenue about four blocks east of Laramie. In 1908 they moved to an upstairs hall at 419 N. 52nd Avenue (now N. Laramie). Through conversions and the addition of believers moving from other parts, the assembly grew to around 50 by 1913. In that year, the assembly incorporated and property was secured at 746-48 N. 51st Court (now Leamington) for the construction of a hall. An opening conference was held in the new Austin Gospel Hall in August 1913.

Conversions and influxes from overseas swelled the assembly to about 200. The assembly continued for more than 40 years, until the building was sold in 1956, and the assembly moved temporarily to Emmaus Bible School in Oak Park. In 1959, the Christians built and moved into Woodside Bible Chapel at First and Chicago Avenues in Maywood on the western edge of Chicago.

Leaders after the Austin period were Henry Moffatt, Phil Clarkson, Donald Anderson, Harold Shaw, Clarence Welsher, John Duff, and Bob Wilson. Elders since then include Tom Bendelow, Chuck Christensen, Dan Smith, Bob Logan, Duncan Mathieson, Steve Wilson, Bob Ramey, Jack Barclay, and John Hurni.

Woodside has two other groups using its facilities: the India Assembly meeting in a separate room but at the same times as the English-speaking meetings; and a Spanish-speaking group of about 20 on Saturday nights for Bible studies. The English-speaking assembly now has about 70 adults and youngsters, while the India Assembly has about 40. The Austin/Woodside assembly has commended a large number of servants to the work of the Lord throughout the world.

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The roots of Norwood Gospel Chapel in Chicago date back to 1916. A group of Christians, dissatisfied with their denominational church affiliations, began meeting together in homes. The interest grew and they sought help from the Moody Bible Institute for someone to minister to them. Among the first sent was Harold Harper, who was associated with the assemblies. In the summer of 1917, Mr. Harper and others conducted a gospel tent campaign in the neighborhood. The good results created a need for a regular meeting place. At the close of the tent meetings a nearby store was secured at Central Avenue and Irving Park. Here a progressive work continued for four years. In 1922, the Irving Park Gospel Hall, a modest building at 5614 Dakin Street, Chicago, was built. The group at that time numbered about 40.

Henry Petersen built up a large Sunday School and Friday night children's meetings. Alfred and Edwin Gibbs were also instrumental in building up the assembly. In leadership at the Irving Park Gospel Hall were J. Millard Doyle, George McAllen, Harvery Langguth, Paul Erickson, John Mall, S. J. Nelson, Charles

Howard, Harold Linquist, and Sor Sorensen. The assembly grew in attendance in the 1920s and 30s, but after World War II, felt they needed to move.

In 1951, after nearly 30 years on Dakin Street, about 125 members in fellowship in the Irving Park assembly moved into the newly constructed Norwood Gospel Chapel, located in a residential section on the northwest side of Chicago at Nagle and Foster Avenues. The Norwood Gospel Chapel has commended several to the Lord's work.

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About 10 people of the former Irving Park assembly purchased the Gospel Hall on Dakin Street in 1951 and continued to meet there, calling it Portage Park Gospel Hall. Now called Portage Park Gospel Chapel, the assembly still meets at the location on Dakin Street.

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In 1977, two families immigrated from Korea to Chicago, having been in fellowship in the Korean Brethren Assembly in Seoul, Korea. They entered into fellowship at the Norwood assembly, but soon desired to establish a Korean-language assembly. Thus, in 1980, the Norwood Gospel Assembly of Korean came into being, the results of efforts of Young M. Lim, Bona Soo Rhee, and Joon H. Park. These and Sang Jin Park have been the elders. Korean is used as the language for the adults, and English is used in the Sunday School.

In 1985, the assembly divided in half, one becoming the Emmaus Gospel Assembly and the other San Jung Korean Assembly in Des Plaines. Emmaus Gospel Assembly rents space in the Park Manor Bible Chapel in

Elgin and has about 60 adults and children in attendance. The San Jung Korean Assembly changed its name to Chicago Korean Bible Chapel. Both assemblies use Korean and English in their services, as before. Mr. Lim published a Korean hymnal in 1977 and is working on a second edition of it.

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The Union Ridge Gospel Chapel in Chicago began as a Sunday School outreach led by Charles Clohsey and Stanley Modrzejeswki of Norwood Gospel Chapel. By 1957, it had been established as an assembly. Paul and Al Streder, John Everding, and Art Modrzejewski were active in leadership.

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A group of brethren from the Laflin Street Gospel Hall – William McCartney, Doug Ibbotson, Art Miller, William Trotter, Fraser, Brown – decided to go further south in the early 1930s to begin a new work. They rented a store on 103rd Street and started the Washington Heights Gospel Hall. Doug Ibbotson was commended to the work of the Lord from Washington Heights. He was also involved in the work at the Navy Yard in South Carolina before returning to Chicago.

The Washington Heights assembly mushroomed and other works hived off from it. The assembly purchased a building, then later built another in the same block. They took the name Beverly Bible Chapel in 1962.

After that, a group left to form a new assembly in the western suburbs; its chapel was completed in 1976 and called the Oak Forest Bible Chapel. Don Thomson was a leader at Oak Forest, which has about 80 adults and

youngsters in attendance. Over the years, this chain of assemblies has commended many missionaries.

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In 1958, about 15 couples from Laflin Street Gospel Hall built Oak Lawn Bible Chapel at 4259 W. 107th Street in the western suburbs. Some of the families at the Oak Lawn assembly were the Millers, Hamiltons, McCallums, Halyburtons, Norgards, Ganleys, McKendricks, Kennedys, Hinshelwoods, Schoerners, and Boyds. The assembly has commended workers to Cuba, Yugoslavia, South Africa, and to local ministries. T.B. Gilbert was commended from Oak Lawn. Jeff and Beth Tichelar are full-time workers in the assembly, which has about 100 adults and children in attendance.

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Fernwood Gospel Chapel hived off from the Washington Heights Gospel Hall in about 1939. William McCartney, Ira Wagner, Roy Mills and William Brook were those who started the assembly. These and George Brucer, Robert Mattingly, John Slager, Robert Drechsel, Wesley Mills, Lawrence Hurley, and Charles VanderVeen shared leadership over the years. Active for many years, Fernwood Gospel Chapel commended missionaries to the foreign field before closing in 1967.

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The assembly now known as Village Church in Oak Park has its roots in a work established before 1920. Known initially as Bible Truth Assembly and located on Austin Boulevard at Corcoran in Chicago, the assembly at some point moved to its own building at 1107 Ontario Street, calling it Bible Truth Chapel. Robert J. Little was

associated with the assembly and was the ‘radio pastor’ at the Moody Bible Institute radio station in Chicago for many years, followed by Don Cole of the Lombard Gospel Chapel.

In 1952, the Christians built the River Forest Bible Chapel in River Forest at Harlem Avenue and Augusta Boulevard, where they remained until 1987. Those active in leadership at the River Forest Bible Chapel included Bob Constable, Jim Catron, Sam Brooks, Ernie Sandeen, Gordon Haresign, John Smart, Roy Horsey, and John Montgomery. At that time the assembly purchased a school building on East Avenue, between Roosevelt Road and the Eisenhower expressway in Oak Park, and changed the name to Village Church. Most of the men in early leadership at River Forest were gone by then. Jim Callahan is a full-time worker in the Village Church assembly. Many have been commended from the Oak Park/River Forest/Village Church assembly.

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A few miles south of Oak Park, at La Grange, an assembly was formed in about 1949 and met in temporary quarters, anticipating building their own chapel on a main road close to a large housing and shopping area. By 1959, the believers had completed their building, La Grange Gospel Chapel, which they occupied until the late 1980s, closing at that time. James Kennedy was an elder there for many years.

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Believers Assembly Chicago in La Grange is an assembly composed of believers from India. It is a product of a Bible study started in La Grange in the early 1970s by K.M. Mathews and others with a brethren background.

In 1996, the Lord enabled the group to buy a church building in the town. The assembly has had the joy of seeing a few Hindus come to the Lord. Abraham T. John and Sajan Mathews are the current elders. About 70 people are in Believers Assembly, which has also commended one worker to the Lord's service.

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In the spring of 1913, Henry Miller heard George M. Schmidt preaching the Gospel on the streets of Chicago, and stopped to speak with him. Shortly, they and their wives began to meet to worship the Lord in the Miller's home. They were soon joined by Mr. and Mrs. Lange, and then others, meeting to Remember the Lord in a variety of homes. When their homes could no longer accommodate the growing German-speaking assembly of believers, they met in a series of storefronts, first on North Avenue, then Armitage Avenue. Finally the assembly settled at 1844 N. Larrabee Street, forming the Larrabee Gospel Hall. The Lord's Supper was conducted in German, while the Sunday School, led by George Wagener, was conducted in English for the neighborhood children.

In 1928, a group of young ladies in the assembly, burdened for the spiritual welfare of the large number of children in the Jefferson Park community, did house-to-house visitation, then rented a large garage in which to begin a new Sunday School. That work eventually grew into the Grace Gospel Church with a succession of pastors.

During the early to mid 1930s, the gathering of Christians at Larrabee Street grew to encompass a group of Assyrian believers, among them Paul David, at

first meeting separately. Then when two Mexican brothers, Otilio and Manuel Carrera, co-workers of George Schmidt, were converted, the German-speaking and Assyrian-speaking believers decided to merge and make the worship suitable also for the Carrera brothers.

The assembly grew and in the 1940s the believers purchased property at 3525 N. Damen Avenue. After remodeling the building, they moved into it in 1949 and took the name Lakeview Bible Truth Assembly. During this period, members of the Grace Gospel Church moved into new quarters and used their original building as a youth center, with a gym. In 1990, the Lakeview meeting purchased the properties of Grace Gospel Church. The Lakeview assembly moved into the building at 5555 N. Lotus Avenue and changed its name to Northwest Gospel Chapel. Families from the two groups merged into this assembly and retained the youth center. Elders have included Armando, Bill, George, and Manual Carrera, and George Bowman.

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In the 1920s, the Methodist Church Council ruled that "the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, as a future event" was not to be preached by its pastors. This ruling caused an immediate uproar in the Lombard Methodist Episcopal Church. The pastor told five objecting families to leave, and about thirty did leave in early 1927. Among those were the families of Frank Erickson, William Routson, Dave Weber, William Kerr, Mae Patterson, and Noah Roeshley.

The people that left the Methodist Church engaged A.H. Fardon, an evangelist and Bible teacher from Kansas City, to join with them to conduct tent meetings in

Lombard. So many people attended these meetings that a board was formed to consider the beginning of a new church. The Board asked Mr. Fardon to consider moving to Lombard and be their full-time worker, and he agreed.

At that time there was no brethren assembly in Wheaton, Glen Ellyn, or Lombard. At the end of 1926 and in early 1927, some individuals from the Austin Gospel Hall moved to the Lombard area, including the families of Will H. Durant, William S. Kellar, and Charles M. Allen. There was no apparent connection between the group from the Methodist Church and those from the Austin assembly prior to the tent meetings in August 1927, but the Durants became involved in that new work. They and Frank Erickson were instrumental in purchasing two lots in Lombard and the construction of a new building, the Lombard Gospel Chapel at 40 W. Ash St. The group had its first meeting in March 1928, and celebrated the Lord's Supper each week from the beginning. Tent meetings were a regular Gospel outreach of the Chapel.

The Lombard Chapel continued to grow at a rapid pace into 1930. By March 1930, the Sunday School had increased to 150. Soon, plans were being made to begin a new work in Villa Park. A hall was secured and a group of 35 to 40 from Lombard began a similar work there. Starting as a simple hive-off in January 1931, this group continued to grow, but eventually joined with the Evangelical Free Church of America.

Even with the new work in Villa Park, the Lombard Gospel Chapel continued to grow rapidly. Many accounts are given of people coming to salvation through Jesus Christ. Tent meetings and special meetings at the

Chapel were common. Noted speakers were James McKendrick from Scotland; T. Ernest Wilson, then a missionary in Portuguese West Africa; A. G. Bently of Toronto; William R. Newell of Deland, Florida; Harold St. John; and Alfred P. Gibbs. In May 1931, H. A. Ironside, then pastor of the Moody Memorial church in Chicago preached at Lombard Chapel.

Though Lombard Gospel Chapel had a strong brethren orientation by this time, many of its members from other backgrounds were not comfortable, and 1934 was a year of change. Many in the assembly wanted to name Mr. Fardon as the pastor of the Chapel, and this caused a deep division. Rather than be the source of problems, Mr. Fardon, who had led many in the church to Christ, resigned and left Lombard Chapel. About 25 left with him, but others who had left earlier during the conflict returned

The assembly continued to invite well known speakers, and was involved with the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago. During World War II, many servicemen passed through the Service Men’s Center at 646 South State Street, and Lombard Chapel had an ongoing part in this ministry.

In the early 1940s, the numbers were down to about 50 people in regular attendance. These included the families of Will Kellar, Charles Allen, Earl Elliot, and Evelyn Varder. Miss Varder in 1948 went to Immanuel Mission in Arizona where she started a school for Navajo children. Lombard Gospel Chapel was the home church of Stacy Woods, later president of Intervarsity Christian Fellowship.

During and after the war, families who joined with Lombard Chapel included those of Frank Wilson, Willard Rodgers, Robert Hanson, and Charles Howard. Wheaton College students who attended included Jim Elliot, Ronald Harris, Jim Yorgey, and Priscilla Hoy (Kaliodjoglou).

In the 1950s, the younger people in the assembly agitated for a new building in a different part of the town. This was done and the Sunday School grew so rapidly that an addition was built that was larger than the original building. Eventually over 400 children were in the Sunday School. Other families moved into the area and became part of the assembly. Among these were the families of John Harper, John Phillips, C. Donald Cole, Charles Fizer, Jack Fish, and David Glock. naomi Cole began a Bible class with help from the other ladies in the assembly; over a hundred women attended the class and many of them eventually came into the assembly along with their families.

Lombard Gospel Chapel continues as a thriving assembly today at 369 N. Stewart.

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In 1930, T. B. and B. M. Nottage established the first black assembly, Grace Gospel Hall, in Chicago. Among its original members was W. F. Mullins. Edgar Burgess was associated with early Gospel efforts there. For six years T. B. Nottage commuted from New York, coming four to six weeks at a time, to help in the work in Chicago.

While this work was going on, meeting with discouragement and opposition, and some success, Theodore Williams Sr., a former Baptist pastor of

Detroit, came in contact with B. M. Nottage and through him learned about the New Testament church. In February 1945, Mr. Williams moved to Chicago to give a hand to the assembly work there. In 1946 he was joined by Mr. O. F. Gall, commended from Grace Gospel Chapel in New York City. Mr. Gall had been exercising his evangelistic gift in and around New York for about 22 years while secularly employed. Louis Hoy of Arlington, WA also joined the efforts at about that time.

Grace Gospel Hall first occupied a store front at 4646 Langley Avenue. At the urging of Mr. Williams and Mr. Hoy, the assembly at 4646 Langley Avenue moved to a funeral parlor at 18 East Fifty-fifth Street, and then to another funeral parlor at 4842 South State Street. The testimony grew slowly, with 37 in fellowship in 1949. With financial assistance from the assembly at 86th and Bishop, the Christians purchased a lot at 9140 South State Street in the middle of Chicago's South Side. Grace Gospel Hall was incorporated in 1947; the original trustees were Louis Hoy, Frank Mullin, and Theodore Williams, Sr. Construction of the Hall began soon, but several years elapsed before the roof and doors were in place, due to lack of funds. Saints at Arlington, WA and Vancouver, British Columbia provided financial assistance for this; some Chicago-area assemblies provided the heating plant, and an assembly in New York City paid for the plumbing and electrical work. In the 1950s, the highway department decided to build a highway through the property. With proceeds from the highway department, the assembly built a new Hall at 96th and King Drive. Close to a grade school with 1200 pupils, Grace Gospel Hall has emphasized children's work.

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Grace and Glory Gospel Chapel branched out from Grace Gospel Hall under the eldership of Messrs. Gall, Mullin, and McCray. The Learning Center Gospel Chapel in Harvey, IL was a branch-out from Grace and Glory Gospel Chapel, under the original leadership of James Fair and Mr. Henry.

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For four or five years preceding World War II, Joe Nieboer spent considerable time laboring among the black population on Chicago's South Side. Among those he contacted was Burleigh Edwards, a business man. Mr. Nieboer taught him the security of the believer and other Scriptural truths. In about 1944, Mr. Edwards started, from his apartment house at 41st Street and Michigan, a Gospel and visitation work under the name of South Side Gospel Testimony. In September 1949 an assembly with that name was formed, with assistance from the Nottage brothers, with ten in fellowship. A room in the apartment house was converted into a chapel. The Gospel was broadcast by loud speaker from the building and given out by tracts, visitation, and other means.

In 1949, the little assembly had opportunity to buy a substantial church building. This property with an adjoining corner lot at 64th and Drexel Streets was acquired, and the assembly was incorporated as South Side Gospel Assembly. The assembly numbered twenty seven at the time of the move. Visitors, preachers, and teachers from other assemblies were given a hearty welcome. Groups from Bethany Chapel at Wheaton and Emmaus Bible School helped in the ministry.

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The South Side Gospel Assembly carried on outpost work that developed into Westlawn Gospel Chapel, on South St. Louis Street near 21st, under the leadership of LeRoy Yates, Melvin Banks, and Mr. Rollerson. The Lighthouse Gospel Chapel was another branch-out from the South Side Gospel Assembly. From the Westlawn Gospel Chapel came Roseland Bible Church, the Christ Community Church in Chicago, and the Family Gospel Chapel of Bangor, M ichigan.

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In the early 1940s, the only assembly in the town of Wheaton met in the home of Wheaton College professor Mortimore Lane, and only for the Lord's Supper. Billy Graham, while attending Wheaton College, frequently attended those meetings at the Lane's home. Many assembly young people attended Wheaton in those days, but because the closest assembly was in Lombard, seven miles away, most attended other churches. Knowing this, William McCartney, who had been active for years in helping to establish assemblies on the south side of Chicago, took steps to initiate an assembly in Wheaton.

In 1945, he was instrumental in having a large house purchased close to Wheaton College on President Street. A wing was added and the house, called Bethany House, was used for assembly meetings and was made available to students for relaxation and recreation. Mr. McCartney persuaded Harold Harper of Pennsylvania to move his family to Wheaton and minister to the students. Almost immediately, students, faculty, and staff of Wheaton College began attending the assembly. A few

families from Lombard Chapel joined the Wheaton assembly.

In the early 1950s, Bethany Chapel in Wheaton was built next to Bethany House and became the home of the assembly. The chapel accommodates about 200 persons. Now it numbers approximately 150 during the regular Wheaton College semesters.

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Warrenville Bible Chapel in Warrenville, near Wheaton, was opened for regular services in November 1959. Branching out from the assembly at Bethany Chapel, this work resulted chiefly from the efforts of one family in Warrenville bringing large numbers of boys and girls to youth meetings in Bethany. Interest in starting a new assembly testimony in Warrenville developed, and seven families – those of Robert Mojonnier, Herman Heise, John Sweemer, Charles Shelburn, Sophus Bolt, Del Dennis, and Maurice Martin – started to pray together about this. With encouragement from the elders at Bethany, a fund was started in early 1958. Money came from many sources, and construction of a building on a one-acre lot was carried out in the late summer of 1959. The building has been added to twice, seating 200. An adjacent lot was purchased in the early 1970s.

Robert Mojonnier, Herman Heise, John Sweemer, and Sophus Bolt were the first elders. Since then, Don Pope, A.G. Sutton, Maurice Martin, David Neal, William MacPherson, and Erwin Kittner have become elders. Several workers have been commended by Warrenville Bible Chapel to the Lord’s service abroad. About 200 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

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Glen Ellyn is between Lombard and Wheaton. The Glen Ellyn Gospel Chapel began in 1986, having derived from the Lombard Gospel Chapel. Ron Walker, Chuck Formby, Richard Neal, Chris Barton, Ken Blysma, and Tim, Jim, and Bill Hertz were the principals involved in the beginning of the assembly. Gerry Wright, Ed Auer, and Bob Marshall have also shared in leadership. The assembly has commended two workers. About 30 are in Glen Ellyn Gospel Chapel today.

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One of the largest assemblies in the outlying areas of Chicago is the Arlington Countryside Church in Arlington Heights. This assembly began in 1966 through the cooperative vision of men and women from various assemblies closer to Chicago and the staff of International Teams, formerly called Literature Crusades. As the northwest suburbs exploded with people, the new outreach grew rapidly. Elders there have included Walter Liefeld, Neil Glass, Cy Fors, John Elliot, John Stadt, and Evan Davis. Although the community and congregation have been transient, Abner Bauman has been involved full-time in pastoral and evangelistic ministry since 1971.

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The leadership of 13 families from Arlington Countryside Church resulted in the formation in 1982 of Alpine Chapel in Lake Zurich, which is northwest of Arlington Heights. Art Volkmann, Rick Knox, Jim Harshaw, and Dick Loizeaux were the principal people starting the assembly. Meeting initially in Seth Paine elementary school, the Christians in 1985 moved to their present

location on 17 acres at the corner of Miller and Echo Lake Roads in Lake Zurich.

Dick Loizeaux assumed full-time ministry responsibilities that year. In 1990, additional staff members were added. Alpine Chapel has grown to about 700 people through an aggressive outreach in the expanding community, and the facility has been expanded several times to accommodate the growth. Leadership has included Jim Harshaw, Dick Loizeaux, Rick Knox, Fred Heick, Charles Christiansen, Juan Angolo, Rich Borst,and John Cross. About 70 people professed salvation in 1997 through the outreach of the assembly, and 60 new families were added.

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In the 1880s, James Harcus married Margaret Ross, daughter of Donald Ross, and moved northwest from Chicago to Elgin, where he obtained employment. He remained in that town for ten years and helped build up the little Elgin Assembly. L.C. Burbury was a leading elder in the assembly at one time, and more recently Art Modrzejewski.

* * *

A mission group – the Gospel Expansion Fellowship – from Park Manor Bible Chapel in Elgin, Bethany Chapel in Wheaton, and Norwood Gospel Chapel in Chicago started the Meadowdale Gospel Chapel Carpentersville, north of Elgin, in 1956. The principals in the beginning were Louis Cook, Walter Albright, Robert Harper, and Emil Jordi. Sharing in leadership since then have been Charles Frame, Donald Mullins, Jim Hoeflich, Ralph Whitlock, and Dan and Dave Niequist. Meadowdale

Gospel Chapel has commended workers to the Lord's service. About 85 persons are in the assembly today.

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In the early 1940s, a Mr. Ransome started a meeting in his home in Rockford, in the northern part of the state. In 1943, these Christians formed Miriam Gospel Hall in Rockford. In 1957, they sold this building and built Ridgeview Chapel in Rockford. While in temporary quarters in the Community Hall, awaiting the completion of Ridgeview Chapel, a significant growth in the Sunday school occurred, with real blessing in the Gospel, and souls saved.

Ridgeview Chapel continued until 1978. However, an outgrowth of the assembly was the formation of the Beloit Gospel Hall in Beloit, WI, started by Mr. Ruff and his two sons.

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Believers Bible Chapel in Rockford began in 1995 in the home of Warren and Brenda Henderson. Ralph and Estelle Borchardt worked with the Hendersons in establishing this assembly. From eight people at the beginning, it grew to about 50 in 1998, and had moved to rented quarters in the Wannebago County Farm Bureau building. Elmer and Jean Wacker, and Rick and Ramona Kuntzelman were also early members.

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In the Evanston area on the north side of Chicago, believers were meeting before 1916, and in that year erected Grace Chapel there . The assembly had an active outreach and attracted many of the well known speakers who frequented the Chicago assemblies. By the

late 1920s, some changes had apparently occurred because a small group was then meeting in a small room in downtown Evanston. As this group grew, they began meeting in a storefront. In 1941, the present building at the corner of Cleveland and Asbury was erected and called the Evanston Gospel Chapel.

* * *

Farther north, almost at the Wisconsin state line, is the town of Zion, founded many years ago as a Christian community. A week-night Bible study in the home of Bill and Polly Allen, former assembly missionaries to the Belgian Congo, led to the start of the North Shore Assembly in Zion. Early members of the Bible study group were Clarence and Marge Wright and Ed and Helen Hanni. Soon Heinz and Lore Habel and their parents from Kenosha joined, and then a messianic Jewish couple, Martin and Fania Suess. James and Helen Kay and their son John and his wife Nadine, moving to Zion, encouraged the group to begin Breaking Bread together in the fall of 1965.

The numbers grew, and the North Shore Assembly moved to the home of the younger Kays a year later. When others continued to come, including Howard and Grace Armerding, the assembly moved to the basement of the administration building of Mt. Olivet Cemetery, of which the Armerdings were part owners. In 1969, they purchased and remodeled a home on 33rd Street and Gilead Avenue, changing the name then to North Shore Bible Chapel.

In spite of a hive-off of several members to start the Lakeland Fellowship in nearby Gurnee, the Christians felt the need for larger quarters, and in 1996 purchased

and remodeled a funeral chapel at 2800 W. 29th Street in Zion, their present quarters. Leadership has been shared by David Herman, William Allen, Heinz Habel, and Al Leach. About 70 adults and children attend North Shore Bible Chapel.

* * *

Four families in leadership at the Fernwood Gospel Chapel in Chicago were desirous of starting a testimony in the city of Lansing in the Chicago metropolitan area but near the Indiana state line. The Gilbert, Hurley, Leathem, and Murray families started holding prayer meetings in their homes. With the assistance of Stewards Foundation, the Lansing Gospel Chapel was erected on Bernice and Roy Streets and occupied in 1957. Though small, the assembly has seen souls saved and built up, and continues today.

* * *

The assembly now meeting at Grace Bible Chapel in Springfield had its start in 1954 in the home of Robert Isringhausen on Milton Avenue. Robert and Camille Isringhausen, Lamont and Norma Haynes, Floyd and Helen Pierce, Lorraine Cantrall, and Barbara Lynard were among the founders. The assembly was known as the Springfield Gospel Chapel at that time. The brethren from Prospect Avenue Bible Chapel in Champaign gave assistance in the early days, and William MacDonald and Paul Flint from Emmaus Bible School, then in Oak Park, visited periodically. Nick and Alberta Guikema moved to Springfield in about 1958 and joined the assembly.

From the Isringhausen home, the assembly moved to the Knights of Pythias Lodge Hall on South Spring Street for a time, then to the Pleasant Hill School. In 1958,

property was purchased and a building was constructed at the corner of Milton Avenue and Carpenter Street. The assembly was known then as the Milton Avenue Chapel. In 1977, property at 700 S. Livington Street was purchased. The congregation relocated there and chose the name Grace Bible Chapel. Another move took place in February 1995 to 3335 Woodhaven Drive.

The Gene Haas family were the first fruits of the work begun in 1954 and the tent meetings held in 1957. Larry Haas was for many years in leadership and led the singing at Grace. Leaders over the years in addition to those mentioned include James McFarland, Nick Guikema, Philip Dossett, Tom Duncan, John Gantz, Mike Williams, Mike Rodier, William Ilch, Robert Wenneborg, Morton Morris, Richard Cooley, Rick Petrone, Mark Pribble, and James Fitzgerald. The assembly has commended workers to Brazil and Zambia. About 125 adults and children attend Grace Bible Chapel today.

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The assembly now meeting at Oak Ridge Bible Chapel in Milan in the Quad-cities area was formed in November 1978, a hive-off from Harrison Gospel Chapel in Davenport, Iowa. It was at that time called Valley Christian Fellowship and met at a day care center on Blackhawk Road in in Rock Island. The principal people in establishing the assembly were Craig Rolinger and Ray Routley. The families who lived in Illinois came with the new meeting, principally the Ferguson, Stevens, Stonehouse, Trent, Rolinger, and Routley families.

The assembly met in the day care center until October 1981, when they moved into a building they had purchased in Milan, at 2716 W. First Street. That

building had been a restaurant, which the Christians renovated and enlarged. At that time they changed the name to Oak Ridge Bible Chapel. The elders have been Criag Rolinger and Ray Routley. Craig and Nancy Rolinger have been commended for work at the assembly. About 50 people attend Oak Ridge Bible Chapel.

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In Champaign, 100 miles south of Chicago, the assembly now known as Stratford Park Bible Chapel was established in 1917 by Paul Rader, a pastor from Moody Memorial Church in Chicago. Subsequent pastors were Charles Porter in 1920 and James Emblem in 1923. In 1930 the church began moving toward a New Testament structure when Harold Harper came and taught Scriptural principles of gathering. In 1935, E. G. Dillon helped to further establish the company as an assembly. It was called The Gospel Tabernacle in Champaign, IL until 1938.

The Christians met in a small rented hall from 1940 to 1948. They constructed their own building on the corner of Washington and Prospect Avenue in Champaign in 1948, and remained there as the Prospect Avenue Bible Chapel from 1948 to 1967. The new and current building was built in 1967 on the corner of Kirby and Stratford. Commended workers have been Tim and Shirley Dever, Robert and Debbie Whattoff, and William and Sue Tell. Leaders have included Frank and Robert Faulkner, Jim Kay, Ed Hilderbrand, Aldon Jensen, Morel and James Dixon, Robert Jordan, Herb Atwood, John Garrett, Robert Whattoff, Ken Raymond, and Richard

Schmall. Nearly 200 adults and children are in the assembly.

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Neighborhood Bible Fellowship in Carbondale in the southern part of the state, began in 1978 in the home of Glendall and Janet Toney at 801 W. Sycamore, and has moved through several locations, now being in its own building at 2605 Striegel Road. The originators came from Cape Bible Chapel in Cape Girardeau, Missouri – the Toneys, Stan Tucker, Kent Carrell, Laurel Faust, Curt and Cathy Caldwell, Mike Yockey, Glen Berry, Scott Adams, Janice Crumbacher, Peter and Dianna Chandler, and Debbie Cooper. Leadership has been shared by Glendall Toney, Stan Tucker, Kent Carrell, and Dennis Smith. About 130 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

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Servants Church in Batavia began meeting in January 1994, with Paul Regan one of the people starting the assembly. However, in 1998 the assembly removed itself from the fellowship of brethren assemblies.

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Several assemblies were begun in the period between the two World Wars, through the efforts of various pioneers. Henry Petersen was instrumental in starting the Melvina Gospel Hall in the western part of the state through visiting families around Melvina and Montrose. A store was purchased for meetings in the early 1930s. The assembly lasted seven or eight years. Sam McGill was a leading elder. The Peoria Assembly in the middle of the state, had ceased to function by 1949. The Joliet

Assembly, near Chicago, met for many years. E. G. Matthews of Waterloo, IA and Joe Nieboer of Chicago are remembered to have ministered there.

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We also mention several inter-assembly activities, most of which are still continuing, and which served as connecting points among the assemblies.

The fellowship among the Chicago assemblies was somewhat divided between north and south in the early days because of distances and transportation. The annual Thanksgiving Conference was a four-day conference usually held on the north side in the Logan Square Masonic Lodge. People from throughout the Midwest came to it. For that Conference the north side assemblies would often invite Northcote Deck as principal speaker.

In about 1938 the teenagers on the south side organized a committee with representatives from every assembly and started a monthly young people's meeting. Their monthly Sunday evening Singspiration would pack out the building, and young people from the north side would drive all that way after their Sunday evening service to join. Some of the young men who were involved in those gatherings became the leading men in the Chicago assemblies, including Jim Kennedy, John Boyd, Neil Glass, and Wilson McCracken.

An assembly broadcast over radio station WAIT during World War II was a success. Some assembly young men who were in the armed forces would give their testimonies, and a male chorus from the 86th Street Assembly sang quite frequently on that program and became quite popular in the Chicago area. A mixed

chorus from several assemblies also sang for the broadcasts. Peter Pell, Charles Howard, and Bob Arthur were among the speakers, and Dick Boldt, Phil Clarkson, and Jim Kennedy were announcers.

The Chicago Missionary Study Class was (and is) the joy of many young and older men. Started at the time of the First World War, classes are hosted by different assemblies throughout the city on the second Saturday of each month. A typical session consists of an afternoon devoted to reading of letters; then supper, followed by a two-hour evening meeting. Typically a young brother was assigned a topic several months in advance – a particular missionary or mission field, or a review of a missionary book. Usually a missionary was available to minister in the latter part of the meeting, or else one of the local brethren would speak. Roy Rapsch had much to do with the Class for many years.

The Chicago Missionary Study Class has for years maintained the Chicago Missionary Guest Apartments. In 1998, the location was in Glen Ellyn, with Harry and Jean Williams as host managers. Earlier managers have been Sally Weidner, Kirk and Paula Lithander, and Steve and Diane Richards. The building contains six apartments, five for furloughed or visiting missionaries, and one for the manager. The six apartments are ‘adopted’ by assemblies who are responsible for decorating and supplies.

The Lake Geneva Youth Camp has been another rallying point of the Chicago area assemblies.

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## Indiana

Several assemblies were started by the Scottish pioneers in northwest Indiana not far from Chicago. Assembly testimony in Indiana began in the 1870s when James Campbell visited Valparaiso. As a result of his visit, an assembly was started in that city, and was strengthened when Judge Gillet, a well-respected Christian and Bible teacher, identified himself with the testimony. Alexander Matthews and Donald Ross, among others, ministered there. The work continued at the Valparaiso Gospel Hall until the mid 1980s.

Mr. Ross had meetings at Crown Point in the late 1800s and the Crown Point Assembly began at that time. A Mr. Turner and was in the fellowship there. In 1949, the assembly built a chapel seating over 100.

Mr. Ross also visited Lowell, and saw the Lowell Assembly started in that little town. The Lowell and Crown Point assemblies disbanded many years ago.

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T.B. Gilbert was led to the rural area south of South Bend to serve the Lord in 1917-18. His going was in response to the prayers of a few people who had formerly been linked with assemblies in various places, but were strangers to each other. Mr. Gilbert helped them to establish assemblies in their various communities. The first of these began at Bass Lake. Three others were formed at Knox, Aldine, and Ora, all in happy fellowship with each other, and choosing "Meeting House" as their common name. The Gospel Meeting House in Knox continues today. The Meeting House in Aldine continued until the late 1970s.

The situation at Ora was a remarkable example of the power of the true gospel. Some cultish groups were already established there, when in 1918 and 1919, Mr. Gilbert visited this town of 150 people. On both occasions he held three weeks of meetings. He found it useless to preach on texts, as the people were skeptical that he was going to bring them his personal ideas. So he preached on the Gospel of John and the Acts, chapter by chapter. Several were saved in these campaigns, one old man saying that he had been praying that God would send someone to clear up his confusion, resulting from the cultish preaching in the town. The Ora assembly was started in about 1930, and probably called its meeting place the Ora Gospel Meeting House at that time. Charles Malott, James Stephenson, and Oliver Schwartz are remembered as being involved in the start-up.

From 1930 to 1942, the Christians met in a small hall. Then in 1942, through the Lawrence Bennett family, the assembly moved to its present building, now called the Ora Gospel Chapel. In 1945, about 25 were gathering to Break Bread regularly, and 50 to 60 came out to the Gospel meeting when Mr. Gilbert spoke, a remarkable number for a town of 150.

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In 1930, C.E. Bulander, then pastor of a church at Royal Center about 30 miles from Knox, invited T.B. Gilbert to come there for a series of meetings, which resulted in Mr. Bulander's identification with the assemblies. Mr. Bulander soon began work around Logansport, 70 miles north of Indianapolis, and Mr. Gilbert held Bible classes at the city hall. The Logansport Gospel Chapel, also known as Bethany Gospel Chapel, was established in about 1934 as a result of these efforts. The assembly first met in the home of Byron Flory in the country; and from there in a succession of homes and storefronts until 1992, when the assembly acquired its own chapel at 321 Cliff Drive. Leaders in the assembly have been Byron Flory, Floyd Swigert, Fred Stout, Milsted and George Hammon, Clarence Rude, Bert Hostetler, and Bob Galinger. About 15 people are now in the assembly.

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Many of the adjoining towns were visited with gospel tent efforts. T.B. Gilbert held Bible classes at Mishawaka, near South Bend, and the Mishawaka Assembly was planted there. Its derivative today is Grace Bible Chapel.

In about 1934, C.E. Bulander and John Farquharson pitched a gospel tent near Brookston, and the Brookston

Assembly was formed there as the result of this effort. It disbanded long ago.

At the beginning of World War II, an assembly was formed in Ripley when gasoline rationing prohibited travel. It continued at the Ripley Gospel Chapel until the early 1990s.

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Bethany Fellowship in Warsaw, southeast of South Bend began in 1977 as Bethany Bible Chapel. Ron Moore, Ron Scantlen, and Abraham Thomas were the principal initiators of the assembly. The Chapel was first located in the nearby small town of Winona Lake. Abraham Thomas, Ray Moore, Wayne Taylor, Dick Lehman, Irv Lindemuth, Ben Scripture, and Leo Belanger have been active in leadership over the years. Bethany Fellowship has commended several to the Lord's work. About 45 adults and children are in the assembly.

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A. R. Cole, whose work was largely caring for orphan children, lived for many years at Kendallville in the northeast corner of the state. He was instrumental in initiating the Kendallville Assembly, which disbanded long ago.

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Grace Chapel at Frankfort, between Lafayette and Indianapolis, was underway in the 1950s under the leadership of John Freeland. They acquired and remodeled a small building at that time to provide facilities for Sunday school and adult meetings. It has since disbanded.

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The Round Grove Assembly, which had been in existence for years in the west central part of the state, moved in 1949 to the home of Bert Hostetler in West Lafayette. It disbanded many years ago, but the Westside Bible Fellowship meets today in West Lafayette.

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Muncie Bible Fellowship in Muncie, northeast of Indianapolis, began in 1985 as a Bible study in the home of Richard and Sharon Rawson, who were from an independent Baptist church. The group included Paul and Debbie McCollum and Gene and Reva Mussick. In 1986, Garlord and Barbara Kramer and family, from an assembly background, joined the group, and were followed in 1987 by David and Felicia Dixon, and the Anderson family, also from assembly backgrounds. At that time, the fellowship first began Breaking Bread.

In 1988, the group relocated to a hotel, and in 1990 to a store front at 4006 W. Jackson; in 1993 they rented and remodeled a 2400 square foot building at 3800 W. Jackson Street, where they stayed until the landlord sold the building, at which time they moved back into the Rawson home at 116 Winthrop, and continue there to the present. David Dixon and Richard Rawson are the leaders of the assembly.

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The assembly now known as Bethany Bible Chapel in Carmel on the north edge of Indianapolis, started in about 1915. In that year, Emile Carboz, an immigrant from Switzerland, moved his family to Indianapolis. They met Dan and Bonnie Robertson, and the two families began Remembering the Lord in one of their homes, since there was no meeting of ‘open’ brethren there.

They were soon joined by the Butlers and Friebergs. In the 1920s, the growing group moved into a storefront building on North Tacoma Avenue for a meeting place. From there they moved to a YMCA on North Pennsylvania Avenue, and from there to a Youth for Christ building.

During the late 1930s, the Dave and Jean Sheele family moved from New York and came into fellowship. In the 1940s, Richard and Frances Hill started coming to the meeting with their family. In 1949 William M. Brown moved to Indianapolis to devote most of his time to the work there. The assembly had been meeting in a public building and in various homes and needed its own chapel. The brethren secured a lot and Mr. Brown drew up some plans, but the neighborhood selected objected to the chapel being built. The lot was sold and another one bought in a new location outside the city limits. Jack Davies, of California, was asked to give a bit of architectural treatment to the plans and in 1950 and 1951 the Indianapolis brethren built a functional and attractive chapel. Messrs. Carboz, Sheele, and Hill were the principal men involved in building the chapel at North Grand Avenue (now North Leland Avenue) in northeast Indianapolis. It was called Bethany Chapel at that time, and later changed to Bethany Bible Chapel.

During this period, many were saved and added to the assembly. But in the early 1950s, some of the elders moved or were transferred, and the assembly decreased. Then Leonard Sheldrake, son of the well-known full-time servant of the Lord, moved to the area and began coming to the chapel. Soon he was one of the stalwarts of the assembly. Ray Morgan became another elder of the assembly at about the same time. William and Mabel

Burrows came in 1961, and William became a real shepherd. The chapel was enlarged in the 1960s.

In 1971 the Christians sold their building and began to meet in the Jordan YMCA until 1973 at which time they bought an older house at 4312 East 116th Street, Carmel, and renovated it for their meeting place. The assembly commended, among others, Mark and Carol Kieft to serve in the foreign field. The Kiefts have since returned and helped start Faith Bible Chapel in Farmington Hills, MI, where they serve the Lord full time.

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At Bicknell in the southwest part of the state, a large assembly arose through the efforts of saved miners from Scotland, but after the mines closed, probably in the early 1900s, the Bicknell Assembly ceased.

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## Ohio

Information about the earliest assemblies in Ohio is scant. The Scots evangelist John Smith, who worked with Donald Munro and others in Canada, made Cleveland his home in his later days, and was no doubt

associated with an assembly in the early part of the twentieth century.

In 1930, T.B. Nottage began the assembly at Elim Gospel Chapel in Cleveland. Though he was an itinerant worker, he and his wife Josephine and children moved to that city in 1936 to be closer to the work. When World War II broke out and traveling became difficult, he curtailed his itinerant evangelism and concentrated his efforts in Cleveland, preaching, doing visitation, and radio programming. The Christians at Elim Gospel Chapel purchased a substantial building at 10522 Amor Avenue in the 1950s, where they still meet. Faith Gospel Chapel in Cleveland is an offshoot of Elim Gospel Chapel.

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In 1936, Central Gospel Hall met in a dilapidated theater building on Central Avenue in Cleveland. B.M. Nottage and Theodore Williams were associated with that assembly.

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The Addison Road Gospel Hall at 1447 Addison Road in downtown Cleveland had about 150 adults and children in attendance at the Breaking of Bread in 1945. Probably the largest assembly in Ohio at the time, the origins of this assembly have not been identified.

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A hive-off from Addison Road Gospel Hall occurred in 1950, when a group purchased land in Cleveland Heights, east of central Cleveland. While awaiting completion of construction of a new chapel, the group met in a Junior High School building. Gracemount Gospel Chapel in Cleveland Heights was occupied in the

fall of 1951. It was a vibrant assembly in the 1950s and 1960s, under the leadership of Ken and Robby Pile, the Beattie family, the Baxter family, and others. When the demographics of the area changed, many people began to fellowship elsewhere. With dwindling numbers, Gracemount Chapel was sold to a different evangelical group in 1994.

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An assembly in the Willoughby suburb northeast of Cleveland, was established in the late 1950s. The Christians built the Willo Gospel Chapel on Johnny Cake Ridge Road with an auditorium seating capacity of 186. Its name was changed later to Willo Bible Chapel. The assembly disbanded in the early 1980s.

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Believers Bible Chapel in Painesville, a town northeast of Cleveland on the shore of Lake Erie, was an outgrowth of a local Wednesday night Bible study in the home of Rob and Jane Main on the far east side of Cleveland in the 1970s. Many in the Bible study were in fellowship at Gracemount Gospel Chapel at the time. The group desired to start an assembly, and the elders at Gracemount gave their blessing. The new assembly was initiated primarily by the Mains, Tice and Evelyn Ozinga, Arthur E. and Susie Auld, Arthur H. and Debbie Auld, Walter and Kathy Lord, and John and Jill Ozinga. Tice Ozinga had been an elder at Willo Bible Chapel, before that work dissolved. Arthur E. Auld had also been in the Willo fellowship, and had been an elder at Gracemount. Taking the name Concord Bible Chapel, hoping someday to be located in Concord Township, the Christians began Breaking Bread in 1978 at the Painesville YMCA. Tice

Ozinga and Arthur E. Auld were recognized as the two elders of the new assembly.

After a year or two, the group began meeting in the Concord Township Fire Station. After another two years, they moved to a store front in Perry, where they took the name South Ridge Bible Chapel. By 1989, they had purchased and renovated an old Baptist church building in Painesville, and moved in as Believers Bible Chapel. Elders now include Arthur H. Auld and Rob Main. The assembly has commended workers to ministries within the U.S.

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Westlake Bible Fellowship began in 1968, a hive-off from Gracemount Gospel Chapel. Located first in Birch School in North Olmsted, a western suburb of Cleveland, the assembly moved to Cahoon Road in Westlake, and now has its own chapel on Hilliard Boulevard in Westlake. Those starting the assembly include Karl and Lois Reader, David and Sandy Bingham, Len and Cherry Dick, and Guy and Betty Meehling. These and Roger Meng and Donald Morris have shared the leadership of Westlake Bible Fellowship. About 110 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

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In north-central Ohio is the city of Mansfield where assembly testimony has long existed. The assembly at Lincoln Heights Gospel Chapel was active in the 1940s and 1950s, continuing into the middle 1980s. The Chapel was newly constructed in 1948.

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An assembly in the city of Norwood on the east side of Cincinnati was begun in 1938 in a small rented building, which the Christians called the Norwood Gospel Hall and later the Norwood Gospel Chapel. A Mr. Powers is remembered as initiating the assembly. Failing to find suitable property to purchase, the assembly moved to the home of John J. McGehee.

In early 1958, the little assembly purchased a half-acre site at Galbraith Road and Kirkland Avenue in the Finneytown area of Cincinnati. On the property was a large old house, which they remodeled. There the testimony had grown to about 80 in fellowship in 1961, with a Sunday school of 120, limited only by space.

In 1961, they built the Northern Hills Bible Chapel on Galbraith Road in Cincinnati, where they still meet. The chapel has an auditorium seating 210. Leaders in the assembly over the years include Gus Jacobs, Israel Martin, John McGehee, Thomas Parks, Bill Wilson, Jim Adams, and Phil Miekley. Today about 150 adults and children attend Northern Hills Bible Chapel.

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Ross Bible Chapel in Hamilton, north of Cincinnati, began in 1974 in the home of Brack and Donna Strong. Wayne and Betty Schlichter had contacted the elders of Northern Hills Bible Chapel for help in establishing a new assembly. Brack Strong responded, along with Ralph and Ruth Merritt, Jim and Sue Slay, and Jim and Jan McGuire. After about two months, the group moved to the Elda Elementary School, and in another two years to 2846 Hamilton-Cleves Road, the present location of Ross Bible Chapel.

Elders have been Wayne Schlichter, Brack Strong, Fred Patton, Ralph Merritt, and Mike Smith. With a large children's work, Ross Bible Chapel has about 100 adults and children in attendance. The assembly has commended several to the work of the Lord.

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An assembly was formed in Toledo in 1950, a breakoff from a United Presbyterian Church. The assembly was originally located at 15th and Monroe Streets and called Christian Fellowship of Toledo. Waldo Yeager, Harold Vernier, and Herb Houck were among the principal people in the start-up.

In the 1980s, the assembly moved to Auburn and N. Cove, where it grew. From there, a group hived off in 1985, the remaining Christians taking a name similar to their old one: Toledo Christian Fellowship. That assembly continued to the late 1990s, when it disbanded, most of the Christians at that time joining with the group that had hived off.

The assembly that had hived off in 1985 moved into Southwest YMCA and took the name Christian Fellowship of Toledo South. In 1988 these Christians moved to their present location at 6711 Pilliod Road in Holland on the southwest side of Toledo. The assembly has commended several workers to the field at home and abroad. About 300 adults and youngsters are in Christian Fellowship of Toledo South. Leaders over the years in the two assemblies include, besides those mentioned, Ben Smith, Bill Wood, Gil Elliott, Dean Pilton, Paul Carter, Wally Yeager, Paul Delamater, Bill Webb, Don Bickford, and Lou Vasaturo.

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Believers Assembly in Bellbrook, just south of Dayton, began its birth process in July of 1975 with five believers meeting in the home of Rennes Bowers in Enon, a small town northeast of Dayton. Rennes Bowers III had been a hippie who was saved in 1974 and discipled by Don Welborn in Iowa. He came to Ohio in 1975 to witness to his parents and others, and decided to stay and lead Bible studies. He was commended by assemblies in Iowa and began the work which is now called Believers Assembly.

In 1977, the Christians meeting in Bowers' home moved to Beaver Valley Road in Fairborn to accommodate growth and took the name Believers in Christ Jesus. The growing assembly moved through several locations in the Dayton area over the following 15 years – the Dayton City Mission, the Dayton Christian High School, a city recreation center, and the Fairborn Senior Citizens Center. From 1992 to the present, they have occupied their own chapel at 3821 Upper Bellbrook Road.

The first elders were recognized in 1979, and have included Rennes Bowers III, Rodney Geiger, Mike Gaynier, and Dwight McMahan. Believers Assembly has commended several to the Lord's work abroad. About 35 adults and children are now in the assembly, though at one time more than 100 were in Believers Assembly.

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Random & Reminiscence, by Theodore Williams, Sr.; self-published, undated

## Michigan

Detroit had no assembly testimony until around 1880. T.D.W. Muir lived in Hamilton, Ontario and spent his time preaching the Gospel in Ontario and in towns in the central part of Michigan. In 1881, he came to Detroit with his wife and they held street meetings in Cadillac Square, the downtown area of Detroit at that time. They met some Christian people and saw others led to the Lord.

These then formed a small assembly, the first in Michigan and later to be known as Central Gospel Hall. The first meeting room was located in a rented store at 5th Avenue and Michigan in the Corktown district of Detroit. The group was small and the people were in poor circumstances, so it was a constant struggle to meet expenses. They met in a variety of places over the next 20 years, even building and occupying a hall at the corner of Seventh and Perry Streets.

Each summer a tent was pitched and the Gospel was preached nightly. As the assembly grew larger, the Christians began to hold annual conferences. It was on the occasion of one of these conferences, perhaps in about 1889, that a small ‘exclusive’ assembly some 10 miles outside of Detroit came to seek fellowship with the Detroit assembly. Its people were French and had for some time conducted their meetings in their native tongue before switching to English. When they heard of the assembly in Detroit founded by Mr. Muir, they became associated with it.

By 1900, the assembly had moved to an auditorium over Dickinson's Hardware Store at 416 Grand River Avenue and continued there for several years. The group was calling their meeting place Central Gospel Hall by then. As the assembly grew it became necessary to seek more space. A hall was built at the corner of Grand River and Harrison Avenues and occupied in about 1906. It was a large hall with a balcony and a seating capacity of about 300, with a large Sunday School room downstairs.

It was at about this time that H.A. Cameron, a young medical doctor, came from Scotland and joined the fellowship. He was soon Mr. Muir's right hand man; Muir and Cameron were the two pillars of the work for many years. Muir's excellence as a preacher and knowledge of the Word attracted capacity crowds to the auditorium; on occasion the stairs up to the speaker's platform were used as seating when Mr. Muir spoke. Mr. Cameron was the exacting teacher, and was the person who encouraged Will Pell to begin publishing the Assembly Annals magazine and the Sunday School curriculum.

Detroit was grew rapidly in the early 1900s because of the automobile factories and the migration of many people from the British Isles and parts of Europe. Tracts were given out in various sections of the city and this resulted in a summer of tent meetings on the east side of Detroit in 1914. In 1917, Mr. Cyril Popplestone had a Sunday School in that area with 60 to 80 children in a tent. In November 1918, a new Gospel Hall was opened in the east side of Detroit. The outreach of the assembly included foreign missionary work; the first missionary commended was Miss Mary Ridley, who went to China and labored there many years.

One of the members of the assembly became interested in deaf people. For many years he conducted a Bible Class for deaf mutes in the balcony of Central Hall. A number of years later, a small assembly was formed for these Christians and met Sunday afternoons in the old Bethany Chapel (now Bethany-Pembroke Chapel in Detroit).

Tent meetings in the summer continued in various parts of the city. Special Gospel meetings were held during the year. A tract band was formed by the assembly, which reached out into the city and produced much fruit. The annual Conference of Christians was a high point in each year. Most of the local assemblies joined with Central Gospel Hall. For many years the conference was held in the Sank Temple on Grand River Avenue and as many as a thousand people attended. Some of the preachers over the years were Charles Ross, W. J. McClure, Mr. McCrory of Hamilton, Ontario, Leonard Sheldrake, William Robertson of Philadelphia, Andrew Stenhouse of Chile, John Ferguson, J. Alexander Clark, and many full-time preachers from Michigan, Ohio, and the Chicago area. These were times of blessings to the hearts of the Lord’s people.

As the Christians moved away from the center of the city, other assemblies were started. In Ferndale, a northern suburb of Detroit, tent meetings were held in the summer of 1925; the Ferndale Gospel Hall started in November of 1926 and continues today. (See below for the Berean Tabernacle in Ferndale.)

Also in 1926, Sunday School and Sunday evening Gospel meetings were held in a store on the west side of Detroit called Springwells. At least a dozen young people were

saved as a result of that work. It continued as an outreach of Central Gospel Hall but never became an independent assembly.

A fruitful series of Gospel meetings was held at Central in the spring of 1927. William Gillaspie and Fred Nugent, both from Ontario, were the evangelists. At least 30 young people came to the Lord and were added to the assembly.

A group of the Christians had settled in a neighborhood near West Chicago Boulevard and Livernois Avenue and became interested in their neighbors. In the summers of 1926 and 1927 they had tent meetings on West Chicago Boulevard and many were saved. An assembly was formed and a building was erected by the men of the assembly and called West Chicago Gospel Hall. They later moved to Livonia, a suburb of Detroit, to a larger building now called Stark Road Gospel Hall.

There was a large population of Italian people in the east side of Detroit. Young people from Central Gospel Hall became interested in helping there during summer tent meetings. Two Italian evangelists from the eastern United States, Mr. Rosanio and Mr. Patrizio, conducted meetings in Italian and English. A group of Christians was formed and became an assembly in October of 1931. As the young people grew, up the meetings were held mostly in English but the outreach was mostly among Italians. (See Ethnic section)

That same year, Mr. R. Hopwood of Central Hall who was fluent in Spanish began meetings in homes among the Mexican people in Detroit. A small assembly was started in 1926 and continued for a few years.

The town of Windsor, across the river from Detroit, in Canada, was growing and Christian people from overseas had come there to live. For a number of years they came over on Lord's Days for the meetings at Central Gospel Hall.

A real missionary spirit continued in Central over many years. Missionaries were commended and sent to various parts of the world. James and Olive Scollon were commended in 1938 to the work of the Lord in Honduras, South America. They continued working there for over 50 years, planting assemblies and carrying on an effective work in printing scriptural materials in the Spanish language.

During this period, the assembly held monthly 'Fellowship Meetings,' emphasizing missions and attracting well known speakers. Several young people at Central were exercised at that time about serving the Lord on the foreign mission fields. In 1946, Donald Cole was commended to go to Angola, along with his wife Naomi, who was commended from Central Hall in Toronto. They served there many years until civil war in Angola became too dangerous and the missionaries were evacuated. Others were commended to Sakeji School in Northern Rhodesia, Angola, Brazil, and Italy.

World War II was a time of serious prayer for the safety of the many young men from all Detroit assemblies who were serving their country. The young women at Central Hall made up a monthly newsletter to send to the servicemen, which included news of the boys who were overseas, as well as pictures and encouraging words.

After World War II, the Christians began to move to the outlying parts of the city. The brethren began to

consider moving to a new location and an old church building was found at the corner of Curtis and Lenore Avenues. The assembly purchased it, tore it down, and erected the Curtis Gospel Chapel in northwest Detroit, which was dedicated in October 1957. Special Gospel meetings and summer Daily Vacation Bible Schools have continued, with many children coming from the neighborhood.

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In 1989, Faith Bible Chapel in Farmington Hills near Detroit was formed by some former members of Curtis Gospel Chapel. Mark and Carol Kieft, commended from Bethany Bible Chapel in Carmel, IN helped start Faith Bible Chapel, where they have served the Lord full time.

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Farmington Road Gospel Chapel in the Detroit area was built in the 1950s. The assembly continued into the 1970s.

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Jim Wallis and Don Fraser desired to start a new assembly in the Redford area of Detroit. Enlisting the help of four more couples, they began the work in a public school, with 50 people at the first service, at which time some were saved. Children’s classes were also held on that day in 1951. Gifts and loans enabled them to build Dunning Park Chapel at 24800 West Chicago Boulevard; the assembly still meets at that location.

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The Midland Avenue Brethren in Detroit, meeting for many years at 10025 Midland Avenue, built a new

chapel in 1953 on Burt Road and Pembroke Avenue, with a seating capacity of 320 in the main auditorium. The name chosen was Pembroke Chapel, now Bethany-Pembroke Chapel.

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The assembly meeting in the Dearborn Chapel in southwest Detroit at Nona and Hamilton Streets, constructed a large new building in the 1950s. The assembly continues at this time.

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The Martin Road Christian Assembly in St. Clair Shores, in the northeast Detroit metropolitan area, has its roots in a Sunday School work begun in 1916 or 1917. Cyril Popplestone started the Sunday School in his home on Bewick Street. A room in an empty store was later rented at the corner of Warren and Pennsylvania Streets for the growing Sunday school work.

Around 1919, John Ferguson, Sr., pitched a tent nearby at Warren and Cadillac Avenue for a month of Gospel meetings. The need for having a place for special meetings induced Mr. Hitt of Central Gospel Hall in Detroit to purchase a frame building, which was transported in sections to Forest and Pennsylvania Streets. The work of erecting the building was done with the help of numerous Christians, many of them from Central Gospel Hall. The building was used initially for the Sunday School work.

The building was very modest in appearance, being of collapsible construction and set on wooden pillars driven into the ground. The Christians were constantly concerned that these pillars might collapse and the

building fall, especially when large crowds were present at special meetings.

About this time Don Charles had special meetings there. A number of people from the neighborhood came and several were converted. John Pinches also had a six-week series of meetings on the chart 'Two Roads and Two Destinies.' It was after those meetings that the assembly was formed in January 1924, and the building designated East Side Gospel Hall in Detroit. John Pinches from Central Gospel Hall came at that time into fellowship at East Side Gospel Hall. H.A. Cameron, T. D. W. Muir, and John Ferguson were among those who gave help at the new assembly.

Some of the early workers were the families of Cyril and Harry Popplestone, David McKay, Walter Lyons, John Pinches, William Upleger and Mabel Gibson Upleger, William Ingram, Cluot, Nell and Tress Bonser, James Brown, Gunda Anderson Ghiata, Elsie Benning Weinert, Mabel Thompson Ross, Beatrice Mellick, Margaret Ingram Murdock, and William Smith. About 60 or 70 Christians were in fellowship in 1926.

During these years the assembly had tent meetings on Holcomb and Forest, a few blocks away. The tent was an attraction to the people who wouldn't come into a building. George Pinches, brother of John Pinches, had several weeks of Gospel meetings in the tent. Many were saved during a Gospel campaign held by Fred Nugent, which was held nightly for six weeks.

The district was changing rapidly and those who could afford it began moving to the suburbs. The Sunday School was dwindling. In about 1950, the Christians bought property on Harper Avenue at Woodhall in

Detroit, erected a building, and called it Harwood Chapel. Italian brethren acquired the East Side Gospel Hall at that time. A very fruitful seven-week campaign was held in Harwood Chapel in 1952 by Pat Magee.

Harwood Chapel was a one story brick building without a basement. Soon it was too small for Sunday School work, and when the Ford Expressway was designed to come near, the assembly decided to move. They had spent about seven years at Harwood.

Property in Detroit was too expensive then, so the present site on Martin Road outside the city at St. Clair Shores was purchased and the Martin Road Gospel Chapel was built in 1958. A Sunday School bus was purchased to bring children to the Sunday School. Mr. Hewson from Salem Hall in Detroit (which assembly built Plymouth Road Chapel within a year or two), gave help in Gospel ministry. John and James Barclay were the first Gospel preachers at the Martin Road Christan Assembly.

Allan Bennett, Barry Mahloy, Eleanor Wylie, Robert Simpson, Lawrence Vroom, James Barclay, and John Smedes are among the many who have worked with the young people. John Smedes and Barry Mahloy with others did house-to-house visitation work in the neighborhood. Lou and Doreen Jerome, Jack Wylie, and Eleanor Wylie accompanied the spoken word with their singing on the Lapeer Radio. John Smedes and Lambert Wilson assisted in the work of the downtown Mission. Daniel Nichols served with the Spain Team of Literature Crusades.

A group left to start a new assembly in a Sterling Heights in 1976. Martin Road Christian Assembly is

much smaller today; nevertheless, it is active. Christians from India have joined the assembly. Each week during fall, winter and spring, the Christians conduct a Girls Club and a

Boys Club, and a Daily Vacation Bible School in the summer. The ladies continue to have a weekly Bible Study and a Monthly Missionary Work Meeting.

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Lakeside Bible Chapel in Sterling Heights on the north side of Detroit began in 1976 as a hive-off from Martin Road Gospel Chapel. Six families from that assembly were instrumental in its formation. Meeting first at the Graebner Elementary School, land for a chapel was purchased in 1978, and the building was finished in 1980. An expansion of the building was completed in 1990, and more land was purchased in 1997. Robert Johnston is the full-time worker at Lakeside. Average attendance at the Family Bible Hour was about 275 in 1997. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord's service in the U.S., Spain, India, and Colombia.

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C.V. Baby, with John M.Chacko and a few other believers, started meeting for Bible studies in 1978 in Warren, MI. This led to the formation of the India Believers Gathering. The assembly is now known as India Brethren Assembly. (See Ethnic section)

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The Middle Eastern Bible Fellowship in Detroit began in March 1991, when a group of men and women of Arabic descent, including Ata and Salwa Mikhael, Raphael and

Renee Haddad, and Philipe Yacoub, gathered to Remember the Lord. (See Ethnic section)

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Black assemblies have historically been strong in the Detroit area, thanks in large part to B.M. Nottage. In 1956 these were Bethany Tabernacle, the home assembly of B.M. Nottage and established in 1932; Grace Tabernacle; Berean Tabernacle in the Ferndale area; River Rouge Bible Assembly in the River Rouge area; Community Tabernacle; Gospel Chapel of Detroit; and Oakdale Tabernacle.

The River Rouge Bible Assembly in Detroit had its start in 1933 when William McHenry began a Bible class in his home on Polk Street. Initially the group met from house to house, later renting a room in the McFall Funeral Home on Palmerston. Among those involved in the very beginning were Sisters Smoot, Folks, Douglas, and Larkins.

In 1934, a store front was rented from Mrs. Collier on Polk and Hall. Then the group moved to the home of Stanley Lamar. During this time, various men came to help minister the Word, including Brothers T. Williams, John Glover, Nottage, and McDonald.

A chapel at 332 Polk Street was completed in 1947, and the assembly met there for many years. A building fund was started in 1959 for purchase of property on Beechwood. River Rouge Bible Assembly was formally incorporated that year. Plans were laid in 1962 to build, and the new chapel at 329 Beechwood was dedicated in 1967.

The assembly has been led by several pastors, beginning with John Glover in 1937, followed by Stanley Lamar in 1938, John Moore in 1959, Timothy Love in 1962, and Pellam Love in 1982.

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A Baptist pastor in Detroit, Theodore Williams, Sr. became exercised about his denominational position, and in 1936 resigned his pastorate. Soon thereafter he came in contact with B. M. Nottage, through whom he learned of assemblies meeting in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. That same year, he and a small company of believers began Breaking Bread together in a canvas tent in the Ferndale area of Detroit. Called the Berean Tabernacle, the assembly was begun by Mr. Williams and another brother, with assistance from two brothers from Bethany Gospel Hall in Detroit. Soon they had erected their own building on Reimanville Avenue.

The Flint Bible Hall was started at about the same time. Between 1936 and 1945, Mr. Williams had weekly radio programs on various Detroit, Flint, and Pontiac stations.

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In April 1939, a group of Christians established the Pilgrim Assembly in Detroit and moved into their first church home. In 1946, they incorporated as the Gospel Chapel of Detroit. Increasing numbers impelled them to move into larger quarters on Gratiot Avenue in 1951. In 1977, they moved to a building on East Grand Boulevard, and moved again into their present facility at 16241 Harper Avenue. Leading brothers have included Regan Wright, Julius Rivera, Arkles C. Brooks, Sr., and later his son Arkles C. Brooks, Jr. each of whom have

served as assembly pastors. The assembly consists of about 100 adults and youngsters.

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The congregation now meeting at the Metropolitan Community Tabernacle in Detroit came into existence on Armistice Day, 1923. It functioned as an independent community church for many years. In about 1940, under the leadership of John E. Glover and B.M. Nottage, it came into fellowship with assemblies of brethren. Known for many years as Community Tabernacle, at Cameron and Wellington Streets, the assembly moved in 1985 to a building at 9835 Hayes and remodeled it, calling it Metropolitan Community Tabernacle. William James Coleman was the full-time worker at Metropolitan for many years, and known for his Bible teaching ministry. He was jointly commended in 1966 by the six black assemblies then existing in Detroit. Metropolitan Community Tabernacle has recognized elders.

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Grace Chapel in Detroit, formerly Grace Tabernacle, is another fruit of the labors of B.M. Nottage in the 1930s. When Ken Hampton left the Detroit police force to become the full-time worker for the assembly in 1980, it had about 50 people regularly attending. In 1987, the assembly purchased a church building with a 600-seat auditorium; within a year, up to 500 people were attending Grace Chapel, which had three Sunday morning services and a Sunday evening Lord’s Supper. The active church sponsors a radio program, is involved in food and clothing distribution, and has several youth programs and an active music program.

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Smith's Creek Bible Camp, initiated by Grant Love and supported by the Detroit black assemblies, provides summer camp grounds for youngsters. Another such group is at Muskegon and is known as the West Side Grace Mission.

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The assembly now known as Dexter Street Gospel Chapel in Flint began in about 1910 when James Turfus moved from Sterling, MI to Flint. Meetings were held in the home of Freddie Coombs. Robert Kersey was also involved in the earliest days. Tent meetings along the Flint River are remembered from those days. After the home meetings, the group moved to space over a drug store at 912 Richfield Road (now Lewis Street). The group seems to have taken the name Gospel Hall Mission at that time. In 1921, the meeting place was moved to downtown Flint, over a dime store, and became known then as Central Gospel Hall.

Early leaders were George McBain, Archie Smith, Meldrum Allen, George Garret, and George Youmans. Brothers who have helped in the assembly include Ross Rainey, Robert Johnston, George Pirie, and Donald Wellborn. Preachers in the early days of the assembly included Thomas Dobbin, T.D.W. Muir, and Dan McGeachy.

In 1932, the assembly moved to Davison Road Gospel Hall in Flint, at 3229 Davison Road. In 1955, the assembly built Dexter Street Gospel Chapel on the corner of Dexter Street and Dale Avenue. William Pell and Walter Jensen spoke at the dedication in March 1956. Elders serving then and since include Samuel Lynch, Claud DeWitt, William Stewart, Joseph Porter,

James Turfus, Stuart Turfus, and Larry Lambert. About 40 adults are in fellowship in 1998.

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The assembly now meeting at Civic Heights Bible Chapel in Flint started in about 1913 in a home. The principals in starting and maintaining it from then until the 1930s were Thomas Lloyd, Thomas Gordon, Robert Irvine, Charles Smith, Thomas Lennox, David Kirkcaldy, Edward Vall, Jim Jackson, Robert Black, William Mackie, John Jackson, Roy Nelson, Thomas Kane, and Andrew Richardson, and their families. Subsequent leaders include Andrew Mackie, Archie Anderson, Joseph Black, Jack Wilson, Ed Bills, Fred Brown, Arthur Randall, Earle McGarvah, and Gerald Sanders.

When the Christians outgrew the home, they rented a building until 1926 when they built and occupied a new building at 601 E. Pasadena Avenue, taking the name Hebron Hall. In the 1930s they renamed it Pasadena Avenue Gospel Hall, and then Pasadena Avenue Gospel Chapel. In 1964 the assembly moved for one year to Flint Christian School while their new Civic Heights Bible Chapel, at 3610 Wisner Street in Flint was being constructed.

By 1984, neighborhood violence induced the Christians to sell the building. They met for a year at the Genesee Valley Mall auditorium, then decided to disperse to two other assemblies – Dexter Street Gospel Chapel in Flint and Countryside Bible Chapel in Owosso, near Flint – rather than re-form their own. The funds from the sale of the building were used to establish the Civic Heights Bible Chapel Foundation, which contributed to many Christian ministries for a number of years. The assembly

commended several to the Lord's work at home and abroad.

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Countryside Bible Chapel in Owosso began in 1958, an outgrowth of a children's work, and deriving from Pasadena Avenue Gospel Chapel in Flint. Roy Nelson, William LeCureux, and Sam Lynch were among those starting the assembly and have been involved in leadership along with Robert Tissot and others. The assembly has commended workers to serve at Bair Lake Bible Camp.

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T.D.W. Muir, with William Garnham, pitched his tent at Saginaw, north of Flint, in 1886. A few souls were saved at that time and the Saginaw assembly was likely planted in about 1887. In 1888, James Kay was encouraged to move to Saginaw by Mr. Muir, and remained there doing extensive evangelistic work in the area until his home call in 1901.

The Christians comprising the assembly first met in a rented building on the corner of Ames and Harrison Streets, the first Saginaw Gospel Hall. Later they moved to a building on Hamilton Street, then to a building on the corner of Madison and Fayette Streets, then in about 1938, to a building on the corner of Throop and Porter Streets. In 1945, the assembly built a new hall, known as the Madison Street Gospel Hall on the corner of Madison and Porter Streets in Saginaw, and has been at that location since.

Leaders in the assembly over the years include Joseph Pocket, John William, Edward S. Williams, and Mathew

McDonald. The assembly has commended John Govan to the work of the Lord.

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The Sturgis Bible Chapel began sometime prior to World War II and still continues. It expanded twice in the 1940s and 50s to accommodate the growing attendance at both Sunday school and adult meetings.

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Coldwater Bible Chapel, about 15 miles north of the Indiana state line, was established in 1955 by the families of Robert Branch, Elmer Anderson, and Dak Warner. It was a hive-off of the Sturgis Bible Chapel some 25 miles away. First meeting at a location on U.S. Highway 12 between Coldwater and Quincy, it now meets at 120 South Jefferson in Coldwater. Those active in leadership have been, in addition to the above, Ted and Nancy Hadfield, Terry and Connie Vercruysse, Tom and Phyllis Duke, and Phil and Dixie Hoard. About 20 adults and children attend the assembly.

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In 1932, James Noall from Detroit held a series of meetings in an old schoolhouse four miles north of Sheridan, a small town northeast of Grand Rapids. Cecil Starks walked to those meetings from his home in Sheridan; there he heard the gospel and received Christ. Shortly after, in early 1933, an assembly was started in the home of the Starks. Charles Frisbey and the Pell family from Grand Rapids also helped in establishing the Sheridan assembly. The principal leaders over the years have included Clayton Baldwin, Bert Starks, Cecil Starks, and Wayne Beard.

In 1934, an old house in Sheridan was purchased for the meetings and called the Sheridan Gospel Hall. In 1940, a chapel was built at 124 N. Main Street, and since then the assembly has been called Sheridan Bible Chapel.

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The city of Muskegon lies on the shores of Lake Michigan. The Muskegon Gospel Chapel at Allen and Oak Grove, was constructed in about 1953 in a new residential neighborhood in a well-equipped and attractive building. This assembly disbanded in 1990.

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In the early 1900s, an assembly of Christians existed in Montague, north of Muskegon. The assemblies at that time tended to follow the railroad line: Montague, Muskegon, Grand Haven, Grand Rapids. A Mr. Meinert, for whom a county park and street are named, was one of the leading brethren in the assembly at Montague. Probably known as the Montague Gospel Hall, long since disbanded, the old building still stands.

In about 1970, a group of Christians with charismatic leanings began meeting in Whitehall, near Montague. After a time, some of them expressed an interest in joining with the brethren movement, and invited Ed and Peg Burdick, commended from Dunning Park Chapel in Detroit, to help them. The Burdicks came in the 1980s, knowing the situation, but after a few years, they realized they were not helping assembly to grow. The assembly was called White Lake Fellowship during that period.

The Burdicks, with Gary and Jan Seaver, Mel and Lois Rykse, Jay and Eva Lou Larman, and Jay and Becky

Vander Laan, left that church in 1991 to form Friendship Bible Chapel in Montague. White Lake Fellowship disbanded soon after that. The assembly at Muskegon Gospel Chapel had also disbanded at about that time, and some of the Christians from there joined with Friendship Bible Chapel. The assembly first met in the Seaver's home, and now meets in the Montague City Building.

The assembly has commended Mel and Lois Rykse to Operation Mobilization. Ed Burdick is a full-time worker at Friendship Bible Chapel, and Peg Burdick is president of Winning Women for Christ. About 30 to 40 adults and youngsters attend Friendship Bible Chapel on Sundays.

Bair Lake Bible Camp and Upper Peninsula Bible Camp are the two brethren-sponsored Bible Camps in Michigan. Jack and Carol Long of Friendship Bible Chapel have been commended to work with those camps.

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At Holland, southwest of Grand Rapids, the origins of the Holland Gospel Chapel are now lost from memory. Some have called it the Wielenga Assembly because of the prominence of the Wielenga family. The assembly met on East 14th Street prior to 1954. In that year, the Christians moved to their current location at 106 W. 26th Street. Other leaders over the years include Henry Ebelink, Simon Dogger, and James Derks. The assembly meeting at Holland Gospel Chapel has commended workers to Japan, Ireland, Turkey, and Mexico. About 100 are in the assembly.

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In 1998, a hive-off of the Holland Gospel Chapel formed an assembly in Burnips, a rural town east of Holland. Dave and Arleen Nyhof, and Bernie and Lil Nyhof have leadership roles there. The Burnips Assembly is characterized by the presence of several home schooling families. The home school network is active among the believers in western Michigan.

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From 1911 through 1914, evangelists T. Dobbin, R. McCrory, T. Touzeau, and T.D.W. Muir held tent and cottage meetings in Jackson, in the mid-southern part of the state. In 1914, as a result of these efforts, the Jackson assembly began in the home of Charles Atkinson. Among the early members of the assembly were Mr. and Mrs. Robert Atkinson, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Schilling, Archie Martin, and Elma Smith. The Christians later moved to a small rented building at 1325 East North Street. In 1946, they purchased a building at 910 Bennett Street, the present location of the assembly, and held the first meeting there in 1949. The meeting places have collectively been called the Jackson Gospel Hall.

Charles Atkinson, Archie Martin, Nick Sarlo, and Douglas Losey are among the leaders over the years. Lorne McBain and Norman Crawford are itinerant workers who have lived in Jackson and been active in the assembly. Other preachers working in the area have included William Ferguson, William Warke, A. Klabunda, Archie Stewart, Oliver MacLeod. The Jackson Assembly has commended a worker to Puerto Cabelo, Venezuela. About 38 were in fellowship in the Jackson Gospel Hall in 1946, and about 75 in 1989.

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The North Adams Gospel Hall was started at nearby North Adams in 1932 by the efforts of brethren Stewart, McBain, and Klabunda. About 20 believers gathered to Remember the Lord at their first meeting. About 100 came to a special meeting later in that year. Memory has lost further details of this assembly, which disbanded long ago.

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Other Michigan assemblies which have been started through those associated with the Jackson testimony are Battle Creek Gospel Hall (1918), Sterling Gospel Hall (1919), Midland Gospel Hall (1919), Deckerville Gospel Hall (1920), Boyne City Gospel Hall (1922), Ubly Gospel Hall (1928), Franklyn Mines (Laurium) Gospel Hall (1935), Alpena Gospel Hall (1938), Sherman Gospel Hall (1954), and Ceresco Gospel Hall (1968).

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The present Sherman Gospel Hall was planted by Fred Mehl in 1954. Originally in the village of Mesick, and known as the Mesick Gospel Hall, it moved to its present location in Sherman in the northwest portion of the Lower Peninsula in 1959. Some Christians from the disbanded assembly at Cadillac joined with the Sherman Gospel Hall. Others involved in the start-up were Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Spencer, Olive Spencer, Crystal Armstrong, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Marvin, Anthony Clouse, and Mrs. P. Oswald. Those active in leadership have been Lloyd Spencer, Chancy Spencer, David Spencer, Thomas Spencer; Robert Nielson, Arthur Phillips, William Armstrong, and Stuart Thompson.

About 35 adults and youngsters are in the assembly today.

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The assembly known now as Rock Bible Chapel got its start in 1951 as a Sunday School work conducted by John Small at the town hall in the small town of Rock on the Upper Peninsula. In 1952, the Smalls built their home in Rock and held assembly meetings there for three years. Then in 1956, the Smalls built a chapel on the lot next to their home, and the work has been called Rock Bible Chapel since then. Benjamin Yeadon took principal responsibility for the work from 1968 until his death in 1998. William Ducote and Mike Lepisco have also shared leadership. About 125 adults and youngsters are in the assembly today.

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The Pelkie Gospel Hall in the Upper Peninsula, began in 1981. Many of the Christians who formed the assembly had been saved through the Gospel outreach of the Christians at Lake Linden Avenue Gospel Hall in Laurium, about 25 miles north. The leaders have been Eugene Maki, Hugo Kemppainen, Kenneth Sohlden, and Samuel McClung, who were also involved in the start-up of the assembly. Joe Balsan, an itinerant preacher from Des Moines, was also one of those starting the assembly. Mark Martinmaki also preached in the Pelkie area. About 30 adults and children are in the assembly.

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Asamblea Evangelica in Grand Rapids began in 1995 in the home of Ricardo and Diana Tavarez home. The Christians moved after that to 635 South Division, where

they currently meet. The Spanish-speaking assembly consists of Christians from Guatemala, Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico, as well as the U.S. (See Ethnic section)

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The roots of the assembly presently at Forest Hills Bible Chapel in Grand Rapids go back to 1899. Messrs. Tazelaar, Krone, and Vander Muelen had visited Fred Wunsch in Lowell, a town east of Grand Rapids. Fred was the father of Gerald Wunsch and was in fellowship in an assembly that these men had heard about. They asked him for help in starting an assembly in Grand Rapids. Shortly, a group began meeting to Remember the Lord in one of their homes. At the end of 1900, the growing group purchased a small building at 272 N. College Avenue, and this became the College Avenue Gospel Hall.

John Van Kammen, the father of Mrs. Betty Wunsch, emigrated from the Netherlands to Grand Rapids as a young man in 1902, and was saved while attending meetings at College Avenue Gospel Hall.

By 1925, the College Avenue Gospel Hall was too small, and the assembly purchased and moved into another building at the corner of Eastern and Baldwin in Grand Rapids and named it the Eastern Avenue Gospel Hall and later the Eastern Avenue Gospel Chapel. However, it was usually called either the ‘Eastern and Baldwin Assembly,’ and sometimes the ‘Van Ryn Assembly’ because it was the home assembly of the Van Ryns who had moved to Grand Rapids from the Netherlands. August Van Ryn itinerated among area assemblies in the years he lived in Grand Rapids.

Cornelia DeJonge, commended by the Eastern and Baldwin assembly in 1925, was the first missionary to go out from West Michigan; she served in Africa. In 1951, Gerald and Betty Wunsch were commended by the assembly to the Lord's work in New Guinea. They served the Lord for 41 years as missionaries in that country.

Harry Ironside had an evangelistic campaign at the Gospel Hall in 1926, well remembered because of the number, young and old, who were saved. He, C.J. Scofield, and many other well-known speakers visited the assembly regularly. The Eastern and Baldwin assembly and its forerunner was a 'Grant exclusive' assembly until the 1930s. Peter Pell Sr., father of ten children including Peter Pell Jr. and Will Pell (who began Gospel Folio Press around the year 1925), attended the assembly for a time. Harry Ironside baptized Peter and Will by immersion there. He asked Will, "Are you dead?" Will knew enough to answer in the affirmative, and then Ironside said, "Good, because I only bury dead people." Later young Peter would travel and preach with Ironside.

After breaking with the Grants, the assembly joined in fellowship with the 'open' meetings in Grand Rapids. During the course of years, it has taken a more progressive stance. Russell Van Ryn was a conscientious shepherd through the 1970s and 1980s. In 1975, the assembly moved to the suburbs and changed its name to Forest Hills Bible Chapel.

Kevin Dyer and Don Cole visited there periodically. Many missionaries have gone out from Forest Hills. Gerald and Betty Wuensch were honored by the government of Papua New Guinea for their work. Forest

Hills has been active with Upper Peninsula Bible Camp where Russ and Ruth VanRyn worked as directors many summers.

* * *

During the thirties, there was a great reaping in Grand Rapids. Peter and Will Pell largely held the same doctrines as H.A. Ironside; they worked with M.R. DeHaan in his early days; they also were great friends with Mel Trotter of Rescue Mission fame. These men, with David Otis Fuller were greatly used to shake Grand Rapids and to make it a kind of hub of evangelical and fundamentalist work. Peter and Will were active open-air preachers in those days.

A brother named Kramer had moved to Grand Rapids from Kansas. He was a strict ‘exclusive’ and a very careful Bible student. Peter and Will Pell both attended Kramer’s Bible readings, and Peter was especially influenced. However, Mr. Kramer’s assembly never received Peter or Will Pell into their fellowship.

Will Pell went to Bay City to a Bible Conference he had heard about and there met ‘open’ brethren preachers such as John Ferguson and Leonard Sheldrake. He found the believers in Bay City to be sound in faith and practice. The Pells after that identified with the ‘open’ assemblies. About that time an assembly began in Mr. Sharphorn’s woodworking shop behind his house in Grand Rapids. Later Will bought a building, which was called the Evangel Hall, for the assembly. In about 1958, the assembly moved to the present Northwest Gospel Hall at the corner of Garfield and Myrtle on the northwest side of Grand Rapids.

From Northwest Gospel Hall several missionaries have gone out or have been jointly commended – to Mexico, Japan, India, Columbia, and Paraguay

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A hive-off from Northwest Gospel Hall occurred in 1985 when Mr. and Mrs. Paul Sherd, Mr. and Mrs. Phil Dickson, Mr. and Mrs. John Sawyer and Mr. and Mrs. Karl Rewa started meeting in the Dickson's home on the northwest side of Grand Rapids. Called Fellowship Bible Chapel, the work soon outgrew the home and moved to the Kinney School. When John Sawyer and Karl Rewa left the work, George Sturm and Bob Sawyer assumed leadership and moved the work to Allendale, west of Grand Rapids. Both had been trained through the Discipleship Intern Training Program at Fairhaven in California. Through their outreach efforts at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, the assembly enjoyed success. Bob Sawyer was a roommate of Jim Elliott in his Wheaton College days. In 1988 the Sawyers responded to an invitation to help a missionary family in Spain. The Sturms went to Albania in 1992. The meeting declined and eventually closed.

* * *

The Burke Street Assembly in Grand Rapids began in 1991, springing up from among the many home schooling families in Grand Rapids. Most of the initial families did not have an assembly background, coming rather from Baptist, Reformed, charismatic, and independent church backgrounds. There are about 10 households in the Burke Street Assembly, which presently rents space in a Christian School. John Bjorlie, Sid Patten, and Larry Baker are the elders.

* * *

Bailey is north of Grand Rapids and Newaygo is nine miles north of Bailey. The assembly meeting for many years at Newaygo Gospel Chapel moved to Bailey in the early 1980s. After a division, some of the believers joined with the Bailey Gospel Chapel and others formed the Newaygo Believer's Bible Chapel.

* * *

James Kay had close links to the beginnings of the assemblies at Deckerville, Bay City, Midland, and Standish. A Mr. Morris was influential in starting the Cass City Assembly. Alex McDonald and Dan McGeachy are linked with testimonies at Bad Axe, Ubly, and Deckerville. An assembly at East Lansing goes back to the early pioneers; it has relocated to Williamston. An assembly in Kalamazoo, going back to earlier days, built a new hall in about 1949, but has since discontinued. The Schoolcraft Assembly in Detroit was originally a French meeting.

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Historical Notes on 75th Anniversary of Jackson Gospel Hall, 1989

Random & Reminiscence, by Theodore Williams, Sr., undated

Letters of Interest, June 1945, p. 13; March 1949, p. 21; November 1953, p. 3; January 1956, p. 19; June 1959, p. 11; January 1986, p. 18; July/August 1972, p. 4; September 1988, p. 20; January 1990, p. 6

## Notes

1. The Maline Family Tree, by Marilyn Ristine and Doris Craig, printed in about 1975.

# U.S. – South

This section contains information on assemblies in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, in that order.

## Texas

Wheatland Bible Chapel in Duncanville, southwest of Dallas, has its origin in 1912. J. Thomas Dean was an ordained Baptist minister for many years. He and his brother, I. R. Dean, another ex-Baptist minister, left that organization at great cost to family relationships. When Thomas and his wife Antoinette moved to Dallas, they started a Remembrance Meeting in their home at 2613 Pennsylvania Avenue in about 1912.

James Sommerville and Charles Foord and their families were among the early Christians who met in the Dean home and they were responsible for continuing and expanding the work after Mr. Dean’s sudden death. In 1918, these two men, who worked at Dallas Tent and Awing Company, donated a tent and the meetings were held in it for over a year.

The next move, in 1920, was to a building on Hickory Street in Dallas. Several families were added to the fellowship during the time they met in that building. William Bush, Sr. of Waxahachie, was invited to hold revival meetings there and several were saved.

In 1924, the assembly moved to another tent, referred to as the Tabernacle, erected on Fitzhugh Avenue and Phillips Street in Dallas. T. B. Gilbert and his wife came

to Dallas to help build the assembly and spent about six months in the area. After Mr. Gilbert left, he sent A.P. Gibbs to Dallas to continue working with the assembly.

Mr. Gilbert urged the brethren to build and in 1929 the assembly moved into Fitzhugh Gospel Hall, which they constructed on a lot across the road from the canvas Tabernacle. Six Sunday School rooms, a baptistery, and a small porch were added later to the original building and it was renamed Believers' Chapel. The assembly continued there until 1954.

In the late 1930s and during the 1940s, Fitzhugh/ Believers' Chapel was blessed with several energetic couples and single young men and women. Their social lives were centered around the activities of the assembly and this vibrant group welcomed and included Dallas Theological Seminary students and visitors in these functions. No doubt, this warmth contributed towards attracting the students because every year, the assembly had a wealth of these young men in fellowship. It was during these years that the assembly organized the first Texas Youth Camp.

In addition to seminary students, the Christians were blessed by ministry from many outstanding preachers who came annually to teach short term courses at Dallas Seminary. Carl Armerding, Charles Feinberg, Harry Ironside, and Charles Van Ryan were some who regularly visited.

The area where Believers' Chapel was located was rapidly changing in the 1950s from residential to commercial property, and the brethren decided to locate in Oak Cliff, an area where many of the Christians resided. Wilfred Looney found a lot at the corner of Polk

Street and Nokomis Avenue. The first meeting in the new Polk Street Bible Chapel in Oak Cliff at 3303 S. Polk Street was a prayer meeting in March 1954. The assembly continued in this location for 26 years and had the distinction of being the first assembly to have a commended worker accepted as a Chaplain in the armed forces. Three young men in fellowship served in this capacity.

Once again, neighborhood changes forced the elders to consider a move. John David Rice found lots on Wheatland Avenue at Tucson in Duncanville. The new Wheatland Bible Chapel was completed in June 1980 and opened with a Daily Vacation Bible School during the day and Gospel meetings conducted by Brian Atmore at night.

Other men who have served as elders at the assembly include Edward Davis, Roy Sorenson, Noel Gardner, Larry Dean, Doug Rice, and Jimmie Hornsby. The assembly has commended several to the work of the Lord. About 60 adults and youngsters attend Wheatland Bible Chapel.

* * *

Fitzhugh Gospel Hall and Polk Street Bible Chapel have given birth to other assembly gatherings in the metroplex. Lewis Johnson and several other families were exercised about commencing a work in north Dallas and it was shortly after the move to Polk Street that they announced their intentions. These men asked the elders if there would be any objection to the new group using the name Believers' Chapel. Permission was granted and today this is a thriving ministry, though it

no longer considers itself to be part of the brethren movement.

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Zane Hodges came to Dallas in 1954 to attend the seminary. He had a real zeal for the Mexican work. Following the worship meeting on Sunday morning, Zane and several other Christians would drive to the 'mission' on Jeffrey Street, where they had Sunday School and evening services. Later in the 1950s, they left Polk Street Bible Chapel to have all their services in that site. This move was made with the full blessing of the brethren. This work among Hispanics is now concentrated at the Victor Street Bible Chapel in Dallas, where Zane Hodges in the full-time worker. About 50 to 60 adults and children are in the assembly. Luis Rodriguez is a commended worker who works with Hispanic youth and has a weekly soup kitchen for poor people in the area.

* * *

Some of the Fitzhugh/Polk Street Christians who lived in the Arlington area conducted Sunday evening meetings in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jameel Hissen. Eventually, this group became an assembly and purchased a building for the Arlington Bible Fellowship.

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For many years, several families came to Polk Street Bible Chapel from east Dallas. In September 1976 some of these formed the Garland Gospel Chapel. This created quite a void in assembly numbers at Polk Street, but the new work was started with the blessing of the Christians who remained.

The Christians comprising the Garland Gospel Chapel originally met in the North Garland YMCA, and moved to their current location at 1420 W. Avenue B in 1978, changing their name to Garland Bible Chapel, after that. The original families included those of John Rodgers, Ed Davis, Robert Muldoon, Joe Muldoon, Bruce Blake, and George Varner. Elders have included these and Tom Messer, E.J. Carter, Dave Shoop Gerry Meyer, Richard Peck, and John Daniels.

Garland Bible Chapel has commended or co-commended workers to Japan, Africa, Peru, Estonia, Sandy Creek Bible Camp, and Emmaus Bible College. About 90 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

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Christ Congregation in Dallas started in December 1967, meeting first at the Civil Air Patrol office, White Rock Airport. The founders were Arthur L. Farstad and Garland Brock. Co-founders were students at Dallas Theological Seminary who were in fellowship at Polk Street Gospel Chapel. After meeting in several locations, Christ Congregation in 1971 established its meetings in the home of Arthur Farstad, 6218 Prospect, where it continues to meet. Before buying the house in 1971, Arthur Farstad rented rooms to seminary students who have since gone to the mission field. Christ Congregation has commended workers to the field in Russia and in the U.S. Elders have been Marcus Farstad, Rick Rencher, Roy Brown, Don von Dohlen, Dan Mosher, and James Davis. About 20 adults and children attend Christ Congregation.

* * *

The Christian Brethren Assembly in Irving started in 1985 as the East Dallas Brethren Assembly and derived from the Dallas Brethren Assembly. The principal people involved in the start-up were P.C. Abraham, P.C. Chacko, Skaria Varghese, and M.O. Joykutty. The first three of these have been the elders. About 120 adults and youngsters attend.

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Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in the Oak Cliff area of Dallas began in 1976 in the home of Anthony Evans. In that year, Reuben Connor of Urban Evangelical Mission, and Gene Getz of Fellowship Bible Church North in Dallas, who wanted to see a strong Bible church in the Oak Cliff area, approached Tony Evans, at that time an evangelist, about planting a church. Mr. Evans contacted Crawford Loritts of Norristown, PA and asked him to partner in this effort. When he agreed, they began the assembly, meeting alternately in their homes.

They both preached each Sunday, and in a month the assembly moved into the Briargate Apartments clubhouse. Soon they began developing programs to meet the specific needs of the congregation, including The Learning Center for children, with Elizabeth Cannings as the first teacher. When 25 families joined in the fellowship, they moved again, in 1977, to the Advent Lutheran Church at 6607 South Hampton.

Mr. Loritts left to minister with Campus Crusade for Christ, but still by 1978, about 100 families were attending Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship regularly, with Mr. Evans doing most of the preaching. The church then moved to Adelle Turner Elementary School at 5505 South Polk. In this period, Van Howard became an elder,

and the women organized the Ladies' Discipleship, under the leadership of Shirley Hawkins and Lois Evans.

Once again, the expanding fellowship needed more room, and when the Camp Wisdom Road property of Faith Bible Church became available, the money for its purchase was donated, and the assembly had a permanent home. Ministries were added, including the Child Development Center under the direction of Van Howard, and a tape ministry. Martin Hawkins was hired as assistant pastor, Tony Evans remaining as the main pastor.

The membership reached 250 families in 1982, and staff were added to minister to their needs and for outreach. Carl Husband and Larry Mercer were among those brought on in leadership capacities. Regular support to specific missionaries and Christian Organizations was instituted. Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship has not hesitated to add programs for the benefit of its people, which they call an alternative vision to provide a biblical foundation for all aspects of life. Growth was explosive as people were saved and strengthened. In 1987, 1200 families were associated with the assembly; in 1988, an interim facility called the Family Life Center was built. In 1989, 22 acres on Camp Wisdom Road were purchased. "Sonny" Acho was added to the staff in 1990, and Roger Skepple and Sylvester London in 1993. The newly constructed Worship Center was opened in 1995. Today, about 4000 adults and youngsters attend the assembly, which has about 50 full-time ministry staff.

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The early accounts of assembly activity in Fort Worth come from Earl Tatum. According to Mr. Tatum, the

original Fort Worth Assembly was formed in 1901 and an assembly testimony has met continuously in the city since then.

In 1916 or 1917, the assembly was meeting in rented space on Samuel Avenue. In about 1919, the meeting moved to a north side location as the Fort Worth Gospel Hall; in 1946, the assembly moved to the near south side and was known as the St. Louis Avenue Chapel in Fort Worth. In the early 1960s, that property was sold and property on the east side at 1939 Handley Drive was purchased. Meadowbrook East Bible Chapel was completed in 1964.

J.A. Gracey and William Scott are remembered as leading in the early days of the meeting, while William Bush helped in preaching and visited regularly. Mr. Hillis and Mr. Grierson of Houston held six weeks of meetings in the early days, in which a number of couples were saved. Earl Tatum was a man of unusual ability in the Scriptures and did most of the shepherding in the earlier days. Fred Pearson came to Fort Worth from Byfield, MA in the early 1960s, and was a great help in feeding the flock.

In addition to Messrs. Gracey, Scott, Tatum, and Pearson, those in leadership at Meadowbrook and its predecessors have included L.B. Shilling, Ted Ball Sr., Otho Logan, and Kenneth Livingstone. Keith Livingstone now does much of the administrative and caring ministry as an elder, while Tom Duncan is a teaching elder. The assembly has commended George Byrum to chaplain duty in the U.S. Navy. About 50 adults and youngsters are in Meadowbrook East Bible Chapel,

which has a vigorous outreach program to youngsters, in which nearly all the adults are involved.

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In 1968, assets from Meadowbrook East Bible Chapel were divided and several families purchased a building in northeast Forth Worth, establishing Glenview Bible Chapel in North Richland Hills. The principal men involved in this were Herb Fyke, Joe Hicks, Roy Milford, Dewey Shilling, Earl Tatum, and Ross Gutierrez. In 1984, the Glenview Chapel was sold and another building was purchased in the Summerfield Addition of north Fort Worth, and called Summerfield Community Chapel. Others in leadership at Glenview and Summerfield have been Donald Welborn, John Ferris, Ralph McCord, Kenneth Morrow, Bob Newberry, Richard Averett, and Jay Carter.

In 1993, the Christians sold the chapel because, among other reasons, building codes being enforced by the city would have necessitated remodeling. From then until April 1998, the meeting was in the home of Donald and Gloria Welborn. Following that, the assembly began meeting in the Children's Palace Christian Learning Center on Davis Boulevard, with about 40 in fellowship, pending purchase of land for a new facility.

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An assembly was formed in 1994 in Lewisville, northwest of Dallas, and incorporated as Believers Bible Chapel. The assembly derives from Believers Assembly in Carrollton, an ethnic assembly which conducts its meetings in one of the languages of India. The Lewisville assembly was begun by John Ferris, a former missionary to Korea, his daughter Jan Ferris, and the families of

Sajan Abraham, Johnson George, George Jacob, and George John.

The Christians originally met in an Inn. In 1996 they purchased land and, pending construction of a chapel, rented space in a realtor's building for their Sunday meetings. They met in homes for prayer and Bible studies in midweek. They moved into their newly constructed chapel at 1724 Edmonds Lane in Lewisville in 1998, at which time they changed their name to Edmonds Lane Bible Chapel. John Ferris and George John have been the elders of the assembly, which has commended workers to the Lord's service in Romania. About 60 adults and youngsters now attend Edmonds Lane Bible Chapel

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Pineview Gospel Hall in Houston began in 1937 as a hive-off from the Louisiana Street Gospel Hall, whose origin has not been available. Now called Pineview Bible Chapel, the assembly has been at 9742 E. Hardy Road since it began. Robert and Madge Lammert, Andrew Patterson, Earl E. Griffin, Roland Avenell, Charlie Jones, and Raleigh Smith were among those who began the work. Others in leadership over the years include J.B. Clooney, Luby Walker, Edwin O'Farrell, Eric Unander, James Patterson, Allen Thrall, Gene Bailey, and James Cross.

Missionaries have been commended by the assembly to work in Argentina; others have been commended to ministry within the U.S. About 60 adults and youngsters attend Pineview Bible Chapel.

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A Spanish-speaking assembly, founded by immigrants from Argentina, hived off from Pineview Bible Chapel in Houston in about 1960 and established the MacGregor Spanish Bible Chapel. (See Ethnic section)

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First Colony Bible Chapel in Sugar Land, on the southwest side of Houston, was established in 1964 by Sydney Green, Leland Smith, Allen Jones, and Herschel Martindale. Other leaders over the years include Herb Green, Dick Nohr, Art Griffin, and Al Yeomans. A hive-off from MacGregor Bible Chapel, the assembly was known first as Braeburn Bible Chapel; the name was changed to First Colony Bible Chapel in 1990. Nearly 200 adults and youngsters attend the assembly. First Colony Bible Chapel has commended several workers to the service of the Lord.

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The first meeting of the India Brethren Assembly in Houston was in 1975 in the home of John T. Mathew. From there, the assembly met in various homes for several years, and now meets in its own building at 14643 Henry Road, adjacent to Colonial Hills Bible Chapel in Houston. The assembly derived directly from the brethren in India, and supports many evangelists in India. Besides Mr. Mathew, those involved in the start of the India Brethren Assembly include P. Thomas Philip, Abraham Varghese, and T. John George. Other leaders over the years include Cherian Varghese, Skaria Varghese, Samuel Thomas, and V.K. Abraham. About 70 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

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Waco Bible Chapel began in the late 1940s in the home of John and Judy Lane on Mockingbird Lane. In 1948 or 1949, the Christians were able to buy property and build a chapel at 3300 N. 22nd Street, at which time they took their present name. A Mr. Hillis and Tom McCollough were involved in starting the assembly, along with the Lanes. Leaders have been John Lane, Howard Kohrmann, John Fullerton, Don Welborn, and Glenn Lightfoot. In its earlier years, Waco Bible Chapel commended several to the Lord's work, including Don Welborn to ministry in the U.S. Today, the meeting has about 15 adults in fellowship.

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Temple Assembly, in the town of Temple north of Austin, was started in the early 1970s by Joe Vasilinda. He and his family had moved from Waco, where he was in fellowship at the Waco Bible Chapel. Possibly meeting first in the Vasilinda home, the small group of believers were meeting in the lobby of a theatre in downtown Temple by 1972; then they met for a time in a vacant mansion on 7th Street before returning to the Vasilinda home at 1311 N. 7th Street. There were never more than about 10 adults in fellowship at the Temple Assembly. Glen Lightfoot had a leadership role for a time. When Mr. Vasilinda died in 1997, the remaining members of his family returned to the Waco Bible Chapel, and the Temple Assembly discontinued. However, Mrs. Olga Farley, her two children, and Ralph Nowell, who had been in the Temple Assembly, continued to Remember the Lord in Mr. Nowell's home in nearby Holland.

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The Amarillo Assembly of Believers started with two families meeting in the Puckett Elementary School Cafeteria in October 1988. Since then, other families have been added and gather at the same place, awaiting the Lord's timing to purchase a building. Richard Hamilton and Roberto Estevez are elders.

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Community Bible Church in Bryan in the southeast part of the state, began in 1982 as an independent Bible church. The elders of Community Bible Church met with the elders of Eastfield Bible Chapel of Mesquite in 1994 to discuss establishing Community Bible Church as a New Testament assembly. Bruce Postma, commended by Eastfield Bible Chapel, is the current full-time worker for the new assembly. The average Sunday morning attendance is about 25. The vision of Community Bible Church is to plant and multiply home churches in the immediate area.

* * *

Grace Bible Fellowship in Mauriceville has its roots with the Baptists. Charim Baptist Church began in 1982 in Vidor, near Beaumont in the southeast corner of the state, as an offshoot of Beaumont Independent Baptist Church. Through the efforts of Gary Sprinkle, who was the Baptist pastor, Grace Bible Fellowship was formed in about 1990 and moved into a warehouse at 320 W. Freeway. They now meet at 6025 Highway 12, further east in Mauriceville. In leadership have been Gary Sprinkle, Lynn Baker, Milton Hatton, Les Jones, Charles Klock Merrill Donahue, Joe Byerly, and Cliff Hilton. The assembly has about 80 adults and youngsters in attendance.

* * *

South Plains Bible Chapel in Lubbock in the western part of the state, began in the 1960s, principally by people not associated with the brethren. Some believers came out of Bible Church backgrounds. One older couple, Charles and Ruby Waller, had become convinced of New Testament principles of gathering. They sought to encourage others in this direction, but progress was slow. With the encouragement of Edwin and Mary Ellen Meschkat, who had moved to the area and were commended earlier from the Houston-area assemblies, they opened a rented house near Texas Tech stadium as a meeting place in 1966, announcing it as South Plains Bible Chapel.

In 1969, a building was completed at 5402 Quaker Avenue, with seating for 100 persons, plus class rooms and a kitchen. In 1979, a Sunday School wing was added. Elders over the years have been Charles Waller, Edwin Meschkat, D.P. Holmes, Tim Lambert, Burt Bradley, and Stan Friedli. South Plains Bible Chapel has commended several people to the Lord’s work. About 120 adults and children attend South Plains Bible Chapel.

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The assembly known now as Grace Chapel in El Paso met at 2231 Montana Street for a number of years. In 1955, the Christians sold their building and purchased a site in a new subdivision at 7319 Alpine Drive in the Ranchland Hills section of southeast El Paso. First services were held in the new building in July 1956. The assembly now meets at 7601 Wilcox Drive.

Mr. and Mrs. John Halliday, formerly missionaries to Chile, moved to El Paso to work among the Mexican people as well as giving help at Grace Chapel.

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The San Antonio Gospel Hall was started in 1924 at West Laurel Street by the families of William Brown, Arthur Pomeroy, Frith Everett, Paul Lamb, Flora Darling, and Moore, Myer, Elford, Stolfus, Stockard, Baird (first names not remembered). From Laurel Street, the Christians moved to Kentucky Avenue as the San Antonio Bible Chapel. They later moved to 135 W. Cheryl Drive in San Antonio, and are now known as Cheryl Bible Chapel. Those in leadership have included Arthur Pomeroy, Lawrence Darling, Louis Kreusel, Sr., Alvin Beswick, Hugh MacMillan, Walter Hart, Kyle Turner, and Louis Kreusel, Jr. Cheryl Bible Chapel has commended a worker to Ecuador. About 60 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

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Letters of Interest, November 1955, p. 12; November 1957, p. 9; July/August 1971, p. 13

## Oklahoma

The Tulsa Gospel Hall, OK was started in 1927 by Mr. and Mrs. Bert Wilder, Clayton and Neva Cox, and Mrs. Pearl Shea. The first meetings were in the Wilder home in Tulsa. From 1929 until 1940, the assembly met in the Cox home, and from 1940 to 1945 rented a store room at 8th and Peoria Street. From 1945 to 1967, they met in several homes, store fronts, and buildings. In 1967, the assembly built its own chapel at 4th Place and Trenton, where it stayed for 20 years, and then built again and moved into the present chapel at 1215 S. 135th East Avenue. In 1982, the assembly changed its name to Tulsa Gospel Chapel and then to East Tulsa Bible Chapel when they to moved the present location.

Leadership has been vested in Clayton Cox, Clifford Slayden, Les Schultz, Frank Moffitt, T. Victor Anderson, Philip Moffitt, Kenneth Miller, and John Heller. The latter was commended to full-time ministry in Tulsa and Little Rock, Arkansas. Another has been commended to France. About 120 adults and youngsters attend East Tulsa Bible Chapel.

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Before 1938, no assembly had existed in Oklahoma City. In that year, T.B. Gilbert met Carlton Jones in Arizona and put him in contact with Mrs. Pearl Shea and her grown children, Vincent and Grace Shea, who had moved to Oklahoma City from Kansas City, where they had attended Troost Avenue Gospel Hall in Kansas City, MO. Soon, a group of Christians began an assembly meeting in the home of Carlton and Lucille Jones in Oklahoma City.

In 1941, the assembly gathered for their Remembrance Meetings in a store front building at 44th and S. Robinson, which they called Grace Gospel Hall. During World War II, tent meetings were held for many years at 35th and S. Shields, the site of the present building, now called Grace Gospel Chapel.

Pioneering brethren came often to Oklahoma City to help build and encourage the assembly. Among them were Samuel Greer, Matthew Kennedy, Tommy Bush, Tom CmCullagh, John Elliott, Leonard Lindsted, F.W. Schwartz, and more recently Don Norbie. Jim Elliott, the missionary martyred in Ecuador, was in the assembly while studying with Wycliffe Bible Translation.

Those in leadership over the years have been Carlton Jones, M.W. Gibbs, Ralph Burrs, Fred Hover, Ed Davis, Warren Bennett, James Davis, James Nelson, and Hugh Moore. Missionaries have been commended to the field in Equador and Africa. About 75 adults and children are in Grace Gospel Chapel today.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

## Arkansas

The Belleville Assembly in Belleville, a small town in west-central Arkansas, had its beginnings in 1923 when Lawrence London came from Henryetta, OK to preach the Gospel at a school house in Piney. Several souls were saved at these meetings. Over the years, the believers had Bible studies in their homes; Gospel preachers would come for one- or two-week Gospel meetings at the homes of the Christians.

Some of the believers moved to Belleville in 1944 for employment and continued to meet as before. In 1977, Donald Grisham from Oklahoma came to Belleville to help Victor Flesher with meetings in the Flesher home. In 1978, a building was purchased and the Belleville Assembly was formed called Christians Gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first Breaking of Bread was in July 1978. Clayton Cox from Oklahoma, John Elliott from Missouri, and Al Shutt of Arkansas have also provided leadership in the assembly.

* * *

Not far from Eureka Springs is the small town of Alpena. An assembly began in the early 1930s, and the Alpena Gospel Hall was built in 1935. Michael Capp came to Alpena preaching the Gospel and saw some people saved. Nealy Grisham and Lee Grisham, who were among the first to be saved, carried on the work of the assembly for many years, with others.

The assembly has received helpful ministry and assistance from brethren such as Lawrence London, Tom McCullough, Henry Miller, John Miller, Peter Pelon, Dan Dunnett, George Thompson, a Mr. Steel, and George Hoekstra. These men probably came to Alpena in the 1930s and 1940s and maybe into the 1950s. Others who have come to preach the Gospel or give helpful ministry include Louis Smith, William Lavery, Lawrence Perkins, Art Ward, Walter Gustafson, Jim Webb, John Elliott, Joel Portman, Don Nicholson, and Rob Weber.

In 1975, following the home call of Nealy Grisham, there were only five sisters left in the assembly. These faithful women – Pearl Grisham, Fern McNinch, Elizabeth

McIntosh, Mrs. Amos Eckhoff, and Gertie Grisham – continued to meet with the assistance of brethren from Springfield, MO until 1976 when two families from Minnesota – the Clifford Bjorks and Neal Olsens – moved to the area to help carry on the assembly work. Between 1976 and 1981, Al Shutt and Louis Smith and some other brethren from assemblies in Michigan made frequent visits to support and encourage the assembly.

In 1981, again the numbers were badly reduced and for a time John Chesney from Springfield, MO was the only brother left in fellowship along with a number of sisters. That same year Mr. and Mrs. Al Shutt from Michigan, Mr. and Mrs. Will Trowbridge from St. Louis, MO, and Mr. and Mrs. John Meader from Iowa came to reside in the area and were added to the assembly.

Today the assembly is small, but continuing to carry on in the 'old paths'. The assembly has a very active Gospel outreach among Spanish-speaking people, who are numerous in northwest Arkansas. In this work , the assembly receives assistance from Paul Thiessen and Harrys Rodriguez, missionaries in Mexico. The assembly is also involved in a Gospel work in an area in El Salvador from where many of their Spanish-speaking people have come.

* * *

Lone Star Bible Chapel in Eureka Springs, in the northwest corner of Arkansas started in 1979. Jack and William Faulkner and their wives had started attending a Bible church in Eureka Springs sometime before that. With their encouragement, this group constructed a new building in 1979 and began Breaking Bread, meeting as New Testament church. The elders since that time have

been Jack and William Faulkner and Dan Hooten. The building was expanded in 1994.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

## Louisiana

The first assembly in New Orleans was established by Vernon and Gladys Schlief in 1942. The assembly met in a tiny room that had been a one-man barber shop about 10 blocks from Canal Street. After a few weeks, the assembly moved into a small shoe repair shop at the end of Magazine Street, renovated it into a chapel, and called it Good News Chapel, though the sign on the building stated “Gospel Hall.” Local opposition to this work was strong, and the assembly remained small.

In 1943, with World War II under way, the Schliefs felt led to establish a center for reaching servicemen. Depending on God for the finances, they rented the second, third, and fourth floors of a building on Carondelet Street in downtown New Orleans and opened the Christian Servicemen’s Center. They moved their home into the Center from their trailer on the edge of the city, and brought the meetings of the assembly to the second floor. From 10 to 30 would Remember the Lord there, including servicemen.

Thousands of service men passing through were made welcome and given the gospel; many trusted Christ. The work continued from 1944 to 1947, when the building on Carondelet Street was sold. The Schliefs felt the work should be widened to include ex-servicemen and other civilian young men. They rented four buildings on Magazine Street, still in downtown New Orleans, and

moved all the activities there, including the assembly meeting place and their apartment. They named it the Good News Center. The incorporators included the Schliefs, Stan Hanna, the William Walkers, and Lloyd G. Walterick of Fort Dodge, Iowa.

After many years of service there, the Schliefs purchased a five-acre parcel on Oil Well Road in Belle Chasse, on the southeast side of New Orleans. They formed a new Belle Chasse Assembly, which met in a chapel they built on the grounds. The assembly grew to about 60 persons in fellowship. They eventually closed the Center in New Orleans, although the Good News Chapel continued for a number of years under the leadership of Stan and Esma Hanna.

After only a few years, the military appropriated the land on Oil Well Road, and another move was required. The Schliefs were able to acquire 42 acres a few miles away on which they built a home and a chapel – Lake Park Chapel. The assembly grew to several hundred.

They subdivided the property and sold parcels, put in their own roads, and built dormitories for a Boy's Home and then a Children's Home. Later they established the Good News Book Store on the grounds.

* * *

Household of Faith Assembly in Gretna, a suburb of New Orleans, has an interesting beginning. In 1979, Raymond Lewis, a former baseball player and a new convert, walked into the Good News Book Store, concerned about eternal security. Vernon Schlief recommended some books and offered to help Raymond with Bible study. As they studied, learning about New Testament principles, Raymond kept bringing along new

converts. Soon there a nucleus of about ten young men, including Orville and Cleveland Lewis, well educated and devoted to the Lord, being grounded in the Scriptures through the teaching of Mr. Schlief and other elders from the Belle Chasse Assembly.

In 1981, the new group of about 15 people bought a building with a seating capacity of 100 in Gretna, which is still the home of the Household of Faith Assembly. The assembly now consists of about 65 adults and youngsters. It is gifted with evangelists, teachers, and pastors, and is well ordered with capable, concerned, hard-working elders. The Christians have conducted street preaching, for which they have been arrested and jailed on occasion.

* * *

When Guillermo Santos, who had been an elder in an assembly in Honduras, arrived at the Belle Chasse Assembly, the several Spanish-speaking believers in that assembly became interested in forming their own Spanish-speaking assembly. This resulted in the formation of Capilla Evangelica in New Orleans, which continued into the late 1980s.

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In the 1920s, Arthur Rodgers held Gospel meetings near Winnsboro in northeast Louisiana. Several were saved, and a farmer donated a plot of ground on which a small building was erected, the Winnsboro Gospel Hall. The assembly scattered after a time, but the building remained. Vernon Schlief and William Walker learned of this situation and went to the area, probably in the 1950s, and revitalized the assembly. John and David Horn visited the assembly regularly, and after them,

Willard Rodgers. After a few years, the assembly moved to the Winnsboro Town Hall as the Winnsboro Bible Chapel. The Christians later moved to nearby Monroe and meet today in a home as the Monroe Bible Chapel.

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Evangelist A. Paul Duchesneau of Montreal, Canada was forced out of the mission field in Belgium by the threat of invasion by Nazi forces in 1936. Looking to the Lord for a field where his French language could be used, Mr. Duchesneau chose St. Martinville, a dozen miles south of Lafayette in southern Louisiana, 150 miles west of New Orleans, and began a work among the French-speaking people there.

With bicycle and books, Duchesneau brought the Gospel to remote sections of rural St. Martin Parish. The levee of the Atchafalaya River often served as meeting place for the evangelist to unfold the Scriptures through flannel-graph lessons. A building was rented on the main street of St. Martinville to serve as a chapel. One of the first of the St. Martin families to identify with the evangelical movement of Duchesneau was that of Martin J. DuCote, Sr.

Many Christians who were associated with the beginning of the work in St. Martinville relocated to nearby Lafayette, causing Mr. Duchesneau to move his evangelical work there. The Bible Chapel, later renamed Southside Bible Chapel, opened on Mudd Avenue. Roland Begneaud served as an elder and Treasurer of the Bible Chapel for a number of years. Mrs. DuCote was identified with the assembly until her home-call in 1993. Her children, Carolyn and Martin Jr. (Zeke), served the work over a long period of time. Carolyn

DuCote joined the evangelical ministry of Duchesneau as a secretary following her completion of business college. Zeke DuCote served as an elder at Southside Bible Chapel for an extended number of years.

Young men in the Armed Services, stationed at various military facilities nearby, gave help and encouragement by their attendance and ministry. Some of these young men returned to their home churches after the end of the war to become leaders. The discipleship learned from Mr. Duchesneau at Southside Bible Chapel continued in these and many other communities.

After the war, Mr. Duchesneau returned to Montreal to establish the Bible Institute of Montreal. An interim worker at Southside Bible Chapel was Evangelist Elmer P. Gillespie. Mrs. Gillespie was a daughter of the noted author W.H. Griffith-Thomas, and she served as a consultant to Dallas Theological Seminary in their publication of her father's work. As a Greek linguist, she served with Arthur Farstad in the translation of the New King James Version of the Scriptures.

The lack of local men gifted in public ministry, and Mr. Gillespie's confinement to a wheel-chair, led the fellowship to seek help for its ministry from the Good News Center of New Orleans. The Schliefs drove to Lafayette and located Mrs. Meme DuCote, learning that the church's building had been sold. The Schliefs suggested that an assembly could begin meeting in a home, and that they would secure help to get it underway. The home assembly in Lafayette was soon underway, keeping the name Southside Bible Chapel, and the Schliefs came weekly for a while. After that, William Walker, Irwin Headley, Stan Hanna, Bill

Obenour, Herb McKay, and Art Reum would travel to Lafayette for the meetings.

William Walker had been saved while in the service, just before he was transferred to New Orleans. He became a regular at the Good News Center, and developed his preaching gift there. When he was discharged from the service, he worked full-time at the Servicemen's Center. At the Southside Bible Chapel, he met and married Mrs. DuCote's daughter, Carolyn, and the couple eventually moved to Lafayette to devote their time to the assembly.

In 1969, Southside Bible Chapel constructed a new facility on Acadian Drive. In the special evangelistic meetings that followed the dedication ceremony in September of that year, many came to know Christ as their Savior.

In 1990, a time when the average attendance at Family Bible Hour was about 100, a fire gutted the chapel facility. An athletic club in Lafayette fell on hard times in a business downturn, allowing Southside to purchase the building. The facility, with 14,000 square feet under roof, has a spacious sanctuary and numerous Sunday School rooms, with a small gym, a pool, and other facilities. Jeff and Alyce Bloom serve Southside Bible Chapel as full-time resident workers.

* * *

Faith Bible Church in Covington in southeast Louisiana, was started in 1989 by Alfred N. Young, Jr. The large assembly has about 250 in attendance on Sundays. A worker has been commended by the assembly to the Lord's work in Spain.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Southside Bible Chapel: Legacy of a Half-century, by William O. Walker, undated

Our Great Adventure in Faith, by Vernon Schlief, Beeline Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 1996

Letters of Interest, June 1955, p. 15; September 1983, p. 19

## Mississippi

Vernon Schlief reported that he and William Walker ministered at assemblies in McComb, Jackson, and Brookhaven. The latter two have discontinued, while assemblies exist today in Mendenhall, Moorhead, and Tylertown, besides McComb.

Maranatha Bible Church in McComb in the southern part of the state, was established in 1986 and has about 75 in attendance on a typical Sunday. Nathan Johnson is the pastor for the assembly.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Our Great Adventure in Faith, by Vernon Schlief, Beeline Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 1996

## Kentucky

In about 1938, Karl Pfaff began meetings for Breaking of Bread in his home in Louisville. Several families joined with the Pfaffs at that time. Tent campaigns by Mr. Pfaff through several summers brought some response. The Louisville Assembly met in a rented building from 1947 to 1950, at which point the Christians bought a small

building at 515 Montana Avenue and named it Bethany Chapel.

The Pfaffs moved to Colorado in 1950. Christians moving to Louisville for work, and Christian soldiers stationed at Fort Knox, swelled the ranks temporarily, and a young couple concerned about the mission fields, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Spacek, came for two years and developed a sizable children's work in a large housing project. W.W. Elder was one of the leaders in that period.

By 1957, Bethany Chapel, the only assembly in Kentucky then, had declined to seven believers and eventually disbanded.

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An effort at about that time to establish an assembly testimony in the vicinity of Raceland on the eastern edge of the state did not progress beyond Bible studies in a home and in the local YMCA. In the 1970s, a small assembly was meeting in the home of R.J. Reetzke in Louisville, and existed until the mid 1980s.

* * *

Harold and Vena Preston, Kentucky natives, were serving as missionaries in the Philippines and Borneo when they learned of the brethren assemblies. When they returned to the States in 1966, they fellowshipped and worked with assemblies in south Texas, but had a continuing burden for an assembly testimony in central Kentucky. In 1981, they learned of three families interested in starting an assembly in Lexington, two of them from assembly backgrounds and the other from a nondenominational church. The Manvel Gospel Chapel in Manvel, TX commended the Prestons to devote full-

time to the work in Lexington. Thus the South Lexington Bible Fellowship began in 1982. The John Schmidt family and the John Frasher family, with the Prestons and a few others began Breaking Bread in the Preston home at 147 Tartan Drive in September 1982 on a regular basis. In 1991, the Christians moved to an office building at 160 E. Reynolds Road, their present address. The South Lexington Bible Fellowship jointly with the Manvel Gospel Chapel commended the Prestons to the work in the Philippines in 1995-96. Gifted young men for teaching and preaching have developed at the South Lexington Assembly.

* * *

The Pilgrim Bible Assembly in Lexington began in the spring of 1995, the result of convictions by three families of assembly background – those of Paul Sloan, David Sloan, and Jerry Sweers – to meet in the manner of a New Testament church. Meeting first in the home of Paul Sloan, the group moved after a year to a 1000 square foot space on Waller Avenue, and in another year to a rented 4500 square foot building at 350 Elaine Drive. The new assembly supports missionaries, has an active youth program, and has a ministry to University of Kentucky international students. About 70 adults and youngsters attend on a typical Sunday.

* * *

The Mount Washington Bible Chapel, in the town of Mount Washington near Louisville, is the most recent in the state, and has an interesting beginning. James B. Sparks left an Independent Baptist church in about 1995 to find a New Testament way of meeting. He researched Scripture, then wrote a book about his findings on

church governance, and finally discovered the brethren. The assembly met in the Sparks home in 1997. Harold Preston from the South Lexington Bible Fellowship gives assistance.

* * *

The assembly in Owensboro, a city on the Ohio River, began in the early 1980s. Called Trinity Bible Church, it met first in the Owensboro Junior High School, and continues.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Letters of Interest, April 1957, p. 3

Uplook, April 1996, p. 9

## Tennessee

The assembly at Grace Gospel Chapel in Memphis began in 1934 at the corner of Trigg and Azalea Streets, started by two itinerant preachers, one of whom was a Mr. Curry. In 1951, Grace Gospel Chapel moved to 1591 Peabody; in 1958, the Christians sold that property and rented space at 10 S. Second Street. In 1961, the assembly moved to its present location at 3680 Rhodes. Active in leadership have been A.W. Worley, Fred G. Chambers, Lee Tallent, Bob Chambers, Mike Blake, Russ Horn, Chris McCoy, Frank Buck, Louis Sides, Eddie Schwartz, and Gordon Humphreys. Grace Gospel Chapel has commended several to the Lord’s work. About 55 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

* * *

The Nashville Gospel Chapel has its origins in tent ministries. In 1951, John Phelan and Harold Greene, with the help of William MacDonald, secured a tent, erected it on what seemed a desirable lot, and preached the gospel with little apparent success. But when they moved later in the summer to a less desirable location at 55th and Louisiana, they saw souls saved. With a group of young believers now, and little money, they decided to put a floor in the tent, erect temporary walls, and use it as a meeting place through the winter, amidst many hardships.

In the spring, the Lord arranged for them to purchase this lot and they constructed a simple shelter, consisting of one large room and no facilities. Phil Clarkson preached the first message in the new building. In 1955, and again in 1964, they added to the building. Each week they passed out 500 handbills in the neighborhood. Early in the work, Hal Greene left his secular employment and went full time in the assembly. Ruth Graether moved to Nashville in those days and was of great help in music and Sunday school teaching. Jack and Pat Linscott also moved to Nashville and became active in the assembly. Jack later had a major involvement in the beginning of Mid-South Bible Conference.

In 1964, Hal Greene moved to Cape Girardeau, MO to help establish a new work there. About that time, John Phelan left his secular employment and devoted his full time to the work of the Lord, including the Gospel Chapel in Nashville. Many people have given themselves to the work of the growing assembly, including John Everding, who for nine active years, before the Lord

took him home at the age of 36, had special meetings for the children, and donated two buses for this ministry.

In 1957, the Lord burdened Harold Earthman to see a Bible Conference in Middle Tennessee, and the Nashville Gospel Chapel has maintained active involvement with this ongoing annual Mid-South Bible Conference. In 1975, Horton Haven Christian Camp at Chapel Hill, south of Nashville, was established through the efforts of John Phelan, David King, and others. The Mid-South Bible Conference now has its home there.

In 1979, the Nashville Gospel Chapel relocated to six acres at Old Hickory and Sonya Drive. An existing house was renovated and enlarged to a seating capacity of 200.

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In the early 1970s, George and Amanda Martin began a Bible study in the home of Phil and Delcie Moore in the Donelson area on the east side of Nashville. After a period of time, Dave and Teresa King were asked to help with a study on Friday evenings. In 1976, with the encouragement of the elders at the Nashville Gospel Chapel, four families began meeting on Sundays at the Lions Club in Donelson.

In early 1978, a house and two acres were purchased at 2209 Whipple Place in Donelson for the meetings of the assembly – the Christian Believers Fellowship. In 1990, after much prayer and growth, an addition was made to the house, which then could seat over 100 persons.

The assembly has commended three couples to the Lord’s work – to the Wycliff Bible Translators in Mexico and to Horton Haven Christian Camp in Tennessee.

Christian Believers Fellowship has six elders who take the active leadership in expository Bible teaching ministry. The believers reach out into the community with an Awana program.

* * *

T.B. Gilbert set up a tent for Gospel meetings in Murfreesboro in the 1950s. This was followed by Bible studies in the Earthman home. The College Heights Chapel in Murfreesboro developed from that in 1955, meeting initially in a rented building one block from the current location at 1601 E. Main Street. Mr. Gilbert, with Harold H. Earthman, Ben M. Earthman, Oscar Johns, and Neslie Underwood, were those who initiated the assembly. Christians from the Bible Chapel, Ft. Lauderdale, FL and the Gospel Chapel in Shelbyville, TN were helpful to the new assembly.

The men mentioned, plus Dan Decker, Tom Naylor, Ben Wallace, Frank Couch, and Jack Weatherford, have been the leaders of College Heights Chapel, which has commended several to the Lord's work in the states and abroad. About 250 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

* * *

Cumberland Bible Chapel in Tracy City, in southern Tennessee, began in 1971. Everett Pickett, who had grown up in the area, had worked in New Jersey and became acquainted with the assemblies while there. When he and his wife moved back to Tracy City, he encountered a barber, James Sargent, who asked Mr. Pickett, after some conversation, if he might be with the 'brethren.' This led to their families Breaking Bread together in each other's homes. This continued for about

three years, during which time others joined them, including the families of John Stadt and Chris Roberts. In 1974, they purchased, restored, and moved into a building three miles east of nearby Monteagle, at which time they took their present name. Laurence McClung helped in this phase of the assembly. Additions have since been made to the building. Leaders have been those mentioned above, with Alvin Pickett and Dan Sargent. About 50 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

The Gospel Chapel, 40th Anniversary Celebration, by John Phelan, 1991

## Alabama

In about 1950, Nate Taylor from Pennsylvania arrived in the area of Gallion, Linden, and Old Spring Hill, about 50 miles northeast of Needham in western Alabama and began Bible studies in the Old Spring Hill School. Occasionally the Bible study was held in Epps' grocery store. People were saved and accepted the idea of gathering as a New Testament church. As more people began attending, the group began meeting as an assembly in the home of Herschner and Earline Coats in Old Spring Hill. Among those who attended were Mrs. Henretta Hall and her family, and Frank Glass. The meeting became known as the Scripture Truth Center in Old Spring Hill.

Other brothers who came to help establish the meeting were William Walker of Lafayette, Louisiana, Vernon Schlief of New Orleans, and E.G. Matthews, then 80

years old, from Waterloo, IA. Charles Lacey and his family ministered for a number of years at the assembly.

The group bought and remodeled an old building at the intersection of Highways 43 and 69. A split in the meeting in 1955 reduced the numbers, and the remaining 36 people decided to rename their building Gallion Bible Chapel. In 1970, a new chapel was built for the assembly by P.A. Bagley. The assembly has commended Mr. and Mrs. John T. Ferris to the Lord's work. The meeting now has about 14 adults in fellowship.

* * *

In about 1950, John H. Rupp of Altoona, PA came to Choctaw County as a Southern Baptist missionary. He preached to a number of small Baptist groups around Needham. In1951, some of the several Turner families in the area and Mr. Rupp left the Baptist organization and began to meet in homes. John Rupp and the Turners were invited to Old Spring Hill for the Thanksgiving Conference held by Scripture Truth Center that year, and thus became acquainted with assembly practice.

Soon, William Walker and Vernon Schlief learned of this work through E.G. Matthews of Waterloo, IA and came to the area for teaching and Gospel meetings. In the 'Turnertown' community west of Needham, they also had a vacation Bible school. People were saved, an assembly was formed, and in 1952 the Needham Bible Chapel was constructed. James A. Bethany, James F. Turner, and Charlie D. Turner were the founders of the assembly, along with Mr. Rupp. After John Rupp left the area, Charlie and Floyd Turner assumed leadership.

In the late 1960s, Raymond Swales came to speak at the assembly, and it was a time of revival. The assembly outgrew their original chapel, and a new building was constructed about six miles south of Needham in 1984; the name Needham Gospel Center Bible Chapel was taken at that time. James and Billy J. Bonner are the current elders. About 30 adults and youngsters attend the assembly today, which is active in mission and newspaper ministries.

* * *

The first assembly in Birmingham began in January 1948 when a group of like-minded Christians decided to meet in the name of Jesus only. Meeting first at the Birmingham YMCA, they moved to their own building at 4th Court West – the Westside Gospel Chapel. In 1962 the assembly relocated to 3926 Montclair Road, its current location, where it took the name Mountain Brook Bible Chapel. The principal leaders at Mountain Brook Bible Chapel have included Robert J. Willey, Earl Miller, Vernon Poehner, Stephen Underwood, and Walter Heasty. The assembly has commended several workers to the foreign field; about 50 adults and youngsters attend on a typical Sunday.

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In 1974, a group living 15 to 20 miles west of the chapel, desiring to have a meeting in their area, hived off from Mountain Brook Bible Chapel to form the Westside Believers Chapel. The two assemblies maintain a close relationship. The new assembly began in the home of Stephen Underwood, who was in fellowship at Mountain Brook Bible Chapel, and had been having home Bible studies with college students for several years. Mr.

Underwood's father had been influenced many years earlier by T.B. Gilbert concerning the New Testament church. Some of the students in the Bible study were driving a long distance to attend Mountain Brook Bible Chapel, so with the blessing of the elders of that assembly, the Westside Believers Chapel was formed. The families of Stephen Underwood, Steve Davis, Craig Criss, Tom Davison, and Ken Sanford were involved in the startup.

In 1976, the assembly relocated to Hanckey Road, then in 1988 purchased its own building at 1490 1st Street S.W. in Graysville in the northwest suburbs of Birmingham, where it is presently located. Westside Believers Chapel has about 20 coming to the Lord's Supper.

* * *

The Mobile Assembly met in the home of John Todd for many years, reaching 35 persons at its highest. This assembly was begun through contacts made at the Deep South Bible Conference, hosted by the Good News Center in New Orleans. Vernon Schlief and William Walker came to Mobile to instruct the Christians dissatisfied with their denominational affiliations, and the assembly was formed. It continued into the late 1970s.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

History, Needham Gospel Center Bible Chapel, by James E. Bonner, Sr., 1998

## Florida

We begin in the southernmost part of the state, Key West, in which resides the oldest assembly in the state, and proceed north along the eastern coast and the central area, across the panhandle, then south along the Gulf Coast.

The assembly meeting at Key West Gospel Chapel is the oldest meeting still functioning in the state, apparently started in 1869. The building in which the assembly still meets, at 720 Southard Street and known initially as the Key West Gospel Hall, is said to have been erected before 1880. The meeting was evidently associated then with one of the ‘exclusive’ branches.

Time has lost the details about the founders of this assembly or its activity until about 1900, when Charles Holder moved from the Bahama Islands to Key West and conducted street meetings around the town. Benjamin Demeritt, an avowed atheist and fisherman, was won to Christ by the open air preaching of Holder. The next day Demeritt led his friend Copeland Johnson to Christ. Copeland Johnson and Benjamin Demeritt became the main preachers and leaders at the Gospel Hall in the early 1900s. Copeland Johnson and his wife were drowned in a 1935 hurricane. Charles Holder had died sometime before that, and Benjamin Demeritt died in 1937.

In 1931, a split developed at the Key West Gospel Hall. Six men who considered themselves ‘exclusives’ moved out with their families and met in a different location. Demeritt and Johnson did not go out with them. The ‘open’ assembly continued to meet in the same location, but changed its name to Gospel Chapel, in part because

of local confusion with the Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses.

There were about 100 members of the assembly in the 1930s. Preachers would come from the north for six or eight weeks at a time and preach every night. During the years of heavy military activity, there was a substantial gathering, but with a declining military presence, the numbers have dwindled to less than two dozen. Sidney Bullman has been actively involved in the assembly since the 1940s. The work now depends on brethren from south Florida to minister the Word each Lord's Day, and there are no regularly scheduled week night meetings.

* * *

The assembly now known as Miami Bible Truth Chapel was the first in the Miami area and began in the early 1900s. The Christians first met in William Bethel's home but then acquired a building on SW 8th Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenues, called the Miami Gospel Hall A number of the brethren came from the Bahamas and Key West, including Copeland Johnson and his two brothers, T. G. and William. "Uncle Cope" was an able preacher and expositor of the Word, and was considered one of the leaders, although he remained in the Key West assembly. He constructed a beautifully illustrated "Plan of the Ages Chart" which he used very effectively in ministry meetings both in Miami and Key West as well as in some of the other Florida Keys.

Damage to the 8th Street quarters by a 1926 hurricane forced the gathering to move to a temporary location in Glenn Royal Parkway, over a store. Then they purchased a building in which to meet until a new one was

constructed nearby on SW 7th Street. Leon Russell, Robert Humphreys, Tweedy Sawyer, and others were instrumental in the construction. It was at about that time that the assembly took the name Miami Bible Truth Chapel.

During World War II, the young people still at home would go to Bayfront Park and invite service men to the evening gospel services. Through the preaching of August Van Ryn and Lawrence Chambers, the Holy Spirit yielded a harvest in the conversion of many of the servicemen, one of whom was Gifford Beckon. He and his wife Madge went to Japan as missionaries. During the 1940s and early 1950s the young people's group had a Gospel radio program. Elliot Van Ryn usually gave the message.

After World War II, a spacious addition was constructed on the rear part of the chapel. Many missionaries, some with families, were temporarily housed in that addition as they came through for ministry in the southern U.S., the Bahamas, and the Caribbean Islands.

Spanish brethren shared the building with the original group beginning in 1962 into the late 1970s, calling their group Sala Evangelica (see below). The Spanish group purchased the SW 7th Street building when Bible Truth Chapel moved to 6300 SW 99th Avenue in July 1978. Additions to the 99th Avenue facility were made as the assembly grew.

In fellowship at Bible Truth Chapel are saints from Jamaica, St. Kitt's Island, India, and Cuba, most of whom take an active part in the meetings. The multinational group of believers have an excellent bond of unity and a great youth ministry. The saints have great opportunities

with migrant workers and a youth detention center nearby. Several couples have gone out into full time service from the assembly.

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The Miami Asamblea Evangelica, a Spanish-speaking assembly, began in 1962 as Miami Sala Evangelica. At first sharing the building at 629 SW 7th Street with the Miami Bible Truth Chapel, the Christians eventually purchased the building. Rafael and Mariana Carter came to Miami from Santo Domingo to help start the assembly, joined in this effort by Alfredo and Maria Magluta. Dominican brethren coming from New York also helped. In 1982, the Christians changed the assembly name to Miami Asamblea Evangelica. Francisco Escarraman and Alfredo Magluta share in the leadership. The vigorous assembly has about 120 adults and youngsters in regular attendance.

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The 29th Street Gospel Hall in Miami has its roots in the summer of 1916. Mr. and Mrs. E.J. Warner and daughter moved to Miami in that year and looked for an assembly where they could Remember the Lord, but found only one small ‘exclusive’ group in the southwest section.

In 1917, William Conlon met and told E.J. Warner that a few Christians met each Sunday morning for a Bible reading at the home of an elderly couple, Mr. and Mrs. Hector Munro, at 118 NE 4th Street. The Warners went the following Sunday and met the Munros, Mr. Stephen Wall, and Mr. and Mrs. William Clifford.

E.J. Warner wrote to Benjamin Bradford and mentioned the Bible Class they were attending, as they had found

no assembly with which to meet. Both Bradford and Samuel McEwen had been praying about a gospel effort in south Florida, and took this letter as an answer to prayer. A short time later, Sam McEwen arrived and attended the Bible Class with the Warners; Mr. Bradford came soon after.

In 1918 these two pitched a tent on the corner of NW 7th Street and 4th Avenue, where they preached the Gospel nightly for two months. The first convert was Mr. Conlon's wife, Jenny. Birge and Jenny Roberts were saved at tent meetings in 1919 when Sam McEwen was joined by W.G. Smith. Soon the group outgrew their small room at the Munro's home, so Mr. Clifford rented Tompkins Hall on N. Miama Avenue between 3rd and 4th Streets, where the first Breaking of Bread was held. In 192l, Mr. Warner selected and purchased a lot on NW 29th Street near Miami Avenue, then deeded it over to the trustees. The 29th Street Gospel Hall was completed in 1922.

Many of the well known brethren evangelists ministered during these early years, including Benjamin Bradford, William Matthews, W. J. McClure, W. H. Hunter, W. G. Smith, and H. G. McEwen. Many Christians came from the northern states during the winter and proved to be a blessing. George Walker and his wife, who had served in Cuba since 1941, came to Miami in 1961.

In the 1960s, the brethren in the 29th Street Gospel Hall offered their building for Spanish work whenever it was not in use. The neighborhood was by that time seventy-five percent Spanish.

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In 1924, a number of people left the 29th Street Gospel Hall to meet in the home of Carl Gustafson at 1080 NW 38th Street, Miami. Fred Coombs built and furnished a simple hall at 2416 NW 7th Court for the meeting. This was known as Ebenezer Gospel Hall and the assembly grew for a few years. The fellowship included the families of Fred Coombs, Carl Gustafson, George Mingo Sr., Reginal Morgan, Arthur Christie, Homer Evans, Knowels, Chris Nelson, and Sadie Roberts, Della Jackson, and Anne and Margaret Harrison.

In about 1930, Fred Coombs decided to go out as an evangelist, but returned after several harrowing experiences. Because of a disagreement as to his subsequent support, the majority left Ebenezer and began a new work as the Coconut Grove Assembly, renting Carpenter's Hall in the Coconut Grove area for their meeting place. These were joined by several people from the 29th Street Gospel Hall. Among those in the Coconut Grove Assembly were the families of E. J. Warner, William McCartney, William Thompson, and Carl Gustafson.

In November of 1949, a small store front building was leased for one year on NW 54th Street, between 14th and 15th Avenues in a middle class neighborhood. The 15 believers took the name Central Gospel Chapel for their meeting place. The neighborhood was canvassed, gospel literature distributed, and a Sunday school started. In about six months, 160 people were in attendance. The members of the fellowship purchased a plot of land in the 1400 block on NW 53rd Street and erected a chapel, which was first occupied in June 1950. Individuals with responsibilities at that time included

Carl, Gordon, and Don Gustafson, William McCartney, Benjamin Bradford, Carter Bundy, and Eric Young.

The Family Bible Hour and Sunday School at Central Gospel Chapel grew into the 400s and on a few occasions there were over 500 present on Sunday mornings. The facilities were expanded as the fellowship grew. Three large Sunday School busses and a number of station wagons were used to help with the transportation.

After some years the neighborhood changed and most of the families moved away. A lot at 10900 NW 19th Avenue was purchased in 1960 and a chapel was built. As the demographics of the area continued to change, the predominantly Jamaican assembly meeting in Liberty City approached the trustees with an offer to purchase the property, and the transaction was made. That assembly enlarged the building, which is known now as the Miami Gospel Chapel.

The small group meeting at Boulevard Bible Chapel in Pembroke Pines invited the Central Gospel Hall Christians to join with them, and the change was made in 1985.

* * *

Miami Gospel Hall started in 1937 at its present address, 1417 NW First Place. John and Hester Higgs had moved from Key West to Miami with their family, and witnessed to Calvin and Eunice Thompson, who came to salvation, and thus Miami Gospel Hall was formed. John Higgs and Calvin Thompson both preached outdoors on Sunday evenings; others were saved, and the work grew under their leadership.

Edward Lightbourne and his wife came to the states in 1950, and joined the Miami Gospel Hall. They initiated a program that attracted lots of children; some were saved and led their loved ones to the Lord. John Higgs, Calvin Thompson, Edward Lightbourne, and William Rolle are among those who have assumed leadership in the assembly over the years. The work has always remained small.

Mr. Lightbourne went to Moody Bible Institute in 1953, and from there to New York City, where he helped in the formation of the Corona assembly, evidently Galilee Gospel Chapel. They returned to Miami in 1965. Some of the saints at Miami Gospel Hall wanted to expand, but the Lightbournes felt that the Lord would have them develop the work at 1781 NW 73rd Street in Liberty City. As the assembly grew, it purchased the former Central Gospel Chapel and became known as the Miami Gospel Chapel. The Lightbournes remained, however, in fellowship at Miami Gospel Hall.

When Hurricane Andrew blew through, the old Miami Gospel Hall was blown down, and the Christians there moved to other assemblies. Bethel Gospel Chapel in Fort Lauderdale was born out of Miami Gospel Hall.

* * *

The assembly meeting at Hialeah Gospel Chapel started in 1954 and met in its new chapel for the first time in November 1957. This was the work with which the Van Ryn family was identified for so many years. By 1990, the city of Hialeah was nearly all Cuban, and the Christians of the assembly sold their property to a group who could reach that Spanish-speaking community. Some of the believers then merged into other English-

speaking meetings in the area. A small group decided to stay in an area adjacent to Hialeah with the desire of maintaining a small English-speaking work for those who might be interested. After meeting for some time in a Lion's Club building, these believers rented space in a Seventh Day Adventist building. They occupied several locations before disbanding in about the mid 1980s.

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North Dade Bible Chapel in Miami began in 1981, the result of efforts by Sanford Fray, Reginald Warren, and Charles Astwood, who presented the Gospel through films on prophecy. The assembly has also been known as Carol City Community Church and Faith Missionary Bible Church, its present name. Elders have been Sanford Fray, Lloyd Sawyers, and Derrick Bourne. About 32 are in active fellowship, with 20 to 25 children in the Sunday School.

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The Hollywood Bible Chapel has roots extending back before November 1937. Several families from the Hollywood area of Greater Miami would drive to the 29th Street Gospel Hall for Sunday services, and others went to Bible Truth Chapel. Then in November 1937, the Lord's Supper was held at 1932 Fillmore Street, Hollywood, the home of Miss Yeager and Mrs. Lily Wolstenholme. These meetings continued through the spring of 1938, then started again in the fall of 1938 and continued through May 1939.

In October 1939, Mr. and Mrs. J. Baum, "Jac" Yaeger, Lily Wolstenholme, the R. L. Conlons, and the A.R. Crockers arranged for the rental of Carpenter's Hall near Polk St. on North Dixie Highway. The first Gospel

meeting was held there in November, and the first Lord's Supper and the first baptism were celebrated in March 1940. The assembly took the name Hollywood Gospel Chapel at that time.

The Christians soon knew they needed their own building. An abandoned store at 2244 Hollywood Boulevard was purchased and remodeled in early 1941. A larger building was needed again as the assembly grew, so the adjacent lot was purchased in December 1950. Hollywood Gospel Chapel held its 3rd Annual week-long Bible Conference in March 1951. A main auditorium was built and completed by November 1951. In 1954, a Bible school classroom wing was built, and several expansions have been made since then. The name change to Hollywood Bible Chapel was made in 1978.

More than 350 adults and children attended the family Bible Hour and Sunday School on Easter Sunday morning in 1990, and as many as 450 have been in attendance. Hollywood Bible Chapel has a large bus ministry. In the winter a gathering in another part of the building for French Canadian visitors has met with the help of Cyril Shontoff. Part of this group was involved in a beach ministry as well.

* * *

In 1953 a group of about 70 Christians living in the Fort Lauderdale area, left the Hollywood Gospel Chapel to form a new assembly known as Fort Lauderdale Gospel Chapel, which became a large and thriving work and is now called Fort Lauderdale Bible Chapel.

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Boulevard Bible Chapel in Pembroke Pines, at Hollywood Boulevard and 69th Terrace, began as the West Hollywood Assembly. Their building was in need of repair so when families from other Miami area assemblies moved into the area, it brought an infusion of needed workers and funds. The Florida Gospel Pioneers bought the building in late 1957, then turned it over to the growing assembly. Over a period of three years the believers forged a thriving fellowship with a totally remodeled building, a new outreach into the surrounding community, and the new name. Evangelist William Brown devoted practically his full time to this work from its inception.

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Boca Raton Bible Chapel opened in 1970 at 3900 NW 3rd Avenue, its current address. James Humphrey, Donald Parker, Stanley Davis, Jack Hyser, and Allison Hopper were those starting the assembly. Those men, and more recently Jack Smith, Jack Miller, Perry Pasquale, Harold Buirkle, Keith Brown, and Douglas Waters have been in leadership. Boca Raton Bible Chapel has commended workers to labor among Hindus in England. About 100 are in the assembly in the winter months, with fewer in the summer.

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Bethany-Chapel-By-The-Sea in Cocoa Beach was erected in early 1959 at South Patrick Shores, 4355 N. Atlantic Avenue through the efforts of the Florida Gospel Pioneers, cooperating with brethren living in the Cape Canaveral area. In the fall of 1959 Dan Snaddon served the Lord there full time. An addition was necessary in 1960, and was fully financed by the assembly itself. On

Easter Sunday morning 1961, the attendance reached 404.

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Boynton Bible Chapel in Boynton Beach began in 1984. After its initial meetings in a high school, the assembly purchased a church building in nearby Lantana in 1986, calling it Pinewood Bible Chapel in Lantana. Bill and Ena Crouse, Ian and Mary Purdie, and Charlie and Betty McMillan were those who started the assembly. Irvin Robertson and Bron Carlisle were involved in teaching and ministering the Word. Bill Crouse and Ian Purdie were the first elders, followed by John Tardonia, Steve Anderson, and others. About 150 adults and youngsters attend Pinewood Bible Chapel.

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The assembly meeting at Bethesda Gospel Chapel in West Palm Beach was in existence by 1951. Mr. and Mrs. Germany were active and much esteemed by the assembly.

* * *

Palm Bible Chapel in North Palm Beach started in a home in September 1961. A dozen couples from the Bethesda Gospel Chapel in West Palm Beach had desired to establish a corporate testimony in their own neighborhood, to be a center for Bible teaching, missions, and evangelism. Because their history had marked three of the men as elders, it was agreed that these should function as the recognized overseers of the new church until the Spirit of God should raise up more. C.E. Tatham took up residence there to work in the new assembly.

For the first six months Palm Bible Chapel was a household church. With the help of the Florida Gospel Pioneers and Stewards Foundation, a parcel was purchased and a building seating 250 was erected. By 1971, Palm Bible Chapel had a functional building with a fully equipped Sunday School and an auditorium seating 425.

Palm Bible Chapel operated a daily morning radio broadcast and an extensive tape ministry of Sunday morning sermons and other Bible studies. The Chapel spawned many neighborhood Bible Classes. The Lord's Supper was held on Sunday evening since the inception of the work. At the beginning this attracted only the committed core, but this meeting grew both in numbers and in spiritual exercise. The weekly prayer meeting averaged around 100, including dozens of young people.

* * *

Grace and Truth Bible Fellowship in West Palm Beach began in 1997 as a result of the closing of Bethesda Gospel Chapel in that city. The assembly met in homes until December 1997 when they moved into the Cross Creek Condominium clubhouse. In 1998, the numbers were increased when some Christians from the assembly at Pinewood Bible Chapel in Lantana joined with Grace and Truth Bible Fellowship. The original organizers were Alfredo Palmer, David Marot, and Furman Martin, later joined by George Cox. These and David Hull, John Mollenhaver, and Don Gustafson Jr. have exercised leadership in the assembly, which has not recognized elders to this point. Attendance is greatest in the winter, then totaling about 25 adults.

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Grace Bible Sanctuary in Melbourne on the east coast below Cape Canaveral, began in 1980 as Saved by Grace Bible Sanctuary. The assembly has met in rented quarters on E. New Haven Avenue, on E. University Boulevard, on Monroe Street, and now meets at 52 E. Line Street. The assembly was begun by Myrue, Patricia, Dorothy, and Jonathan Spivey; Charles and Linda Butler; and Johnny and Denice Bentley. Leadership over the years include Myrue Spivey, Bradley King, Emmanuel Collins, Jim Mantorelli, Waymar Aldridge, Carlton Stewart, Charles Hendricks, and David Diez. Workers have been commended by the assembly to the Haitian community in Fort Lauderdale and elsewhere. Grace Bible Sanctuary has about 50 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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Frostproof Bible Chapel, in the town of Frostproof in the middle of the state began in 1977 in a home on the property of Shepherd Christian Retirement Community. The assembly later moved its meetings to the chapel of the retirement community, where it meets now. Frostproof Bible Chapel was started by Ben Bradford, Ed Armstrong, Alan Walker, Leslie Harris, and Norwood Latimer. Those in leadership over the years include Ron Tewson, Carroll Van Ryn, William Clark, Jim McKendrick, Jim Dunbar, Charles Pinches, John Barclay, and Milton Pruitt. The assembly has commended Carroll Van Ryn as a home worker. About 75 adults are in the fellowship in the winter months, and fewer in the summer.

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In 1959, two small assemblies in the Orlando area decided to join forces. The larger of the two had been meeting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Rainey in Sorrento, 20 miles northwest of Orlando. The smaller group met in the Osborne Lepage home in Orla Vista, five miles west of the city center. The combined strength of the two groups was only 40, including children.

Meeting first in the town of Mt. Plymouth, near Sorrento, the merged assembly later met in Maynard Evans High School in the Pine Hills section of Orlando. Leaders at that time were Raymond White, Svend Christiensen, Robert Willey, and Ed Scott. Bob Harper gave several years to the development of this and other Orlando area assemblies. In 1960, the assembly had purchased property in nearby Hiawassa Highland, with help from Stewards Foundation and the Florida Gospel Pioneers. The inaugural service in the new Hiawassa Hills Chapel, was in April 1961, at which time the assembly had grown to about 50.

Over the years, Ed Scott, Louis Capeci, Ted Dippy, Keith Dilley, Don Pell, and Jim Hislop have served as elders. Now called Hiawassa Bible Chapel, the assembly consists of about 200 adults and youngsters. The assembly has commended about 20 people to the Lord’s work.

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In 1963 five of the Hiawassa families, three of them from the original merger, began meeting in Dover Shore School. They were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Tom Willey. In September 1966, this group broke ground for a chapel at Lake Howell, seven miles northeast of downtown Orlando. The new building, called Lake Howell Bible

Chapel, was opened April 1967. It was built with a vision for growth, having a seating capacity of 220 to 250, several times the size of the congregation. Hugh MacDonald, commended by an assembly in Scotland, came in February 1972 to enter into the outreach of the Lake Howell Bible Chapel.

* * *

Several families from Winter Garden began attending meetings at Hiawassa Hills in 1963. Disappointed in the modernism and heavy organization of the large denomination to which they belonged, they wanted a Bible Chapel in Winter Garden. Svend Christensen, who had pioneered extensively in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, started a Bible Class for them, about 20 people. In May 1965, they rented the city auditorium for Sunday night meetings. Later they moved to a school so that Sunday School classes could begin. The first Breaking of Bread meeting of the Winter Park assembly was in March 1966. Winter Garden Bible Chapel seating 100, was constructed in 1972.

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An Emmaus summer team, operating from the Hiawassa Hills Chapel, held a Vacation Bible School at Bear Lake in the northwest section of Orlando in 1967. The results were so encouraging that a group of Orlando brethren made the down payment on a 2.5 acre lot a few months later, and an assembly was begun in a nearby Community Center. Stewards Foundation granted a loan, and a building was begun. Bear Lake Bible Chapel was officially opened in November 1970. David Vander Noot and Harlan Brown were among the initiators of the assembly. Those and Bob Harper, Phil Guikema, and

Dennis Petry have been in leadership. Bear Lake Bible Chapel has about 70 in attendance.

* * *

At Deland, between Orlando and Daytona Beach, the assembly now meeting at Deland Gospel Hall began as Deland Gospel Assembly in 1975. The originators were Bill Walker and Bob Brant, along with several others. In leadership over the years have been Anthony Orsini, Phil Colella, and Bob Brant. About 15 persons are in the assembly today.

* * *

Ocala Bible Chapel in the mid-Florida city of Ocala, north of Orlando, has its roots in a Bible study held in the home of John Suess in 1975, where Bob Saunders and John Suess and their wives been meeting with others. Three couples decided to organize themselves as American Bible Church. They became interested in New Testament principles of gathering and invited Ernest Woodhouse to meet with them for instruction; soon they were meeting as an assembly.

After meeting in homes for six months, they rented Pythian Hall for Sunday meetings. In 1978 they purchased a building, financed through Stewards Foundation, at their present location of 729 NE 2nd Street in Ocala, calling it Ocala Bible Chapel. This historic building was originally the first Jewish temple in the city, built in1888.

The originators of the assembly are Ernie Woodhouse, and the Robert Saunders, John Suess, Smith, and Donahue families. Godfrey Weir, Art Auld, Howard Derby, Jack McLaughlin, John and Paul Barnard, and Al

Nye have been in leadership over the years. About 50 persons attend the assembly, which is multi-cultural with believers from Jamaica and various places in the U.S. and Canada.

* * *

Park of the Palms Church in Keystone Heights, near Gainesville, began in 1970, Robert Willey and Frank Waardenburg being among those who started the assembly. Ernest Woodhouse also had an early leadership role in the assembly. Occupying the same grounds as the Park of the Palms Retirement Homes, the assembly is comprised largely of Christians who live there or who come for a vacation at facilities on the 23-acre property. Winter attendance approaches 200, while about 100 persons attend the assembly in the summer months. An eight-week annual winter conference is a highlight of the assembly, attended by people from throughout the continent. Local outreach is made through Bible classes conducted by teachers in the assembly. Ernest and Joyce Woodhouse have been commended to the Lord's work by Park of the Palms Church.

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The assembly meeting at Bible Truth Chapel in Gainesville was called Gainesville Bible Chapel when it started in 1974 in a home at 4828 NW 143rd Street. It moved in 1987 to its current address at 13410 Archer Road. A hive-off from Ocala Bible Chapel, it was started by Guy McDaniel, Lyman Loche, Jerry Svetlik, Roy Pell, and Clarence Irwin. These and William Grant and Robert Shevlin have shared in leadership. About 30 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

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The Jackson Assembly of Christians in Jacksonville in northern Florida began in 1954, with its first meetings at the local YMCA. After that the assembly met at several locations before purchasing a lot at 2701 Dean Road in 1958 and constructing Dean Road Chapel in 1959. In the mid 1980s, the Christians changed the name to Southside Bible Chapel. The original group who started the assembly includes William Perry, Hollis Johnson, Ralph Butler, Garland Lester, Jack Lees, Hubert Fancette, Sam Sergent, and R.T. Elliott. These and Jerry Powers, Mike Lester, Dave Eastman, and Larry Price have been in leadership. The assembly has commended several workers to the mission field and full-time work at home. About 40 people are in Southside Bible Chapel.

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Grace Bible Chapel in Niceville in the Florida panhandle, began in 1987 in the Paul Carmean home. This was the first assembly in that region, the closest established works then being in Montgomery, AL, and Albany and Thomasville, GA, about 100 miles distant. The Carmeans had been in fellowship at Riverview Chapel in Hinton, WV, which has been supportive of the newer work. Grace Bible Chapel now meets in rented space in a store front. Four main families share leadership and teaching responsibilities, with about 12 adults in fellowship.

* * *

Forest Lake Bible Church in Niceville began as the Open Door Bible Church in 1971, and was not affiliated with the brethren at that time. Those who started the Open Door Bible Church were Jack Murphy, Ed Avery, Phil

Lacy, and Harold Thomas. Over the years, a number of people from brethren backgrounds chose to worship there. The Lord's leading and study of Scripture convinced the leadership and the people of New Testament principles of church governance.

The Christians affiliated with the brethren assemblies in 1991, having changed their name by then to Forest Lake Bible Church. The assembly met for a few months in an elementary school in Fort Walton Beach before moving to its present location at 1000 37th Street.

In active leadership over the years have been those mentioned above, plus Dave Baker, Jung Leong, Dave Bergman, Bob Grete, Arnold Dykman, Joe Vetter, Pat Tidwell, Tom Marinello, and George Kaim. Forest Lake Bible Church has commended workers to Papua New Guinea, Emmaus Bible College, and Rocky Bayou Christian School in Niceville. George Kaim is commended as a resident worker at Forest Lake. About 50 adults and children attend the assembly.

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Holiday, Tarpon Springs, and New Port Richey are towns north of Tampa Bay and near the Gulf coast. The Tarpon Springs Assembly was apparently started by V. Phillips, a Greek immigrant. In 1951, he remodeled a house into a comfortable hall for the meeting. He labored there for years. Holiday Bible Chapel was started in the late 1950s by some of the younger people from Grace Gospel Chapel in St. Petersburg. They started in a store building but later bought land and built the chapel that they continue to occupy. They have a good Sunday school, though most of the people in the assembly are now senior citizens. Bible Truth Chapel in New Port

Richey started in the early 1960s. They met at first in the backroom of a bookstore. Sometime before 1970, they built their chapel on Massachusetts Avenue in New Port Richey. Charles Faulkner and Mr. Schultz were among those who started the assembly.

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Grace Gospel Chapel in St. Petersburg was started in the late 1930s by people from the north who had retired, including Sam McCartney. Among those who came later and found work in St. Petersburg were Wally Hall, a paint store owner, and Mr. MacGregor, a builder. A Sunday school was started which grew to over 200 for a while. They built the chapel on 5th Street in the early 1940s, and it is still being used. The wing was built in 1956. Later many moved away and the assembly declined. It is considerably larger in the winter when there are visitors from the north.

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A Palm Harbor Assembly, north of Clearwater in the Tampa Bay area existed for a time, and had an outreach into Jamaican fruit pickers' camps in the 1950s.

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Cornerstone Bible Chapel in Clearwater began in the home of Bill and Karen Davis. Mrs. Davis had played a leading role in two large non-denominational women's Bible studies for many years. The Davises had also been conducting a home Bible study as a vehicle for Christian growth. When the believers in these studies found they were of like mind, they began Breaking Bread together in late 1994, desiring to form a fellowship based on New Testament principles of meeting rather than joining with

existing churches in the area. Soon, Tim and Karen McDermott, neighbors of the Davises, joined with the embryonic fellowship, and both homes were used. Most of the people had no brethren background except for the Davises and the John Finns who had been in fellowship at Brooksville Bible Chapel in a small town about 60 miles north of Clearwater.

After the early period, the assembly met for a time in a school in the Long Center, then in a warehouse, and in an exercise gym. In 1998, Cornerstone Bible Chapel purchased property in nearby Dunedin, anticipating occupation in 1999. Those most active in leadership include Bill Davis, Mike Barlow, Speck Ansers, and Frank Brzezinski. About 60 persons regularly attend.

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Central Bible Chapel in Tampa was originally known as Tampa Gospel Hall, and later as Florida Avenue Chapel. The present building was built by Michael Hughey in the mid 1950s. Woody Murphy was the first full-time worker, followed by Wayne Carter, son-in-law to Mr. Hughey. The assembly has a large young people's group. The chapel has a gymnasium, which is used for Awana and other programs.

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Carrollwood Bible Chapel, in a suburb north of Tampa, was started in 1983 by David Binnie, Conrad Campbell, Paul Krokenburger, Mike Gentile, and Paul Zapadenko. Some of the believers came from Tampa's Central Bible Chapel. The assembly met first at the Carrollwood Civic Center, until their chapel was constructed in 1986. David Binnie, Conrad Campbell, and Mike Gentile have been the elders. Carrollwood Bible Chapel has

commended a worker to Brazil. About 80 adults and children are in the assembly.

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North 56th Street Gospel Chapel in Tampa is also a hive-off from Central Gospel Chapel and has a good cultural mix of people from the continent and the Caribbean islands. Founded in 1966, it was known first as North Tampa Gospel Chapel and met in the Riverhills Elementary school cafeteria. In 1968, land was purchased and construction of the present chapel was completed, and the name North 56th Street Chapel was taken. The founding families were the Bennetts, Grattons, Greens, Huenishces, Peterkins, Paynes, Thisses, and Touzeaus. Over the last 20 years the leadership has consisted of Alfred Adams, Jerry Balloon, Raymond Montgomery, Pembroke Peterkin, and Ed Pawasarat. About 60 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

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The assembly at Lockwood Ridge Gospel Chapel in Sarasota, south of Tampa, began in 1968. Chartered as Saramana Bible Center, Inc., it took its present name after a few years. Those who began the assembly are Wesley E. Erickson, James P. Fraser, John A. Walford, and J.E. Hoffman. These, with Isaac Selby, Wendell E. Bearce, and Percy Sutton have been the elders. About eight persons attend the assembly in the summer months, and up to 20 in the winter months.

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The Church of the Open Door in Sarasota began in a home in 1980. One of its originators had been in

fellowship at Believer's Chapel in Dallas, TX. Since that time, the assembly has met in the West Coast Symphony Building and the Girl's Club building, and now has returned to the home where it started. Chuck Nixon and Brian Chase started the assembly. Those and Steve Ponchot, Scott Schurr, and Bruce Ewing have been in leadership over the years. The Church of the Open Door has about 35 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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## Georgia

In the early 1930s, Owen Hoffman pitched his tent in a rural community some 15 miles from the town of Washington, which is about 50 miles northwest of Augusta. The tent was usually full to overflowing, and many were saved or strengthened in these meetings. When winter came, the new believers asked to have the Gospel meetings in their homes. Some were baptized and began meeting as an assembly in a rented one-room rural school house. Two brothers who took the lead in the new unnamed assembly were R.R. Whittington and Ned Stamey.

The tent was pitched again the next year in several places nearby, including Washington. Souls were saved despite opposition from townspeople. The following summer, Mr. Hoffman pitched his tent in another town, again with many saved. About 60 were baptized in a pond one Sunday afternoon. Many of these were expelled from their churches because of their baptism as believers.

About 50 of these believers then purchased some land in the country and built a chapel with an adjacent cemetery. The name of this chapel is not known. The work grew, and several full-time brothers ministered, including John Bramhall, Douglas Ibbotson, Frank Detweiler, and Lawrence Chambers.

When people began moving out of the rural areas, this assembly and the one in the school house merged and built a new two-storied brick chapel in 1949 in the town of Washington, calling it Washington Chapel. The

assembly still occupies this building. Allen Rogers, Aage Hoffman, Carl Dawson, and Peter Hoffmann are among those who have led the work at Washington Chapel.

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In the 1930s, H.P. Crowell, the Founder and President of the Quaker Oats Company, had a winter home in Augusta, in which he had a Bible Class attended by Christians from many different denominations. He invited different men to teach the class, including Virgil Hollingsworth. During this period, Virgil Hollingsworth had come in contact with brethren such as Harold Harper. He also began reading the writings of brethren who explained God's plan for the Church and began to teach this in the class at Mr. Crowell's home. However, none in that class were willing to begin a New Testament church with him.

So in 1940, the Virgil Hollingsworths, the Liddon Sheridans, and another couple Broke Bread for the first time in the Hollingsworth's home, the beginning of the first assembly in Augusta. After that they met at the Women's Club on Greene Street, then at a beauty parlor on Walton Way. At about that time Sue and Gene Hollingworth came into the fellowship. They were followed in the next few months by the families of Hartford Timmerman, Frank Tice, Lewis Douglas, and Warren Hersey. For the first couple of years or so, the assembly was called The Christian Assembly Hall.

After a couple of years of meeting in the beauty parlor, the group purchased and renovated a house on Crawford Avenue near Walton Way. At about that time, they named their meeting place Bethany Chapel. Along with other truths having to do with the Church, Virgil

realized that the Bible taught that there should be a multiplicity of elders. Gene Hollingsworth, Hartford Timmerman, and Lewis Douglas were then recognized as the oversight of Bethany Chapel, and others were added later.

Also at about that time, Owen Hoffman brought his tent to Augusta for a month of evangelistic services. Many were saved and some of them came into fellowship at Bethany Chapel. Mr. Hoffman came back on several occasions to preach in his tent or at Bethany Chapel. Other speakers at Bethany were John Bramhall, Harold Mackay, Lester Wilson, August Van Ryn, A.P. Gibbs, Harold Wildish, Richard Hill, and Welcome Detweiler.

Later the Christians purchased the house next door to the chapel to be used for Sunday School and other activities. In the mid 1940s, the Martintown Road Bible Class was started in North Augusta, and depended on speakers from Bethany Chapel to teach it. As a result a good number of these Christians came into fellowship at Bethany. Also in the 1940s, some of the brethren from Bethany Chapel, including Tip Welch, Virgil Hollingsworth, and Gene Hollingsworth, would go down almost every Sunday to help out at the Savannah Gospel Chapel.

In 1944, a large number of Christians came at about the same time, incuding the R.E. Barinowski and Thomas Stephens families. Messrs. Barinowski and Stephens were later recognized as elders. Needing more space, the assembly constructed an addition that doubled the capacity of the auditorium.

A few years later these facilities burned to the ground and a new Bethany Chapel was constructed on Milledge

Road. A house on the lot was used to house visiting speakers and others, and a gymnasium was constructed later.

A large number of soldiers were stationed at Fort Gordon in those days. The young people's group distributed tracts and invited the service men to Bethany Chapel for refreshments and to attend the Gospel Meeting. During the first year, they averaged having eight new soldiers each Sunday. As many as forty service men came on some Sundays. The Christians at Bethany faithfully continued this work for about twenty years, the sisters particularly, being willing to furnish meals and refreshments for this effort. Many of the service men professed faith in the Lord Jesus. One of the service men who came to the meetings was Tom Taylor, who received encouragement to go to Bible School and spend the rest of his life serving the Lord.

Bethany Chapel has commended several to the work of the Lord in foreign lands. A notable ministry at Bethany Chapel is the Labor Day Youth Conference. Each year hundreds of young people from different assemblies and many adults have been blessed through the activities of this conference. The present oversight at Bethany Chapel – Clarence Barinowski, T. S. Morgan, Jules Godin, and Ramon Waters – has continued this work.

In 1984, Clarence Barinowski obtained a license to operate a radio relay station in Augusta, designated as WLPE. He used this station to relay programs from Moody Broadcasting Network to the CSRA section of Georgia. and other stations in Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina.

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Not long after they were saved, Edgar and Emma Murrah came into fellowship at Bethany Chapel. Having a successful business, they purchased in 1969 three buildings on Broad Street, which they converted into a chapel. In 1970 four families, including the Murrahs, established an assembly known as the Harrisburg Gospel Center. Several years later a chapel was built at 120 Grace Street, not far from the original location. This building has since been sold and those left in fellowship are gathering in nearby Martinez.

A few years after the Harrisburg Gospel Center was started, the Murrahs purchased a farm south of Augusta and established The Gospel Farm. Its purpose was to help young adults experiencing times of trouble. As a result many of them were saved. Warren Hylton, who worked with Edgar and was in fellowship at the Harrisburg Gospel Center, helped with this project. This property has been sold and The Gospel Farm disbanded.

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During World War II, Lee Lohre moved to Augusta with his family to start the Augusta Rescue Mission. With the help of many local churches, including Bethany Chapel, he was able to provide and sustain this mission, a place where service men from Camp/Fort Gordon could come and be helped with their spiritual needs and enjoy recreational activities. Lee was encouraged by being asked to speak at Bethany Chapel and seeing how the meetings were conducted there. He began to read the New Testament to see what truths were revealed concerning the operation of a local church. As a result, Glendale Bible Chapel was started and still continues to operate.

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In 1971, Bernie O'Neill and Dan Hollingsworth, in fellowship at Bethany Chapel, desired to establish an assembly in South Augusta. With the blessing of Bethany, Bible studies were started in September 1972 in a rented building on Lumpkin Road. Believers Gospel Chapel in South Augusta was soon started. Within a few months, the assembly purchased a chapel on Young Drive. Later, 5.5 acres were purchased on Peach Orchard Road, where the present chapel was constructed in 1980. Since then, more Sunday School rooms and a gym have been added. In 1990, the Christians at Believers Gospel Chapel started an Easter Conference, which has continued almost every year since. Sam Thorpe, Jr. was a leading elder at Believers Gospel Chapel for many years, involved in its growth to about 200 people.

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In the latter part of 1995, Bernie O'Neill and Sam Thorpe, two of the elders at Believers Gospel Chapel, believed the Lord was leading them to start an assembly in Lincolnton, north of Augusta. With the blessings of Believers Gospel Chapel, Lakeside Bible Chapel, was established in early 1996.

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In the early 1980s, several Christians in fellowship at Bethany Chapel and who lived in North Augusta, felt the need to establish an assembly in the north part of the city. After much prayer and several meetings with the elders at Bethany Chapel, there seemed to be an agreement that this was in the will of the Lord. In January 1983, this group of Christians met for the first

time, calling their meeting place North Augusta Bible Chapel.

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In 1976, Dan Hollingsworth and Jon Reimer at Believers Gospel Chapel, Lee Lohre at Glendale Bible Chapel, Gene Sawyer of Bethany Chapel, and Sam Thorpe Jr. at Kalmia Hill Chapel, Aiken, SC, became interested in starting a Bible school in the Augusta area. The Augusta Center for Biblical Study began in September 1978, meeting first in the facilities of Believers Gospel Chapel in South Augusta. In 1980, five acres of property were purchased on the south side of the city. The new dormitory and classroom building, finished in time for the 1984-85 school year, constituted the start of a campus development program.

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About 25 miles southwest of Augusta is the town of Wrens. As an effort to regather some of a scattered flock, a few believers began meeting together to Remember the Lord in the Wrens Community House in the spring of 1967. Shortly afterward, a small vacant church building was rented and repaired, becoming known as Wrens Bible Chapel. A regular schedule of meetings was undertaken, with the Lord’s Supper given prominence. Among earlier responsible men were P.N. Powell, John F. McCoy, Albert Allen, S.M. Mallard, and Curtis Thigpen.

Some outreach ministries have included a weekly radio program covering Jefferson County, initiated by George Landis in about 1968 and continuing to this day with the ministry of a variety of preachers. Children’s work has included Sunday Schools, vacation Bible schools, and

Bible Hours. Missionary support has been accomplished through funds sent to CMML and a ladies' handicrafts program.

In 1995, some of the men formed a corporation to enable the assembly to have title to real properties pertaining to the assembly. They then purchased the old Gospel Chapel in the nearby town of Avera, and relocation was accomplished in 1998. The Avera Gospel Chapel had been built in 1931 for the meeting place of a young assembly that had resulted from Gospel tent meetings held in the area by Evangelist David Brinkman. The assembly is yet small, but looks to the future for blessing as they faithfully minister the Word.

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In 1946, Edmund and Nell Bynes from Waynesboro, south of Augusta, came into fellowship at Bethany Chapel in Augusta. Others from Waynesboro soon followed. After a time, these Christians desired to start an assembly in their home city. The elders at Bethany encouraged them, and Burkehaven Chapel in Waynesboro was begun in 1955 on Park Drive at Church Street. Edmund Byne and Claud Brown were principal movers in starting the new assembly. William McCartney, Robert Love, William Gustafson, and James Gay have been active in leadership. About 70 adults and children attend Burkehaven Chapel.

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The Savannah Gospel Chapel, now called Savannah Bible Chapel, is one of the oldest assemblies in Georgia. The earliest gatherings as an assembly were in the first decade of the twentieth century and took place in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hussey on West 39th Street,

Savannah. One of those most instrumental in teaching and encouraging others in New Testament church order was Peter Rabey, who had learned of this through contact with assemblies in South Africa during a trip there. Mr. Hussey was also a gifted Bible teacher. Others who were a part of those early gatherings were Messrs. Judson, Clifford Rowland, Stephen Rabey, Tom Rogers, and Miss Katie Wilkins.

After the first meeting in the Hussey home, the assembly moved to a locations near Henry and West Broad Street, to 115 West Park Avenue, to 115 West 40th Street, and then to the present location on Skidaway Road. Many of the well-known brethren preachers ministered at the assembly in the earlier years, of whom we mention J.D. Ibbotson, John Bramhall, and Owen Hoffman. Savannah Bible Chapel continues today, though small.

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A work hived off from the Savannah Gospel Chapel in 1997. A number of the saints attending the Savannah meeting lived in the Midway, Hinesville, and Richmond Hill areas south of Savannah and about 30 miles from the chapel. These families met in the homes of Tommy Taylor and Brooks Williams for prayer and Bible study on Wednesday nights. As this meting grew, they felt the need to establish a local testimony in the area. After two years of meeting, the group now numbers about 50 people. Taking the name Faith Bible Fellowship, the assembly is temporarily meeting in the chapel building at Marsh View Bible Camp in Midway. Leaders are Tommy Taylor, Brooks Williams, John Woods, and Irby Bazemore.

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T. Michael Flowers had been commended to the Lord's work in 1949 by assemblies in the Bahamas, where he had been born and raised. After he had lived four years in Michigan, Grace Tabernacle in Detroit joined in his commendation. In February 1955, Mr. Flowers moved from Detroit to Savannah, GA, near the southern tip of South Carolina, knowing of no New Testament assemblies among the black population of Georgia. Many months of door-to-door work passed before he saw his first convert or started his first Bible class, and before was he able to bring his family from Detroit. Face to face and over the air this gifted expositor preached the Gospel. He worked also in South Carolina, where he saw the Beaufort Bible Chapel established in 1958.

In 1967, a summer tent crusade was held in Savannah with Tom Skinner as the evangelist. Some 85 out-of-state helpers, half of them young people from the Bahamas, called door-to-door with literature. When the Crusade concluded in August it was followed by about four weeks of Bible teaching and instruction in New Testament principles for the young converts. The crusade gave birth to the Berean Bible Chapel, located on Highway 175, the site where the tent had been pitched.

Berean Bible Chapel was dedicated in February 1968. The speaker was Ed Allen of Nassau, Bahamas, editor of Evangelistic Crusade and director of the Gospel Bells broadcast.

By 1976 there were at least three assemblies in Georgia and four in South Carolina, brought into being largely through the efforts of Mr. Flowers. Besides the two mentioned, these were Community Bible Chapel in Atlanta and Glendale Bible Chapel in Augusta; in South

Carolina, they were Grace Tabernacle in Charleston, Grace Bible Chapel, North Charleston, and Grace and Truth Gospel Chapel in St. Helena .

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The assembly meeting at Albany Gospel Chapel in the city of Albany in the southwestern part of the state, began in February 1955. It was instigated by the efforts of a business man, Jacob Bishop, and established by the ministry of Lester Wilson.

Lester Wilson had been pioneering in the Piedmont area of North Carolina. His friend, Jake Bishop of Albany, knowing that Mr. Wilson needed a break, begged him to come to Albany to recuperate and get his strength back. The Bishops had also long wanted a work started in Albany. Mr. Wilson came in the latter part of 1954 and taught at the Bible study group in the Bishop's home. Those who heard him and saw his ability to explain and teach the Bible were impressed with the power of his presentation of the Word. The Bishops urged him to stay in Albany and establish an assembly there. After much prayer by many, he made the decision to reside in Albany for that purpose. Albany became a permanent settlement for him for the rest of his active days.

To gather a group of interested persons, Messrs. Wilson and Bishop rented a Youth for Christ building. Mr. Wilson established a radio broadcast and Bible studies in various homes. The first assembly in Albany was thus formed in 1955. On the lot adjacent to the building, Mr. Bishop, a building contractor, erected a large tent for Gospel meetings. This structure had sawdust flooring and two wood heaters. The wooden benches did not deter people from coming. In two series' on the book of

Revelation that year, Mr. Wilson preached to crowds who came to hear his message and the Gospel of salvation, and many accepted Christ.

Then it became evident that a permanent structure should be built. The lot on which the tent was located, at 2556 N. Slappey Drive, was purchased and ground breaking for the Albany Gospel Chapel was held in February 1956. Adjoining property was purchased in 1958, giving additional space for parking and a nursery building. In 1960, a large recreational building was built.

Lester Wilson faithfully preached the Word of God at the Albany Gospel Chapel for nearly 35 years. Due to declining health at age 84, he went to live in 1989 at Pittsboro Christian Retirement Village, where he died a year later. Among the early leaders of the assembly were Mac Marchman, Hugh Roach, Jake Bishop, and J. D. Gunnele.

Sunday School attendance of 150 was reported in 1956, only a year after the assembly began. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord’s service and is active today, with recognized elders and deacons, and with five gifted brothers involved in ministry from the platform.

* * *

The Macon Bible Chapel in the middle of the state, was formed in 1968. It was soon renamed Three Oaks Bible Chapel, with Jim and Linda Leaptrot, and Vaughn and Betty Sitepley being the principal instigators of the work. John Moore and Tom Skillen have shared leadership with Jim Leaptrot and Vaught Sitepley. About 40 adults and youngsters attend Three Oaks Bible

Chapel. The assembly has commended Jim Leaptrot to a preaching and pastoral ministry.

* * *

Community Bible Chapel in Atlanta began in January 1971, the fruit of many years of prayer on the part of T. Michael Flowers and Mrs. Barbara Simon of Atlanta. Mr. and Mrs. John W. Moore, Jr., formerly of Detroit, had moved to Atlanta and labored abundantly for the Lord among the black population. About 30 to 35 people were in the assembly in 1971, which then met in the Joseph B. Whitehead Branch YMCA of Atlanta for morning services on the Lord's day.

* * *

The North Atlanta Gospel Chapel at 1475 Druid Hills Road in Atlanta, had come into being by the late 1940s. By 1985, it had changed its name to North Atlanta Bible Chapel. In the summer of 1992, several families attending the North Atlanta Bible Chapel felt a need to start a new assembly in Gwinnett County. With the blessings of the elders at North Atlanta, 12 families began meeting for prayer and Bible study about this effort. In 1993 a transition leadership team was recognized, and in September 1994, the group met for the first time as an assembly in a rented day care facility on Wynne Russell Drive.

Attendance grew steadily from the first Sunday's attendance figure of 51. In 1995, the assembly moved into a larger day-care facility on Indian Trail Road. Later that year, property was purchased, and the first meeting in the Gwinnett Bible Chapel occurred at the end of 1996. George Groezinger, Charles Brown, and John

Stewart are the elders. About 110 attend the assembly today.

* * *

In the late 1940s, Charles and Betty Fouche, who had been in fellowship at Bethany Chapel in Augusta, moved to Atlanta. For a while they fellowshipped at the North Atlanta Gospel Chapel. Then Charles Fouche and others started Northwoods Chapel in Doraville, a suburb of Atlanta. This meeting grew rapidly and in a few years they were able to construct a chapel. This meeting continued into the 1990s.

Sources:

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Gwinnett Bible Chapel – Chronology, anonymous, 1998

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Lester Wilson and Albany Gospel Chapel, by Harold P. Henriksin, February 1998

Letters of Interest, November 1949, p. 3; January 1956, p. 19; November 1956, p. 7; June 1959, p. 11; February 1968, p. 4; April 1971, p. 16; October 1976, p. 14; April 1985, p. 16; January 1985, p. 11

## South Carolina

Florence Bible Chapel was begun in 1937 by John W. Bramhall. Initially on Gregg Avenue in Florence, it later moved to its current location at 1400 Second Loup Road. Leadership over the years has been shared by Bill

Anderson, Henry Blackwell, John Wenteler, Fred Kosin, Ernie Gross, Robert Floyd, Allen Montrose, and George Kirk. In the late 1990s, the assembly had about 45 in attendance on a Sunday.

* * *

Community Bible Fellowship in Florence began in 1973 as an off-shoot of Florence Bible Chapel. After their first meeting in the chapel of a funeral home, the small group of Christians met for a year in the community room of a local bank. During this time they purchased a lot on the west side of Florence, and the chapel was ready by the end of 1974. Fred Kosin, E.J. Creel, George Crow, Phil Baugh, and J.L. Windom were those involved in the start-up. Leadership over the years has been shared by Fred and Roy Kosin, John Pritchett, Don Chambers, Sam Munnerlyn, David Strawn, and Robert Meyers. About 25 adults and youngsters are in the assembly, which has commended workers to the Lord’s service at home and abroad.

* * *

Soon after Bethany Chapel in Augusta, GA was formed in 1940, the Warren Herseys, in fellowship there, moved to the capital city of Columbia, where with James T. Rawls they were able to establish an assembly. The Christians first Broke Bread in June 1944 in the home of E. Quattlebaum at 2502 Devine Street. Before then, some of these Christians were aware of some scriptural gathering principles, and had contacted John Bramhall of Florence and Virgil Hollingsworth, Jr. of Augusta, GA. When these two preachers came, the new assembly received the Word with a ready mind. A year later there

were more than 40 in fellowship in the new Bethany Chapel in Columbia.

In 1946, Gene and Sue Hollingsworth were invited to move to Columbia from Augusta to help to build up Bethany Chapel, and this they did for three years. Bethany Chapel has moved through four locations, always keeping the same name.

The young assembly was greatly helped by soldiers stationed at nearby Fort Jackson. Bethany Chapel in Augusta sent one of their number to minister quite frequently, and helped by arranging for speakers with engagements in Augusta to spare a few days extra in Columbia. John Bramhall continued in contact with the Bethany assembly in Columbia. The assembly has commended several to the work of the Lord.

* * *

Believers Chapel in Columbia started in 1975, principally by Henry Blackwell, Shockley Few, and Dave Johnson from Bethany Chapel. Meeting first in the Carpenter's Union Hall, the Christians moved to 3106 Broad River Road in 1978. This assembly has commended workers to the Lord's service in Italy, Germany, and Turkey.

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In November 1941 a Sunday school and Gospel work was started in a Government building at Navy Yard, just north of Charleston, on the Atlantic coast. Walter Nelson assisted in the work in the beginning. The activities were soon moved to a tent on a vacant lot and the Navy Yard Assembly was established. Although there were only five or six in the newly formed assembly, the need

of a suitable building was felt. The lot was purchased and construction was commenced in November, 1942. The Lord provided for the building of the chapel through the self sacrificing of the few who were responsible for the work and through the gifts of individuals and assemblies, chiefly in Chicago.

In January 1943, J. D. Ibbotson came from Savannah and helped in completing the chapel as well as conducting regular meetings. R. E. Tewson, then in the army, was active in the work. The building was formally opened in April.

Sunday School attendance reached 335 at the peak of World War II. In 1946, the Sunday school attendance still averaged close to 200. The work was started as a wartime effort for the benefit of the Navy Yard and other workers. After the war, most of the families moved from the area, and the Navy Yard Assembly disbanded after a few years.

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Whipper Barony Bible Chapel in Charleston was a follow-up work from the Navy Yard Assembly. In 1974 the assembly relocated and became known as Jamison Road Bible Chapel.

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In the early 1980s, the Summerville Bible Fellowship, northwest of Charleston, branched off from Jamison Road Bible Chapel. For the first few years, the Christians met at Hickory Street in Summerville, then moved to the present location at 10428 Dorchester Road. This was originally a house, but has been remodeled and an auditorium added.

The men primarily involved in getting the assembly started, and who remain active in the work are Walter Elliott Jr., Charles Ridgway, Walter Elliott III, Ted Fry, and David Drumheller. Approximately 50 people, including children, are in the meeting.

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The North Charleston Bible Chapel started in 1970 as a branch off from Wipper Barony Bible Chapel. It continued for about 15 years until it disbanded, its people joining with Summerville Bible Fellowship and Jamison Road Bible Chapel.

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Christians from Aiken and Granitevelle, SC and the adjoining areas just east of Augusta, GA were attending a Bible Class in Graniteville in the early 1950s, conducted by Gene Hollingsworth and later by Virgil Hollingsworth. From these beginnings, the Colleton Avenue Chapel in Aiken was started in the spring of 1957. The assembly was initiated by Newman Sanders, Henry Beck, Kenneth Flinchune, Henry Dascher, and LaVern Sanders. E.P. “Crow” Thomas labored from 1950 to the 1990s in the assembly. In the spring of 1970, the Christians moved to Kalmia Hill Chapel.

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Two assemblies in the Charleston area began in the 1940s primarily through the work of Julian Dennis. These are Grace Bible Chapel and Grace Tabernacle.

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Overbrook Gospel Chapel in Greenville was established in 1947 by Ernie and Virginia Gross. It met first at Parker High School. The growing assembly built a

chapel at 26 Overbrook Road and moved into it in October 1949. Among those in leadership have been Ernie Gross, Edwin Shivers, William Hurlsong, Edward Goodwin, Dewitt Jones, and Alex Fields. The assembly has commended workers to Nigeria, Senegal, Zaire, Paraguay, Spain, and elsewhere.

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Bethany Bible Chapel in Conway on the eastern side of the state, began in 1960 on Oak Street, and moved in 1976 to its present address at 3304 Fourth Avenue. Hilmon and Mildred Horton, who lived in Durham and were saved under the ministry of Welcome Detwiler, were the initiators of the assembly. David Rickert, Larry Deeds, and Jeff Richert have served as elders, and are commended to full-time work in the assembly. Bethany Bible Chapel has grown, with many coming to Christ; about 200 attend the two Sunday morning services.

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Myrtle Beach Bible Chapel started in 1991 in the Alec Collette home in Conway, the result of efforts by Ken Gladden, H. Glendinning, and Alec Collette, who had been in assembly fellowship at Conway and elsewhere, and are the current elders. In 1993, the Christians rented space in Myrtle Beach and met there for about three years. The assembly now owns its own building at 2903 Church Street. About 35 adults and youngsters are in Myrtle Beach Bible Chapel.

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Believer’s Bible Chapel in Longs, at the eastern edge of the state, hived off from Bethany Bible Chapel in Conway and was established in 1980. Its initial

designation was Buck Creek Bible Chapel. The principals involved in the start-up were H.B. Horton, Paul Prince, and Larry Crabb. These and O.C. Tuck and Danny Martin have been in leadership over the years and do most of the preaching at the assembly. About 25 adults and children are in Believer's Bible Chapel.

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The assembly at Beaufort, between Savannah and Charleston, was established in 1958. Beaufort Bible Chapel was built in 1959. Paul Beverly came to the work there when T. Michael Flowers found it necessary to concentrate his efforts in Savannah. Julius Dennis labored there for some years.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Letters of Interest, November 1945, p. 21; September 1946, p. 32; November 1949, p. 3; November 1956, p. 7; June 1959, p. 11; October 1976, p. 14; January 1985, p. 11

# U.S. – Mid Atlantic

This section contains North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Washington D.C., Delaware, and Pennsylvania.

## North Carolina

The earliest work in North Carolina seems to be in Asheville in the western part of the state. The story of the Asheville Gospel Chapel starts with W. G. Smith, born in Scotland in 1884. Coming to the U.S. in 1911, he was commended to full-time Christian work about 1913. Mr. Smith moved to Asheville and first lived in a tent at the lower end of Swanannoa Avenue, from which he witnessed for the Lord Jesus. When several were saved and instructed, the Christians became interested in having the Lord's Supper. Mr. Smith instigated the building of the Asheville Gospel Hall on Alabama Avenue.

The Varner family moved to Asheville in 1921 and were among the first in fellowship. Miss Carrie Bellinger, who had moved from Columbia, SC was a devoted and useful sister in the assembly. Evangelist Robert Curry worked with the assembly in the early 1920s. W.G. Smith had tent meetings in the summers of 1924 and 1925. During the later 1920s, Fred Nugent and Andrew Foster worked in the Gospel at nearby Canton. Some who were saved there and who later came to Asheville were Opal Snyder, Mrs. Reed, and Willa King. An assembly was started in Canton but was short-lived. The Lannings moved to Asheville in the 1930s and contributed much to the Asheville assembly.

In the early 1930s, three different evangelists – James Smith, David Calderhead, and Oswald McLeod – lived in and worked out of Asheville. James Smith's initiative in 1937 brought about the purchase of property and building at 20 Hanover Street, the home for many years of the Asheville Gospel Chapel.

During the World War II years, there was much to discourage. At times Ralph Poole was the only man to carry on at many of the meetings. Mr. Poole had been saved through the ministry of Donald Ross in Savannah. The women were faithful in maintaining a Sunday School. In about 1945, James A. Innes, his wife, and their three sons moved to Asheville from Minneapolis. They were a great help to the assembly for many years. About 24 were in regular fellowship in this period. William Brown came from New Jersey to assist in the work until late 1947.

After the war, the Sunday School, which had been discontinued, was restarted and a period of growth ensued. Soon the assembly needed more room. An addition to the Ashville Gospel Chapel was made in the fall of 1947. The children's work grew through the start of a Bible school by Tom Innes and children's meetings with Ernie Gross. Some were saved and several Christians who had left the fellowship in previous years returned, so that by 1952, there was again need for more room. The lot next to the chapel was purchased. This was the time of the Korean War, and some young men who had been active in the assembly were drafted. Plans went ahead, however, and an addition was started in 1953, about the time when a Family Bible Hour was started. When the Korean War ended, some men returned. Walter Peck moved back to Asheville and

associated with the assembly. The Southeastern Workers' Conference was held there in March 1955.

A peak attendance of 145 was reached in 1958. There was a shift at this time from attendance by children whose families had no connection with the assembly, to an increase in the assembly family. By 1964, the Christians were considering a move. An offer for the Chapel property was made and accepted. Property on Old Haw Creek Road was purchased and a chapel built. The first meeting in the new building was January 15, 1967. An addition to the building was completed in the fall of 1993.

* * *

At about the same time that the work in Asheville began, a similar interest was stirring in Raleigh in the north-central part of the state, the so-called Piedmont area. The work at Raleigh dates back to before 1924, when James C. Chappell returned from World War I. He had heard about the New Testament church meetings through a fellow soldier. He discussed what he had learned with his friend David Allen. They invited Sam McEwen and W.G. Smith to come to Raleigh for a Gospel effort, and these evangelists held a tent campaign in September 1924. After the campaign, a hall was rented on Gaston Street, and the first Remembrance meeting in the Raleigh Gospel Hall was held in November 1924, attended only by David Allen, Mr. and Mrs. Chappell, and the two preachers. About a month later four other Christians had joined the circle around the table. Records of the assembly show a continuous growth in numbers.

The two evangelists returned each year for five years. Souls were saved each year. By 1931, there was an assembly with 40 in fellowship, meeting in a former church building. James Chappel, a pharmacist, carried on an extensive pastoral and visitation ministry.

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Before continuing with the work in Raleigh, we turn to the ministry of Lester Wilson in the Piedmont area of North Carolina. Mr. Wilson, more than any other individual, was responsible for the building up and maintaining of the assemblies in this area, and for instituting a modified style of meeting. He favored the use of large buildings for the meetings of the assembly, introduced the now common practice of a Sunday morning Family Bible Hour, and encouraged a strong musical program. The following are the words of Mr. Wilson from his article in Letters of Interest, month?, 1943, p. 25, with portions edited out:

...[In 1931], I came south [from Canada] with Brother Fred Nugent. We arrived in Canton, NC and after about three months we went to Raleigh where there was a hearty little assembly of around twenty; the fruit of the labors of Mr. Sam McEwen and W.G. Smith.

Mr. Nugent left me after three weeks in Raleigh and I labored alone around Raleigh for three years, having meetings mostly in rural sections. A number were saved in the following places and fruit of these meetings remain unto this day [1943]: Clayton, Six-Forks, Wendell, Wilder’s Grove, Ebenezer, and Swift Creek...

I then went to Winston-Salem about 100 miles from Raleigh... The first tent I pitched in the city was destroyed by a storm a week after it was erected. We

obtained a new one and started meetings again. After five years of labor we had an assembly of around 100 with a nice Sunday School... The Lord then exercised me about Greensboro, a city of 55,000 thirty miles away.

With the Winston work not strong enough to be left alone, the brethren still but babes in the things of God, and the interest good, the Lord led me to invite brother Harold Mackay to take over the work in Winston. This move was definitely of God as brother Mackay applied himself wholeheartedly to this work, and after four and a half years has established and built up the Winston work until today [1943] we have an assembly of around 150, with a Sunday School over 200.

... After four years in Greensboro we had an assembly of about 100 with a Sunday School over 200 and a fine big building with large auditorium and 17 Sunday School rooms. This is known as Forest Avenue Tabernacle and prior to our obtaining it, was a Baptist Church... I was helped in the Greensboro work by Mr. and Mrs. Gross who lived there about ten months, and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Brown who were with us for nine months.

While at Greensboro I opened up Burlington, a city of 20,000 about 20 miles from Greensboro. Mr. and Mrs. Gross were with me and we had two six-weeks series of meetings. The result was a nice group of Christians gathered, some saved in our meetings and other Christians contacted who were seeking food and fellowship. Mr. and Mrs. Gross stayed in Burlington until spring helping these Christians, and then moved to Florence, SC. I then went back [to Burlington] and had a six weeks series which was the best series yet in that city. The interest picked up remarkably and a number

were saved and more Christians contacted. Each Sunday afternoon we have a meeting there and from 100 to 150 attend. We expect to give them more meetings during the winter and then another summer in the gospel, by which time we should be ready to “Remember the Lord.”

After the Burlington campaign I went to Siler City, a town 35 miles away where a group of Christians were exercised about New Testament principles. This interest was contacted and helped by our radio work and these Christians built a nice tabernacle capable of holding 300. We started meetings the middle of October... some eighteen professed and a nice number of Christians were contacted and helped. The interest was excellent for a new field, up to 150 some week nights, and 235 Sunday nights. Mr. Frank Detweiler helped in this series by taking care of children’s meetings and singing, as well as noon hour meetings in factories. An assembly should be established in Siler City in the spring after a winter’s work of teaching and consolidating.

Thus we have in these parts three large, active assemblies [in 1943]: Raleigh with around 75 in fellowship; Winston-Salem with about 150; and Greensboro with 100; a possible 50 Christians in Burlington not yet breaking bread, and around 35 in Siler City not yet breaking bread. Some 800 children are in the Sunday Schools of these assemblies.

I have had five series this year... [and] some 150 radio broadcasts... and now that brother Mackay has recently moved to Greensboro, I will be free to work Burlington and Siler City...

The secret under God that has produced results in NC is going to a place and staying there until something is

done. This will take years. You can’t expect people to get saved one summer, and without any teaching or pastoring during the winter, find them going on and ready for an assembly the next summer...

Mr. Wilson continues in this article to espouse his philosophy of pioneering, which was quite different from that common in Canada and the northern part of the U.S.

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The Christians at Raleigh Gospel Hall constantly brought the Gospel to the surrounding cities and countryside. Fred W. Nugent had introduced the young Lester Wilson to Raleigh in 1931. A building at Clayton, 17 miles southeast, was made available for a Gospel campaign, which the seasoned evangelist and the young preacher were to launch together. Home affairs kept Mr. Nugent from participating, and Lester Wilson fearfully started the meetings alone. Crowds packed the big building and in five weeks 51 persons professed faith in Christ. For three years, Mr. Wilson, a guest in the Chappell home, preached in church buildings and school houses, and held Bible readings in homes around the Raleigh area. A branch work at Six Forks, nine miles away, was opened up by Lester Wilson in 1932.

In 1939, the Raleigh Gospel Chapel was built on Franklin Street, about a mile northeast of the city center, to house the growing assembly. Evangelistic meetings, the Sunday School, and personal work all contributed to further growth. By 1946, about 225 regularly attended the Breaking of Bread. In 1952 the main auditorium was enlarged to hold 420 people. The Sunday School averaged 375 at that time.

In November 1974, more than 400 people filled the Gospel Chapel on Franklin Street for a service commemorating the fifty year history of the Raleigh work. W. G. Smith, then 90, reminisced about tent work in the early days. Lester Wilson, then working in Albany, GA spoke of the burdens and blessings of pioneering days in North Carolina.

The Christians at Raleigh Gospel Chapel sold their building and joined with other Christians in 1993 to form the North Ridge Bible Chapel in Raleigh. (see below).

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In 1967, forty people hived off from the Raleigh Gospel Chapel to start a second assembly on the north edge of the city. The new meeting grew rapidly and soon built its own chapel at 5421 Six Forks Road, called the North Raleigh Chapel. Comma Danieley, Jerry Lovelace, Norman McKelvey, Tommy Jeffreys, and George Sloan were those instrumental in starting the new assembly.

William McNeil moved to Raleigh from his native Scotland in 1959 and was of assistance to all the Raleigh assemblies. When the North Raleigh Chapel was opened, he was responsible for the services for the first six weeks. William Oglesby of Virginia visited the area frequently, then moved to Raleigh in 1970. In mid-1974, Donald Pelon came to work with the assembly. Ingimar DeRidder has since been commended as a full-time worker at North Raleigh Chapel, where about 150 to 200 adults and youngsters attend.

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North Ridge Bible Chapel in Raleigh was formed by a merger in 1993. Several Christians desiring a testimony in a new part of Raleigh were joined by the group that had been meeting at the Raleigh Gospel Chapel on Franklin Street. The latter Christians had decided that a move should be made from Franklin Street at the time. Helping with the establishment of this testimony were Clarence Jeffreys, Richard St. John, L.H. Price, Cliff Webber, C.C. Pipkin, and John Gordon.

The North Ridge Bible Chapel, including an auditorium, class rooms, and fellowship hall, was built in 1994. About 200 were in the fellowship in 1999, with a Sunday School of about 100 students.

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Faith Bible Fellowship in Raleigh was not a hive-off from another group. Instead, a small number of Christians, anxious to have a testimony for the Lord in their part of the city, started meeting together in about 1967. Meetings, including a Sunday School, were held in a large home. Some of the number wanted to establish a Baptist Church, but others wanted to form an assembly patterned after the New Testament churches. In time this view prevailed. A new building was erected in 1974 for Faith Bible Fellowship, just across the southern boundary of the City of Raleigh.

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Pittsboro is about 30 miles west of Raleigh, and is the home of the Pittsboro Christian Village, a retirement facility sponsored by the brethren. The Pittsboro Bible Assembly meets there, established in January 1972 by Eugene Hollingsworth, Thomas Ridley, David Ednie, Robert Gay, Colin Heath, and Charles Balsan. The

constituency of the assembly are the retirees living at the Village, plus some service staff.

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In 1934 a call for meetings came from Winston-Salem through Mrs. James Chappell's sister, and Lester Wilson moved to that city. The work was slow in starting, but in time an assembly developed. Radio work started in 1936 brought many out to the Gospel services and established contacts with Christians. By 1939 there were 35 believers in fellowship; in that year another 46 professed faith in Christ and of these 38 came into the assembly. The Winston-Salem Gospel Chapel was built there that year, 1939, and Lester Wilson moved on to Greensboro to conduct evangelistic work and teach believers there. Harold Mackay moved to Winston-Salem to minister at the assembly. When Mr. Mackay left a few years later, Gordon Reager came for a time, followed by William Bousfield.

Glenn Avenue Gospel Chapel in Winston-Salem had its roots in the work of Lester Wilson, Mr. Gentry, Mr. Drage, and Mrs. Grace Snead. The assembly first met in the home of Mrs. Snead on 4th Street, and later moved to a storefront on 9th Street, and then to Glenn Avenue. Elders in the assembly have been H.R. Cromer, George D. Binkley, A.R. McConkey, Tommy Steele Sr., R.H. Wofford, C. Stender, H.R. Larrymore, C.C. Fishburne, James Crouch, and J.H. Cockerham. In the mid 1960s, the assembly dissolved into two new assemblies – Fair Oaks Chapel and Parkway Chapel.

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Parkway Chapel in Winston-Salem, at 2651 Buchanan Street, was established in 1964 by J.H. Cockerham, R.H.

Wofford, H.R. Larrymore, C.C. Fishburne Sr., Tommy Steele Sr., L.A. Cowling, and H.R. Cromer as a hive-off from Glenn Avenue Gospel Chapel. For a time the assembly had the name Parkway Gospel Chapel. In addition to those mentioned, elders at Parkway Chapel include P.J. Bonardi, W. Kornelis, and I.G. Scherer. About 135 adults and youngsters are in the assembly. Parkway has commended a worker to serve with Child Evangelism Fellowship.

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Fair Oaks Gospel Chapel in Winston-Salem began in the fall of 1967, its roots being in Glenn Avenue Gospel Chapel. Those involved in the start-up include George Binkley Jr., Herman Cromer, Bill and Don Fulk, Nelson Davis, A.T. Watkins Sr., Jim Binkley, and Frances Forcum. The assembly is now known as Fair Oaks Chapel. Leadership has been shared also by Tommy Steele Sr., Julian Stephenson, and Charles Baker. Fair Oaks Chapel has commended a worker to the Lord's field in Korea. About 30 adults and youngsters attend Fair Oaks Chapel.

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Lester Wilson found the going tough the first year in Greensboro in 1939, but the second year was different. He held tent meetings and souls were saved. About 30 people were involved in starting an assembly. A vacated Baptist church on Forest Avenue, having a large auditorium and 17 Sunday school rooms, was purchased in 1940 by the assembly and became the Forest Avenue Tabernacle. Within 15 months of taking this building the assembly tripled and the Sunday school had over 250 in attendance. Ernest Gross joined Mr. Wilson in August

1941. A steady radio program was carried on in connection with this work. In January 1943, William Brown moved to Greensboro and remained until about August, when he moved to Asheville. Harold Mackay then moved to Greensboro. The work continued to grow under his care and reached over 100 in fellowship, with a Sunday school over 300. A daily radio program was carried on at that time. A branch Sunday school at Halburg, opened up during Mr. Gross' stay, was carried on by local brethren.

From this work has developed the present Shannon Hills Bible Chapel in Greensboro on Vandalia Road. Leaders since the early days include Jim Redling, J. Eddie Schwartz, Larry Batts, C.R. Andrews, Charles Crawford, and Mark Shelley. The assembly has had seven full-time workers over the years, and 12 others have gone into full-time Christian service. Shannon Hills Bible Chapel has commended several missionaries to the foreign field, including South Africa and Burundi. About 350 people attend Shannon Hills Bible Chapel.

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In July 1942, Lester Wilson rented a large tobacco warehouse in Burlington, which is between Greensboro and Durham, and started meetings, assisted by Ernest Gross. Souls were saved and Christians contacted. Mr. Gross cared for the work until he left for South Carolina in June 1943. Mr. Wilson held three more campaigns in Burlington. A simple hall was built there in about 1943, and a larger Ireland Street Chapel in Burlington was built in 1946. Sunday school attendance soon reached 170. Harold Mackay and Welcome Detweiler helped out in this work when occasion permitted. W.G. Smith moved

to Burlington in February 1946 and continued the work there.

Other families involved in the start-up of Ireland Street Chapel were Warren Miles, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sutton Sr., Mr. and Mrs. A.C. Cooper, and Mr. and Mrs. Bob Burns. Besides the men mentioned above, elders have included Kirk Dixon, Ed Lovette, Larry Hughes, and A.G. Sutton Jr. One of the sisters has been commended by Ireland Street Chapel as nurse at the Pittsboro Christian Village. About 115 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

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Evangelistic work was carried on simultaneously in Burlington and Siler City, with Sunday morning services in the former city and Sunday evening services in the latter. A temporary tabernacle was employed in Siler City for the evening Gospel meetings. A little company started Breaking Bread in 1941. Some Christians, having heard Mr. Wilson over the radio, urged him to come to Siler City; these gave the work an early start by their solid testimony. In October 1943, Mr. Wilson held his first series in Siler City, with a number of souls saved. Later, Frank Detweiler and William Bousfield had a series out in the country in a tent, and more were saved. In 1946, about fifty Christians in the Siler City assembly were carrying on the work, and built the Siler City Chapel in April of that year. William Bousfield stayed for three or four years in the area, living in Winston-Salem and also helping in Siler City and Sanford. Joe Giordano moved to Siler City in 1949 to help with the work there.

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A Christian woman in Durham, who had heard the Burlington radio broadcasts, asked Lester Wilson to have meetings in her home. Mr. Wilson came in January 1944, and a month later followed with a special series of meetings in a large rented store building on Mangum Street. Welcome Detweiler, from the Curly Hill country in Pennsylvania, came during a quiet time in farming to help with the singing in these meetings. Some 25 people were saved, and many more in a follow-up series. The Gospel effort continued through 1944, although in smaller quarters. During that year Welcome Detweiler traveled seven times back and forth between the Pennsylvania farm and Durham. In October 1944, he helped form a Young People's Discipleship group.

The new converts in Durham expressed a desire to establish a nondenominational local church, and at the end of 1944, purchased a lot on Driver Street for a building site. In January 1945, Welcome Detweiler and his wife Helen moved their family to Durham to guide the young believers. In April 1945, a company of 18 gathered in a rented building to Remember the Lord, their first meeting as an assembly. In June, the first section of the new chapel, seating 300, was officially opened and called the Gospel Center.

The first Thanksgiving Bible Conference of the Gospel Center was held in November 1945, and has continued to be an annual event throughout the church's history. Interest quickened in September 1947, when quite a number were saved. An addition was completed in October 1948, but within six months the enlarged building was being crowded as much as the original. In March 1950, a house and lot behind the chapel were purchased, and the building was enlarged to a capacity

of over 960 in the main auditorium. By the mid 1950s, average attendance at the Family Bible Hour was about 1200.

In 1954, Welcome Detweiler had two weekly radio broadcasts in Durham. A leading professor at Duke University telephoned that he had been listening to Mr. Detweiler on the radio for several years and wanted him to come and try to help him. Psychiatrists had done him no good. That visit eventuated in the man's salvation.

Several score of the Christians at the Gospel Center have written out their testimonies. Many of them mention visits to their homes by "the preacher." Most of the men in the assembly were drinkers before they were saved; some were rather desperate characters. Real shepherd work on the part of Welcome Detweiler and of others in the assembly, both men and women, was a vital phase of the work at Durham. Doubtless it had much to do with the progress and growth there.

A number of Christians living in the Northgate area of northern Durham desired to reach their own neighborhood with the Gospel. In 1964, about one-fourth of those attending the Gospel Center left to start the new assembly, now known as Northgate Chapel. Still, the Gospel Center continued to expand. A gymnasium was built at the Gospel Center to accommodate youth programs.

Larry Batts became Mr. Detweiler's associate in 1973. Later, he left to engage in full-time service in Burlington and later in Greensboro. Rod Sharp of Scotland joined in the work at the Gospel Center in January 1979 and remained there until 1990.

A number of men and their wives were commended by the Gospel Center into full-time Christian ministry, most within the U.S. though two served in Zambia.

* * *

When the East Durham area began deteriorating, causing many members to move away, the Christians purchased an 8-acre tract on Sherron Road in 1976. Many were reluctant to move, but when one of the members was shot and killed in the church parking lot in 1987, the decision to relocate became imperative. Construction of a new chapel was begun in 1989, designed to seat 450. A new name was chosen – Grove Park Chapel. The first services in the new Chapel were in July 1990.

Dale Brooks began serving part-time at Grove Park Chapel at that time, and became full-time in 1991. For three years, Daniel and Teressa Pierce served as full-time youth ministers. These serve with several elders. About 300 adults and youngsters are in Grove Park Chapel today.

* * *

Sanford Chapel in the town of Sanford, had its beginning in March 1946, when Lester Wilson and Welcome Detweiler rented the Armory at Sanford for three weeks of meetings. Some eighteen persons professed salvation. An army barracks was bought from Camp McCall (Fort Bragg) in the summer and moved to McIver Street where it was remodeled. Temporary benches were installed, and the auditorium seated more than 400. Gospel meetings were held nightly for six weeks that summer. Clarence Low joined in the campaign in 1947 and later moved to Sanford. Ray

Felton also ministered at several meetings. Lester Wilson stayed with Sanford Chapel until his health broke in 1948 and he had to leave for a rest.

A lot on 405 South Third Street was purchased, and there the first Sanford Chapel was built. The first service was held in January 1949. Clarence Low served the Lord there for 18 years.

In 1966, the original building was remodeled. Attendance had increased, with record attendance being 315. Construction on a new building at 650 Franklin Drive was begun in March 1983, and the assembly occupied it in February 1984.

After Clarence Low transferred to Asheville, Jim Redling worked in the assembly for approximately seven years, Ken Ashton for three years, and Franklin Taylor for ten years. In January 1989, Joseph Gould and his family came from Liverpool, England to minister to the Sanford Chapel assembly.

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An assembly work began in Goldsboro, 42 miles southeast of Raleigh, in about 1954, helped along by John Milton Mills from Raleigh. It continues today as Goldsboro Gospel Chapel.

* * *

The Piedmont assemblies have historically had much interaction. An Easter Conference at Greensboro each year, a Thanksgiving Conference at Durham, and a monthly get-together of the young folks in one of the places each month, supported a strong regional testimony.

Some 1954 statistics provide the following: At the Gospel Center, Durham, the Family Bible Hour attendance stood at about 850 to 1000, including adults and children. About 350 attended the Sunday morning preaching service and Sunday school in the Raleigh Gospel Chapel. Sunday attendance was typically over 200 at Sanford Chapel. At Siler City Chapel, attendance was about 150. Sunday morning attendance was 380 at Ireland Street Chapel, Burlington. At Forest Avenue Tabernacle, Greensboro, about 300 were in attendance, and at the Gospel Chapel in Winston-Salem, attendance was usually over 200 at the Family Bible Hour.

* * *

In the late 1940s, a little group began meeting for Bible readings in the home of Ralph Carter at Zebulun, 17 miles east of Raleigh. About 45 were attending, and about a dozen of these, mostly women, began Breaking of Bread in the Carter home. In the early days, a Sunday school was held and on Sunday evening there was a Gospel service in an abandoned store and service station four miles from Zebulun, with from 35 to 50 attending. The assembly continues today as Union Hope Gospel Chapel.

* * *

A protracted campaign in Reidsville, north of Greensboro, in the early 1950s did not result in the formation of an assembly there, though that had been the goal. However, an exercise developed in the late 1980s in the hearts of four brethren from Shannon Hills Bible Chapel in Greensboro, for a New Testament church in Reidsville. In the spring of 1989, with the hearty encouragement of the brethren at Shannon Hills,

the Reidsville Bible Chapel was launched. Jeff Johnson, Steve Andrews, Jerry Denny, and Andy Burgess with their families began the work after serving in responsible positions at Shannon Hills Chapel for several years.

Reidsville Bible Chapel met first at the Reidsville YMCA, but in 1997 constructed its own chapel at 3016 S. Park Drive. About 80 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

* * *

In October 1975, seven brethren met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Hill for the purpose of forming a new assembly in the Burlington area. They decided to seek a meeting place in the town of Graham, and called their new assembly Graham Bible Fellowship. The Graham Civic Center was rented for the earliest meetings, and Philip Bomberger gave the first sermon there. In May 1976, a permanent building at the corner of Trail 8 and Moran Street in Burlington was secured and renovated. A piano was donated and an organ was purchased, the beginnings of an active musical program.

Ernie Gross conducted a series of Gospel meetings in the fall of 1976, introducing the young people to Camp Hope in Canton, NC. Also in the first year, a Senior Citizens monthly fellowship was formed, as well as a Youth Fellowship. In 1985, seven acres were purchased on Ivey Road in Graham, and the meetings of the assembly were moved into a building already there. This building was enlarged and renovated in 1988. Graham Bible Fellowship has a tradition of events such as annual Christmas banquets, annual graduation banquets, youth involvement in the muscial programs, and Bible

Conferences. Leadership has been shared by W.R. Humble and Roy Loflin, in addition to those already mentioned.

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Sedge Garden Chapel in Kernersville, between Greensboro and Winston-Salem, began in 1968, having hived off from Glenn Avenue Gospel Chapel in Winston-Salem. J.C. Musten, Leo Whicker, Charles Atkins, Robert Stuart, Richard Williard, and Jack Micheal were those involved in the start-up. These with David Cedolia, Jack Parrish, and Bill Puritt have been in leadership over the years. Sedge Garden Chapel has commended a worker to Immanuel Mission in Arizona. About 55 adults and youngsters attend Sedge Garden Chapel.

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The Wilmington Bible Chapel started in the summer of 1968 and met initially in the home of Ralph and Marietta Samppala. The three families who began the work – George and Linda Bowman, Robert and Blanch Duncan, and Ralph and Marietta Samppala – had moved to Wilmington for work reasons and each had an assembly background. The meeting moved in 1972 to a rented house on 41st Street, and in 1974 built and moved into the Wilmington Bible Chapel. The active assembly later added an auditorium and a gymnasium for its Awana program.

Ralph Samppala, Jim Whaley, George Bowman, Willis Stancil, and Bill King have been leaders over the years. Wilmington Bible Chapel has commended workers to the Lord’s vineyard in Colombia. About 175 adults and children come to the chapel.

* * *

Waynesville Christian Fellowship in the southwest part of the state has its roots in a children's work, as is frequent in the formation of many assemblies. David Adams had left Cuba after the communist take-over of the country, and contacted Clayton and Kathleen Davis about Gospel meetings in the Waynesville area. A campaign of many weeks showed no evident conversions, but when a Sunday night Bible class for children was begun in the basement of the Davis home, the interest was evident. With Joe and Wilma Jo Arrington, and Dennis and Mary Lou Caldwell helping, the class grew to over 100, and several were saved.

A desire for other meetings developed, and in 1967 three families joined with the Arrington, Caldwell, and Davis families to celebrate the Lord's Supper in the Davis home in Maggie Valley. Later the assembly purchased and moved into a building on Highway 19, opposite Lake Junaluska, and took the name Waynesville Christian Fellowship. George Corn and Dick Reed have shared in leadership of the assembly, which now numbers about 100. Other workers who contributed significantly in ministering in the early history of the work were George Landis and Charles Rolls. The assembly has commended Harold Wells to ministry in the U.S.

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The assembly meeting now at Mebane Gospel Chapel started in 1963 in an unoccupied house on 5th Street in Mebane, between Burlington and Durham. The Christians met in the upper story of a store on Center Street before constructing the Mebane Gospel Chapel at

503 North Ninth Street, the current address. Mebane Gospel Chapel did not derive from another assembly, and was begun by Robert Suitt, George Davis, Moody Summerell, and Samuel Taylor. Robert Suitt, Edwin Petree, James Adams, and Samuel Taylor have been the leaders. Average attendance is around 50.

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Early in the 1960s, the Wallace Hylton family, who had been in fellowship at Bethany Chapel, Augusta, GA moved to Salisbury, south of Winston-Salem, and entered into fellowship at the Parkway Gospel Chapel in Winston-Salem. Others living in Salisbury were also traveling to Winston-Salem. Because of the distance, Bill Hylton, Wallace Hylton, Warren Hylton, Joe Walmsley, and Jim Myers decided in late 1971 to start an assembly in Salisbury. Thus Bethany Chapel in Salisbury was born, a hive-off of Parkway Gospel Chapel. The group first met in Warren Hylton's office building, then in the Dukeville School, and then in an apartment for a few years. In 1973 they were able to purchase a church building on Main Street in Salisbury. In 1995, the Christians built the chapel at 4260 Stokes Ferry Road where they are now meeting. Elders in the assembly have been David Brewer and Tim Miskell in addition to the above. Bethany Chapel has about 50 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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Pembroke Family Fellowship in the town of Pembroke in the southern part of the state began in 1994 in the home of Ron and Wendy Locklear, where it still meets. For a brief time it was called The Family Church in Pembroke. Ron Locklear, Johnny Locklear, Nicholas Clark, and Scott

Kitchens were the principals in the start-up, and Ron Locklear has been the leader. About 75 adults and youngsters attend the assembly. Workers have been commended by Pembroke Family Fellowship to the Lord's work in Zambia.

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The adjacent towns of Newton and Conover are midway between Ashville and Winston-Salem. The Newton-Conover Gospel Fellowship grew from a Bible study in the home of Andy Schaper. The study was attended by members from several local churches. Teaching from the Scriptures led the group to desire observing the Lord's Supper and establishing a testimony as directed in the New Testament. Helping to establish this testimony were Andy Schaper and Jack Proctor. The group met as an assembly beginning in May 1989 at the local YMCA.

In 1992, two adjacent buildings were purchased and modified to provide a facility for meetings and Sunday School. About 20 are in fellowship now, with about 25 in the Sunday School. Several Spanish-speaking folks are attending.

Sources:

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Letters of Interest, January 1944, p. 25; July 1946, p. 16; December 1949, p. 18; November 1953, p. 3; March 1954, p. 12; June 1959, p. 11; March 1975, p. 5

Uplook, October 1989, p. 357

## Virginia

Assembly testimony in Virginia seems to have started when Henry Catts from an assembly in Chicago, opened a business in Staunton in the western part of the state and was instrumental in bringing two well-known Gospel pioneers, James Campbell and William Matthews, to Staunton. These brethren pitched a tent there in 1887, resulting in an awakening in which many people were saved, black and white. The joy of these new-born souls abounded over all racial feelings and all were baptized together.

Alexander Lamb and William Beveridge, both from Scotland, were working for the Lord in Philadelphia when Mr. Campbell encouraged them to spend their vacation preaching Christ in Virginia. They went down together the following summer and God used them in bringing souls to Christ.

In 1890, Messrs. Lamb and Beveridge returned to Virginia, this time going to Richmond. James Campbell shipped his tent to them and they pitched it in Fulton, a suburb of Richmond. This was something new in that area, and nightly the tent was packed. A rich harvest of souls was reaped. The work continued into the fall, until the weather turned cool. The tent was taken down and these brethren secured an old building and continued there until the end of the year.

Their first baptism was in the James River in October. The whole community had been stirred and all kinds of evil reports were in circulation about the preachers and the "new doctrine." Throngs came to witness the baptism that day and small boats were lined up the river as far as could be seen. In late October 1890, the preachers and the converts sat down to Remember the Lord in Breaking of Bread and soon about sixty were in assembly fellowship.[1]

Benjamin Bradford, just beginning his work as an evangelist, met the preachers from Virginia and they encouraged him to go to Richmond and continue at the Richmond Gospel Hall while they visited Canada. This he did and more souls were saved, though opposition was strong, especially from a secret order called the "White Caps." One morning, placards were posted in Fulton, setting a time limit for the "Mormons" to get out. The following Sunday night, the hall was crowded. The devil was defeated in his purpose, for the leader of the "White Caps" was saved that night and the saints were left unmolested.

* * *

In 1891 and after, Messrs. Beveridge, Bradford, and a Mr. Stevens from Cleveland would walk to a coal mining village called Gay ton, about 25 miles from Richmond to preach the Gospel. Many souls were saved, and a small assembly began Remembering the Lord in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Clairborne of Gayton. This Gayton Assembly seems to have lasted only a short time.

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The preachers went also to Matoaca, a town south of Richmond. Messrs. Lamb and Beveridge secured a hall

there with only planks for seats, but the place was crowded. A tent season followed and there were very few homes in that village that did not witness the grace of God in the salvation of some of the members of their families. The preachers – Lamb, Bradford, and James Hamilton from Scotland – built Matoaca Gospel Hall for the new assembly in 1897. The Matoaca Gospel Hall continues today.

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Hugh Campbell, who was saved in tent meetings held by Mr. Matthews and Mr. McGill, moved to Petersburg, a short distance south of Richmond. The brethren pitched their tent in that city and again the work took hold, and an assembly was formed. W. R. McEwen had a tailoring business in Petersburg and a number of his daughters and his son Sam were saved in those seasons of blessing. Sam McEwen became a well-known servant of the Lord and was much used of God in Virginia, as was the youngest son, Hugh. The Petersburg Gospel Hall dates to 1900.

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Al and Mattie Ridolfi, Joseph Cheetham, and Thelma Reams, who were in fellowship at Shurm Heights Gospel Hall in Richmond (now Carlisle Avenue Gospel Chapel), decided in 1950 to have a series of children's meetings in a home in McGuire Park in south Richmond. These meetings drew the interest of a number of parents, and a number of them came to know the Lord as their Savior. A small assembly was started in a home in that area, and before long, plans were made to build a chapel.

With the help of a number of Christians, primarily from Durham, Raleigh, and Siler City, Grace Gospel Chapel in

Richmond was completed near the end of 1951 at 3459 Chapel Drive. A number of additions followed over the years, including an apartment which was used by visiting speakers and traveling missionaries.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, the attendance reached 200 or more each Sunday. But when urban blight reached the area, families moved away and attendance dwindled. A six-acre site in Chesterfield County was found and purchased, but it was about eight years before the old chapel was sold. The new chapel at 1201 Spirea Road was finished enough for occupancy in 1995. Attendance was up to about 80 people in 1998 and has grown as a result of visitation in the neighborhood. Grace Gospel Chapel has commended workers to the Pittsboro Children's Home and other service in North Carolina.

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Bethany Gospel Chapel in Newport News dates back to the turn of the century when five families met each Sunday to Break Bread in the home of William Dunning in the 300 block of 49th Street. At about the same time, a different group formed a Sunday school in a nearby building that had been used by different churches. The leader of that group met Mr. Dunning and was so impressed with the type of services held at Dunning's home that he made his building available for the assembly services.

A few years later the growing assembly purchased a house and land, and organized under the name Gospel Hall. Expansion led to plans for a new building in 1938. The first meeting held in the new Newport News Gospel Hall at 82 - 29th Street was in May 1940.

Around 1962, when the area around the area was becoming more commercialized, the assembly moved to 40 Ballard Road in a residential neighborhood, where more children could have easy access to hear the Gospel. Construction of Bethany Gospel Chapel was begun in September 1963 and the chapel was dedicated in June 1964.

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Hampton Roads Community Church in Poquoson, north of Newport News, began in September 1989 in Poquoson High School, having split off from Bethany Gospel Chapel. Earl Cheek, Gary Stewart, Chancellor Bailey, Joseph Kingsboro, Kenny Cheek, and Tom Ward were those who started the assembly. The church grew slowly in the first six months as the elders developed a philosphy of ministry. Then they moved into the Poquoson Primary School, where they had exclusive use of the facilities on Sundays. Gary Stewart, Kenny Cheek, and Tim Rutman have been the elders. About 110 adults and youngsters attend Hampton Roads Community Church.

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The assembly known today as Cherrydale Bible Church in Arlington started in the mid 1950s from a home Bible study group led by Colin Heath. This group established an assembly and moved into Tucahoe School in North Arlington, where it was called Cherrydale Community Chapel. In 1958, the assembly moved to the present building at 1905 North Monroe Street. In 1980, the group took the name Cherrydale Bible Chapel, and later Cherrydale Bible Church.

Mr. Heath was with an assembly in southeast Washington before starting the home Bible study in Arlington. In addition to Colin Heath, Warren Lane and George Grimm were involved in starting the assembly. In 1963, the assembly recognized elders as their leaders, and these have been Bill Barr, Donald Tinder, Dale Knowles, Claude Poole, Edward W. Payne, Excell Duncan, and Conrad Tolosa.

The congregation was fairly large through the 1960s with a good youth ministry. The 1970s witnessed a departure of a large percentage of the young members, and today about 40 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

Cherrydale has commended or co-commended workers to Ecuador, The Netherlands, Chad, Rumania, France, the Emmaus Correspondence School, and to prison and youth work in Virginia. Ted Payne has been commended to ministry at Bethany Bible Fellowship, Canton, OH.

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An assembly in Hopewell was prospering in 1953. Its Hopewell Gospel Chapel was built in 1955.

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Northside Gospel Chapel in Victoria, a rural town in southern Virginia, was begun in 1951 through the efforts of Robert Adcock, Les Doby, C.O. Dunnavant, Ralph West, W.H. Hardy, and A.S. Holloman. The assembly began as a Baptist church, but after about a year, and discussions with the brethren in Durham, NC, they switched to a New Testament style of governance and worship. The group has always occupied the same building at 2300 Marshal Avenue. In leadership over the

years have been Woody Murphy, W.J. Oglesby, and Glenn and Clifford Hood, in addition to those mentioned above. In 1996, the assembly had about 40 adults in fellowship and about 20 children. Northside has commended Glenn Hood to work in the assembly. Charles Vaughan of Lynchburg, VA often ministered the Word at the assembly.

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Blacksburg Christian Fellowship in southwestern Virginia, began in 1969 in rented facilities of the Wesley Foundation at Virginia Tech, where it met until building its own chapel in 1989. Jerry Caskey, Paul King, Sam Metcalf, Paul Ribbe, and Victor Zitta, with their families, were the initiators of the assembly. Others in leadership have been Joseph Kelley, David Kingston, David Kenyon, Dennis Schnecker, and Jay Sullivan.

The assembly has commended workers to Spain, Ecuador, Bolivia, Austria, Cambodia, Nigeria, and Austria. Attendance at Blacksburg Christian Fellowship on a typical Sunday is about 600 to 700.

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Sunnybrook Gospel Chapel in Syria, near Culpeper, about 60 miles southwest of Washington, DC, began in 1952 in Criglersville. Mr. and Mrs. Ermal Robinson were the principal people involved in the start-up, and since then McKinley Jenkins and James Hasse have shared the leadership. About 65 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

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Letters of Interest; November 1946, p. 34; December 1946, p. 30; October 1966, p. 9

### West Virginia

Assembly work in Huntington, at the western tip of West Virginia, began as a tent meeting conducted by William Graham Smith in 1931. He also had a children's meeting in his garage around this time. He invited Harold Mackay to come and assist in the Word. Willie Bousefield and Willie Foster came to help with special meetings. In 1935, a store building was rented and Lester Wilson was asked to come and have Gospel meetings. He stayed for six weeks. He was followed later by Robert Holliday. Lester Wilson returned for Gospel meetings in 1937.

W.G. Smith, his wife Ruth, and their two children continued faithfully in their labor of love until 1945, when they moved to Burlington, North Carolina; they saw many saved. One convert, Edwin Porter, developed real ability in preaching. Others who ministered were 'Mac' McDaniel and Harry White. These brethren began the chapel building in about 1938. The Huntington Gospel Chapel was dedicated in 1940. Arnold Clary was saved in the 1940s and continues in the ministry.

Harry Pilkington conducted several Gospel campaigns at Huntington in the 1960s. Eddie Huston from Riverview Chapel in Hinton came into fellowship in 1960 and

provided valued Bible teaching. Through the witness of Eddie Huston, Darrell Adkins was saved and also has greatly assisted in the meetings. Herman Luhm of Morgantown has regularly provided helpful teaching over the years. Charles Fizer of Emmaus Bible College assisted in the work in the Huntington assembly in the 1970s.

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In the 1940s, brethren including Herman Luhm, who was commended to the Lord's work by Marlborough Gospel Hall in San Diego, CA in 1942, began a work in the coal mining area of Mullens and Allen Junction. Souls were saved and an assembly formed. Welton Bible Chapel at Allen Junction was built to house this assembly. Harry and Joan Pilkington came from Ontario to assist in the new work. When the Pilkingtons moved to Hinton in 1962, the work at Welton was left in the hands of David Pollock, who had moved there the year before to help.

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In 1956, another work began in the coal mining area at nearby Otsego and continues today as Otsego Bible Chapel. Mike Cook, Doug Hedrick, and Gary Rhodes are leaders in that assembly.

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Riverview Chapel in Hinton in the southern part of the state, began in the late 1940s at 1401 Temple Street. It was called West End Chapel at that time, but changed to Riverview Chapel when it moved to 16th and Temple. Frank Monroe and Herman Luhm were those who started the assembly. Herman Luhm, Bill Chewning,

Larry Deeds, Robbie Merritt, and Harry Pilkington have been leaders over the years. Riverview Chapel has commended Bob Deeds to the Emmaus Correspondence Ministry, Larry Deeds to the assembly at Conway, SC, and Harry Pilkington to the local work. About 70 to 80 adults and youngsters attend Riverview Chapel.

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The city of Morgantown sits on the east bank of the Monogahela River, just south of the Pennsylvania state border. In 1949, Guy Meehling started a Sunday School in Morgantown, and out of it an assembly developed, meeting in a school house. In 1957, Herman Luhm moved from Hinton to Morgantown to help the small group of Christians who were meeting to Remember the Lord. Radio outreach was added to camp and Sunday School ministries.

By 1960 the group had outgrown its rented quarters. Family Bible Hour attendance was averaging 100, and reached a record of 153 on Easter Sunday of that year. But the hall only seated 80, so the Bible Hour was being held in two sessions. The assembly itself consisted of only ten families – 33 people, including children.

A lot was purchased across the river in Westover and funds were borrowed from Stewards Foundation for building costs. Brethren from Durham, NC drew up building plans and sent a team of volunteers to help with steel work, carpentry, and plumbing. Crescent Hills Chapel was opened in late 1960.

Growth continued, and a Sunday School wing and assembly room were added to the building. Bible Hour attendance averaged 185 in 1972.

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The Morgantown assembly also reached out to other communities. During the period when the assembly still met in the school house, a young George Kirk, Jr. was won to Christ. Later he moved to Terra Alta, 25 miles to the southeast, and helped establish an assembly there. Hillcrest Chapel in Terra Alta was built and occupied in 1969.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Letters of Interest, July-August, 1972, p. 22

## Maryland

Perhaps the oldest assembly in Maryland is the Frostburg Gospel Hall in the northwest corner of the state, near Cumberland. It seems to have been in existence in the late 1800s or early 1900s. Nathaniel Dunn, an immigrant from Scotland and a convert of John Knox McEwen, had arrived in the coal mining regions in the late 1800s, and at some point had associated with the Frostburg assembly. In 1938, evangelists Samuel Rea and Alexander Cathers pitched a tent in a country place near Frostburg, and many were saved and joined with the assembly at that time. The assembly continues today.

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Eastern Gospel Hall was one of the oldest assemblies in Baltimore. Located close to Johns Hopkins University and hospital, it ceased to exist around 1987.

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The assembly at Hillendale Bible Chapel in Baltimore has its roots in a chicken coop. In about 1941, a lady left a chicken coop and the land around it to whomever would use the land and coop for a Sunday School. Mr. A.S. Loizeaux along with several others decided to incorporate as a church in order to get this land and begin a Sunday School in the area. The coop was cleaned and renovated, and eventually was added on to. The sessions were held on Sunday afternoons initially in order not to interfere with their other assembly activities. The activity developed into a joint effort of several assemblies in the area. Mr. Bud Young was active in bringing children to the Sunday School, which at one time had about 200 children in attendance.

In the early 1950s, the workers formed an assembly, meeting in that building on Goodview Road. The work at that time had no recognized elders. Will T. Miller, a preacher from New Zealand, and James Dunkerton moved to the area, called Hillendale, in about 1973. They encouraged elder recognition. Elders since then have included Jim Dunkerton, Bill Dunkerton, Roger Dunkerton Jr., Tom Schetelich, and Norris Gorman. The assembly, taking the name Hillendale Bible Chapel, grew and is now the largest assembly in the Baltimore area. The assembly currently rents space in a middle school, and recently purchased land in the Perry Hall district for erection of a larger building.

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Glad Tidings Chapel in Baltimore began in about 1950 at 1633 Laurens Street. It derived from Maranatha Gospel Hall in Washington, DC. Glad Tidings moved from Laurens Street to its current address at 4801 Garrison

Boulevard in1970. Aubrey Wilson of Washington DC established the Assembly, and Sister Lawerence purchased the first building. Those in leadership over the years include Aubrey Wilson, William Strickland, and Arthur Evans. About seven adults and youngsters are in the assembly at present.

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SAYSF Bible Church in Lexington Park near the southwest tip of Maryland, has its roots back in 1935, when Gould M. Brown began an assembly meeting in his home in New York. Newly saved, he studied the Bible to see what the Lord would have him do, and came on his own to New Testament principles of meeting. Upon meeting E.C. Hadley, he learned of the brethren. It was then that he established Parkside Gospel Hall in Milford, NY. During this period, Theron Davidson met and married Mr. Brown's daughter Barbara, and Theron Davidson joined in the work with Mr. Brown.

Mr. Davidson was a Naval Officer in World War II, and was sent after the war to the Patuxent Naval Air Test Center, adjacent to Lexington Park. The Davidsons began camp work at St. Mary's City in 1946, and when 17 persons were saved as a result, they purchased 13 acres of nearby land to be used for full-time work for the Lord. They built a home and began an assembly there in 1951, calling it the Lexington Park Christian Assembly. After a chapel was constructed on the property, and because of Pentecostal confusions, they took the name SAYSF Bible Chapel. When they learned that local people thought of a 'chapel' as an insignificant church, they changed the name to SAYSF Bible Church (SAYSF stands for 'Seek and Ye Shall Find').

The assembly of about 500 has had dozens of men in leadership, including at present Tom Hanrahan, Dick Jordan, and Peter Dobson. SON-KISS Ministries, which provides construction assistance to assemblies, is one of the many outreaches of SAYSF Bible Church.

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South Potomac Church in Accokeek, south of Washington, DC, began in 1991, having hived off from Clinton Community Chapel in the Washington metropolitan area. David and Deanna Sutherland, Rod and Beth Parker, Chuck and Kit Coleman, Peter and Avis Buckingham, Mike and Margo Clarke, and Brent and Jill Brooks were the principal people starting the assembly. These, with Doug Moore, Eric Burkhardt, Mark Adams, Bob Keysar, Vince Miller, and Storm Hutchinson have been in active leadership. South Potomac Church has commended several to the Lord's work. About 550 adults and youngsters are in regular attendance at the assembly.

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Faith Bible Church in Mechanicsville, south of Washington, DC, came into existence in 1992 as a hive-off of SAYSF Bible Church. Theron Davidson was the principal person involved in the start-up, and leadership has been shared by Rodney Spade, Leon Kelly, and Dick Nevala. About 100 adults and youngsters attend Faith Bible Church.

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Rockville Bible Fellowship, which now meets in a hotel on Rt. 28, began in nearby Gaithersburg in about 1969, and was known then as Gaithersburg Christian

Fellowship. George Shabarji and Julius English were those who initiated the assembly; both had assembly backgrounds. Those men, with Arthur Garnes, have taken leadership in Rockville Bible Fellowship, which has about 50 adults and youngsters in typical attendance.

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Cedar Ridge Community Church in Spencerville, just north of Washington, began in 1982 in Riverdale. After that it occupied rented quarters in Greenbelt, Beltsville, and Bartonsville. At the end of 1997, the assembly moved into its first permanent facility, in Spencerville. Brian McLaren and William Duncan were those who started the assembly, which now has about 500 adults and youngsters in attendance. The vigorous church has commended several church planters.

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Loch Hill Chapel in Baltimore is a merger of Arunah Chapel and the Lauraville Gospel Hall in 1951. In the Arunah assembly, the elders included Milton Loizeaux, Paul Loizeaux, Alfred S. Loizeaux, Edwin Fesche, Roger Dunkerton, and Elmer Knirimen. In the Lauraville assembly, the elders included Earl Barlow, G.T. Willey, and John Suess. After the merger, these men continued in leadership. The Lauraville Christians had been meeting in an old country school house rented from the city; the Arunah assembly sold its building. A new chapel was erected for the new assembly at 6601 Loch Raven Boulevard, still the location of Loch Hill Chapel.

* * *

Brooklyn Bible Chapel in Baltimore began as the Masonville Gospel Hall, which was begun by Stanley Loizeaux, Herbert Gray, and Ermal Robinson at a time not now remembered. Others in leadership since the early days have included Alfred S. Gray, Norman Cannon, and Don Brower. For many years, William Cunningham did much of the preaching and visitation. The assembly later took the name Brooklyn Gospel Chapel, then Brooklyn Bible Chapel. The assembly of about 175 people has an active foreign missions program, and has commended several workers to foreign and local fields.

* * *

Bel Air Bible Chapel, formerly called the Bel Air Bible Community Church, in the town of Bel Air northeast of Baltimore, began in about 1964. It is a small group of about 20 people, of whom Neal Wogsland, Edward Suess, and James P. Sabatino have been leaders over the years.

* * *

The assembly at Laurel Chapel, in Laurel between Baltimore and Washington, DC, came into being on Easter Sunday, 1987. Its founding was encouraged by Christians at Cedar Ridge Community Church in Spencerville, MD . When the Christians at Laurel purchased an old Congregational Church building in nearby Savage in 1994, they changed the name to Countryside Fellowship Church. Many of the older members of the Congregational Church stayed and joined the assembly.

Commended workers Dan and Sue Schmidt, the principals in starting the assembly, were supported

initially by Interest Ministries and the Cedar Ridge assembly. When the Schmidts left for the Lord's work in Chile, Charles and Katherine Coleman were commended for work in the assembly, which has about 140 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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The assembly now meeting at New Hampshire Avenue Gospel Chapel, Silver Spring began in April 1916 at F. G. Ruebsam's house at 5224 Illinois Avenue, NW, in Washington, DC. The assembly moved in January 1917 to N. Fillmann's home, 1422-22nd Street, SE, Washington, where it remained for a time.

Bible Readings were held each Lord's Day at the homes of C. W. Birkett and F. G. Ruebsam alternately, previous to the Breaking of Bread, which was the outcome of Gospel tent meetings for two consecutive summers (1915 and 1916) by Evangelists Benjamin Bradford and Samuel McEwen. Their ministry was followed by F. B. Hanle in the fall of 1916 and the spring of 1917.

The assembly moved to a rented building at 1420 H Street, NE, and later to a rented building at 245-15th Street, SE. In 1938, the assembly constructed a chapel at 5720 South Dakota Avenue, NE, in Washington.

After the chapel at South Dakota Avenue was sold, the assembly services were held in the Seventh Day Adventist's church building on Riggs Road in Adelphi, Maryland on a rental basis, during the construction of the New Hampshire Avenue Gospel Chapel at 12608 New Hampshire Avenue in Silver Spring, still its current location. The first services were held in the chapel on May 24, 1964.

Lloyd Wineberg, Thomas Hall, and Marlow Olsen were the leading brethren for many years. The Sunday Schools have always been important in the assembly. Dorothy Peter (Aunt Dot) is especially remembered for her Sunday School interests. The superintendents have included Lloyd Wineberg, Lou Wieland, Don Kuester, Fred Corley, Ira Mitchell, Ron Gaskins, Rick Markley, Dan Solanki, and Doug Crow. Sunday School picnics were initially held once a year, then twice a year – the Saturday before school closed and a week after it opened in the fall.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

25th Anniversary Celebration of the New Hampshire Avenue Gospel Chapel, 1989

Letters of Interest, Oct. 1952, p. 13; March 1953, p. 18

## Washington, D.C.

Immanuel Bible Assembly in Washington, DC has its roots in home Bible studies conducted in the city prior to 1970. Several persons were saved in the Bible studies, and other Christians were drawn to the group, being discouraged with the church settings in which they found themselves.

In 1970, the Christians began meeting in full assembly capacity in the home of one of the saints at 207 Taylor Street, N.W. Soon they were having a Sunday School and had an active young people's group, with 45 in fellowship. Outgrowing the home, they moved into a Washington Bible College building for a time, and by 1977 moved into their own building at 3303 10th Street, N.E. Leaders in the assembly have included LeRoy W.

Burns, Burdette S. Burton, Willis L. Davis, Jr., and Lorren E. Hackett.

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Washington Christian Assembly at 30 Kennedy Street NW in Washington, DC is active. Samuel and Joseph Jeremiah have been in leadership.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

## Delaware

In about 1940, Edward and Jean Richmond were commended by the Olney Gospel Hall in Philadelphia, to come to Dover for evangelical work. They started a children's work in a store on the main street in Dover. From that work, the Dover Gospel Hall began in 1946 at a location in central Dover. From 1950 to 1975, the assembly was located in West Dover and called the West Dover Bible Chapel. The assembly discontinued in 1975 but revived in 1979 when Norman Wilkerson and Don Henry came. The group then moved just one mile west and took its present name, Dover Bible Chapel. About 30 adults and youngsters attend on a typical Sunday.

Mr. Richmond and a Mr. Brown in the Dover assembly began an outreach in the late 1940s in the village of Hazelville, about 10 miles from Dover. A Gospel series resulted in about 20 being saved, and a Sunday School was established in an old school house in the town.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Letters of Interest, August 1948, p. 22

## Pennsylvania

An assembly known as the Old Meeting in Philadelphia at 18th Street and Fairmount Avenue is known to have existed in Philadelphia by 1881, for Miss Mary Ann Smith (later Mrs. Mary Harry), a recent immigrant to the United States, was directed there by the Irish evangelists James Campbell and William Matthews. A Mr. Reed was a leading elder in that assembly. But after Miss Smith visited a nearby 'exclusive' meeting, she was not allowed to return to the Old Meeting.

Mrs. Harry records that there was no other assembly in Philadelphia to which she could turn, so the Old Meeting was evidently was the only 'open' brethren meeting in the city at that time. The young girl wrote to the evangelists, pleading with them to come to Philadelphia, and they did in May 1884, holding tent meetings on South Broad Street below Federal Street. On the first Sunday of the tent meetings, seven Christians Broke Bread together, the beginning of what became known as the Philadelphia Assembly or the Downtown Meeting. Those present were Miss Mary Ann Smith, her brother Robert and mother Mrs. Charles Smith; James Campbell, William Matthews, William McEwen (brother of John Knox McEwen and father of Hugh and Sam McEwen), and John Greer.

Many were saved in the first season of these tent meetings. When winter came, the Philadelphia Assembly rented a room over a blacksmith's shop at 1113 South Broad Street. It was there that the assembly had its first Conference on Christmas Day, 1887 at which Donald and Charles Ross, James Campbell, William Matthews, Norman Case (later with the China Inland Mission),

Frank Crook, William Staner, David Oliver, and John Haliburton were preachers. (Mrs. Harry also mentions attendance by her future husband from the Harrisburg assembly, so the Harrisburg Assembly was in existence by 1887.)

The Christians met for several years over the blacksmith's shop. Many were saved and added to the group, and many believers came from the 'old country' and joined them. Open-air meetings conducted by the assembly were common, and there the greatest opposition to the Gospel was felt, stones and bricks being thrown at the preachers.

From this Downtown Meeting, several others sprang up. People living in north Philadelphia rented the Iron Hall in Kensington for assembly meetings, in fellowship with the Downtown Meeting. These later moved to Howard Street, and in 1910 purchased their own building at 2447 North Mascher Street, known as the Mascher Street Gospel Hall. The Mascher Street assembly continued to exist until 1982, but was not on Mascher Street in its final years.

The Christians at the Downtown Meeting went through several moves, to13th and Wharton, 15th and Federal, 17th and Federal, 21st and Latona, and then to 20th and Dickinson, where they remained for many years and apparently erected their own building. This building was sold in 1945 and they moved to rented quarters at 71st Street and Woodland Avenue, and then to 64th and Woodland until 1952, when the meeting disbanded, after 68 years of existence.

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While the Christians were at 20th and Dickinson, some of the group then living in the vicinity of Darby in the southwest suburbs, built Maranatha Hall or Maranatha Tabernacle in or near Darby. A radio preacher, George Palmer, was there for many years. This assembly later was called the Collingdale Assembly.

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This Collingdale Assembly is not to be confused with another assembly of similar name, which began when an Irish preacher, Mr. Nickelson, came to Darby in 1914 and held Gospel meetings. Several were saved, and the little band began meeting in 1915 as an assembly in a rented room in the Odd Fellows Hall in Darby. Robert Henry and Harry Pinney were the principals at establishing the assembly, having moved from Philadelphia. In 1921, the growing assembly built Collingdale Gospel Hall a mile west in Collingdale at MacDade Boulevard and Hillside Avenue. The assembly grew and increased its auditorium and Sunday school capacity in 1953. Now called the Collingdale Gospel Chapel, the assembly has commended several to the Lord's work in the Dominican Republic, Zaire, and Quebec.

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In the 1880s or 1890s, George McCandless, who had a printing business, was preaching on the streets of Philadelphia. He rented a store at 20th and Kater Streets in south Philadelphia, and put a big Bible in the window along with some Bible texts. He invited men to a Bible study and in other ways attracted families to gather, apparently as an assembly. A number of these families later moved to west Philadelphia and met in a

room in a large building at 67th and Market Streets, owned by James Arthur, a building contractor. The assembly at that time became known as the West Philadelphia Assembly.

Mr. Arthur knew of George MacKenzie, who had only recently become acquainted with the New Testament manner of gathering and would soon become outstanding itinerant preacher, and encouraged him to teach at the new assembly. In about 1900, Mr. Arthur won a contract to develop a residential area in Kenilworth, New Jersey. He brought some of these Philadelphia Christians with him and helped start an assembly in Kenilworth. He sold the Philadelphia building at that time, and the Christians who had been meeting there moved a short distance west to a store between 58th and 59th on Market Street. The group at that time was small and was affiliated with the 'Grant exclusive' brethren.

A Mr. Mory then built a four-story apartment building at 5917 Chestnut Street and rented the whole first floor to the assembly. There it flourished and grew, and many well known speakers came for special meetings, including H.A. Ironside, A.E. Booth, and George MacKenzie.

Then a split occurred and one group moved out, to 58th and Hoffman Avenue. These were identified with the 'open' brethren. In 1948 they moved into a basement-only building in nearby Lansdowne and became known as the Lansdowne Gospel Hall, and after that the Lansdowne Gospel Chapel. They later added an above-ground auditorium, but a fire forced them to move out for six months. At that time, the brethren who had

remained at 5917 Chestnut, invited them back into that space. When the repairs were finished, the rift apparently healed, those brethren joined with the Lansdowne group.

In 1956, some of the families moved further out into the suburbs and established the Malvern assembly. The Lansdowne assembly today is known as the Lansdowne Bible Chapel, located at Greenwood and Wycombe.

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Another group of Christians were also called a West Philadelphia assembly. Though the names given to its various meeting places have not been identified, I will refer to them collectively as the West Philadelphia Gospel Hall. The assembly was formed in about 1914, and was an off-shoot of the Downtown Meeting because of a number who were living in the western area of the city. They first met in a store front property on South 60th Street near Spruce. Some of the early brethren at the West Philadelphia Gospel Hall were David Sutter, John McLeod, Thomas Anderson, Albert Anderson, William Cameron, James Smith, Albert Wilson, William King, William Long, and Edward Moffitt. In 1933, the assembly purchased a building at 62nd and Jefferson Streets in the Overbrook section of the city. It was simply a basement with no above-ground floor. In 1933, Sam McEwen had Gospel meetings in the newly purchased building. In 1963, they sold that building and moved further west to rented quarters in Broomall before moving to their new hall in 1967, located on Route 252 south of Newtown Square. In 1927 or 1928, Robert Halliday and John Conaway had fruitful meetings at the West Philadelphia Gospel Hall.

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In 1906, a group of Christians who had been commuting in to town from the suburbs began meeting as the Ardmore Assembly in the Merion Title Building. A year or so later they moved to Bryn Mawr and became known as the Bryn Mawr Assembly. The believers met for years in the reading room over the public library. Mr. Cesare Patrizio was commended from the assembly in about 1918, and Oswald MacLeod in 1928. Others have been commended to the Lord's work at home and abroad since that time. The preacher James Marshall made the Bryn Mawr assembly his home assembly for many years.

A new building was erected in 1923-24 – the Bryn Mawr Gospel Hall – which is still used today. Some of the names from that time are Samuel Martin, Hugh Clark, Harry Iolitt, Robert Irvine, King Irvine, William Goldsmith, William Oliver, and Charles Dautle. Two expansions to the building have been made since the original, the first in 1975, and the most recent in 1994.

One of the interesting things about the Bryn Mawr assembly was the large number of men and women who worked in the private estates in various capacities. The weekly prayer meeting was on Friday evening to accommodate these folk. Another feature of those days was that the prayer meeting at Bryn Mawr was almost as large as the morning meeting. The Bryn Mawr assembly sponsored an annual Thanksgiving Conference for many years.

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Before 1921, a work was being carried on among Italian immigrants in Philadelphia. Cesare Patrizio and Louis Rosanio had tent meetings and decided to form an

Italian meeting because of the need to use the language for many coming into the country who did not know English. This meeting began in 1921. They met for years in different places in south Philadelphia. Among the various addresses was 8th and Reed Streets. In later years they moved to the Tycony section of Philadelphia; in the 1966 the meeting was disbanded. (See Ethnic section)

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The assembly now at Enfield Gospel Chapel on the north side of Philadelphia, came into being in 1906 at 2838 Ridge Avenue. It later moved to 14 E. Clapier Street where it was known as the Germantown Gospel Hall. The assembly moved to its present location at 6 Summit Lane, Oreland in 1968. Leaders over the years include Charles Brinkman, Harry Sailer, Fred Vollmar, William Wills, William Rickert, Chester Myers, and Ernest Schwarz.

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In 1926, the Olney Gospel Hall in North Philadelphia hived-off from the Mascher Street assembly, which had become quite large with over 200 in fellowship. The Christians met first on N. 5th Street between Lindley Avenue and Tabor Road. In 1928, they moved to 314 W. Chew Street, which is the present location of Olney Gospel Hall

The original elders at Olney included John McQuillen, David Oliver, David Harry, William Richmond, E.B. Sykes, Harry Strain, and John MacEllan. Another early elder was John McQuillen. Sam and Hugh McEwen had Gospel meetings there in 1927. Open-air preaching at the corner of 5th and Tabor was a feature of the

assembly. John Bothwell was known for his distribution of Gospel tracts in the neighborhood. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, five preachers made Olney their home assembly. They were Charles Keller, John P. Conaway, William Robertson, Ed Richmond, and Clay Fite. In the late 1940s, Paul Plubell made his home there.

Among those commended to the Lord's work have been Edward Richmond, who pioneered and shepherded a work in Dover, DE (now called Dover Bible Chapel), and C.C. Fite, who preached throughout the continent. The Italian evangelist Cesare Patrizio was also associated with Olney Gospel Hall, though commended by the Bryn Mawr Assembly.

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Grace Gospel Chapel in Philadelphia began in 1927 when a group split off from Olney Gospel Hall. These Christians met on the second floor of a commercial building at 5th and Rising Sun Avenue in Philadelphia. Robert Barnes, George Canning, Granvil Godshalk, and James MacDonald were the acknowledged leaders and among those who started the assembly. In 1944, they rented a former Episcopal church building for their meetings, on Willow Grove Avenue in the suburb of Wyndmoor on the north side. This small building was next to a large Roman Catholic facility; about a year after Grace assembly occupied the building, the Catholics purchased it and had it torn down for their own expansion.

So in about 1946, the assembly moved into a storefront in the Erlen section of the city on Cheltenham Avenue. This was a busy street and the storefront was next to the

Erlen Theater. The Christians called their new home Erlen Gospel Chapel.

The area gradually deteriorated and the Christians began looking around for a more suitable place to meet. In 1970, they learned of an available building long known as Ardsley Chapel in Ardsley, then about 10 miles north of the city. The Erlen assembly purchased the building, calling it Ardsley Bible Chapel, which is the current meeting place of the assembly on Jenkintown Road at Harrison Avenue.

In 1984, the assembly was small and struggling. Apart from Robert Barnes, the early leaders had all passed on, and the assembly had no designated elders. The Enfield Gospel Chapel, about three miles away, was at that time a thriving assembly with a number of young families. A number of these families, about 40 people in all, decided to leave Enfield and join the Ardsley group. James Hulshizer was the leading brother among these.

The assembly became convinced of the Scriptural need for designated elders, and James Hulshizer was chosen, followed later by Albert Crompton. Paul Logan and his family then returned from the mission field in Zambia for medical reasons, and Paul became another elder. In 1989, Norman and Alice Roberts came to the assembly, and Norman joined the three in eldership. In 1994, four young men were added to the eldership: Karl Peterson, Dean Henrich, John MacPherson, and William Parfitt. Karl Peterson was commended for work within the assembly. Ardsley Bible Chapel has commended and co-commended workers to Zambia and Mozambique.

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An assembly in Malvern, in the western suburbs of Philadelphia, was founded in 1957. In 1956, several families living in that area and who were attending the Lansdowne Gospel Chapel, which was closer in to the city, were exercised to start a new testimony in their neighborhood. They met together for prayer for several months. Some from the Bryn Mawr Gospel Hall joined with this group, as did others. The families of Thomas Fraser, James Mehaffey, Stanley Hart, John Dorazio, Herman Sauer, Charles Wilson, and Hans Kurash formed the nucleus of the group.

In 1957, they purchased and extensively remodeled an old Quaker Meeting House at Woodland Avenue and Roberts Lane, calling it Upper Main Line Gospel Hall in Malvern, and that year celebrated their first Lord's Supper there. A major effort was made to reach the children of the neighborhood. A Friday night "Happy Hour" for children would run for 12 weeks each spring and fall; a very desirable side benefit was the involvement of the whole congregation.

Because of the different backgrounds of those in fellowship at the new assembly, decisions and agreements had to be made on matters such as choice of hymn book, the style of the Lord's Supper, and the type of preaching meeting. This was done in a spirit of unity. As the numbers grew from the starting group of about 50, an addition was made in the 1960s, and another in the 1980s. The name Upper Main Line Gospel Hall was changed to Gospel Chapel to distinguish the group from the Kingdom Hall title used by Jehovah's Witnesses. Another change to Malvern Gospel Chapel was made to better reflect the area, and then Malvern Bible Chapel was adopted to emphasize that the whole Bible was

preached. The number in fellowship in the late 1990s is about 140.

Those active in leadership from the early years include Harold Harper, Edgar Brightbill, Mervin Madsen, Bart Sloane, Godfrey Greenhow, and William Calderwood. In the early 1970s, the church government was placed in the hands of a group of seven elders. The assembly has commended workers to France, Zambia, and Peru.

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In the mid 1930s, Whitfield Nottage moved to Philadelphia, where he founded the Ebenezer Community Chapel in Philadelphia, ministering there for more than 30 years before retiring.

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The Germantown Christian Assembly began in 1973, the planned product of a Gospel Crusade convened at the Church of the Atonement in the Germantown area of Philadelphia. Under the leadership of B. Sam Hart and others from Calvary Gospel Chapel in West Philadelphia, the new assembly began with 27 members. The assembly's initial Sunday morning services were conducted in the local YMCA, and the Breaking of Bread and other services were held in the building of the Church of the Atonement on Green Street.

In 1974, the Christians purchased a large house at 610 E. Mount Pleasant Avenue, which became the home of the assembly and of the Grand Old Gospel Fellowship, the organization established by Mr. Hart for camp work and radio ministry. By mid 1975, more space was necessary, so plans were drawn to approximately double the seating capacity. The expansion was finished in 1978

after delays caused by a fire and neighborhood opposition. Within a few months, the new sanctuary was filled with new faces.

In 1980, B. Sam Hart left to plant another church (his radio broadcasts and Gospel crusades have led to the establishment of ten or more assemblies in black communities along the eastern seaboard), and Charles Hart was called to pastor the Germantown Christian Assembly. By 1982, the assembly had five elders and nine deacons. In 1983, the assembly observed the 100th birthday of its oldest living member, Whitfield Nottage, whose name is written large in the history of black evangelism in America.

The growing church with its many outreaches into the community and prisons, and active programs within the church, soon required three full-time and three part-time workers. At the end of the 1980s, the old building was torn down, and replaced by a new structure, seating 450 persons.

Others active in leadership over the years have been John Holley, Andrew Trusty, Dan Curbison, Charles Jones, Ed Harris, Ron Felten, and more recently Emmitt Cornelius. The assembly supports many missionaries and has commended workers to India and within the U.S. Ed and Carmen Harris were commended to the Lord’s service at the Willingboro Christian Assembly in New Jersey.

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The assembly at Frankford Gospel Hall in Philadelphia bought a church building in Mayfair in the early 1950s and called it Mayfair Gospel Hall. The new building

doubled their seating capacity and gave them a new neighborhood in which to work.

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The assembly of Christians now at Roxborough Bible Chapel began in about 1913 and was known as Wissahickon Gospel Hall, with members residing in the Wissahickon, Roxborough, and Germantown areas of Philadelphia. Three brethren were instrumental in starting the assembly as a convenient location for the local residents – James Martin, Thomas Craigmile, and Albert Berry. They came from other assemblies in the Philadelphia area. Over the years, the meeting place for the assembly moved through several rented facilities in Wissahickon, the last being at 5154 Ridge Avenue.

In 1953, a parcel of land at 460 Flamingo Street in Roxborough was purchased. The Roxborough Bible Chapel was completed that year. From this location, the Sunday School and youth work begun in Wissahickon has continued to be an outreach. William Von Buchwald, James Herman, Samuel Thomas, and Paul Roberts are presently active in the leadership of the assembly.

Missionary interest is important in the assembly, and they regularly contribute to the support of workers who have had an association with the assembly and have labored in France, Honduras, and Indonesia. Miss Alice Buckland was commended in 1993 to youth work in the assembly and camp work at Greenwood Hills and Iroquoina.

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In the mid 1920s, Ralph Richards lived in Hatboro, a small village north of Philadelphia, but was in fellowship

at the Downtown Meeting in Philadelphia at 20th and Dickinson. He met a Mr. Hunton, a Christian business man who lived in Hatboro but was not affiliated with the brethren assemblies. Mr. Hunton, however, was acquainted with some of the Christians at the old Germantown assembly. Mr. Richards brought him to the Downtown Meeting one Sunday, and Mr. Hunton liked what he saw.

Emory Richards, Ralph's brother, returned to the area about then, and joined the fellowship at Mascher Street on the north side of the city. Soon, in 1926 or 1927, Mr. Hunton and his large family were in the fellowship at Mascher Street.

Mr. Hunton and others at Mascher Street were exercised to start a Gospel effort in Hatboro, and held cottage meetings there. They invited Oswald MacLeod, who along with Samuel Rea had tent meetings there in 1928. A Gospel outreach was continued in Hatboro in 1929 by James Marshall, Charles Teller, and local brethren from Philadelphia. In tents pitched that summer, they saw a few saved, including Mr. and Mrs. Haskell Coleman.

A new assembly was formed in Hatboro in November 1930, with more than 20 in fellowship. The assembly first met as the Hatboro Gospel Hall in half of a rented storefront on Montgomery Avenue, a partition dividing the assembly meeting room from a drum storage area. In 1935, the partition was taken down, and the assembly had full use of the storefront. The wooden floors, wooden folding chairs, and walls filled with Bible texts, are remembered. In that first year, the Hatboro

assembly jointly with Mascher Street commended Samuel Rea to the work of the Lord.

In 1943, a building fund was started, and in 1946 the Christians purchased a lot at 23 W. Moreland. Construction was begun that year and completed in 1948. The Hatboro Gospel Hall still meets at that location. Many Gospel series were held by the assembly in the following decades, with speakers such as Gordon Reagor, Hector Alvez, Norman Crawford, Paul Plubell, Fred Holder, and many others. The hall was enlarged in 1982.

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Believers' Fellowship, now meeting in a rented building in Yardley, northeast of Philadelphia, began in 1983 in the home of Paul and Joy Karleen in nearby Levittown. The assembly was started by the Karleens, Sam and Mary Lou Hardman, and Dan and Sue Matlack. Sam Hardman, John Avery, and Paul Karleen have been the leaders of Believers' Fellowship.

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In November 1922, a young Christian, Chester Myers, became burdened about people living in Plumsteadville and surrounding villages north of Philadelphia. Having tried various means of spreading the Gospel, he invited Mr. Harold Harper, then preaching in the Germantown Gospel Hall in Philadelphia, to come to the Plumsteadville schoolhouse for Gospel meetings. The school was packed to capacity and the meetings were continued beyond the original closing date.

Following that, and for the next several months, Mr. Harper held Gospel meetings in many chapels and

schools. This faithful preaching of the gospel of God's grace resulted in 75 to 100 souls trusting Christ as Savior. After the evangelist left, Chester Myers undertook the unfolding of the Word of God to these newborn souls. Bible classes were held in Danboro Chapel and in the homes of Mr. Harvey Huber and Mrs. Benjamin Snape. Ten automobiles were used to carry interested believers to the annual Thanksgiving Day conference at Collingdale Gospel Hall in Philadelphia. As many of them had learned the truth of Christian baptism from the scriptures, 19 took the opportunity to be buried with Christ in baptism. Among this number were Harvey Huber, Mrs. Benjamin Snape, Hilda Snape, Mr. and Mrs. Arlington Myers, Howard Tyson, Carrie Leatherman, Helen Lear, Lloyd Tyson; and Monroe, Wilmer, Mabel, and H. Welcome Detweiler.

A meeting was arranged for the benefit of a number who had expressed desire for teaching about New Testament church truths. As a result, 22 believers met to Remember the Lord at Fountainville Chapel in December 1923. Much persecution followed. So intense was it for some believers that they were forced to leave their homes. The Lord sent many of His servants to help the new testimony.

The first Bible Conference at Fountainville Chapel used Harold Harper's tent for the dining room. During the summer months open-air meetings were conducted in Doylestown, Stockton, New Hope, Lonsdale, Quakertown, Souderton, Telford, Perkasie, and Point Pleasant. In the winter months a class for young people was held on the first and third Saturday evenings of each month. These proved to be a source of growth.

Fellowship funds from these meetings were sent to workers around the world.

In Fountainville Chapel and nearby places Frank Detweiler, Harold Jones, David Blackburn, August Hasse, and others preached the Gospel and souls were saved and added to the Lord and to the assembly. In May 1928, the Christians decided to build a chapel on the Easton Highway to house the assembly. Grace Gospel Chapel in the Curly Hill, PA area was opened formally in January 1929. The assembly held for many years a Memorial Day conference. Open-air baptisms were held in the summer months in Pine Run Creek on the John B. Detweiler farm, and in the creek under the bridge near the William Tyson farm.

In 1953, about 100 were in fellowship at Grace Gospel Chapel. The assembly has commended to the work of the Lord in other parts Frank M. Detweiler, H. Welcome and Helen Detweiler; and John and Eleanor Schultz.

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In 1975, an assembly was formed and met in the basement of Steve Hulshizer's house in the village of Line Lexington, midway between Philadelphia and Allentown. Steve, Bill, and Dave Hulshizer, and Dave Dove, all from Enfield Gospel Chapel in Philadelphia, were the principals in the starting of the assembly. In 1979, the Christians moved to their present location, and formed the North-Ridge Bible Chapel in Sellersville. Elders in the assembly have been Steve Hulshizer, Wes Reif, Bill Hulshizer, and Don McCaughey. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord's field in Ecuador, Honduras, and the Bahamas.

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The first assembly in the Pittsburgh area was in McKeesport, a southern suburb of Pittsburgh, in 1876. No other details are available for this time period, but it is known that from 1908 to 1913, an assembly was meeting in an upper room in downtown McKeesport, to which William Pinches came to preach.

When several of the saints had moved away or passed away, the remaining believers in 1913 joined with the Homestead Assembly some few miles away. Those in fellowship at the Homestead Assembly at that time included Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Clark and Mr. and Mrs. William McAra.

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From 1913 to 1933, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Clark held a Sunday School in their home and carried on Bible studies in various homes. Gospel tent meetings were held. Many were saved in these years. After Alexander Wilson started a Sunday School in his home in McKeesport in 1933, the believers involved in that work decided for form an assembly in the area, in fellowship with the Homestead Assembly. An empty storeroom was located and rented at 1301 Soles Street. The saints, twenty in all, met for the first time there in March 11, 1934 to Remember the Lord. The Joseph Clark, William Moore, and Alexander Wilson families were among those.

This first McKeesport Gospel Hall was heated with a pot bellied stove in the middle of its only room. There were no other amenities. But the assembly was vibrant, with 100 children in its Sunday School. Sam Rea and Tom Ferguson were among the early preachers coming to the Hall.

In 1938, the building was purchased, then enlarged. The addition was opened with a prayer meeting in February of that year, with about 130 in attendance. The assemblies represented at the prayer meeting were Homestead Assembly, Friendship Avenue Assembly, East Pittsburgh Assembly, the North Side Assembly, Pittsburgh, the Indiana Gospel Hall, and the Mansfield Assembly.

The McKeesport Gospel Hall assembly purchased a lot at Prescott and Broadway Street in White Oak Borough in 1974. The brethren designed and built the new Hall, and the first service there was in March 1975. The assembly has held Conferences each year since 1949, usually with a few hundred people attending. The assembly has commended a worker to Chile, and others to ministries within the U.S. About 60 are in the assembly now.

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Bible Truth Chapel in Murrysville, in the Pittsburgh area, began meeting in December 1956, with nine in fellowship. Four of the families came from Beechwood assembly in Pittsburgh. The work grew and in 1958 the brethren started construction of a building to house the growing testimony. The chapel was designed to seat 110 in the auditorium. By the late 1990s, the name was changed to Murrysville Bible Chapel, still at the same location at 4779 Christy Road.

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After the four families left to form Bible Truth Chapel, the remaining families at the Beechwood assembly built the Beechwood Bible Chapel in Pittsburgh, which was dedicated in November 1958. In the mid 1980s, the

name was changed to Browns Hill Bible Chapel and the assembly remains at the same location at 3349 Beechwood Boulevard.

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The assembly meeting at the Gospel Barn, near Harmony on Route19 north of Pittsburgh, had its start in 1952. Ed and Dorothy Bohl, who were acquainted with some brethren from Pittsburgh, fixed up their barn for a meeting place and invited the Pittsburgh brethren to come preach. The Bohls invited their neighbors, Peter and Lillian Frankenstein, who were Presbyterians, to come hear the preaching. They liked what they heard and began fellowshipping at the Gospel Barn. For a time, about 30 people came to the assembly meetings. When Mr. Bohl died, the assembly declined; Helen Theis and Lillian Frankenstein are the only remaining members at this writing.

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Donora Gospel Hall in the town of Donora south of Pittsburgh came into existence in 1920 in the home of William Kiddy on Kenric Avenue. Mr. Kiddy was formerly in fellowship at the Lonaconing Gospel Hall in Maryland. Through the years, the assembly met in three other locations in the town, and now is at 201 Thompson Avenue. Robert Grant Sr. and Louis Olsen were also involved in the start-up of the Donora Gospel Hall. Others in leadership over the years include Andrew Craig, Stanley Bell, Lester Wolfe, and Henry Todd.

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The assembly now known as Elk Run Avenue Chapel in Punxsutawney, northeast of Pittsburgh, began sometime

before 1900, and probably met in homes initially. The deed to the assembly for the land is dated 1899. A building was constructed soon after that, and a basement added later. Those involved in its start included W.F. Wineberg, Joseph Dennison Jr., George Murray, William Dennis, and Henry Strachan. Known for many years as the Punxsutawney Gospel Hall, the name was changed to its current one in 1970. The assembly has always occupied the same location on Elk Run Avenue. The leading brother for many years was Clifton R. Wineberg. Other elders have been Clifton M. Wineberg and Tony Sushereba, in addition to those above. David L. Roy traveled from Cleveland many times to give help and encouragement, as did Lloyd Wineberg. David Madgwick was co-commended to Africa by the assembly. The assembly has always been small, but has an active work among young people in the area.

* * *

The Indiana Gospel Hall in the town of Indiana east of Pittsburgh was formed in 1912, or perhaps a little before, as a result of the work of David L. Roy, who worked also in Punxsutawney. The Christians met first in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lott Frederick, and in April 1912 moved into a building at 526 Philadelphia Street in the town. Mr. Frederick was a true and loving shepherd of the Lord’s people.

Later in 1912, the Christians secured a lot on West Church Street for tent meetings by W.B. Johnston and David Roy. Similar meetings were held in 1913. Sometime between 1913 and 1916, the Christians rented a room in what they called the “Cement Block Building” near the Frederick home, for their meetings.

In 1919, they held their first Annual Conference. Over the next two decades, the assembly moved through several rented spaces, and then in 1938, bought the lot at the corner of 5th and Locust streets at which the present Indiana Gospel Hall was constructed.

Located in a college town, the assembly has seen a number of students saved and brought into fellowship. Paul Plubell was commended to the Lord's work in the 1940s and saw many souls saved before going to be with the Lord at an early age. William A. Seale, Jr. was commended to full time work as an evangelist in the early 1990s. Others involved in leadership over the years have been Jack Byers, Glenn Moose, James Walker, Cammie Plubell, William Craig, Robert Baird, and William Parks.

* * *

The assembly known as East Freedom Chapel, in the town of East Freedom, 100 miles east of Pittsburgh, began in 1951 when Obie and Mary Ann Snider met together with Mary C. Walter in the Snider home at Singing Brook Farm. The were joined in fellowship over the next couple of years by Mrs. Walter's son John, Hugh Caulfield, Cloyd Shaffer, and Sam Hagen. The fledgling assembly was faithfully taught and encouraged with regular visits by T.B. Gilbert, A.P. Gibbs, Joe Neibor, Herman Luhm, David Pollock, and John Milton Mills.

In 1960, the assembly moved into East Freedom Chapel at 16637 Mount Pleasant Street, its present location. The opening was marked by a month's special meetings by Bill Paterson. Harold Blattenburger, David Harper, and Dan Snaddon, have also been active in ministering the Word. David Harper and his wife have been

commended for work in the assembly. About 50 were in fellowship in 1996. In 1997, a wing was added to the building to accommodate increased attendance.

* * *

Jefferson Road Bible Chapel in Brookville, a small town about 100 miles northeast of Pittsburgh, began in the home of Terry and Amy McCall in December 1990, and was called at the beginning Believer's Fellowship. In June 1992, the Christians moved into an old Presbyterian church building on the property of one of the members. Numbers never topped 50 despite many evangelistic efforts. When all but one of the families moved away due to employment, the assembly disbanded in 1997. Two workers were commended by the assembly to the Lord's work in Kenya. Eldership included Tony E. Sushereba and his sons James D. and Timothy T. Sushereba, and Terry McCall.

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The assembly in Reading had its beginning in about 1905, meeting on the second floor of a building at 8th and Penn Streets, which was the downtown area of the city. As the assembly grew, it developed into a group of about 125 believers. Later they moved to a second floor room at 6th and Franklin Street in a building called Stauffer's Hall. Around 1928, they bought their own building, a former shirt factory at 5th and Franklin Streets in the borough of West Reading, and converted it into a very fine hall for the assembly. Mr. John Bloore from Plainfield, NJ drew the plans for the renovation. It was called Bible Truth Hall in Reading until the 1950s, when its name was changed to Bible Truth Chapel.

Many brethren from Plainfield, NJ helped in the growth and development of the assembly. In addition to John Bloore, there were other regular visitors, such as Samuel Ridout, George McCandless, Fred Mackenzie, Richard Hill, and R.J. Reid. P. Daniel Loizeaux would visit every month and read missionary letters at the monthly missionary meeting. Harry Ironside frequently conducted evangelistic meetings at the Odd Fellows Hall in Reading. Thus the assembly was associated with the 'Grant exclusive' brethren in its early days.

Much of the assembly growth came about through the evangelistic efforts of some of the local brethren. George Starke, who was the correspondent for many years, and George Kreidler were very active in children's work throughout the city. They would rent store fronts and conduct children's meetings in them. Also many children were reached through an outreach in federal housing areas. Paul Bitler, who later became a worker among the Spanish in New York City, was very active in the housing project work. Alfred P. Gibbs was brought in each year to conduct a week of children's meetings.

During the years of the assembly's existence, there were three commended workers. Paul Bitler was commended to work among the Spanish in New York City in 1944. He worked there for almost fifty years and saw Spanish assemblies established in Manhattan and the Bronx. Bill Oglesby was commended also in the 1940s and he first worked in the assembly itself for a number of years. Then he moved to the south, where he labored in Victoria and Richmond, VA, and also Raleigh, NC. Jim Yorgey was commended to the work in France and later worked for many years in Quebec.

In 1988, the assembly closed its doors at the building in West Reading. Its size had decreased considerably and it was felt the building was too large. They then met in a room in the Day's Inn in Shillington, a suburb of Reading. A small group met there until 1996 when the assembly was disbanded after more than ninety years of existence.

* * *

An itinerant preacher from Reading, Gorge Holmes, became very active in seeking to establish a testimony in Allentown, near the eastern edge of Pennsylvania, in the 1920s. Eventually the group met together in a rented storeroom at 5th and Turner Streets in downtown Allentown. Most of the believers lived in the small city and the majority walked to the storeroom, which was heated with a pot belly stove in the center of the room. They called this place the Allentown Gospel Hall, and they met in the storeroom for over twenty five years. The Bethlehem Assembly, meeting in nearby Bethlehem, later merged with the group in Allentown.

Gilbert Renninger was one of the most active of the local brethren in establishing this testimony. His brother, Frank, later became the correspondent and carried on the work into the 1980s. During this time period, many brethren such as Inglis Fleming, David Kirk, and George McCandless taught the Word in the assembly. Lewis Chambers was a regular visitor who brought with him a model of the Old Testament tabernacle. P. Daniel Loizeaux came once a month to read missionary letters at the missionary meetings.

Welcome Detweiler, who later labored in North Carolina, conducted tent meetings in south Allentown. His

brother, Walton Detweiler, who was self-employed, was a consistent worker in Allentown. On the third Sunday of each month, he would travel to Allentown from his home in Plumsteadville, near Philadelphia. He would conduct a meeting in the local jail and at the rescue mission, in addition to speaking at the meeting hall. He visited every month with very few exceptions for over forty five years.

In 1956, the assembly built their own chapel. Now known as Grace Gospel Chapel in east Allentown, on Irving Street, they remained at this location until 1995. Then they bought a larger building at 1642 Ehrets Lane in south Allentown, which is its present location.

Grace Gospel Chapel and its antecedents have commended workers to the Lord's field at Immanuel Mission in Arizona and Colombia; others have been commended to ministries within the U.S.

* * *

An assembly started in Lancaster, west of Philadelphia, in the early 1930s. Samuel Hocking had a machine shop in that city at Grant and Prince Streets. His and two other families started the Lancaster Assembly in the room above the shop. In the late 1930s, the group met in St. Mark's Church on Pershing Avenue. When the Hocking family moved away, this assembly ceased and for a period of time there was no meeting in the Lancaster area.

In the early 1940s, many Spanish-American and Mexican residents lived and worked in the east end of Lancaster. Luis Montalvo started an assembly there in its own hall on Grofftown Road; the assembly had services in both Spanish and English. In the mid 1940s, many of the

Spanish-American families moved away to the Steelton-Highspire area to work in the steel mills. Samuel S. Sheaffer, an elder in the meeting, kept the assembly going at Grofftown Road. At about that time, the assembly changed the name to East End Chapel.

About six to eight families met in the small chapel until the early 1970s, when the state made a decision to build Route 23 into Lancaster, and purchased the land the chapel occupied. The Christians then met in the Bird-in-Hand Fire Company for about a year. In 1975, they purchased the Monterey Mennonite Church on West Eby Road, about five miles east of Lancaster, where they presently reside as Monterey Chapel in Leola. Robert Crawford, Bruce Yorgey, and Paul D. Sheaffer have been elders at Monterey. Several men of the assembly are active in teaching and counseling at the Lancaster Country Prison. Monterey Chapel supports the Water Street Rescue Mission as well as many missionaries. About 85 people attend Monterey Chapel.

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The Greenwood Hills Assembly in Fayetteville in south-central Pennsylvania, was established in 1928 by K.B. Moomaw, J. Bishop Nicklas, Bigler Plasterer, Eddie Plasterer, Frank Blair, and Richard McIntire. First meeting in the home of J.B. Nicklas, the assembly moved into the Mt. Union U.B. Church building, and then into the dining room of The Inn of the Greenwood Hills Bible Conference Association. The Christians now occupy a chapel built in 1946, to which a multipurpose annex was added in 1993. Besides the men indicated above, leaders in the assembly have included George Landis, Howard Lankford, Robert Kirkpatrick Sr., Z.C. Hodges, and

Bruce Kramer. In 1996 the number in fellowship was about 100, with 20 youngsters. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord's vineyard in Zambia, Aletia Springs, the Philippines, Senegal, and Indonesia with Wycliffe.

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One of the more recent assemblies in Pennsylvania is the Boiling Springs Bible Chapel in the small town of Boiling Springs, near Carlisle southwest of Harrisburg. Early in 1992, five families that had met at the Greenwood Hills Bible Conference began to meet informally for fellowship in the home of William J. Wirl, Jr. in Carlisle. The other families were those of Robert Boelter, Douglas Bates, Rodney Booth, and William Howard. The Bates, Boelter, and Wirl families had assembly backgrounds. After a short time, the group decided to rent a room at a motel for Sunday meetings, and placed an ad in the Carlisle newspaper announcing the start-up of the meeting. This attracted the attention of the Charles Hocking family, who then met with the group. The name Carlisle Bible Chapel was chosen at that time.

They met at the motel until mid 1994, then relocated for a few months to an office building pending the purchase of an old Methodist building at 119 Fourth Street in Boiling Springs. They took possession in January 1995 and changed their name to the current one. The current elders are Douglas Bates, Charles Hocking, Charles Masland 3rd, Paul A. Myers, and William Wirl, Jr. The assembly has joined with the Chambersburg Gospel Chapel in commending Steve Witter to the work of the Lord at Emmaus Bible College.

* * *

The Waynesburg Bible Chapel in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania began in 1981 as a Bible study. Two couples, Jan and Penny Buckhalter, and John and Robin Harding, began meeting in their homes with a desire for a deeper understanding of the Scriptures. None of them had prior knowledge or experience with the brethren. After about a year, William Skelton, who had knowledge of New Testament principles of meeting as a church, joined with them and confirmed what they had been learning in their studies. Numbers increased quickly and in 1983 a building at 859 North Bonar Avenue in Waynesburg was purchased, where the assembly meets today. Others active in leadership have been Paul Parsons and John Schmidt. The assembly has commended workers to serve in Burundi, Africa and with Friends of Turkey and CBM Ministries.

Sources:

Questionnaires and Other Correspondence

Looking Backward, by Mary A. Harry, January 1946

Waynesburg Bible Chapel, undated

History of Indiana Gospel Hall, 1988

Our Heritage: Assembly History in the Philadelphia Area, March 7, 1999; by William J. Oliver and Robert Rea

A Brief History of Malvern Bible Chapel, 1996

History of the Germantown Christian Assembly, Philadelphia, Pa., Charles Hart, 1990

History of Monterey Chapel, P. David Sheaffer, undated

A History of the McKeesport Gospel Hall, by Harold F. Clark, 1999

Letters of Interest, November 1953, p. 3; January 1954, p. 9; June 1959, p. 11; February 1970, p. 33

## Notes

1. A note in Letters of Interest, Nov. 1957, p. 5 states that 1870 was the date of the first assembly in Richmond. This is probably in error, unless the reference is to an ‘exclusive’ assembly.

## U.S. – Northeast

This section contains New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine.

### New Jersey

Terrill Road Bible Chapel in Fanwood has an illustrious history. By the year 1870, a small group of 15 or 20 believers were gathering together in assembly fellowship in Plainfield. Of the original company, only one name is remembered, that of Louis Rhéaume. Mrs. Elie Loizeaux was a step- daughter of his.

Later in the 1880s, Paul and Timothy Loizeaux with their families moved to Plainfield and met with this small group. They were the founders of the Bible Truth Depot, later known as Loizeaux Brothers Publishers. At about this time F.C. Jennings, a gifted writer and teacher, joined with the group. The assembly grew and the Lord blessed. A little later, J.D. Loizeaux, the Perrins, the Hardinghams, and the Maugers came into fellowship.

Toward the end of the 1880s, F.W. Grant, the well known assembly leader and writer, came to Plainfield with his family and took his place among this group. (F.W. Grant's sons, Fred and Frank, and some members of the Loizeaux family, were associated with a similar assembly in nearby Berkeley Heights – the Berkeley Heights Gospel Hall – which continued until World War II.) F.W. Grant produced The Numerical Bible while in Plainfield. Miss Emily Farmer, who assisted C.I. Scofield in the preparation of his well known reference Bible, was also in the assembly for many years. During these years, the

assembly was known as Bible Truth Hall in Plainfield, but was usually called the Front Street Meeting, denoting its location in downtown Plainfield at 331 E. Front Street.

Soon after the turn of the century, Samuel Ridout, another well known author, came to Plainfield with his family, and came into fellowship. F.W. Grant and Samuel Ridout were successive editors of Help and Food. The Front Street Meeting was quite large at this time. After Mr. Ridout died in 1930, John Bloore assumed the editorship of Help and Food for twelve years. He perhaps more than anyone else was used to break down some of the party lines among brethren. The Front Street Meeting had been in the ‘exclusive’ camp, and with Mr. Bloore’s and others’ efforts, became an ‘open’ meeting.

Others in the meeting in the first half of the 1900s were James Parker; Hughes Fawcett; P. Daniel, Elie, Alfred, and Parker Loizeaux, the sons of Timothy Loizeaux; Fred and Frank Grant, the sons of F.W. Grant; the Armerding family; the Loughs; Carvers; Inglis Fleming; Ferdinand French; Walter Temple; and for a time, John Smart and R.E. Harlow. Those who ministered at the assembly comprise a veritable Who’s Who among the brethren.

Hillside Cemetery, located on the border of Scotch Plains and Plainfield, stands today as a memorial of many saints, including those listed. Their tombstones stand as a great tribute to God’s Word. The entrance of this cemetery is graced by the markers of three of the original Loizeaux family, whose inscriptions are written in French.

The Front Street Meeting built a new chapel in the neighboring town of Fanwood in 1957 and since then has been called the Terrill Road Bible Chapel. Others in leadership over the years include John Reid, Phillip Carter, John French, Ledley Perrin, Douglas Haggan, Robert Hansen, and William Patterson. The assembly has commended several people to the work of the Lord in Puerto Rico, to itinerant ministry, to Emmaus Bible College, and other areas. Terrill Road has about 110 adults and youngsters in attendance at this time.

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The assembly that meets today at Cedarcroft Bible Chapel in South Plainfield has its roots in the Front Street Meeting, discussed above. In late 1898 or early 1900, several men with their families left that 'exclusive' assembly and started an open meeting in a storefront – the Liberty Street Assembly. Among these were F.C. Jennings, Sydney Perrin, Walter Hardingham, Joshua D. Loizeaux, Nathan Saunders, and Nicholas and Edward Mauger.

The Baehr family moved from Bronx, NY to Plainfield in 1912. A couple named Platts lived across the street from the Baehrs and sent Mr. Perrin to visit them. He told the Baehrs about the Sunday School at Liberty Street, and the parents realized this was the place they had been looking for. This was in 1918. Conrad Baehr and his wife Myrtle later became missionaries to China.

Mr. Perrin, the son of W. L. Perrin who owned an insurance company in New York, was a Sunday School superintendent; he picked up the children and bought bus or trolley car tickets for others who lived further

away. Joshua D. Loizeaux took young people to the local rescue mission to help in the assembly ministries there.

Later, the Christians moved to a larger building and became the Washington Avenue Gospel Hall in Plainfield. For many years, F.C. Jennings had a Tuesday evening Bible class at the Westfield Assembly, which was a hive-off from the Washington Avenue Meeting. He would walk the five to seven miles to Westfield for these classes, and take transportation home.

In the 1930s, the Washington Avenue Meeting moved to the Grove Street Chapel in North Plainfield. They remained there until buying property and building a chapel on Kenyon Avenue in South Plainfield in 1965, calling it Cedarcroft Bible Chapel. Leading brothers over the years at Grove Street/Cedarcroft include Frank Biffen, Rufus Hummel, James Van Duzer, Alfred Guzzetti, and many others. Kingsley Baehr is a resident worker for the assembly.

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When the Front Street Meeting broke from the ‘exclusive’ camp in the 1930s, ties between the two Plainfield meetings became strong, and there was much interaction between them. They formed monthly missionary meetings in Plainfield, alternating responsibility for the meetings. They fellowshipped regularly together for a number of years until the Front Street Meeting moved to Fanwood. The William Deans family, who had ties with both the Front Street and Grove Street meetings, left for Africa as missionaries in 1929, with a send-off from both assemblies. In 1940, the Front Street Meeting procured a printing press for the

Deans in the Congo, with which to print Christian literature.

Captain Barlow, who had been a sea captain, became the New York dock captain of the Cunard Line and did much to help many missionaries with transportation and in other ways as well. He also helped start a monthly missionary meeting, probably in the early thirties, in a small meeting in Elizabeth. A light supper was served and missionary letters were read, followed by a prayer meeting. The monthly missionary meeting outgrew the chapel in Elizabeth and was moved to the larger Kenilworth Gospel Chapel (see below) with the same format, and attended by a sizable number of people from many different New Jersey assemblies.

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The roots of Woodside Chapel in Fanwood go back to the time of Walter W. Gill, who came to Westfield from Iowa to practice dentistry in the early 1900s. Mr. Gill was converted in 1918 at a Billy Sunday meeting. He longed to share the Gospel with others and began teaching in the church he attended in Westfield. Unfortunately, his message was unwanted and he was denounced for sharing God's truth. He did, however, find a group meeting in Plainfield who believed as he did – the Washington Avenue Gospel Hall – and he began to fellowship there.

He began a Sunday School in a Norwegian section of Westfield. The group met in various homes, including the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Hansen. Some were brought to the Lord through this effort, which was followed in 1921 by evangelistic tent meetings in that area. Mr. Hugh McEwen of Philadelphia came as the

evangelist and God answered prayer in the salvation of several of these Scandinavian people. The new converts formed the nucleus of the Westfield Assembly. They rented an upstairs room on Elm Street in Westfield in 1924 and began meeting together for the preaching of God's Word, fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and prayer.

For the next twenty eight years these believers met in four different locations in Westfield, seeking to serve the Lord in any way they could. Evangelistic meetings were frequent. A.P. Gibbs used his slides to present the Gospel to children. Many were saved. A small rented store on Cacciola Place provided a spot for gathering children on Friday nights to hear and learn the Scriptures.

In the late 1940s, the YMCA in Westfield was used as a meeting place, but as it did not provide good facilities for Sunday School or Gospel meetings, the group began looking in earnest for their own quarters. God finally provided property in 1951 on Morse Avenue in Fanwood. Woodside Chapel opened its doors in January 1952. Following the passing of Walter Gill, his son John (Jack) Gill faithfully led and shepherded this assembly until his home call in the early 1990s.

In 1954, the adjacent corner lot was made available and purchased. A year later the chapel was extended to twice its length and the basement and two classrooms were finished. In 1959 and 1960, the nursery, foyer, and side classrooms were added. A new auditorium was built a decade later under the able supervision of James Perrin.

Many godly men and women shared in this outreach to the neighborhood over the years, such as Albert and Arthur Mayer. Many well known servants of the Lord

have been commended from Woodside, including Len Brooks, Ed Christensen, Jack Fish, Fred Kosin, and James Stahr. Present elders are David Brooks, Beorge Dick, Eugene Graber, John Jeffers, and Alan Schetelich.

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Henry W. Redfield had been active in a denominational church in Tarrytown, New York. By the late 1870s, he had become concerned over what he felt was an unbiblical system in the church he attended. After reading the Scriptures for many months, he became convinced that he would have to take an independent position where scriptural methods and principles could be applied. A series of letters dating from 1877 set out his convictions, essentially the same as those held by the brethren, though he knew nothing of the assembly movement.

By 1882, the Redfields had moved across the Hudson River to Closter, a community in the northeastern corner of New Jersey. Mr. Redfield and his wife invited a few friends to join them in a simple observance of the Lord’s Supper, and thus an assembly was born, probably the second oldest in the state, Bible Truth Hall in Plainfield being the oldest. Harvey Wadham was also involved in establishing the assembly.

Just before the turn of the century, when several key families in the assembly were about to move a few miles south to Tenafly, it was decided to relocate the assembly to that village. The Remembrance Meeting was held in a rented library room. The Christians called their meeting place Tenafly Hall. The Sunday School met in the railroad station. The assembly was incorporated under

New Jersey law in 1908. The assembly later moved to its own building – Washington Hall.

The Christians were energetic and evangelistic. Tent meetings brought many in. Others were reached through an unusual form of evangelism – some of the men conducted daily Bible classes on the commuter trains during the long ride to New York City.

Through the years there has been a steady outreach in evangelism, missions, and humanitarian service. Alfred A. Kunz, one of the elders, founded and directed the Pocket Testament League. Missionaries were sent to Angola and Italy. In 1972, Henry Redfield, Jr. became one of the founding directors of El Nathan Home, then in Buffalo and now in Missouri.

The assembly now meets at Grace Chapel at West Clinton Avenue and Tenafly Road. Elders have included Alfred Kunz, Robert Watson, and Charles Steinhofer, among many others.

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A few miles north of Newark is Kearny. The original thoughts about an assembly in Kearny began in 1892, at a time when there was a very small meeting in Newark. Some of the brethren in fellowship in the Newark Assembly decided to hold tent meetings in the town of Kearny. When people responded, the brothers not only desired to establish an assembly there, but to develop a children's work. The assembly moved through several rented buildings in the next several years and was subjected to persecution from 'rowdies,' as they called their antagonists. In March 1898, a small Sunday School work began in a home.

The assembly eventually located in the Good News Chapel in Kearny, which they apparently owned. A Mr. Spencer is considered the founder of the assembly, along with Mr. John Thomson Sr. Others who helped in the work were Mr. Oliver, Mr. Miller from Portland, OR, Mr. Wilson from Willimantic, CT, and Mr. Lyon from Great Britain, who arrived in 1903.

In about 1910, the meeting place was called the Kearny Gospel Hall. At some point, a separation into two groups occurred. One group took the name Kearny Gospel Chapel and the other reverted to the name Good News Chapel. Both groups were in Kearny.

In 1979, the two works recombined into one, and the building originally housing Kearny Gospel Chapel was sold to a day care center, and the newer building that housed Good News Chapel was renovated and the work became known as Kearny Bible Chapel. The assembly continues with this name and location.

Others who have shared leadership over the years include Messrs. Shearer, John Thomson Jr., Robert Gardner Sr. George Green, George MacLachlin, Robert Turner, William Watson, Robert Gourley, John Henderson, Sal Cristo, Lawson Mitchell, Jay Allen, and Thomas J. Turner. The assembly has commended workers to Africa, Spain, and Russia. About 100 adults and children attend Kearny Bible Chapel.

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Kenilworth Gospel Chapel has an interesting history because of its involvement with the beginning of the borough of Kenilworth.

In the late 1800s, commercial development in the area west of Newark and south of Orange was underway. A clothing company was one of the largest moving into the area, employing several hundred people. But these all lived in New York City, and transportation was a real problem. So the clothing company decided to have a residential area built in what was then called the New Orange Industrial Park, and sought bids for the development and construction of 100 homes. The successful bidder was the construction company owned by James Arthur of Philadelphia.

Mr. Arthur arrived in 1898 with a group of construction men, and these men with their families and a few already living in the area, were the founders of the borough of Kenilworth. But Mr. Arthur was a Christian, associated with the brethren assemblies, and many of those he brought with him were also.

In that same year, 1898, George MacKenzie, a 33-year-old immigrant from Scotland who had been saved in a New York City mission a few years earlier, had begun teaching at a Bible Institute in Philadelphia. Largely self-taught and having no association then with assemblies, he had discovered the New Testament principal of the oneness of the body of Christ, and began teaching this, which led to his early dismissal from the school. But the Lord had led him into the acquaintance of James Arthur, perhaps a year or two earlier, who then was associated with a small Presbyterian church. Recognizing his teaching and preaching gifts, Mr. Arthur invited George MacKenzie to teach them these New Testament truths. The group soon withdrew from the Presbyterian association and formed the West Philadelphia Assembly (later known as the Lansdowne Gospel Hall).

And so it was that James Arthur brought with him to New Orange/Kenilworth a substantial New Testament church testimony. George MacKenzie, who had identified with the ‘Grant’ brethren by then, moved to the area at the request of Mr. Arthur in about 1905 and soon took up his calling as an itinerant preacher, traveling widely, and apparently living for a time in St. Louis.

In the early 1900s, it is known that a group of assembly Christians was meeting in a small building at 17th Street and Monroe Avenue; these were probably the group identified with Mr. Arthur, who are said to have met initially in various homes. In 1908, the meeting place of these Christians was located in the Council Chambers of the present municipal building.

A few years later they moved to a store at 52 South 21st Street (now Orange Avenue). In about 1933, the Christians started a Sunday School work there. Upon growing, they decided they needed their own chapel. The lot at the corner of Newark Avenue and South 23rd Street was donated to the group by Howard Gillings, and ground was broken for construction in July 1936. Kenilworth Gospel Chapel was dedicated in December of 1936.

By consistent door-to-door visitation, series of meetings once or twice a year, and the use of able speakers at the Gospel meetings, the work grew. By the beginning of 1948 they had expanded their quarters, and undertook a five-week Gospel campaign with Lester Wilson, then of Greensboro, NC . The assembly grew rapidly after that. Over the years, many additions have been made to the building, until now it extends from Newark Avenue to Passaic Avenue along 23rd Street.

Besides the MacKenzie, Arthur, and Gillings families, Mrs. Winnie Dyke is also remembered as having a strong influence in the early days of the assembly, and conducted a home Sunday School. Fred MacKenzie, son of George MacKenzie, was a strong leader in the assembly for many years. He was president of The Fields and then Christian Missions in Many Lands (CMML). He became a leader among many assemblies and was influential, with many others, in breaking down the barriers between the ‘Grant’ and ‘open’ assemblies in the area. Kenilworth has for many years been counted among the ‘open’ assemblies. Other leaders over the years have included George Sharp, Frank MacMillian, Ben Hubinger, William Baxter, Alec Carver, William Arthur, and James Arthur, Jr.

Kenilworth Gospel Chapel now numbers about 125 adults and children. The assembly has commended Bob and Joyce Clark (jointly with Maplewood Bible Chapel), who have an extensive preaching and radio ministry. Others have been commended to the Philippines and South Africa.

* * *

The village of Maplewood was blessed with an assembly of believers as early as 1913. At about that time, several families moved to Maplewood not having brethren backgrounds, and in searching for a fellowship where Biblical truths were expounded and practiced, joined in with the new assembly and became mainstays in the work.

For a while the Christans met in rented facilities in the center of Maplewood. Subsequently they rented a store front on Springfield Avenue, the main artery in town.

Gospel texts were placed in the windows, and were an effective means of spreading the Gospel. The work grew to the degree that the Maplewood Bible Chapel was built in 1938 on a triangle of land bordered by Lexington and Burnett Avenues. For a number of years following, it was perhaps one of the most progressive assemblies in the metropolitan New Jersey area. It was blessed with a host of young people, many with growing families, and many wise shepherds. The names of Low, Main, Myers, Mauger, Lough, Bellinger, Fortune, Humphries, MacKenzie, Brackenridge, Scheele, and others are part of the history of the assembly.

People still speak glowingly of the blessings derived by attending Charles Bellinger's Bible study. Mr. Bellinger was the leading brother in establishing The Fields, forerunner of Christian Missions in Many Lands. During the 1940s and 1950s, Jack and Marge Wyrtzen and family lived in Maplewood and made the chapel their church home. Young Don Wyrtzen, who is now well known for his sacred music, started out by playing the piano in the Sunday School.

The work is not as large as it once was, but a faithful number still meet in the name of the Lord Jesus and have an outreach to the neighborhood through youth activities and DVBS. They are encouraged in the work by elders Grosvenor Rust, William Elder, Richard Magee, Lance Ellis, and Vincent D'Addio.

* * *

Grace Chapel in Elizabeth was well underway in 1932 at 357 Morris Avenue, and known then as Bible Truth Hall. In that year, another assembly that had been meeting in a store front merged with Bible Truth Hall. James C.

Manahan had built the Hall, with a meeting room on the first floor and an apartment on the second. When he died, he willed the building to the assembly. In leadership have been Messrs. Manahan, H. Carpenter, J. Troutman, Gibson, Avery, and now Bill Kother. Owen Hoffman was commended by Grace Chapel to the Lord's work in Georgia. The assembly of about 25 people has an outreach to inner city youth, transporting up to 25 each week to the Sunday School.

* * *

The assembly now at Central Bible Chapel in Palisades Park in the New York City metropolitan area, began in 1907 in a store front a few blocks from the present location at 14 W. Central Boulevard. Peter Steenland, Harry Ackerman, and Rollo Steenland were the leaders in forming the assembly, having left the multi-denominational Union Church of Palisades Park, which had become liberal. At the store front, it was known as the Palisades Park Gospel Hall and took its current name after moving. Active in leadership after these first men were L. Stanley Ford, George T. Mortland, Harold Buirkle, Edward Armstrong, David Swaim, and Ned Stephens. The assembly has commended workers to Paraguay, Poland, and the Phillippines. About 45 adults and youngsters attend Central Bible Chapel today.

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Correspondence shows that believers had been meeting as an assembly without a specific name in the city of Hackensack in the New York metropolitan area since about 1905. How the assembly began has been lost from memory. Prior to incorporating in 1940 as Hackensack Gospel Chapel, the believers had met in rented space on

State Street and on Main Street in the city, and probably in other locations as well. In 1940, the Christians erected their own building at the corner of Euclid and Terrace Avenues. At that time, there were no recognized elders, but the trustees for the incorporation were William Walsh, Collins Chivers, Florent Feltz, Wesley Schierloh, and Otto Speck, so these men would have been among the leadership.

The assembly was active during this period. It sponsored a 15 minute radio program each Sunday morning; regularly distributed literature in the neighborhood, and had a Sunday School of over 100 students at times. Only a few adult neighbors would come to the meetings. In the late 1950s, desiring an outreach into the neighborhood, the believers invited Ernest Woodhouse to come as a resident evangelist.

Expansion of the building was impractical, so the believers agreed unanimously to relocate. At about the same time, a Family Bible Hour on Sunday mornings decided upon. The elders at that time were Benjamin Boonstra, Ernest Chick, Florent Feltz, Nazar Nazarian, Meno Nershi, William Walsh, and Cecil Whitaker. A site was chosen in a suburban area near Hackensack. The opening of Valley Bible Chapel, in Washington Township Bergen County, was on January 1, 1961.

The assembly has commended workers to the field in India, Bolivia, and Colombia. Local residents have come to know Christ as Savior, and a strong youth program has seen conversions. About 130 attend Valley Bible Chapel. Current elders are John Molnar, J. Leslie Campbell, Kenneth Biswurm, and Robert Hayes.

* * *

The assembly now at Brighton Avenue Bible Chapel began in about 1930 on North Park Street in East Orange and was known in the beginning as The Gospel Chapel. R.H. Muir was the principal person in the start-up, and has been followed in leadership by Alfred Moffit, Don Small, and Michael Pongracz. The assembly has commended John and Eleanor Sims to the work in Zimbabwe, and Bob Young to Zambia. About 55 adults and young people are in Brighton Avenue Bible Chapel today.

* * *

Rutherford Bible Chapel in the New York metropolitan area, began as an assembly in homes in the Rutherford area. In 1901, the Christians rented the basement of the Public Library and were known as Library Hall assembly. In 1915, they moved into a rented store at 37 Park Avenue. In 1926 the Christians moved to 118 Union Avenue, where they were known as the Rutherford Gospel Hall. In 1970, they purchased their own building at 161 West Passaic Avenue, and took the name Rutherford Bible Chapel.

Arthur Mauger, Alwyn Ball, Lyman C. Hershey, and Ernest Hageman were those who began the assembly. In addition to these, Walter C. Nearpass, Walter L. Nearpass, John Barlow, Henri Larrieu, and Gerard DeMatteo have been in leadership. Rutherford Bible Chapel has commended several persons to ministries in the U.S. and Canada. About 125 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

* * *

A few believers in fellowship at Grace Gospel Chapel in Jersey City, desiring to start a work nearer their area a

few miles north, began Gospel Tent work in Union City with the help of Thomas Baird. Souls were saved and the group began meeting as an assembly in store fronts in Union City in October 1914. Dirk Janssen, Arthur Bowman, and Samuel Donnelly are among the names remembered as initiating the assembly. Later the believers met in a loft over a machine shop at 522 – 30th Street, Union City. They took the name Bethel Gospel Chapel and incorporated in April 1930. Finally, on October 1934 they erected a chapel at 3124 Summit Avenue, Union City, where they still meet.

Others in leadership have included Harold Brown, Franklin Spangler, Howard Klenk, Fred Holst, Edward Zogheb, Franklin Brown, and Pasquale Garafalo. Several from the assembly have been commended to the Lord's work abroad. With the influx of Spanish-speaking peoples from Central and South America, the assembly is now bilingual. About 40 to 50 adults are in fellowship, with about 10 to 15 youngsters.

* * *

Mountain Ridge Bible Chapel in Berkeley Heights began in 1962. The initial group of about six families, from assemblies in nearby towns, met at that time at the Mountain Park School for Sunday morning worship, Sunday School, and Bible Hour. All other services were held in the downstairs of the Howard's home, which had been finished off by the brethren as a large meeting room. A week-long series of children's meetings conducted by Mel Wistner attracted as many as 80 neighborhood children, giving ample indication of a wide open door for evangelism in the area. In 1966, the congregation, numbering about 60, moved into its own

new building at 763 Mountain Avenue, its present location. In 1976, the congregation had increased to about 125. Five families were active in the beginning of the work: Alec and Nancy Collette, Robert and Elizabeth Howard, Edward and Florence Kretzmer, and George and Alice Ingalls – all sent out with the blessing of the Woodside Chapel in Fanwood – and Edward and Christina Whittle sent with the blessing of the Kenilworth Gospel Chapel. Presently, 130 adults and children make up the fellowship. They are led by Scott Allen, Paul Gilkenson, Allen Goetz, Robert Howard, Douglas Tremper, and Paul Trimmer as elders. David and Judy Shoop are resident workers serving not only Mountain Ridge but also the many area assemblies in a teaching ministry. The assembly has co-commended and supported workers to Paraguay and Wycliffe Bible Translators.

* * *

A few miles from Berkeley Heights is Summit, and there the Summit Gospel Hall existed for many years, finally disbanding in about 1957. Its time of origin is not remembered, but it was in existence by 1935, and probably many years before that. Leading brothers were Messrs. McClay, Glasgow, J.S. Hyde, and R. Collette.

* * *

The New Jersey assemblies retain much of their corporate fellowship. Besides the monthly missionary meeting at Kenilworth, there is an annual Memorial Day outing established by Alex Breckenridge of the Maplewood Bible Chapel in the 1920s. At one time this outing pulled in up to 1500 people, and still gets 500 or more. The Women’s semi-annual Missionary Conference

is shared by several assemblies. Grace Gospel Chapel in Jersey City has a rally the 2nd Saturday of each month, and the Kearny Bible Chapel has a rally the 4th Saturday of each month.

* * *

The assembly of Christians presently meeting at the Fifth Avenue Chapel in Belmar, a town on the New Jersey shore south of New York City, originated in the mid 1920s by brethren from the metropolitan area of northern New Jersey and New York. These Christians desired to Remember the Lord during their vacations at the shore. A small store was secured for this purpose on South Main Street in Neptune near the old Neptune High School.

In about this time, several families moved to this area and an assembly was formed on an all-year basis. The home of August Handle in Asbury Park served as a meeting place. Mr. and Mrs. Dussman and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hart from Eatontown, Mr. and Mrs. Nunzio Pizzulli from Long Branch, Miss Gertrude Ellliot from Bradley Beach, and Mr. and Mrs. James Wilson, made up the assembly.

About 1925, a room was secured in the American Legion Home on Bangs Avenue, Asbury Park, available for Sunday morning meetings. Thursday evening meetings were held in homes. When the Legion moved to Sewell Avenue, the assembly met in a room there. Robert Hazel and Stan Hart were saved and came into fellowship in 1928.

To conduct Gospel meetings, the Christians realized they must have larger quarters, and rented a store front on Ridge Avenue in Neptune. The assembly grew, and many

of the well known preachers of the time preached there. In 1935, they secured a larger store on Seventh Avenue, west of the Bradley Beach railroad station. It was at this time that monthly ministry meetings were inaugurated, continuing until about 1970. Annual conferences were held until about 1973.

In 1940, the Christians purchased and refurbished an unused Episcopal Church building on Fifth Avenue in Belmar, where they are still located as the Fifth Avenue Chapel. F.C. Hart, A.T. Thorn, and Robert Hazel were mainstays of the assembly during the war years. Elie Loizeaux and Ed Turner were prominent in leadership later. Enlargement of the building was done in 1958 and again in 1980.

In the mid 1960s, the Christians helped establish Bethany Bible Chapel in the Silverton area of Toms River, 25 miles south of Belmar.

In about 1970, the committee of Christians Missions in Many Lands (CMML) purchased property in nearby Wall Township and moved into it in 1971. The move has been mutually profitable, because the Fifth Avenue Chapel has provided a convenient assembly for missionaries on furlough, and it has given the assembly a world view of missions.

Fifth Avenue Chapel has commended workers to Zimbabwe, France, Peru, South Africa, and Ireland. The assembly has about 140 adults and youngsters in attendance today.

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In 1953, a meeting place was erected by an assembly meeting in Toms River. That unnamed assembly lasted a

few years. In 1964, a series of evangelistic meetings were held at the Fifth Avenue Chapel. Some people from the Brick Town and Toms River areas received Christ as savior at these meetings. These new Christians needed to be taught in the things of God, so Robert Hazel was asked to lead a weekly home Bible study, which continued into 1965. Then the Christians asked Boyd Nicholson from Canada to come for an evangelistic campaign.

At about this time, a children's work had been started in a home and needed more room. The Christians procured space in a store, and a 6-12 Club was begun. Mel Wistner, the chalk artist, took the first series and seven children received the Lord. This encouraged the Christians to begin a new testimony in the Brick Town area. Thirty believers met as an assembly in June 1965 in the Britts Department Store community room, calling themselves the Brick Town Bible Chapel. In December, they moved to a home for the Sunday meetings and used Osbornville Elementary School for the children's meetings.

Adam Miller and William Wilson were the acknowledged leaders of the assembly at that time. They found a choice piece of land on Church Road, Toms River, and the Christians purchased it. At that time, the name of the assembly was changed to Bethany Bible Chapel. While waiting for construction, the assembly met in a church building in Herbertsville for about a year. In May 1967, Bethany had its first meeting in the new chapel.

James Bechtle, Frank Jelley, Charles Myers, Mark Kolchin, and Dave Collette have been among the elders

over the years. Bethany Bible Chapel has commended workers to the Lord's field in Zambia and the U.S.A.

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Community Bible Fellowship in Beachwood, near Toms River, was formed in 1971 through the efforts of Rod Conover, John Wenteler, Gary Walter, and Bob Carver. Not a hive-off from another assembly, the group met initially in the Conover home in Toms River, then in several schools until the current building on Compass Avenue was purchased. Over 400 adults and youngsters attend Community Bible Fellowship.

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Bethel Bible Chapel in Red Bank a town inland from Long Branch, began in 1965, a hive-off from the Long Branch Gospel Hall. The assembly was started by G. Anderson, Pat Truglia, and R. Tirado. The latter two have been the elders. Bethel Bible Chapel has commended Robert Billings to work in the assembly, and David Dunlap to ministry in Florida. About 70 adults and children are in the assembly.

* * *

There were Italian-speaking assemblies in Orange, Long Branch, Hoboken, Jersey City, and Hackensack in the 1950s. The believers meeting at Long Branch Gospel Hall and Livingston Gospel Hall today are primarily of Italian descent who now conduct their meetings in English. (See Ethnic section for a discussion of the extensive Italian work in the U.S. and Canada.)

* * *

The assembly meeting today at Carter Road Bible Chapel in Princeton began in Trenton in about 1870.

Mrs. Esther Hyde, Harry Matlack, Fanny Barlow, Mr. and Mrs. W.S. Jaeger, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Sorter, Samuel Hannah, and Ira Fisher were among those who were involved in the early days of the assembly. Meeting first in a building on North Broad and Perry Streets in Trenton, the Christians moved later to a building on Bank Street, then into the Old Trenton Academy. After that for many years until 1932, the assembly met in the library of the WCTU building on East State Street, taking the name Library Hall. When forced to vacate, the assembly built Woodside Chapel at Huff and Brinton Avenues, Trenton. Evangelist Samuel Stewart was associated with the assembly for a time at Woodside Chapel.

In 1973, the Christians relocated to 193 Carter Road in Princeton, its present location. Leaders over the years have been W.S. Jaeger, Samuel Sorter, Edward Ristow, T. Bain Jackson, Samuel Hannah, Elwood Matlack, Ron Marchant, and Norman Fiess. Carter Road Bible Chapel has commended workers to Greece, Papua New Guinea, and ministry within the U.S.

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Hamilton Bible Fellowship in the town of Hamilton near Trenton began in 1991 as a hive-off from Carter Road Bible Chapel. Before coming to its current meeting place at Langtree School, Whatley Road, the assembly met at 5 Snowball Lane in Hamilton. Harold Neil, Sr., Harold Neil Jr., and Thomas Freeman were those who started the assembly, and who have shared the leadership. Hamilton Bible Fellowship has about 20 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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Marmora Gospel Chapel in the town of Marmora on the New Jersey coast south of Atlantic City, started in 1963 and has remained since then at its location on Lyndhurst Road. Ed Richmond and Raymond Henry were the principals in getting it started. In addition to those, Ed Smullen and Gilbert Leeds have been in leadership in the small assembly.

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An Atlantic City assembly began in 1920 through the efforts of James Kelly and a Mr. Smith, meeting then on Maryland Avenue as the Atlantic City Gospel Hall. The assembly moved in about 1940 to Ventnor, still in the Atlantic City area, where a Mrs. Thomas purchased a fraternity house at Troy and Monmouth Avenue for the Gospel Hall. The active workers there were Louie Villari, David and Jessie Phillips, Don and June Phillips, Lou and Arlene Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Crawford, Mrs. Thomas and her son Charlie, Edna Williard, and a Mrs. Felsberg.

Sometime after that, the assembly moved to the Margate area of Atlantic City, and was located at Ventnor and Washington Avenues. From there, two assemblies developed. One became the Longport Gospel Hall at 2800 Atlantic Avenue, in which William Moon, Jessie and Arthur Davenport, John Fannan, Walter Brown, Nelson Williard, the Haughks, the Sunderlands, and Angus Weir were early leaders. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the leadership was Gustave Semrau, Roy Morrison, and Edward Niebch. The present overseers are Kenneth McCullough, Albert Amadio, and Todd Cherry. About 60 adults and children are in Longport Gospel Hall now.

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Linwood Gospel Chapel also derived from the Atlantic City Gospel Hall and is on New Road and Pierce Avenue in the town of Linwood in the Atlantic City area. Jim Kelly and Angus Wier were associated with Linwood in its early days. Other leaders over the years include Messrs. Bryson, Sunderland, Davenport, Wagner, Amos, Haugh, Bateman, Cook, and Greer. Linwood Gospel Chapel has commended a worker to Japan and has about 70 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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The Hammonton Assembly in the village of Hammonton, half way between Philadelphia and Atlantic City, is remembered to have existed in the 1930s. Bob Stark and the Brownlees were leading families there.

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The earliest record of an assembly in Camden, across the Delaware River from Philadelphia, is in conjunction with a series of Gospel meetings advertised as: 'Free Lectures on the Future of the Human Race, Illustrated from a Large Chart,' convened by William Beveridge and Alexander Lamb in September 1909.

This seems to be the root of the assembly which met in a rented room at the intersection of Broadway and Walnut Streets, for records show that on two successive Sundays, their total offering went to the support of the two mentioned servants of the Lord. Two further moves occurred shortly thereafter – the first to 1259 Kaighn Avenue in September 1910 for one year, and the second to 2nd and Pearl Streets for six years. The assembly purchased a former Episcopalian building at 915 North Front Street in North Camden in October 1917, where it remained for the next 44 years. The assembly

incorporated as the Gospel Hall Association in 1917, and became known as the Camden Gospel Hall. Also in 1917, Mr. and Mrs. John McKay became the first commended workers from this assembly, serving in the West Indies.

Those signing the Articles of Incorporation in 1917, and thus who were probably among the leaders of the assembly, were James and Hugh Brown, D.H. Oliver, Alex Morton, Herbert Staats, and O.R. Ferguson. Other names appearing in the records of this time include J. Rothwell, Anthony Wilson, B. Brown, J.W. Snyder, and Robert Stark.

Herbert Rue was saved in 1921 through contact with the assembly, and became a respected elder until his death in 1975. His co-worker Elwin DuBell was converted at the same time. In August 1924, William Warke was commended from the Camden assembly for ministry in the Gospel; Robert Surgenor was his understudy for many years. Others saved and becoming stalwarts in the assembly were Jack and May Draper and their son Robert. Such Gospel preachers as John Ferguson, Fred Nugent, Hector Alves, and Archie Stewart were among those who ministered at the assembly in the 1920s and 1930s. Andrew Harley in the 1930s and 1940s, and Charles Strom after 1950, were among the respected elders in the assembly.

Merritt, William, and David Curran and Eugene Higgins are among the many taking active leadership roles at the Camden Gospel Hall. Eugene Higgins was commended by the assembly to Gospel ministry in 1974. Active Gospel efforts in the 1950s and 1960s included weekly Saturday visits to the Philadelphia Home for the Indigent. Outdoor Gospel meetings were held for years

at Broadway and Sycamore Streets, often on Sunday evenings just before the assembly Gospel meetings. Herbert Rue would often illustrate the outdoor message with chalk texts on the sidewalk. Ruth Fisher and Eleanor Cunningham witnessed to the women of the Spanish families then moving into north Camden. Sunday School outreaches were made into the areas of Grange and Haddonfield.

The deteriorating condition of both the Gospel Hall and the neighborhood led to the purchase of a lot on Caroline Avenue in the Pennsauken area north of Camden. Building was commenced in 1961, and the new Pennsauken Gospel Hall was completed in 1963. The assembly continues today at the same address.

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Barrington is on the south side of Camden. As early as 1912, several believers, including the Hocking family, lived in Barrington and traveled together via train, ferry and trolley from Barrington to Philadelphia to Remember the Lord with the believers at 20th and Dickinson, the so-called Downtown Meeting. Several of these men traveled to work together as well. They would bring their Bibles and have a Bible reading on the train. Gustav Eisle, a neighbor, traveled with them and became interested. He asked to join the readings and was soon saved.

Later cottage meetings were held in the homes of these believers by William Beveridge. The number of believers in this group grew during the period 1913 to 1915. On June 6, 1915, the group of about 25 believers met as an assembly for the first time in the Barrington Fire Hall at

Haines and Second. This was the start of the Barrington Gospel Hall.

In 1919 or 1920, a church building on Kingston Avenue became available for use. It was bought by William Anderson and the assembly met there from 1920 through 1997. Some of the early overseers were William Moon, Samuel Hocking, David McClintock, and Tom McCobb. In 1928, Gospel meetings by John Conway and R.T. Halliday saw a large number saved. In another series in 1933 by Robert Young, William Scott was saved and who had a great influence on the assembly in the future. Shortly after that series, Robert Young moved to Camden for a series and saw others reached, including some who would make up the future of the Barrington assembly.

A strong bond has existed between the two assemblies at Pennsauken and Barrington through the years. Their histories in many ways are interwoven. Much of the recent growth at Barrington is attributable to Gene Higgins in his outreach work each summer. Some of the names of those who were a help to the assembly during its early years and who were instrumental in the preservation of the testimony include William Beveridge, George Duncan, David Oliver, Fred Watson, Robert Telfer, James McCullough, David Calderhead, John Watt, W.P. Douglas, Clay Fite, and the McEwens and Kellers.

The Barrington Assembly sponsored a New Years Conference through the 1930s, at which time responsibility was taken over by the Camden assembly. The Conference was held for many years at the Haddonfield Heights town hall and then the Haddonfield Heights high school. William Scott was a leader in the

assembly for many years, and served as Correspondent and Sunday School superintendent; he was a gifted and godly man who steered the assembly through some difficult times as well as times of growth. A.J. Higgins is the Correspondent at present.

The Barrington Gospel Hall on Kingston Avenue was sold in 1997 and a new building was occupied in 1999 at the corner of Barrington and Trenton Avenues. The believers met in the Legion Hall on Lord's Day in the interim.

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## New York

Perhaps the first assembly in the state was started in Buffalo in 1875 by Edward Fairbairn, a Scottish immigrant who worked in secular employment all his life. The group he gathered together for Bible studies and prayer first met to Break Bread in a rented second floor room on Main street in Buffalo. The Joseph Morton family joined the group in 1877, followed by Alexander Tweedley and John Townsend. These Christians were evangelistic and spread the Gospel into the newly formed Village of Blasdell. The first three to preach there were Messrs. Fairbairn, Tweedley, and Townsend.

As numbers increased, the Christians moved to Allen Street in downtown Buffalo, and then to Florida Street. In 1877 the assembly acquired a brick cottage at 111 Elmwood Avenue and called it Assembly Hall. A basement was added, and a second floor with a caretaker's apartment. The apartment later became a place where visiting missionaries could stay.

The Buffalo Assembly Hall later spawned three other assemblies: Blasdell Gospel Chapel in 1888; Berkshire Avenue Chapel in 1929; and Cold Spring Bible Chapel in 1963.

Assembly Hall changed its name to Elmwood Gospel Chapel in 1951. Elmwood Gospel Chapel was one of the original founding and participating assemblies in the origins of Camp Li-Lo-Li in 1952. In 1964, Elmwood closed its doors because the neighborhood had become dangerous and joined with the Berkshire Avenue Chapel pending purchase of property in an area where most of its people lived. They located a lot in Amherst and

erected the Amherst Bible Chapel. In 1974, they parted from Berkshire and moved into their new building.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a severe economic depression in the Buffalo area forced about half the assembly to move because of job transfers. However, the assembly continued, and has slowly grown from its lowest point. About 60 people attend the Family Bible Hour at this time. Over the years, leaders have included Edward Fairbairn, Alexander Tweedley, John Townsend, George Lord, George Gibson, Carlton Clapp, James Virtue, Harry Thompson, Alvin Sauer, Edwin Monroe, David Ednie, Robert Parker, Samuel Brady, George Boggess, Charles Parsons, David McCulloch, Melville Northrop, and Clyde Tyson.

A large number of workers have been commended from Amherst Bible Chapel and its antecedents, to mission fields and full time work, perhaps more than any other North American assembly. One of these workers was Abigail Townsend Luff, the well-known “Sister Abigail,” commended in about 1905 for full-time ministry to El Nathan Home, since moved to Marble Hill, MO. Sister Abigail was a great influence in the assembly in its days at 111 Elmwood Avenue.

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Berkshire Avenue Chapel in Buffalo began in the Kensington area in rented space in the Knights Lodge on Bailey Avenue near Shirley. It consisted in its early days mainly of believers from Assembly Hall and was called Kensington Gospel Meeting at that time. The believers changed the name to Kensington Gospel Hall in approximately 1936 when they purchased a frame church building at the corner of Berkshire and Suffolk

Streets. In about 1938, a fire destroyed the building, and the assembly met with the neighboring Calvary Baptist Church while the new semi-basement part of a future chapel was built. Early in 1952, a second floor with additional lower rooms was constructed. The name became Berkshire Avenue Chapel at this time. From 1964 through 1974, the Elmwood Gospel Chapel believers joined with them, a period remembered as very profitable.

Leaders in the earlier history of Berkshire Avenue Chapel include Wallace Logan (when on furlough from Africa), Paul Sacher, Walter Lord, Sam Carson, Sr., George Gibson, John Hynd, and Walter Holler. Since then, elders include William Sacher, Harry Thompson, Phillip Ensmenger, David Bell, G. Stewart Timm, Clarence Bunce, Floyd Crittendon, Otto Kuehliewind, Rolland Walker, Jack Pinkham, Les Paulson, Lee Kiddy, H. James Thompson, Harry Chang, Fred Pohle, Bill Pohle, Ken Pohle, Don Santucci, Michael Johnson, and Paul Ranbler.

Commended and co-commended workers were sent to the Philippines, Nigeria, and Colombia. Otis and Geraldine Tillman were commended to inner-city Buffalo. Berkshire Avenue Chapel discontinued in1992.

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South of Buffalo in the western part of New York state is Jamestown. Grace Chapel in Jamestown began in 1951 in a home at 141 Beechview Avenue. Gunnard Lindberg, Donald Allison, Merrill Allison, John Cole, and James Bottomley were those involved in the start-up of that assembly. These and James Loizeaux, Kenneth Cole, and Harold Collette have been its leaders. The Grace Chapel

assembly has commended workers to the Lord's field in Puerto Rico. About 30 adults and youngsters attend Grace Chapel.

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An assembly in Rochester began in 1916 as a result of efforts by Harold Harper and John Bramhall. The Christians first met on St. Paul Boulevard, then moved into a building at the corner of Carter and Hearld Streets, where they took the name Carter Street Assembly. After that they moved to 195 Congress Avenue, the current location, where they took the name Congress Avenue Gospel Chapel for a time, before changing to Congress Avenue Bible. Some of the leaders over the years have been Bob Westfall, Ted Larter, Vernon Larter, Jim Boyd, Mel Northrup, and Harvey Rodger. Two assemblies have hived off from Congress: Northgate Bible Chapel and Crossroads Bible Fellowship. Congress Avenue Bible Chapel has about 200 adults and youngsters. The assembly has commended workers to Zambia, Colombia, Zaire, and Papua New Guinea. Randy Amos and Ray Blais and their families were commended for full time work at Northgate and elsewhere.

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Northgate Bible Chapel in Rochester began in 1965 at 240 McGuire Road, its present location. A hive-off from Congress Avenue Gospel Chapel, it was begun by the families of Robert Westfall, Earl Clark, Andrew Greer, Ted Larter, Orville Musclow, James Boyd, and Gladys Valcore. Leaders have included the six men named above, with James Nieboer, Herm Klingenberger, and Dale Brooks. The active assembly has commended

workers to the Lord's service in Colombia, Zaire, and Zambia, and to serve with International Crusades. Ray and Becky Blais are commended for youth work at Northgate and at Camp Li-Lo-Li. About 160 adults and children attend Northgate Bible Chapel.

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Crossroads Bible Fellowship in Rochester began Breaking Bread in 1996 in the home of Chuck and Mary Gianotti. The meeting moved to the Norman Howard School at 725 Pinnacle Road, Henrietta on Easter Sunday, 1997. The assembly began with the blessing of Congress Avenue Bible Chapel, from which most of the original members came; the Gianottis moved down from Canada. The Gianottis, Rick and Jennifer Myles, Bill and Kelly Wendlandt, Jim Mayer, and Larry Haag were the principals involved in the start-up and are the recognized leaders of the assembly. About 45 adults and youngsters attend Crossroads Bible Fellowship.

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Prior to World War I, the Schenectady Believers Assembly met on Vischer Avenue in the Bellevue section of Schenectady. From 1923 to 1940, the Christians met in rented quarters at the IOOF Hall at Broadway and Thompson Streets. From 1940 to the present, they have been in their own quarters at Bellevue Gospel Chapel in Rotterdam at 2702 Guilderland Avenue. Alex Cooke is considered to be the person starting the Believers Assembly on Vischer Avenue, while Robert Wallace and Arnold Button initiated the move to Broadway and Thompson Streets, with Robert Wallace and Albert Davids instrumental in the move to Guilderland Avenue.

Those active in leadership include Albert Davids, Walter Delap, Harvey Wilson, Fred O'Bryon, Earl Brinkman, Clayton Anderson, Abraham Laurenzo, Burnell Fields, Doug Lewis, Rick Strohm, Bill Crecca, and John Smith. Bellevue Gospel Chapel has commended workers to the field in Zambia. About 100 adults and children attend the assembly.

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Shiloh Gospel Chapel in White Plains has its roots in a Sunday School work begun in that city in the fall of 1955. Sanford Fray and others of Grace Gospel Chapel in New York City developed this outreach. When a good number of children were coming, weekly Bible studies were started, and from that the Lord's Supper began in August 1958.

The assembly has moved through several locations and now occupies a chapel at 27 Juniper Hill Road. Stanley Fray and others have shared in the leadership after Sanford Fray relocated. The assembly has about 50 adults and six children.

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Community Bible Church of Northern Westchester, at 301 Chadeayne Road in the village of Ossining on the Hudson River, started in 1970 as a hive-off from both Bethany Chapel in Yonkers and the White Plains Gospel Chapel. Ten families, including those of Tom Dunkerton, Nathan E. Dunkerton, Fred Vesperman, and Paul Winter, began the new assembly. Nathan Dunkerton and David Dunkerton have been the active leaders; David Dunkerton serves as the full-time worker. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord's service with A.I.M. Kenya and to Colombia; to local ministry with

Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, Campus Crusade, and World Concern; and to Men's Mission in Alabama. Grace Sidebotham has been commended for neighborhood Bible studies. Community Bible Church has about 135 adults and youngsters in regular attendance.

* * *

An assembly now meeting at Bethany Chapel in Yonkers began in about 1910 in South Yonkers, meeting in homes on St. Andrews Place. George Clarke, O.E. Dunkerton, E. Morgan, David Munro, and David Tully are considered to be the founders. The assembly was initially composed primarily of families relocated by their companies from other places. The group met for a time in the Temperance Hall on Palisade Avenue, then at the Women's Institute on North Broadway. In 1931, the Christians incorporated their assembly as Bethany Gospel Chapel and in 1938 they built their own chapel at 55 Greenvale Avenue, their present address. Other elders after the early period include, among many, Edward and John Drost, John T. Ferris Sr., Candido Sousa, and Ned and Tom Dunkerton.

Workers have been commended to Peru, Korea, Mexico, South Africa, and the Congo. Many others have been commended for ministry within the U.S. About 70 persons are presently in Bethany Chapel.

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In 1912, a number of black brethren who had come from the British West Indies were in fellowship with Christians at the 125th Street Assembly in New York City. Being located in the white section of the city, they were not reaching the blacks. Then the Nottage brothers, together with Messrs. Sampson, Seeley,

McLaughlin, and others began open-air work and other activities. A tract band was formed in 1913, and three and a half million tracts were bought and distributed by the summer of 1914. Hundreds were saved or restored to the Lord. Home meetings were begun in the winter of 1913, and this led to the establishment of the first assembly in the black areas of New York City. By October 1914, 30 of the believers were able to gather as a local church at 50 West 134th Street in the heart of Harlem. Called Grace Gospel Chapel, the assembly grew in ten years to 300. Today, Grace Gospel Chapel is located nearby at 102 West 133rd Street.

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Many of the Christians in fellowship at Grace Gospel Chapel were being relocated to Queens in the late 1940s. After many tent meetings in 1948 on Northern Boulevard in Corona, in the Queens area, they realized the need for a meeting place in that area, and purchased a store front on 103rd Street, calling it Corona Gospel Hall. After that it was called Corona Gospel Chapel and upon the 1962 completion of a new chapel at 102-05 35th Avenue, Galilee Gospel Chapel.

Those involved in the start-up include Evans Welch, Joseph Muller, Lloyd Rallos, Jerry Thompson, A. Cambridge, B. Holder, and Mr. McClaughlin who conducted the tent meetings. Others active in leadership include S. Graves, L. Collymore, B. Phillips, G. Tucker, and G. Daniels. Joseph Muller has been commended for full time work at the assembly. About 150 adults and youngsters are in the meeting.

* * *

Good Tidings Gospel Hall in Brooklyn traces its history to a small home meeting in 1918 at 136 Third Avenue in Brooklyn, the home of Thomas and Elizabeth Ellis. A few believers originally from the Caribbean met in the Ellis home for prayer and Bible study. At that time, they fellowshipped at the 13th Street Assembly in Brooklyn, comprised largely of caucasian believers. But they yearned to reach the blacks in their own neighborhood, and sought God's face for His enabling. The Spirit of God worked among them; backsliders came under conviction and were restored, and souls were being saved. Albertha Herbert and Alexander Weeks were among the first fruits and became stalwarts in the work.

At first the group met monthly on first Sundays while they continued to fellowship with the 13th Street Assembly. Soon they began meeting weekly in homes. In April 1919 they rented quarters at 160 Third Avenue for a Sunday School, and three weeks later began celebrating the Lord's Supper there with an initial attendance of 14. The young assembly was assisted by Grace Gospel Chapel in New York City, both financially and in ministry. John B. Hunte, Thomas Ellis, and Joseph Griffith are considered the founding elders. They were soon joined as elders by George Jilkes, James E. Herbert, and George Phillips.

By the end of 1919, the membership had increased to 79, and the assembly relocated to larger quarters at 169 Third Avenue. Between 1930 and 1940, the assembly in cooperation with Grace Gospel Chapel began a program of open-air preaching, which resulted in the formation of two more assemblies, in Corona (Queens) and in Montclair, New Jersey. During the period 1940 to 1950, the assembly increased through conversions and

immigration from the Caribbean. The Christians relocated to the Old Globe Theatre on Sumpter Street and remained there for many years. They incorporated as Good Tidings Gospel Hall in 1940.

The expanding assembly needed more room; in 1983, they were donated the deed to property at the corner of Fulton Street and Reid Avenue, now Malcolm X Boulevard. They constructed a new building seating 400, and continue at that location. The vigorous assembly publishes a quarterly paper, has a radio program, and has many youth outreaches. From 1930 and on, the assembly sent many of its members to mission fields in Barbados, the West Indies, the western United States, and Florida. Elders since the early days include Donald Robinson, George Berry, William Cox, William Lane, Josehp Welch, Theodore Edghill, Frederick Pilgrim, Granville Salmon, Theophilus Cato, Justin Mason, Alfred Fox, Roy Sixto, Andrew Esdelle, Hugh Wood, Rudolph Jackson, and Patson Agard. Today there are about 350 in fellowship under the spiritual leadership of eight elders.

* * *

Sea Cliff Gospel Chapel in Sea Cliff, Long Island has its beginnings in 1889. The year before, William A. Isaac had immigrated from Ireland to accept employment as estate superintendent for a wealthy businessman, John T. Pirie. Mr. Pirie was a staunch Methodist and was concerned that his superintendent seemed not to be a believer, apparently because the Isaacs were not attending a church. But Mr. Isaac explained that he and his family “broke bread” each Sunday in their own home in the manner of the earliest Christians. Mr. Pirie asked if he could join them, and was so impressed that he

asked others to be included. The assembled group increased to about thirty families, and Mr. Pirie then provided larger quarters on his estate for the Sea Cliff Assembly.

From 1901 through 1906, Bible conferences were held on the Pirie estate, in a tent seating 600 people. C.I. Scofield attended some of these conferences, and there, with Arno Gaebelain, expressed his desire to produce a reference Bible. Mr. Pirie and others of wealth supported the project, and much of the writing was done in the Pirie home.

The German Methodists moved a 'Tabernacle,' a large open-air frame structure, to the north end of Main Street in Sea Cliff, and tents and dormitories were erected for accommodations. It seems that these Methodists and the brethren cooperated to an extent in this venture, for the Centennial report states, "Prayer and revival meetings were held by the Methodists and the brethren, and there was a spirit of evangelism that spread over the whole area of Sea Cliff and its surroundings."

Prior to 1918, the brethren continued to meet in the cottage on the Pirie estate. In that year, the building the Methodists had used on 14th Avenue was purchased for the assembly. The assembly was incorporated as Sea Cliff Gospel Hall and met there until 1949. The property was titled to Miss Margaret Pirie, and the officers of the corporation were initially all members of the Pirie family, male and female. A 1944 document shows that the assets and control of the corporation were to be turned over to the Sea Cliff Assembly upon moving into planned larger quarters.

The new Sea Cliff Gospel Chapel was completed in August 1949 on a large lot at Sea Cliff and Carpenter Avenues. A Hammond organ and a Steinway piano were donated to the assembly, which has had a vigorous musical program since that time. The Sunday School has attracted up to 150 students. The assembly has maintained an active youth program with Good News Clubs, Pioneer Girls, craft classes, jail ministries with the young people, and for a time a special Sunday School for retarded children, managed by Helga Swanson.

One of the early preachers at the chapel was Richard Hill, a former missionary to Russia, and later involved with the Missionary Institute in Brooklyn, where several well-known brethren missionaries received training. Mr. Hill, with the help of Christian Missions in Many Lands, directed the Sea Cliff Conferences that still continued at the “Tabernacle” into the 1930s.

Apparently the first commended worker by the Sea Cliff Assembly was sent in 1930 to France to direct an orphan home there. Many others have since been commended to the work at home and abroad, including Walter Liefeld who was commended to full-time chapel ministry in 1961; he was later commended by the assembly to teaching at Trinity Seminary in Illinois.

Besides those mentioned above, other leaders include Franklyn Mauger, Thomas Isaac, Albert Grieg, Byron Bjork, Bill Isaac, Cyril Lewis, Mark Diggory, Herbert Liefeld, Robert D. Kroeger, Charles Hendron, Harry Thurber, and David Collins. The active assembly has attracted ministry by a large number of well-known brethren preachers and missionaries.

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Edward Dugan, who was a baker, pitched a Gospel tent in 1927 on a lot he owned in Glen Head, Long Island. He invited preachers such as Willie Beveridge and Hugh McEwen to preach there, and he too did open-air preaching and tract distribution. In 1929, the tent was replaced by a house called the Gospel Meeting House. Regular assembly meetings began at that time.

Sisters from the nearby Sea Cliff Assembly helped establish a Sunday School work. Gordon Reager came often to the assembly in those days. Horace Klenk did neighborhood and hospital visitation work in the area for many years. In 1932, May Carruthers came into the Glen Head assembly and became a real worker, winning many to Christ. Evangelist Richard Hill came every Tuesday evening from Brooklyn to conduct a Bible study, and later joined the assembly. The Gospel Meeting House has been at 2 Orchard Street since its inception, and had the same name. About 40 adults and youngsters attend the Gospel Meeting House today.

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In 1880, Charles F. Boynton, an ordained minister, was dismissed from the Presbyterian church in Freeport, Long Island when he persisted in preaching the Gospel. He had come into contact with brethren in Delaware, and became acquainted with Malachi Taylor in New York, so he took the dismissal as an indication that the Lord wanted him to make the change. He and his wife began Remembering the Lord at his home at 500 Babylon Turnpike, Freeport, on the first Sunday after his dismissal. This was the start of the Freeport Assembly.

In 1907, the Frew and Cameron families arrived from Scotland and joined the Freeport Assembly, and the Medd, Wilson, and Carnie families came in about 1910. At that time, quarters were rented on the second floor of the Realty Building on Railroad Avenue, Freeport for the assembly meetings. They continued there until about 1918 when they moved to the hall of the Vigilent Hose Company on North Main Street. In 1920, the assembly purchased a lot on West Dean Street and erected the Dean Street Chapel in Freeport.

The Sunday School thrived and outgrew the available facilities, and in 1954 the assembly enlarged and renovated the chapel. H.P. Johnson, H.F. Baehr, and Quentin Bennett are among those in active leadership over the years. Dean Street Chapel has commended workers to the Lord's service in France, the Philippines, Nepal and Butan, and Turkey. About 60 adults and youngsters attend the assembly today.

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Born as a Roman Catholic in the New York metropolitan area, John Thomas was saved in 1968, and discipled and introduced to the assemblies by Stan Vaninger. He moved to Colorado Springs where he benefitted from the ministry of John Walden. He helped establish Bethany Bible Chapel, Warsaw, IN and had an itinerant preaching ministry in the midwest, North Carolina, and Virginia. Wanting to return to New York, Mr. Thomas accepted the pastorate of the independent First Baptist Church at 35 Campus Drive in Port Washington on Long Island in 1982. In that year, the church started and continues to run the Port Washington Christian School. In two years the constitution of the church was changed to

incorporate a plurality of elders, the Lord's Supper was instituted, and the name was changed to The Bible Church of Port Washington. John Gerringer from the Shannon Hills Chapel in Greensboro, NC came to help in the work, and now he and John Thomas are the two elders. The assembly has about 70 adults and children.

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Though Staten Island is a borough of New York City, it lies against New Jersey, connected to it at Elizabeth by the Goethals Bridge across the narrow Arthur Kill. In 1937, a small assembly of Mennonite Brethren was established at Port Richmond on the north shore of the Island. In 1939, the group moved to nearby West Brighton and adopted the name Beth-Car Mennonite Brethren in Christ. The young men who established the assembly had been working to plant a church in Elizabeth, New Jersey. In the 1950s, the Mennonite Conference of which the group was a part decided to move to a more Reformational stance and changed its name to Bible Fellowship Church. In response the local fellowship changed its name to Bible Fellowship Church of Staten Island in 1959.

Ralph Ritter had been in fellowship at Collingdale Gospel Chapel in Collingdale, PA in his college years, and in fellowship at other assemblies in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts later. In 1991, Bible Fellowship Church of Staten Island asked him to be its pastor. Mr. Ritter responded that he would consider it if they could accept the teachings on the New Testament church. The elders of the congregation readily agreed to this and encouraged him to introduce the Breaking of Bread service, and to follow the Scriptures in every respect.

Thus, Bible Fellowship Church of Staten Island, while still maintaining their conference connections, entered into fellowship with the ‘open’ brethren. After that, Mr. Ritter called their attention to the Walterick Address of Assemblies with the result that the elders desired to be listed therein and thus identified with the ‘open’ brethren. The church has a fellowship of 63, with an average attendance of about 40.

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Letters of Interest, January 1956, p. 19; July/August 1972, p. 4; February 1980, p. 16

## Massachusetts

A series of tent meetings in Fall River, conducted by David Scott and John Blair in 1887, resulted in the planting of an assembly in that town in the southern part of the state. The believers met in various homes and in a store front until they purchased a building in 1904, the Fall River Gospel Hall.

When this building was sold in 1951, the assembly decided to build a larger and more suitable chapel in South Swansea a few miles to the northwest. Bethany Gospel Chapel was designed and built by members of the assembly, with assistance of Christians from other assemblies. Seating for 150 was provided in the main auditorium. At the opening in November 1952, more than 200 were present. Though several people came over from the Fall River Gospel Hall, Bethany Gospel Chapel was a new work, started by David Ward and Harold Harper. William Horner and John Bramhall are also remembered as helping in the start-up.

Those in active leadership over the years include William Horner, Paul Shaw, Charles McCoy, Robert Spender, James Harshaw, Peter Blackwell, James Klink, Richard Clarkson, and James Donaldson. Bethany Gospel Chapel has commended workers to the Phillipines, to prison ministries, and Carlos Cerqueira to work at the Portugese assembly in Pawtucket, RI. About 200 are in the assembly at Bethany Gospel Chapel.

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The assembly known today as the Mount Auburn Gospel Hall in Watertown had its start in 1875 as the Newton Gospel Hall in nearby Newton. In the 1880s, the assembly moved to Tremont Street in Boston, and then to a location on Cliff Street, where it took the name Cliff Street Gospel Hall.

The Cliff Street Gospel Hall was very much Gospel oriented, having many campaigns, some for as many as ten weeks at a time. Many souls were saved through these efforts, which included street meetings and cottage meetings. During World War II the young people

of the assembly along with some of the older Christians would go to the Boston Common and invite service men to come back to the Hall for supper and then have them stay for an informal Gospel meeting. Some would stay for the regular night preaching service. Many of these service men came to trust the Lord, and many British service men from assemblies were encouraged by this effort.

The Cliff Street assembly had conferences every Christmas, with no pre-arranged platform speaking but as many as fifteen preachers invited. During the World War II years, as many as sixty young people would be at the Lord's Table. The seats were arranged in a square around the table, and the first two rows would be all young people. People would be in their seats fifteen minutes before the service started. These Breaking of Bread meetings were wonderful worship meetings, where a deep feeling of reverence pervaded.

The Cliff Street Gospel Hall moved to Mount Auburn Street in Watertown in 1960 and for a time was known as the Mount Auburn Gospel Center before taking its present name, Mount Auburn Gospel Hall. About 65 adults and youngsters are in the assembly today.

Two assemblies were hive-offs of the Cliff Street Gospel Hall: Countryside Bible Chapel in Lexington, and Village Bible Chapel in Framingham.

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Countryside Bible Chapel at 480 Lowell Street in Lexington came into being as a local assembly during the years of 1958 and 1959. Those who were the chief impetus for the new work in Lexington were John Pollard, Jack Fulton, Douglas Wacome, Robert

Herrmann, and a number of other young couples who met for home Bible studies and prayer in Lexington. An assembly was formed and met for a year in the V.F.W. hall on Woburn Street while a new building was completed on 5.5 acres in the Countryside area of Lexington. The assembly at Beech Street Gospel Chapel in Cambridge sold its building and joined the new work. The main leaders at Beech Street at that time were W. Herbert Marshall, William MacDonald Sr., and Samuel Jackson. They along with John Pollard were recognized as the elders of the new assembly.

God blessed the work and a larger auditorium was added in 1968. A residence was later built next to the chapel. To help with preaching and teaching, William Anderson was asked in 1984 to join with Countryside Bible Chapel. He and his wife Virginia and family were the first occupants of the chapel residence. Following them, Stan and Rhonda Schultz, former missionaries to Zaire, served in that role; Jed and Betty Snyder serve the assembly today.

Other elders have included William Armerding, Jack Fulton, Tom Serpliss, Douglas Pollard, Eric Brosius, Bill Martin, Don Moberger, Ronald Sanderson, and Jed Snyder. About 150 are in fellowship. An active ministry continues among all ages.

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The Village Bible Chapel in Framingham came into existence in 1958, the result of the efforts of seven families. Its early meetings were held in the Old Town Hall. The assembly constructed its own chapel at 1341 Edgell Road in 1963. Several have been commended by

Village Bible Chapel to the Lord's work abroad. Average attendance at Sunday meetings is about 130.

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The Missionary Study Class meetings in the Boston area were held once a month. Six different area assemblies took turns having the responsibility for the meetings. This was a real blessing to the Lord's people for inter-assembly fellowship, and the offerings for missionary workers was a real help in the furtherance of missionary activities.

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In 1907, Jonathan Dalzell and James Scott – immigrants from Ireland and Scotland – held open-air Gospel meetings in Worcester. They had known about assemblies in the "old country" but had not been affiliated with them. In the summer of 1908, a tract came to their attention and they wrote the author in New York state. He referred them to the Cliff Street Gospel Hall in Boston, and soon the Worcester Gospel Hall was formed.

Among the early brethren from Boston giving assistance to the fledging assembly were John Gill, Damon Fales and William Farquhar. In 1909, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Yarrington, and their son and his wife, came into fellowship, as did Mr. and Mrs. Mark Stevenson. A somewhat later group included Mr. and Mrs. Frank L. Shaw and Mrs. John Barrie, the daughter of one of the founders, James Scott.

E. A. Martin joined William H. Hunter in a tent-work evangelistic effort in 1909. Months prior to this Mr. Hunter had been giving some help as he came and went

from the North Grafton Assembly, established earlier. At the close of this tent season the assembly convened at 338 Pleasant Street. Worcester Gospel Hall moved through several locations until 1946 when the Christians purchased a building at 23 Stanton Street, having 54 in fellowship at that time. When on Stanton Street in Worcester, use was made of the name Bethany Gospel Chapel. After selling that building in 1959, the Christians rented space until 1961, at which time they built the chapel at 242 Clark Street, where Bethany Gospel Chapel still is located. At that time, 65 were in the fellowship, representing seven nationalities.

In addition to those mentioned above, John Dickson, W.E. Matthews, James Waugh, Samuel McEwan, Charles Keller, William McClure and others were used of the Lord in establishing the spiritual foundation of the assembly. The assembly has commended workers to the field abroad and in the U.S. About 65 adults and children attend Bethany Gospel Chapel today.

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Good News Bible Chapel in Attleboro was established in 1935 by Arthur and Ceinwyn Stebbings, Eugene and Hilda Quarnstrom, and Walter and Florence Jacobsen.

In the early 1930s, the Stebbings were living in Pawtucket, RI and were in fellowship at Pawtucket Gospel Hall. Mr. Stebbings had a printing business in Attleboro. Through his business, he came to know the Quarnstroms and Jacobsens, who were Attleboro residents and had become dissatisfied with their denominational affiliation. The three couples began meeting together in their homes to study the Scriptures.

In 1935 the three couples decided to begin a fellowship in Attleboro. In the first week, ten people met to Break Bread. They met in homes until they moved to a store front at 201 Pine Street in 1936. From 1938 to 1950, they rented space in the Oddfellows Building on Bank Street. From 1936 to 1950, they took the name Christian Assembly of Attleboro. From 1950 to 1954, they met in a converted garage at 32 Hazel Street, and there took the name Good News Bible Chapel. In 1954, the assembly purchased a church building at 138 South Main Street and remained there until 1976. The assembly's present location is 235 West Street.

Among those active in leadership have been Albert and Rhea Johnson, Elmer Pierce, James Ruddell, Ken Brasier, and Alden and Fern Stebbings. The assembly has commended workers to South America and Alaska. About 300 adults and children attend Good News Bible Chapel.

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The assembly meeting today at Andover Bible Chapel began as a result of tent meetings held between 1890 and 1900 in the general area of Methuen and Lawrence. Believers came together as an assembly in early 1900 and met in various rented quarters until a building at 9 Center Street in Methuen was purchased in 1906. This became known as the Methuen Gospel Hall, and then Methuen Gospel Chapel in 1959. In 1964, the assembly moved into a newly constructed building on previously purchased land at 266 Lowell Street in nearby Andover, its current location and where it took the name Andover Bible Chapel.

The signers of the 1906 purchase agreement were John D. Dewhurst, Archibald Stewart, James Thompson, Albert Smith, Thomas Wilkinson, George E. Knight, and Joseph Taylor. Leading brothers include William C. Watson, Donald L. Banks, William Walker, William Dewhurst, and Robert A. Watters. The assembly has commended workers to the Navajo Indians in Arizona, to Faith Academy, Phillippines; and to Pittsboro Christian Village administration. About 70 adults and youngsters attend the assembly today.

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## Connecticut

The Hartford Gospel Hall began in 1907 on Asylum Street, the result of a number of workers spreading the Gospel. The assembly Christians met next on Park Street, then Witmore Street, from there to Farmington Avenue, and lastly to the current address at 685 Broad Street, Hartford. The Gospel Hall is the mother of a number of assemblies in the area. Fritz Bjork, Nick Vendetta, and A. Reagor have been among the leaders of the assembly. The Hartford Gospel Hall has commended workers to ministry in the U.S. and Canada. About 20 adults and youngsters now attend the assembly.

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An assembly in Manchester was meeting in the early 1920s, renting the Town Hall for their meetings. Around 1925 they built the Manchester Gospel Hall at 415 Center Street, where they presently meet. They conducted many Gospel campaigns and many souls were saved; they held street meetings every Saturday night in the down town. Today there are missionaries on the foreign field who have been commended from this assembly.

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The assembly meeting at Prospect Bible Chapel, Hartford has its roots in the 1920s, when it was known as the Gospel Hall Society. In 1934, it was incorporated under the name The Scripture Truth Church and at that time it developed a set of Fundamental Articles for the church to operate under. John P. Barclay served as President, Duncan M. Surgenor was clerk, and Thomas Waugh was the treasurer. Overseers were Charles Austin, James Surgenor, Carl Martinson, J.C. Amont, William Gardener, and William Surgenor.

In November 1934, the Christians purchased a building at 576 Prospect Avenue and called their assembly Prospect Gospel Chapel. They have met at that location since then. In 1983, the name was changed to Prospect Bible Chapel.

Leaders of the assembly over the years include Charles N. Miller, Alexander Brown, James Serpliss, James Gardener, Marcus Harvey, Thomas E. Woods, James Daniels, and J. Victor Congdon. The assembly convenes an Annual Conference each September, and a Young Peoples Conference each March.

Mrs. T. Ernest Wilson (Elizabeth Smith), a missionary to Angola, was commended from this assembly, as were Gordon Reagor and Neil Dougal to the U.S. and Canada as evangelists. Others have been commended to serve at His Mansion and Emmaus Bible College. Miss Flora Barclay who served the Lord for many years in China was also from this assembly.

About 60 adults are currently in fellowship, with 30 children in the Sunday School. Two assemblies have derived from Prospect Bible Chapel: Fellowship Bible Chapel, first meeting in Rockville and then in Enfield, and which no longer exists; and Manchester Bible Chapel.

* * *

Manchester Bible Chapel was started in 1988 through the efforts of Jack and Ruth Spender and Don and Jean Woods, with a nucleus of 11 persons, including some from Prospect Bible Chapel in Hartford. Its initial meeting place was in the Robertson school; since then the assembly has occupied a series of rented spaces. Elders have included Don Woods, John Zine, Mike Yenor, Rusty Hammel, and Mike Giacalone. As many as 80 have been in fellowship, though now attendance is about 20.

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In 1931, a few Christians began to meet weekly for Breaking of Bread, Bible study, and fellowship on Whitney Avenue in North Haven. The MacWilliam and Thomson families were the key people in starting the assembly, and provided the leadership in the early days. In 1937, the assembly moved to a building on Newhall Street in New Haven and took the name Gospel Hall, Newhall Street. In the 1960s, the assembly built West

Woods Bible Chapel at 165 Hillfield Road in Hamden, north of New Haven.

At its largest, the assembly had about 300 in attendance, but a split over a charismatic issue has reduced the number to about 50 today. A number of other assemblies in the area have been started by people from West Woods Bible Chapel – New Haven, North Haven, Branford, and Cheshire.

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In 1972, Joseph and Andrea DePino returned to Connecticut after Joe was discharged from the U.S. Navy. Just several weeks prior, they had been wonderfully saved. They checked the church listings in the local newspaper, and as a result came to West Woods Bible Chapel in Hamden.

The DePinos were anxious to share their new-found faith with young people they had known, most of whom were Roman Catholic. Their temporary home was a trailer in Branford on the east side of New Haven, and it was there that they started inviting friends to a Bible study. Just at this time, Herbert McCaulley had to retire from secular work because of a heart condition and the elders at West Woods Bible Chapel asked him to teach the young people. When the numbers increased, they joined with another study group in a home in Branford. These young believers attended West Woods Bible Chapel and Broke Bread there on Sunday mornings, still having the studies on Sunday evenings as well as some week nights in Branford.

As growth continued, they felt the time had come to start functioning as an assembly. Jack Spender came out from West Woods and gave teaching regarding the

Lord's Table. Thus, Branford Bible Chapel was established as an assembly in 1973. For several years the assembly met in the gun club, the local armory, the historic Academy on the Green in Branford, and public schools.

The need to have a permanent building became a reality when after much prayer and searching, property was purchased in North Branford. The existing house was very useable and was remodeled. Most of the construction was done by the men in the assembly and the assembly met in its own building for the first time on the Sunday before Christmas in 1991.

Mr. McCaulley had been commended to minster full-time in the assembly, where he remained until the Lord took him in 1997. Ken Hardisty was on furlough from the Philippines at that time and stayed until returning to that field in July 1999.

The brothers who faithfully ministered in the beginning were Herbert McCaulley, Harold Hardisty, Jack Spender, Joseph DePino, and Ernest Wegener. The current elders are James C. Baker and Joseph DePino.The assembly has commended workers to the Philippines and to Friends of Israel. About 80 attend the Breaking of Bread, with quite a few more attending the preaching service.

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Westville Bible Chapel in New Haven has its roots in a Bible study in the home of Ralph Kirchhofer in 1976. Those involved in the study started Breaking Bread together in the spring of 1977. West Woods Bible Chapel in Hamden was helpful in getting the work at Westville off the ground. In 1978, the assembly moved into the Edgewood Club building at 201 Alston Avenue, and in

1984, purchased the lot and building. Jack Spender, who taught an early Bible study on New Testament church principles, was influential in starting the Westville assembly, along with Ralph and Lunda Kirchhofer, Peter and Pam Herndon, Dill and Katie Ewen, and John and Karen Cramm.

Joe Pratt, Ed Anthony, Eric Broadbent, and Wally Van Wyck have also served as elders. Full-time workers Jack Spender and Ken Hardisty are supported by the assembly. Westville Bible Chapel has about 80 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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From its beginning in 1979, the Cheshire Bible Chapel in the town of Cheshire about 15 miles south of Bristol, had a vision for a work in Bristol to serve the families who traveled down from that area. In 1983, the Bristol Bible Chapel began in the Bristol Boys and Girls Club building and has continued to meet there since. Six or eight families from Cheshire Bible Chapel, including one elder and two deacons, along with Jack Spender, initiated the assembly in Bristol. Those active in leadership at Bristol Bible Chapel have been Ronald Russell, Brian Sorel, and Daniel Symolon. About 80 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

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The present Groton Bible Chapel has its roots in a Sunday School work begun in 1919. Herbert and Bella Mackenzie had immigrated to the U.S. in 1900, and were followed in 1906 by William and Florence Ward, both families settling in Rhode Island. Both families had been in assemblies in the British Isles, and initially fellowshipped at the Westerly Gospel Hall in the town of

Westerly, RI at the Connecticut state line. In 1917, both families were employed and lived in Groton, about 18 miles away in Connecticut, but continued at the Westerly assembly. Desiring to start an assembly where they lived, they began an afternoon Sunday School in a rented store front at 452 Thames Street. The work attracted many people, among whom were the Chiapperini, Post, Gore, Orkney, and Page families.

In 1920, evangelists John Rankin and Hugh McEwen held tent meetings in the town. Many were saved, and many joined in the Sunday School work. The Deady, Weiser, Whipple, Conghlin, and Gregg families came at this time, as well as Joseph Ward from England. The Christians began to Break Bread as the Groton Gospel Hall in that year in the store front. In the mid 1920s, William and Mary Campbell joined the fellowship and became leaders. For the remainder of the 1920s and 1930s, the church stayed at about 20 adults in fellowship. The Sunday School work remained as the chief outreach and focus of work.

By the late 1930s, some in the assembly felt the need to move the assembly from its separatist stance to the mainstream of evangelicism. World War II brought more into the fellowship who shared this view. In 1949, a new Groton Gospel Chapel was completed at 81 Poquonnock Road.

David and Elsie Ward were commended as workers for the assembly in 1948. Hilmar and Ruth Burgess came in 1949 to join the work, and Bob and Barbara Campbell came in 1956. These dedicated workers, with others, had much to do with the substantial growth of Groton Gospel Chapel. The afternoon Sunday School was still a

major feature of the assembly, but in the mid to late 1970s, had evolved into a Family Bible Hour comprising 500 to 600 adults in two services.

In 1959, the Christians purchased a 3.5 acre lot, knowing that needed expansion at their present location was not possible. Ground breaking for the Christian Education wing of the new chapel took place in 1961. Construction and dedication of the sanctuary occurred in 1973, and final construction of the gym took place in 1985. A name change to Groton Bible Chapel took place in 1973.

Among the many workers commended by the assembly, we mention Carlos Cerqueira, commended to work among the Portuguese in Rhode Island. The assembly has yearly evangelistic crusades and strong missions and visitation programs. About 750 adults and youngsters attend the assembly today.

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Community Bible Chapel in Brooklyn, near the eastern edge of Connecticut, was begun in 1987 by David Bell and Steve Chuiek. The small assembly (up to 30 adults and youngsters) has met in homes and other locations over the years. David Bell and Steve Chuiek have served as the leaders.

An assembly was established in South Norwalk in 1952, following Bible studies led by David Ward in the home of Cliff and Isabel Foley. Harold Harper gave help in establishing this new work, which became the South Norwalk Gospel Chapel . Due to the high cost of living in the area, young couples who had been saved were forced to move, and the assembly was discontinued in 1995.

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Waterbury Christian Fellowship began to meet in September 1997. The assembly has been meeting in the Sheraton Hotel. The work started as a home Bible study in the home of Paul Forcucci, with Jack Spender teaching the studies. It started as an outreach to Kennedy High School, where Mr. Forcucci was teaching. The group has had the support of Cheshire Bible Chapel since the beginning.

The principal people initiating the assembly were Paul and Maria Forcucci, Jack and Ruth Spender, John and Foida Monroe, and Juan Torres. Waterbury Christian Fellowship is now waiting for the Lord to identify elders to lead the assembly. About 65 adults and children are in the assembly.

Sources:

Questionnaire responses and other correspondence

The75th Anniversary of the Groton Bible Chapel, 1919-1994, by David Ward

The History of Concord Bible Fellowship, by William E. Houston, 1999

Letters of Interest, October 1953, p. 5; November 1953, p. 3; May 1957, p. 3 February 1982, p. 6

## Rhode Island

The Pawtucket Gospel Hall has its roots in a Gospel series held in Central Falls, near Pawtucket, in the late 1800s. The assembly was formed soon after that. The Pawtucket Gospel Hall was opened April 9, 1916. It served for nearly three-quarters of a century, ultimately

turning its property over to a Portuguese group of Christians in mid 1981.

Knowing that one out of every seven people living in south eastern Rhode Island and Massachusetts are Portuguese, T. Ernest Wilson contacted the Christians at Buttonwoods (see below) about Carlos Cerqueira, forced out of Angola and seeking the Lord's will for place of service. John Farrell was able to arrange for his entrance into the country, a job among Portuguese-speaking people, and housing. The Pawtucket assembly offered their building for times when they were not using it. So the Cerqueira family began their work of ministering to the Portuguese and establishing a Portuguese-speaking assembly. (See Ethnic section. Other assemblies in Rhode Island and Massachusetts that conduct meetings in Portuguese are also discussed in the Ethnic section.)

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The Providence assembly started soon after the Pawtucket work began. It was called the Providence Assembly of Christian Brethren and met in various rented facilities, primarily in upper rooms. It was eventually termed the Providence Gospel Hall. Hugh Thorpe, an itinerant worker, helped in the start of the Providence work. The assembly was composed of Scottish and Irish brethren who did not always see eye to eye, and in 1924 or 1925, the assembly divided.

The Irish group moved to the northern part of the city and subsequently built their own building on Rochambeau Avenue, calling it the Rochambeau Avenue Gospel Chapel. The leading brother in the Rochambeau work was George Megaughin.

There was no fellowship between the two assemblies, and most New England assemblies chose to interact with the Rochambeau group.

* * *

The Scottish group continued in rented rooms in the center of Providence and kept the old name, Providence Gospel Hall. The leading brothers there were Robert Brodie, an excellent Gospel preacher who would often preach on street corners, and Archibald Murdoch, who was a Bible teacher often consulted by teachers at the Providence Bible Institute to explain difficult passages. Hugh Thorpe, T. Ernest Wilson, Herbert Webber, and John and Betty McGehee were among the many who ministered at the Providence assembly when in the area.

In 1941, Mr. Brodie died, and Mr. Murdoch took the major responsibility at the Providence Gospel Hall for many years. In 1943, the assembly moved into a small former drug store on Route 1, the major highway through the state. It had seating for 50, and had four Sunday School rooms and a kitchen. This was during World War II, and the Providence Gospel Hall along with other evangelical groups established a Victory Servicemen's Center and helped staff it. The assembly maintained a high profile in the weekly Youth For Christ rallies. These contacts brought in many young Christians and on Sunday afternoons the Gospel Hall was filled.

When Mr. Murdoch became disabled after the war, Stuart Garver, Registrar of the Providence Bible Institute, provided much of the teaching and pastoral care. John Farrell took an active role in the assembly until he married and moved to New Jersey in 1951, fellowshippng at Woodside Chapel in Fanwood, NJ .

Robert Campbell and Dorsey Merrills became leaders in the assembly then, until they both moved from the area. John Farrell and his wife then returned to leadership in the assembly.

Joy Campbell, Robert Campbell's sister, was invited to conduct a series of five 5-day Bible clubs in the Buttonwoods district of Warwick, south of Providence. Interest and attendance were great. Thus encouraged, about 10 people committed to establishing an assembly in the area and had their first Remembrance meeting at a community club house in September 1957. Samuel Thorpe, Sr. and family joined at that time and were a great help.

Area assemblies renewed their fellowship with the new Buttonwoods Assembly and began a coordinated effort in conducting Vacation Bible Schools, with Jim Harshaw doing the teaching. Many children were saved in these outreaches, and the Buttonwoods assembly had to rent space in a school to accommodate all the children. This school was subsequently used for Sunday Schools. Mel Wistner headed the VBS work for a couple of years, with attendance well over 100.

Soon, Frank Stebbings and Jack Fish came into fellowship and added much to the leadership. By the third year, the assembly realized the need for their own chapel, and in May 1961 Buttonwoods Bible Chapel was completed. Work with children and teens grew rapidly and in 1968, a 5000 square foot addition was built. Dick Polcyn and his family were invited to assist in the work in the 1970s. They reached out to young people in the drug culture, and many were saved and have gone on well. In 1980, a preschool program was established at

the chapel, and more recently a day care program has been initiated. A Narcotics Anonymous group meets in the chapel every week, headed by a brother in the assembly.

About 100 people attend Buttonwoods Bible Chapel regularly. Douglas Brush, John Farrell, and Wesley Gardner are the current elders.

* * *

Many of the young people reached by the Polcyns at Buttonwoods lived a couple of towns away from the chapel, and began having their own Bible studies there. They soon started their own assembly as a house-church, and later rented a school auditorium in Warwick for Sunday mornings. As Warwick Believers Fellowship, they continue as an assembly. Buttonwoods suggested that they unite with them, but Believers Fellowship has a ministry they feel can be served best as a house-type church. Fellowship is good between the two assemblies. Warwick Believers Fellowship continues to meet at Harold Scott Elementary School.

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Hope Bible Chapel in Bristol was started by Wesley Gardner, perhaps in the late 1960s, and closed in 1990. The Gardner family then joined the fellowship at Buttonwoods.

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The Christian Brethren of Coventry, a town near West Warwick, was started by Paul Shaw in the mid 1970s. By the late 1970s, the assembly had adopted the name Pawtuxet Valley Bible Chapel. Allen Moores was an elder there. It closed in about 1991. Mr. Shaw fellowships at

Buttonwoods and conducts the Sunday afternoon chapel service at the Federal Detention Center.

* * *

When the Westerly Gospel Hall closed its doors, Groton Bible Chapel inherited the old building. The elders at Groton had a vision for many years of reviving a work there, and several attempts were made. In 1984 they approached several men who were involved in ministry at Groton Bible Chapel and asked them to consider hiving off to form a new work in the Westerly area.

A small group of believers thus began meeting on alternate Wednesday evenings in a home to study the word. Among them were Gregory Benoit, Andrew Bonner, Paul Edgerley, Sal Galtieri, and Joe Higgins, and their families. Andy Bonner and Greg Benoit were already ministering to teenagers in the Westerly/ Ashaway area. This Bible study grew into a Breaking of Bread service comprising about 30 adults.

In 1985 the new assembly began renting the Ashaway Seventh Day Baptist Church building. This was one of the oldest church buildings in the area, a building that had been moved by oxen a hundred years earlier from the nearby town of Westerly. The Seventh Day Baptist believers met on Saturday and Ashaway Bible Chapel met on Sunday.

The youth ministry continued to grow after the chapel began to meet, and it provided a key source of growth as the young people began to start families of their own. In 1997 Ashaway Bible Chapel moved from the old Seventh Day building into a store-front in downtown Westerly, where it is still meeting at this time, and consists of about 100 people.

Sources:

Questionnaire responses and other correspondence

Historical Remembrances of Buttonwoods Bible Chapel, by John Farrell, 1999

## Vermont

Northern New England has often been characterized as spiritually cold; the liberal church there is often the only sign of religious activity. Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine difficult states for the Gospel and in particular a New Testament church.

An assembly in Woodbury, north of Montpelier, first started to function as an assembly in 1947, and was known as the Woodbury Gospel Hall. Edwin Corliss and his wife and brothers and sisters, with their families, were the principal people starting the assembly.

Edwin and Nina Corliss had been saved in the early or mid 1920s through contact with Nick Vandetta while working in Connecticut. Concerned for his relatives who had never heard the Gospel, Mr. Corliss returned to Vermont and invited Mr. Vandetta and others to come preach the Gospel. His sister, Flossie Parker, made her home available for this purpose. By about the mid 1920s, many in the extended Corliss family and others had accepted Christ.

Through the influence of brethren preachers such as Samuel Rea, Sr., the Christians desired to gather to the Lord’s name alone. Flossie and Glenn Parker gave the building across the road from their home in Woodbury to be used as a hall in 1946; local Christians remodeled the building, and within a year, the first Remembrance

meeting was held there. Many locals were saved and the Sunday School was active.

People from the Hardwick area, five miles north, began coming to Woodbury to fellowship in the meeting. In 1960, property was purchased in Hardwick and a hall was built on Lower Cherry Street. The assembly continues as the Hardwick Gospel Hall. Until the 1980s, various members of the Corliss family were the leaders of the assembly. Since then, leadership has been taken by Royce Griffith, Robert J. Rea, Jr., and William Scott. About 45 adults and youngsters attend the assembly today.

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Rutland is a city of modest size in central Vermont. Bethany Bible Chapel in Rutland started in 1994 in the home of Robert and Bonnie Lucas. Having lived in Philadelphia for several years while Robert attended the Philadelphia College of the Bible, and fellowshiping at Ardsley Bible Chapel, they had felt a burden to return to Vermont and start a work in the area.

They and another brother began the work, but it never grew beyond a few. When this brother left, the Lucas' had sole responsibility for the work, and soon just Robert and Bonnie were Breaking Bread each Lord's Day. Their home now serves as a haven of rest for the Lord's servants who are passing through the area. Their witnessing activity is mainly on a one-to-one basis and through weekly Bible studies. Mr. Lucas is active in a teaching ministry throughout the northeast, and Bonnie Lucas writes a newsletter for women entitled Abigail Voices, which is mailed to about 500 women throughout the US, Canada, and Australia.

Sources:

Questionnaire responses and other correspondence

50 Years, Kept Safely Kept, A History of Hardwick Gospel Hall, 1997

## New Hampshire

Historically, New Hampshire has been a difficult state in which to establish assemblies. In the far past, assemblies have existed at Nashua, Keene, and Manchester. However in 1953, there were no assemblies in the state. Arthur Dewhurst pioneered extensively in New Hampshire, seeing quite a few saved, but little assembly activity. Four assemblies are listed in recent Walterick Address Books.

An assembly developed in Barrington probably in the early 1950s. It grew out of the Sunnyside Christian School and was started by Mr. and Mrs. Phillip E. Strout. About 25 gathered to Remember the Lord on Sunday mornings. People came from long distances to attend the Barrington Assembly, which also attracted a few students from the University of New Hampshire and the Sunnyside School. The assembly continued for perhaps two decades.

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Concord has had an assembly since the late 1960s. While living in Honduras in 1962, William (Nick) and Barb Houston met missionaries Bill and Kay Tidsbury in a home Bible study. The Houstons were young Christians and were instructed by the Tidsburys in the way of the New Testament church, and soon the Houstons were in fellowship in a Spanish-speaking assembly in the city of

Progreso. The Houstons began using their home as a hospitality center for missionaries in Honduras.

In 1964, the Houstons decided to return to their home area of Contoocook, New Hampshire and spread the Gospel to their friends and families. Arthur Dewhurst came up from Massachusetts to help with Bible studies in their home. These studies grew to about 30 persons in regular attendance, and a few were saved. Mr. Dewhurst wanted an assembly established there, but the Houstons felt they needed to go back to Honduras to work with the Tidsburys and other missionaries and to work with the assemblies there.

However, in 1964, the Tidsburys returned to their home area of British Columbia to help establish an assembly in Dawson Creek, and the Houstons joined them there. The assembly work in Dawson Creek went well and grew to about 30 believers. In 1968, the Houstons returned to New Hampshire, to the Concord area where Arthur Dewhurst was working with three families in establishing an assembly meeting in the Pineconia Grange Hall Assembly on Ormond Street in Concord. The Houstons joined in the effort, and the Lord added more Christians.

For several years, the assembly took no name as they continued to meet at the Grange Hall. The Houstons were active in pastoring the assembly, which was growing slowly. After Mr. Dewhurst became elderly, James and Janette Harvey came and were valuable in the assembly. Jack and Nina Pollard and Dave and Ron Ward from Massachusetts gave significant help. Bruce and Cindy Lawson joined the fellowship in the 1970s and

were active leaders. Bruce Lawson was an elder for about 20 years.

In the late 1970s, with the help of a loan from Stewards Foundation, the believers purchased an acre of pine grove on the east side of Concord, and put an A-frame building on it. At that time they took the name Pine Grove Bible Assembly.

The Dale Gagnons arrived at the assembly after that, and helped in several ways, including pastoring, administration, music, and hospitality. Mr. Gagnon became one of the leaders, along with William Houston, Jim Blanchard, and Pete Stohrer, although the assembly had no recognized elders at that time. Many gifted believers were added in that decade.

A split over leadership issues occurred in 1979, with some families staying at the Pine Grove facility, and others meeting in the Houston home. The latter group soon began renting the city's Ward Seven Building on West Street for assembly meetings. Midweek Bible studies met in various homes. In 1986, this fellowship purchased a small church building at 21 Dunklee Street on the south end of Concord where it continues to meet as the Concord Bible Fellowship. The church has grown to about 100 in fellowship, half of which are young adults and children.

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His Mansion Ministries, formed in 1971 to help reclaim the lives of troubled youths, moved in 1979 from Wauregan, CT to Deering, NH, northwest of Manchester. Before long, people from the area began to meet for worship with the Mansion family, and so in October 1979, the Christians formed Wolf Hill Chapel in Deering,

in which Stan Farmer, Hal Moore, and Tom Turi were the founding elders. Later the name was changed to Long House Bible Chapel to reflect the commonly used name of the property.

In 1981, desiring more visibility to the surrounding towns, they moved to nearby Hillsborough and met in the Hillsborough-Deering High School cafeteria, giving their assembly its present name of Contoocook Valley Bible Chapel. Rob Christenson joined the leadership team in 1982. The church grew and needed larger facilities. The abandoned Contoocook Valley Inn, a historic coach inn in the center of town, was purchased in 1983 and renovated. The church first gathered there in 1985. Contoocook Valley Bible Chapel is very much a community church and because of its origins, young people have tended to be a significant part of its composition. About 130 persons attend services each week. Contoocook Valley Bible Chapel has an active interest in missions, commending several of its members to serve the Lord at home and abroad, on short and long term missions.

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Calvary Bible Fellowship in Westmoreland in southwest New Hampshire began in 1993, not having derived from another assembly. David Calhoun, Robert Rummell, and Dale Hubbard were those who started the meeting, and are the recognized leaders, waiting for the time when the assembly will be able to recognize elders. About 40 adults and youngsters attend the meeting.

Sources:

Questionnaire responses and other correspondence

Letters of Interest, October 1953, p. 5; May 1957, p. 3

## Maine

The Madison Gospel Hall, north of Augusta, began in 1951 through the efforts of Ervin Wacome, Sanford Wacome, Ralph Crouch, Effie Emery, and Nina Henry and their families. The group met first for four months at a schoolhouse at Blackwell Corner, then for 12 years on Main Street. In 1964, the assembly moved to 84 Old Point Avenue, and from 1986 to the present have been at their current location on Highway 148, Madison. Those active in leadership have included Ervin Wacome, Gene Aubrey, and Gerald K. Paine. About 10 adults and children attend the Madison Gospel Hall.

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Grace Fellowship Bible Chapel in Union, a small town east of Augusta, began as a home Bible study. Not then aware of the brethren assemblies, several people had left their denominational affiliations, or were new believers, and met to search the scriptures. Later they were helped by the believers at Spring Hill Gospel Hall in Westbrook, near Portland. In 1970, the believers identified with the brethren. After meeting in homes in Union, the group met in space in the Union Odd Fellows Hall, then at a Grange hall in nearby Warren, and since 1983 have met in their own building in East Union. The leaders have been William Street, Roy Beverly, Joe Paradise, and Donald Sabins. The assembly has commended workers to serve the Lord in New Guinea. About 40 adults and youngsters attend on a typical Sunday.

Sources:

Questionnaire responses

# Canada – West

In this section, we consider the western provinces of British Columbia and Yukon.

## British Columbia: Victoria and Vancouver Island

The first assembly in British Columbia, and perhaps the entire Pacific northwest, began meeting in 1887 in a private home on Kings Road in Victoria, Vancouver Island.

Victoria Gospel Hall was established by 1888 on Blanshard Street. Brethren from Scotland and England started the assembly; these were the families of A.J. Woodward, W.C. Petticrew, Andrew Davidson, H.E. Munday, and Messrs. McKenzie and Allan. One of the first evangelists to visit the assembly was Alexander Marshall, who came in 1889. Among those who have played leading roles in the assembly are Raymond McDonald, Edwin Munday, John Stewart, N.J. Caufield, Fred Bowen, W.H. Marlow, J. Daniels, David Wallace, Bill Hamilton, and Walter Carter.

By 1931, the assembly was meeting at 935 Pandora Avenue, having purchased and remodeled a large building. Seating in the auditorium could accommodate about 300 people. The name was changed to Victoria Gospel Chapel in 1967.

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A Sunday School was begun in 1911 in the Galloway home in the Oaklands district of Victoria. Within a year, Gospel services as well as the Sunday School were being

conducted each week in rented space over the stores at the corner of Cedar Hill Road and Hillside Avenue. Those involved in this effort – including the Galloway, J. Thomson, H. Hopkins, W. Swetnam, and R. Smart families from Victoria Gospel Hall – decided to form a new assembly. Its first Remembrance Meeting took place on Easter Sunday in April 1913. By the next year, Oaklands Gospel Hall was built at 2815 Cedar Hill Road.

Steady growth followed, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1954 the assembly had 150 in fellowship and a large Sunday school. The old hall was overcrowded, so the assembly purchased property at 2736 Fernwood Road. By March 1957, the new Oaklands Chapel was completed and occupied. Today the assembly has about 250 adults in fellowship, with 120 children. Elders over the years include J. Thomson, F. Hamilton, H. Hopkins, P. Smart, D. Easton, and R. Powell.

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Lewis Speller started a Sunday School in a little store at the corner of Marigold Road and Interurban Road in the Marigold district of Victoria. He put benches in the back of his truck and faithfully drove around the district to pick up any children who were interested in coming.

As an outreach of Victoria Gospel Chapel, the Sunday School moved into the Marigold Scout Hall and functioned there for many years. An adult Bible class was added to the Sunday School work In order to bring the children in, a bus was chartered to drive around the area, and Mr. Speller continued to use his truck. Hundreds of children heard the message of salvation, and many parents also.

Another outreach in the Marigold district was a Sunday evening Gospel meeting, also held in the Scout Hall. Some people from the neighborhood attended those meetings regularly. On one of his visits to Victoria, Stan Beasley, a pioneer missionary in Newfoundland, encouraged the brethren who were carrying on the Marigold work to form a building fund with the goal of establishing an assembly.

In cooperation with the brethren at Victoria Chapel, plans were made to build a chapel on Brunswick Place near the Colquitz Junior Secondary School. The brethren spent many hours working together to complete Westview Gospel Chapel. In September 1962, the building was completed enough for meetings to begin. Twenty five believers Remembered the Lord in the first meeting. Sid Biggs, Joe Gilmore, Lewis Speller, and Gordon Roberts were the prime movers in establishing the new assembly.

A Ladies Coffee Hour was a means of Gospel outreach to neighborhood ladies. Vacation Bible Schools and a vigorous youth program were a part of the work of Westview Gospel Chapel. The building was enlarged in 1975, and about 130 were in fellowship in the late 1970s. Hospital visitation programs have marked recent years. Others in leadership at Westview have been George Douberoff, Doug Relf, Joe Taylor, Eldred Williams, Steve Miller, Henry Loewes, Enoch Johnson, Brad Cameron, Carl Schulz, Phil Townshend, and Alex Yashuk. About 50 are in fellowship today, plus about 20 children.

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The Ross Bay Gospel Hall in Victoria commenced in 1947 as an outreach of Victoria Gospel Hall the result of Sunday school and Gospel testimony work for many years in that district. Bethesda Gospel Chapel was another hive-off from Victoria Gospel Hall. The Bethesda and Ross Bay assemblies amalgamated in the early 1980s to become the Oak Bay Gospel Assembly.

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In the early 1950s, Harry Penman, living in the Gordon Head area of Victoria, began a Sunday School work in the Gordon Head Community Hall on Tyndall Avenue. In this he had the blessing of the elders at Oaklands Chapel, where he was in fellowship. John Jenner helped him, and later took over the work. This ministry was carried out until the mid 1960s.

In about 1964, five couples from Oaklands Chapel felt it was time to expand this ministry into a full church ministry, with an outreach to the adults and families of the growing Gordon Head area. In 1965 they rented a small building on the corner of Hawthorne and Majestic in Victoria and began to meet regularly as University Chapel.

In 1969, the Christians bought property on Feltham Road in Victoria, and at about the same time invited John Williams from Detroit to full-time ministry at the assembly. During this period, the assembly at University Chapel moved from their rented quarters and merged with Quadra Bible Chapel which had started in March 1953 in a new building. The name of the merged assemblies was University Chapel at Quadra.

Construction on the Feltham Road property began in 1973, and the finished building was occupied later that

year. The assembly then called itself Lambrick Park Church. Growth was rapid and in 1978, a group hived off to establish Saanichton Bible Fellowship (see below). John Williams moved to Vancouver in 1979, and Dennis Clark and Stan Kelly, both of them elders and retired missionaries, shared the full-time responsibility for the teaching and preaching ministry for the next two years. In 1981, Tom Cowan was brought on as a full-time worker.

Average Sunday morning attendance is about 1700 between two morning services and an evening service for young adults. Located about five minutes from the University of Victoria, the church has many students. Children's ministries is an important part of the church. Lambrick Park Church has several full-time staff.

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In 1941, a new assembly was established at the Sidney Gospel Hall on 5th Street in the town of Sidney, just north of Victoria. Messrs. Lyon and Rashleigh were among the elders. The assembly later took the name Sidney Bible Chapel.

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Saanichton Bible Fellowship is an amalgamation of Sidney Bible Chapel and those who left Lambrick Park Church to establish a new work. Today about 150 are in fellowship in the Saanichton assembly.

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North of Victoria on Vancouver Island is the town of Duncan. Starting at the beginning of 1921 and continuing for several months, a series of Gospel meetings were held in the Odd Fellows Hall in Duncan,

with well known speakers such as W.M. Rae of Portland, OR; G.L. Hunt of Yakima, WA; Peter Smart of Victoria; and others. In summers, the Gospel meetings were transferred to a tent at Maple Bay.

The Duncan Gospel Hall on Duncan Street opened in January 1923, a separate rented building 'between the Cowichan Creamery and Duncan Coal Depot, opposite Freight Shed.' Its founders and leaders for many years were H. Corfield, C. Butcher, H.A.H. Rice, B. A. Rice, G. S. Dobbie, and S.K.B. Rice. The assembly continued there for several years, with tent meetings and picnics at Maple Bay during the summers. In 1930, a new Cedar Hall was built on Brae Street, and the first meeting there took place in September 1930.

Over the many years since then, the assembly had many special speakers such as Walter Ainslee of Liverpool, England, John Smart of Victoria, and C.O. Bowen of Vancouver. At some point, the name of the meeting place was changed to Brae Road Gospel Chapel. Other elders of the assembly over the years include Steve Saunders, Huron Sheppard, Harvey Lowe, Sid Biggs, Paul Brammall, and Terry Ryan. About 70 are in fellowship at Brae Road, which has a large Awana program. Several missionaries have been commended to the Lord's service.

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North from Duncan ten miles, a small Chemainus Assembly met in that town for a time. Ten miles farther north, the Ladysmith Assembly of some 30 believers existed in the 1950s.

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Twelve miles north of Ladysmith is Nanaimo, where one of the oldest assemblies in British Columbia met. In 1904, a small gathering of believers met in the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. Marshall in Irwin Street in Nanaimo. Will Rae, a traveling salesman from Vancouver, initiated the meeting for Remembering the Lord and for Bible study. The families of Sandy Stewart, James Cochrane, Robert Lindsay, Leslie Richmond, and others were involved in the beginning of the Nanaimo assembly.

For a time, the believers rented a Finnish assembly hall in Nanaimo. Later they purchased the building and named it Victoria Road Gospel Hall. The assembly numbered about 60 in the 1950s. At one time, Sunday School attendance reached 250 students. As the Sunday School grew, the brethren excavated a basement on the property, then added above-ground rooms for the Sunday School and youth programs. The believers built and moved into the Wakesiah Gospel Chapel on Wakesiah Avenue in 1975, their present location. Robert Burns is commended as a full-time worker for the assembly, and was for a time the executive director of Camp Imadene. About 100 adults and children are in the assembly today.

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Further north on Vancouver Island is Lathom Road Gospel Hall in Port Alberni, which began in about 1890 as the Helen Street Gospel Hall, its location until 1968. The beginnings of the assembly are lost, although correspondence with Mr. Monypenny is dated in the 1890s. Correspondence with J.J. Rouse dated 1909, shows his concern for the assembly. About 40 adults and children attend Lathom Road Gospel Hall.

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Courtenay is a good-sized town 50 miles north of Nanaimo. A.W. Rigler and Arthur Stewart, who had been in fellowship in Victoria assemblies, moved to Courtenay in the spring of 1920. Meetings started in the Rigler home as early as 1921. In the early to mid 1920s, Charles Bowen came with his Gospel Car and two young men; these built Elim Hall in Courtenay on 4th Street for the small assembly of Christians.

In the 1950s, a larger building was built at 566 Fifth Street, the current location of Elim Gospel Chapel. At that time there were some 80 believers in fellowship, with children's works in two other locations.

Those responsible for the establishment of Elim Hall, in addition to the Rigler and Stewart families, were Mr. and Mrs. Pearce, and Mrs. Smith, and their families. Messrs. Rigler, Stewart, Burns, Pearce, Carter, and Murray were some of the early elders. A military airbase in nearby Comox supplies an ever-changing population to the assembly. The active assembly has a large Sunday School with 22 teachers, and has purchased a nearby house to accommodate the needs of the growing work.

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Camp Imadene on Mesachie Lake near Duncan was established in about 1920 and is supported mainly by the assemblies on Vancouver island. It is the most important outreach on the Island. Thousands of children have been at the camp and many have gone out as misionaries.

## City of Vancouver and Environs

The city of Vancouver was established soon after the Canadian Pacific Railway agreed to put its terminus in the area in 1884. The city grew rapidly in the 1890s during the Klondike Gold Rush.

In 1897, James Rae, then 25 years old and a son of John Rae Sr., an evangelist working in Manitoba and North Dakota, arrived in Vancouver to open a shoe store. He soon found other believers of like mind, and the small group formed an assembly in 1898. These included Harry Douglas, Alex Anderson, and William Woods and their wives, along with James Rae.

Others soon joined with the Vancouver Assembly, including James Rae's wife who arrived from Winnipeg, Mr. Murchie, Mrs. Jess, Mrs. Miller, Mr. and Mrs Alex Matthews Jr., and Mr. John Currie. Messrs. Swain and Parnell came for a few months and stayed until a new assembly was formed in New Westminster on the southeast side of Greater Vancouver.

The original Vancouver Assembly met first in an upstairs room above Harvey's store at Hastings Street and Westminster Road. Next they met on Cordova St. above a meat market; then in an upstairs room on Cordova Street near Cambie Street, and then later to an undertaker's parlour on Granville Street.

People arrived in the city daily from England, Eastern Canada, and the Prairies. It was not unusual for several 'Letters of Commendation' to be read on Lord's Day mornings, and the assembly grew rapidly. Soon, larger quarters were needed, and Mr. Muncie from the Victoria Gospel Hall built a large Seymour Street Gospel Hall for the believers, at 1181 Seymour Streeet, and this became

the meeting place for many years. Most of the traveling Brethren evangelists of the day preached at the early Vancouver/Seymour Street Assembly.

The Seymour Street Gospel Hall moved in 1947 from its downtown location to a residential section about three miles west at Sixteenth and MacDonald and took the name 16th & MacDonald Gospel Hall. Since then it has become known as the Sixteenth Avenue Gospel Chapel. Others in early leadership, in addition to those mentioned above, were Gordon Budd, Stanley Budd, Harold Summers, Ronald Sellers, and Leslie Richmond. Since then, Geofferey Lloyd, William Cummings, Leslie Jones, Clem Aitken, Ernie Peters, Harold Diewert, Samuel Gilmour, Robert Shannon, Eric Peterson, Teus Kappers, Jim Hathaway, Jay Levielle, Harold Summers Jr., and Harold Budd have shared leadership of the assembly. Several have been commended to the Lord's work. About 120 adults are in fellowship, with 40 children.

* * *

At least twenty of the Seymour Street Assembly had settled in the Cedar Cottage district south of Vancouver, an area then having no convenient transportation to Seymour Street Assembly. Prayer meetings, Bible Readings, and a Sunday School were established by the believers living there in the early years of the first decade of the twentieth century.

The brethren at Seymour Street were praying about the formation of a new assembly in the Cedar Cottage district since about 200 were in fellowship at Seymour at that time. James Rae offered the use of a lot he owned on Kingsway (then called Westminster Road), and

Thomas Miller built a Gospel Hall there in 1909. This became known as the Cedar Cottage Assembly, which had about 26 in fellowship at its beginning. These included Charles Hillman, Thomas Miller, John Burr, Horace Oliver, James McConnell Sr., Matthew Mawhinney, and their families. Many others came to live in the area in the next few years and joined the fellowship, including Charles Summers and Frank Goff and their families.

Hundreds of children began attending the Sunday School at the Gospel Hall even in its first year, and an addition was soon built to accommodate them. One class met in the home of Frank Goff. In the next few years, Sunday Schools were held in other homes and in rented stores.

A portable wooden tent was constructed in 1911 and used for evangelism by David Scott, J. J. Rouse, and others for many years, with many persons saved.

In 1912, a larger Hall was built nearby on Welwyn Street for the Cedar Cottage Assembly. Also in that year, the assembly commended C. S. Summers to full time service for the Lord. From 1913 on, the assembly has held conferences almost yearly at Thanksgiving time. Street meetings were a feature of the assembly. A ‘Gospel Car’ was used to carry the Gospel to different parts.

Elders in the early years at Cedar Cottage Assembly included John Burr, John Bell, George Vout, Frank Willox, John Dennis, John Morgan Sr., Alex Bryson, and Frank Goff. Many others have served in leadership since that time. In 1931, the assembly commended Hector Alves to full time service for the Lord.

The Cedar Cottage Assembly was active after World War II, having about 175 in fellowship then. It had a thriving Sunday school work about two miles north at First and Nanaimo in a prefabricated building. In 1957, the assembly built and occupied the new Victoria Drive Gospel Hall a few blocks away.

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In 1921, an assembly was formed at the Fairview Gospel Hall on 10th Avenue just west of Granville, made up of some saints from the Seymour Street Assembly. James Rae was a leader there and had a great zeal for the spread of the gospel. The Fairview assembly was active in holding gospel meetings. Aabout 80 believers met there in 1954.

In 1928, they rented a building at 14th Avenue and Woodland Drive where Thomas Black and Herb Harris held fruitful Gospel meeting for nine weeks. Later Cecil Copp bought the building. A large Sunday School was built up and gospel meetings were held on Sunday nights. In 1955, an assembly was formed there and called the Woodland Drive Assembly.

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In 1932, Arthur Rae and other brethren from the Fairview assembly began a children’s work in the home of Mrs. McBride. The following year, Hector Alves pitched his tent nearby. James Rae and Herb Harris operated the tent the following summer. Then a store building at 61st Avenue and Main Street was rented and used for gospel meetings. Many souls trusted Christ during those years. The brethren soon built a Hall at 60th Avenue and Main Street and the South Main Street

Assembly was formed. The Sunday School had 100 children in 1954 and 135 believers in fellowship.

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Some of the South Main Street Assembly brethren were very active in gospel outreach and one of these efforts eventually resulted in an assembly being formed in west Richmond in 1959. The assembly grew large, had an active gospel outreach, and built and occupied the large West Richmond Gospel Hall.

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Another gospel outreach of the South Main Street brethren was in Deep Cove. This work also prospered and resulted in the formation of the Deep Cove Assembly in 1960.

* * *

In 1912, there were three assemblies in the Vancouver area – the Seymour Street, Cedar Cottage, and New Westminster assemblies. At that time, a split occurred in the Seymour assembly on the issue of the 'open table,' the principle where any believer of clean life was welcomed regardless of other religious affiliations. The evangelists Robert McMurdo and Alexander Marshall espoused this view when they preached at Seymour Street. A number who agreed with this position left and formed an assembly in the Mount Pleasant area. This included Will Rae, Frank Goff, and Weymss Reid. The group met in several locations before building the Mount Pleasant Gospel Hall in 1914.

Leadership during the early years included W.W. Reid, J.M. Robertson, R.C. Dunns, R.M. Bagshaw, James

Paxton, W.N. McPhee, E.C. Hunt, J.T. Rae, F.W. Goff, A.J. Jordan, and B. Thompson.

In the 1940s, when their numbers had increased, and as industrial activities began to encroach in the area, the Christians began discussing a move to a location on the west side of the city, particularly since Mr. Marshall Sheppard had been carrying on a large Sunday School work there in the Marpole area. In 1944, the majority of the Christians decided to establish an assembly there. Property was purchased at the corner of Granville Street and 43rd Avenue West, on which a new building was erected and known initially as Granville South Gospel Chapel. The chapel had two auditoriums separated by a collapsible curtain; together they could seat up to 700 people. About 240 persons moved to the new chapel. The dedication service was in the spring of 1950, with Henry Petersen as the speaker. The elders at the Granville assembly at the time of the opening of the new chapel were Ralph Bagshaw, John Bennett, Jack Cochrane, Robert Dunns, John Elder, Walter McPhee, James Paxton, William Reid, John Robertson, and Marshall Sheppard.

(The assembly remaining at Mount Pleasant remodeled the Mount Pleasant Gospel Hall and continued with about 200 in fellowship, remaining open for several more years. The two assemblies were in full fellowship.)

In those early years Sunday School attendance was high, and as the children grew older many became Christians and joined the assembly. A variety of teaching programs was available to assist in their spiritual development. As well, members became very active in many parachurch organizations, including InterVarsity Christian

Fellowship, Young Life, Anvil Island camp, Calling Foundation, Terry Winter Christian Communications, and Bible Study Fellowship.

The Christians of the assembly had soon begun shortening the name Granville South Gospel Chapel to just Granville Chapel, and the name change was made official in the early 1980s. As community conditions changed, programs were created to meet those changes. Thus in 1973 Granville opened a licensed Daycare facility. Missionary activity has always been a strong emphasis at Granville. When iron curtains began to fall in Europe, medical personnel and others from Granville went to countries like Albania and Romania to distribute clothing and medical supplies. In the summer of 1994, fourteen young people spent time in Albania, while others went to places like Mongolia and Africa. Some have gone for longer periods to Austria and Poland.

Although all preaching and teaching had been carried out on a volunteer basis by members of Granville, the leadership felt that the time had come to create staff positions for this purpose. This led to the appointment in January 1987 of Tim MacIntosh as pastor, and under his ministry the church began to experience significant growth, particularly in the number of young people. By 1993, it became obvious that the Daycare would have to close, and in the fall of that year the space it occupied was converted to a nursery, complete with closed circuit television. Other changes included the renovation of the balcony area, making it possible to add another 90 seats.

Granville Chapel maintains a strong commitment to Bible-centered teaching, both from the pulpit and in

home study groups. Spiritual leadership is given by a group of elders whose ages span from the 30s to the 70s, of which the pastor is a member. They are assisted by an administrative staff and by a group of deacons who are responsible for the building and grounds, and for the day-to-day operation of the church. At present about 425 attend; the median age is in the low 30s. About 75 Asians attend Granville, which is the largest assembly in the Vancouver area.

Regent College of Vancouver began in 1969 as a vision of several outstanding brethren. One was Marshall Sheppard of the Granville assembly, and the other was James Houston of Oxford, England. As a result of their discussions a board was set up consisting of 14 men; 10 of them were members of Granville. The college has grown steadily; about 300 graduates received their degrees in 1997.

* * *

One of the early assemblies in Vancouver was formed in 1924 as Hebron Gospel Hall. Some of its early members were from the Mount Pleasant Gospel Hall Among the founding members were the families of Brian Sutherland, William Patterson, Revel, Williamson, Bottenheimer, Shepherd, and Jacks. Others from the early days were the families of J.M. Anderson, Linton, Barter, Scott, Simpson, Rose, Sam Shannon, Cousins, and T. Jones.

In the 1940s, the Hebron assembly changed its name to Kitsilano Gospel Hall to reflect the area. It consisted of about 125 believers in 1954. In 1963, its property at 5th and Arbutus was sold and a new building erected at 33rd Avenue and Arbutus. The new building was called

Quilchena Chapel, again to reflect the area – a First Nations name meaning Pleasant Waters. Stacy Woods of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship was the speaker at the dedication in February 1963.

Among the many supplying leadership over the years were J.M. Anderson, P.J. Rich, Henry Smith, Ed Barter, George Hargreaves, Franklyn Hills, Will Wilding, Bill and Jack McAllister, Wes Bowen, Ken Smith, Gifford Crawford, David Smith, Arden Robertson, Bob Cuthill, Norman Chandler, and Elie Messim. In the early days, there was a tendency toward 'area commendation,' in which most of the lower mainland assemblies joined in signing. Quilchena Chapel and its predecessors joined in such commendations for workers to Ethiopia, the Dominican Republic, the Messianic Fellowship in Vancouver, and other places.

The assembly dwindled in recent years, with many younger families moving from the area. The remaining members disbanded as an assembly and sold the building to a Chinese Baptist group in 1998.

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An assembly was commenced in the 1950s in Hastings East Gospel Hall, Vancouver, at 2004 E. Pember Street. This assembly continued for just a few years. Close to the Hastings East Gospel Hall was the Italian Gospel Hall, an assembly of some 30 believers, meeting in a home at 696 Semlin Drive. From it, the Gospel sounded out not only through Canada and into the United States, but across to Italy.

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A testimony started in Burnaby, in the southeast section of the Vancouver metropolitan area, in August 1928. The nucleus of the assembly came from Seymour Street Gospel Hall and Mount Pleasant Gospel Hall, both in Vancouver. The principals involved in the start-up were James Cochrane, William McGowan, Duncan Pollock, Edward Hogg, Andrew Hogg, Daniel McLellan, William Murdoch, Archie Robertson, and Thomas Robertson.

The Christians met in an upper hall on Kingsway and called it Park Hall Gospel Hall. They remained there until they built a new hall in 1935 on Barker Avenue, about three blocks away, and renamed the testimony Central Park Gospel Hall. The Christians continued there until March 1989 when they sold the building and began construction of a new chapel at 7103 Tenth Avenue in Burnaby. They moved into the Tenth Avenue Bible Chapel in March 1991.

The assembly has scores of leaders in its long history, among whom we may mention Gilbert Murdoch, who has been in the assembly since 1935 and is still active. Workers have been commended to the Dominican Republic, Peru, Zambia, and to work in Canada. The assembly has spun off two others (see below), and today has about 45 adults and children attending.

* * *

In 1959, another work was started by Christians at Central Park Gospel Hall. Again, this work began as a children's work. Central Park purchased property in North Burnaby and a building was erected, called Parkcrest Gospel Chapel. The brethren starting this assembly were Gil Fuller, Ken Fuller, Dave Chila, and Wilf Hawes.

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The assembly in North Surrey was the outgrowth of several groups that met in homes in the lower Fraser Valley. Some of these gatherings go as far back as the 1920s, and evidently were coming together for prayer and Bible study. In 1955, the believers came together and formed an assembly, renting a small building in the Whalley district of Surrey in the Vancouver metropolitan area. The building was rented from the Canadian Legion on Sundays, and midweek meetings were held in various homes of believers in Surrey. The assembly had no registered name at this time.

In 1958, the assembly moved to a rented building at the corner of Hjorth Road (now 104th Avenue) and 148th Street in Surrey, which was usually referred to as the Hjorth Road Hall. In 1959, the assembly was incorporated as North Surrey Gospel Hall. Several years later this was changed to North Surrey Gospel Chapel. In 1961, a new building was erected at the corner of 96th Avenue and 130A Street in Surrey, where the assembly is still located.

Frank and Susan Hildebrant, Dan and Julia Clark, Henry and Helen Klassen, John and Isabella Morton, Mr. and Mrs. Amos Crowston, Andy and Karen Malcolm, Fred and Betty Bennett, all of whom had brethren backgrounds, were the initiators of the assembly. Elders over the years have been Frank Hildebrant, John Morton, Ted Mesher, Henry Klassen, George Wiebe, Art Wiebe, Fen Dorozio, Dave Roy, Bob Stevens, Paul Sly, Al Stahl, Ozzie Horton, and Chuck Baker. North Surrey Gospel Chapel has commended workers to Germany and

Ecuador. About 70 adults and children are in the assembly.

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In 1955, a group of the younger generation at Central Park Gospel Hall commenced a testimony in an area about four miles away in the Cascade-Renfrew area of Vancouver. A bus had been hired to bring children to the Central Park Sunday School from that area. Central Park purchased a lot at 25th and Boundary Road and moved an army barrack there in 1953. John Stewart, P.W. Shatford, Fen Dorozio, and Tom McKenzie carried on a Sunday School work there for two years. The good results induced the workers to begin the Cascade Gospel Chapel, with the blessings of Central Park. Those involved in the formation of this work, besides the faithful Sunday School workers, were John Schoberg and John McLellan, with Gerald Ballard, Bill Rolston, and Jim Riller.

In 1966, three nearby lots were purchased, and in 1974, the believers moved into their new building. Others in leadership include Murray McConnell, Norm Marshall, Rob Wright, Peter Gerbrandt, John Hussey, Jim Tang, Scott Banford, Ron Edgecombe, Duncan Hay, Jonathan Lee, and Ian McDouall.

Missionaries have been commended to Argentina and Quebec. Ian and Eleanor McDouall have been commended to full-time work at Cascade Gospel Chapel. About 125 adults and children are in the assembly.

* * *

Hollyburn Christian Fellowship in West Vancouver began as Hollyburn Chapel in 1923. Those who began the

assembly are not remembered. It has always been at 1403 Duchess Avenue. Derek Muller, Ed Worrall, and Alan Morton are among those who have assumed leadership. About 65 adults and children are in Hollyburn Christian Fellowship, which has commended workers to Mexico.

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Mr. and Mrs. Edward Billingham lived in the Carleton area and helped begin a Sunday School work nearby in a rented store in 1932. A series of gospel meetings was held there in 1934. Those most involved at the beginning were Charles Steele, Gaius Bell,Basil Boyd, Harry Steele, Alan Adamson, and several sisters. Later a Gospel Hall was built in that district and the Carleton Assembly was formed in 1966, meeting at 45th and Tyne.

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Other assemblies in Vancouver in the 1950s were the 24th Avenue Gospel Hall and the Parkway Assembly, which occupied rented quarters in the down town area near Stanley Park on West Georgia Street. The Knight Road Assembly at 26th and Knight Road had about 100 believers in 1954.

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The assemblies in the Greater Vancouver area had increased to 36 by 1950. In that year, it was estimated that the inclusive membership of the approximately 60 ‘open’ assemblies in British Columbia was 5000.

Many assemblies in the Vancouver and Victoria areas have historically cooperated in a variety of areas such as summer camps, open-air meetings, senior citizen

housing, Easter conferences, sports teams, parachurch organizations, and commendation of missionaries. Several assemblies had ‘Mary & Martha’ groups of women; like Martha, they would make and provide clothing for missionaries; like Mary, they would have Bible studies. The assemblies have commended a multitude of workers to locations throughout the world, as well as to local ministries.

## Other Areas of British Columbia

A small assembly at White Rock, south of Vancouver and near the Washington state line, began in the early 1950s, and built the Hill Top Gospel Chapel, which continues.

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The work that developed into the assembly now meeting at Langley Gospel Hall southeast of Vancouver began around 1911 in the home of the pioneer farming family of William Brown. The Browns had immigrated from Plymouth, England. The Browns soon began a Sunday School in their home. In 1912, the evangelists J.J. Rouse and Charles Summers pitched a Gospel tent in the Langley community. Following those meetings, a company of Christians began to Remember the Lord in the Brown’s home; this was the beginning of the Langley asssembly.

The Langley Gospel Hall was built on the Brown farm property in 1931 and moved to its present location at 4775 221st Street, Langley, in 1970. It was enlarged in the 1990s. Besides the Browns, J.J. Rouse, and Charles Summers, those involved in the start-up of the assembly were the Willox, Mercer, and Ritchie families.

Leadership over the years has been provided by William Brown, S.E. Matthews, Jim Larsen, S. McKillop, J. Holgate, Philip Toogood, G. Lichti, and J. Ken Foote, and more recently David Chesney, William Hague, and Gerald Hutchinson. About 75 adults and children, representing 16 different nationalities, attend Langley Gospel Hall. The assembly has commended and co-commended workers to The Netherlands, Newfoundland, and Japan.

* * *

A small group of believers living in the Abbotsford area, southeast of Langley, were meeting in the home of William Brown in Langley. One of them was John Rae, who was postmaster for the town of Abbotsford. He was able to obtain a room above the post office, where the Christians in the Abbotsford area first gathered as an assembly in 1921. The fellowship included the Anderson, Vertch, Sparrow, McKie, Adams, McKay, Hyde, Higginson, John Rae, and Ed McPhail families.

In 1922, a small building was built on the site of the present Fraser Valley Inn, but as the town grew, this building had to give way to commercial development. Land was obtained in 1926 on Mission Highway and the Abbotsford Gospel Hall was built. The first series of Gospel meetings at the hall was in 1927, with Herb Harris and Charles Summers preaching, at which many professed salvation and joined the assembly. Mr. Harris held Bible readings in the McPhail home to instruct the new believers. Evangelist David Scott came the next year to help in the assembly, and Hector Alves and Arthur Rae followed in subsequent years with tent meetings in the area.

In 1952, a new hall was built on Old Yale Road. After that the assembly relocated to Gladwin Road when additional parking space was required, and then to Parkview Road, where the assembly took its current name Parkview Gospel Hall. Leadership in the assembly has been provided by Messrs. Emmans, Fadden, Fifer, Moore, Styles, and Barber in the earlier days, and more recently Bruce Fadden, Jim Larson, Elton Krenzler, and John Lightfoot.

Parkview Gospel Hall and its antecedents have commended missionaries to The Netherlands, Zambia, Newfoundland, and Dominica. About 50 adults and youngsters are in the assembly at present.

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The Clearbrook Assembly of Christians started in 1986, meeting in various homes in the Abbotsford area. In the 1990s, they acquired a basement suite in the Cedar Park Mall and took the name Cedar Park Christian Fellowship. James McFarlan, Dave Peters, Bob Styles, and Jerry Lichti were instrumental in starting the Clearbrook Assembly, which was not a hive-off from another assembly. The elders have been Will Dawes, Jerry Lichti, Fred Greer, and Earl McPhail. About 25 adults and youngsters are in Cedar Park Christian Fellowship.

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About 35 miles east of Vancouver is the Aldergrove Gospel Hall in Aberdeen, where the work was developed through the efforts of Mun Hope and others.

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Penticton is at the lower end of Okanogan Lake, about 240 miles east of Vancouver. There an assembly of 60 believers was centrally located in Central Gospel Chapel in 1954. In the late 1970s, the assembly relocated to 120 Preston Avenue and took the name Preston Avenue Bible Chapel. Thirty miles above Okanogan Lake is Westbank, a little community which has two assemblies, each with its own hall, both in existence for many years. A small assembly in the city of Kamloops met in a home in 1954, but lasted only a while. However, in the early 1980s, two assemblies developed in Kamloops and continue. About 140 miles east of Kamloops is Revelstoke, where until 1953 a small assembly met in the home of Fred Woodland.

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In the southeastern section of British Columbia, about 350 miles from Vancouver and close to the Washington state border, were three assemblies. At Castlegar, the assembly of about 30 built the 5th and Elm Gospel Hall in 1954. In this mining and smelting area, older assemblies were at the towns of Trail and Rossland. The assembly at Trail had a new building in 1954, Bethany Chapel, seating 120 in the main auditorium. The assembly at Rossland, a mountain city of 5000, rented the main floor of a three story building on one of the principal corners of the city during the 1940s. The building had been used as a dance hall, a store, and a miniature golf course. The assembly purchased the building and remodeled it to provide an auditorium seating 200, and other rooms. B. P. Sutherland was one of the leaders at the Rossland Gospel Hall later called Rossland Gospel Chapel. All three of these assemblies have disbanded.

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To Prince George, 500 miles north of Vancouver, came E. C. Clogg in 1950, transferred from Penticton by the Hudson Bay Company. The following year the Bank of Montreal transferred John Phillips from Nanaimo to Prince George, and these two assembly families soon met.

When John Phillips' father, Leonard Phillips, arrived from England to visit in August 1951, the families began Breaking Bread. Contact was made with other Christians, and in 1954 the assembly, with 15 to 20 in fellowship and 30 to 40 at its ministry and Gospel meetings, moved into a rented Scout's hall in South Fort George. At that time, the assembly was largely under the leadership of Cecil Carter and John Phillips. Prince George was a rough lumbering town and the small assembly naturally had a variety of members; they were, however intense and dedicated. Sometime after 1955, the Christians erected their own Prince George Gospel Chapel.

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Kelly Road Gospel Chapel in Prince George began in 1980, a hive-off from the Prince George Gospel Chapel. The Haws, Shatford, Phillips, and Singh families started the new assembly. C.W. Haws and P.W. Shatford have been the elders. About 60 people are in the assembly, which has sent three couples to the mission field.

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When the William McCullough family, then in fellowship at Michigan Heights Gospel Hall in Powell River, north of Vancouver, moved in the 1960s to Terrace, not far

from the southern edge of Alaska, only one lady of assembly background lived in the town. The McCulloughs began a Sunday School in their home for about a year, then when numbers increased, moved it to a nearby school. The Dick Vantol family came in 1966 from West Richmond Gospel Hall in the Vancouver area.

The construction of Terrace Gospel Hall began in 1966, and the first assembly meeting took place there in April 1967. Thomas Hay, John Abernathy, William McCullough, and Dick Vantol were those who initiated the assembly. In 1968, Melvin Reid and family joined the assembly and shared in the responsibilities. Thomas Hay and John Abernathy held Gospel meetings in a school in Terrace in 1967, helped by William Funston of the West Richmond assembly. William McCullough and Dick Vantol have shared leadership. At its largest, the assembly had 32 in fellowship and 75 in the Sunday School. Since then, the Reids and Vantols returned to Vancouver and others were transferred out. Terrace Gospel Hall today has about 30 people.

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Letters of Interest, May 1950, p. 7; October 1954, p. 9; June 1945, p. 15

## Yukon

Lying almost within the Arctic Circle is the little town of Dawson, the center of many gold mining operations. Scattered up and down the Klondike Valley and along the gold-bearing creeks are still some camps and the workings of men who have sought the precious metal ever since the big strike on Bonanza Creek in the hectic rush of 1898.

In and around Dawson and up and down the Yukon are native Indians and trappers. Until after World War II, these people were quite neglected as far as hearing the Gospel is concerned.

To these regions Charles O. Bowen was directed of the Lord to preach the good news concerning Jesus Christ. Some were saved, and a vigorous little Dawson Assembly was born, ministering to both natives and ‘sourdoughs.’

In June 1951, the assembly in Dawson opened a branch work among the natives, where a good Sunday school and Gospel work was carried on in a native chapel set aside for use by the Indians.

Mr. Bowen also visited the camps during the short summer season as well as the individual miner in his cabin. He also broadcast the Gospel message over the air twice a week to all who lived in this area.

Sources:

Letters of Interest, June 1952, p.12

## Canada – Plains Provinces

In this section we discuss assemblies in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

### Alberta

J.J. Rouse ministered in Edmonton in the years 1903 to 1905. His biography mentions that an assembly of about 30 people commenced in that city in 1905. This may be the earliest assembly in Alberta. In the early 1900s, four assemblies came into being in Edmonton – the Boyle Street Assembly, the Norwood Assembly, the 97th Street Hall, and the YMCA Assembly, Edmonton, AB . The latter met at the YMCA under the leadership of Mr. Tom Cooper.

The Norwood Assembly was begun around 1926 by William Cummings along with several others including J. Thompson, S. McCaughey, and A. Tandy. It was a store-front operation in an old building and about 40 in fellowship. The Norwood, Boyle Street, YMCA, and 97th Street assemblies had little interaction with one another. However, in October 1933, a young man from Vancouver – Albert McLaren – began to hold Gospel services nightly in the 97th Street Hall; there were many conversions and William Cummings heard about it. He took his four sons to those meetings and they were all converted at that time. William Cummings had vowed to the Lord that wherever his boys were saved, there he would fellowship. When he broke this news to the Christians at Norwood, they said ‘if you go, we all go,’ with the result that in a matter of a few months all of the Edmonton assemblies merged at the 97th Street Hall, with

approximately 125 in fellowship at the time. Some of the surnames of the brethren from these early days were Gregory, Herbert, Magee, Majas, Maskell, Rutley, Smalley, Stephenson, Sydney, Twittey, and Willoughby.

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Most of the converts at the McLaren campaign were young people (about 75) and for several years things went well at the 97th Street Hall, with lots of activity. In different parts of the city people opened their homes for children's services – Richard and Rose McCullough and the John Sutherlands in the north end, and Archie Gibson and his wife in the west end – and these fed young people into the assembly. About 200 were in the assembly at its peak, and yearly conferences were well attended by people from outlying areas.

In the early 1940s, some of the younger people at 97th Street Hall began a Sunday School in the Norwood area of Edmonton in a rented Masonic hall. This grew to the point that in 1945 plans were made to erect a suitable building in the area. S. McCaughey donated a corner lot at 95 Street and 115 Avenue. The children's work moved into it, and a Sunday evening Gospel service was started. This was the beginning of Bethel Gospel Chapel in Edmonton.

The building was used for a year or more before the assembly there was formed in about July 1947. The people who contributed to the building and became the first elders were Ben Finch, Eric Greenhalgh, George Smyth, Louis Mix, Jim McMahon, Cy Blair, George Paul, Sam McCaughey, William Cummings, and Stan Cummings.

Within about 15 years two additions were made to the building and it was the hub of many activities. The number of members at Bethel never exceeded about 200, partly because several other assemblies hived off from it as the city grew.

In 1959, the 97th Street Hall was sold and the remaining flock migrated to Bethel Gospel Chapel and to Conner's Hill Gospel Hall in Edmonton, where Alston King has been a leading brother.

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Believers exercised about a Gospel outreach work in south Edmonton worked of one accord in the purchase of a lot and the subsequent erection of a building with 'army hut' materials. Thus the South Edmonton Children's Mission was begun. Miss Eva Russell and Miss Ruby Murphy (later Mrs. Walter Christie) were leaders in reaching the children of the community, many of whom attended nearby schools. Weekly Bible classes and hobby crafts were used to introduce the children, and ultimately their families, to the Gospel. Later, David Gaunt and Olive Russell, while still attending Bethel Gospel Chapel, took charge of the mission work and attracted capable helpers.

By 1954, many young believers began migrating into the city, with a resulting large increase in fellowship at Bethel Gospel Chapel, which then became filled to capacity. The seed was planted amid the workers of the South Edmonton Children's Mission to begin an assembly using their building as a meeting place.

An exploratory meeting was convened by those interested. representatives from Bethel Gospel Chapel and the 97th Street Hall were invited to attend. Ben

Finch of Bethel and Norman Relf from the Gospel Hall were present. Brethren from the mission were David Gaunt, Len Helmers, Sam Kiffiak, Ted Matthews, and Kelly Siple. This meeting resulted in the decision to proceed with the formation of a new assembly in harmony and fellowship with believers of the two established assemblies in Edmonton. The Mission building was renamed Sharon Gospel Chapel, and the first meeting of the new assembly took place in February 1955, with 13 believers gathered to Remember the Lord.

Rapid growth over the next two years made the chapel inadequate. The old building was sold and removed, and a new building with a seating capacity of 90 was erected on the same site and completed in August 1958. An addition was constructed later, which added 30 seats.

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Capilano Christian Assembly in Edmonton began in the summer of 1978. Meetings were held initially in facilities rented from a Lutheran church in southeast Edmonton, with services on Sunday afternoons. By the end of the year, space in Mount Carmel Bible School was being used for both Sunday morning and evening meetings. The assembly continued to use the space at Mount Carmel until 1994 when, needing more room, they began renting space in the Korean Presbyterian Church.

Capilano Christian Assembly was not a hive-off from another assembly, though it had the blessings and encouragement of other area assemblies. Roger Gurnett, Robert Taylor, and William Gurnett were the principal people starting the assembly. They were full-time commended workers who were also involved in the Mount Carmel Bible School. Other leadership has been

from Bob Shorten and Ted McKellar. Many of those in fellowship have been students at the Bible School or young people who came to Edmonton from Ontario to work. Capilano Christian Assembly has co-commended workers to the mission field in Zaire, and now numbers about 230 adults and children.

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During the mid 1930s, a Wednesday Night Bible Study Class was begun in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Archie Gibson in the west part of Edmonton, with 80 children initially attending. In winter, benches stored on the front porch were brought in to thaw and have the ice chipped away, in time for each class. Every suitable room in the house was used as a classroom; teachers from the 97th Street Hall assisted. Some of these teachers were William and Marjorie Cummings, Mary Getty, Eleanor Latta, Edson Marshall, Mr. McGregor, Eileen Morrow, Annie Russell, Grace Waterston, and Edina Young. In addition to the Bible study, missionary reports and social activities were common in the group.

After several years an assembly came into being and a quonset hut was rented for its meetings. The assembly is considered a hive-off from the 97th Street Hall and Bethel Gospel Chapel of Edmonton. Those involved in the start of the assembly include the families of Archie Gibson, Edson Marshal, George Kerr, Herb McNab, Van Steinberg, Jim McMahon, and the Benners. The believers eventually bought the property where the quonset hut was located, and built Westgrove Gospel Hall, which opened its doors in February of 1961 and continues in use. In the 1970s, the name was changed to Westgrove Gospel Chapel. Others in leadership over the

years have been Horace Ekins, Wilf Fletcher, Vern Eskildsen, Phil Townshend, Hector Marois, Tom Thomas, Tony Turner, and Marvin Hess. About 130 adults and children attend Westgrove Gospel Chapel.

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A group of believers hived-off from Bethel Gospel Chapel and began to meet in north Edmonton as the Belmont Gospel Chapel, which later disbanded when some of the flock migrated to Wyecliff Bible Chapel in Sherwood Park just east of Edmonton, and others returned to Bethel Gospel Chapel. Subsequently, a group again left Bethel Gospel Chapel and met in Dickensfield in north central Edmonton. Later, as the Clairview Bible Church, the group moved to their present location in the Clairview area of northeast Edmonton.

* * *

Wyecliff Bible Chapel in Sherwood Park began in 1966, when three families, one from Belmont Gospel Chapel and two from Bethel Gospel Chapel, decided to form a new assembly. These were the Ron Reyburn, Herb Schindelka, and Sid Tordoff families. The assembly has commended three workers to the Lord's service oversees, and three to local work. About 150 adults and children attend Wyecliff Bible Chapel.

* * *

Around 1979 a group of believers in Edmonton began meeting in Keheewin School to Remember the Lord; they held ministry meetings in the George Arnold home. Other families involved were those of Wally and Wilf Fletcher, K. Joseph, Max Lavoie, and Phil Walton. As many as 60 people, including children, attended

Southgate Christian Brethren Assembly in Edmonton at one point. However, in about 1984 the group closed its doors due to the departure of most of the flock.

* * *

A group of believers withdrew from fellowship at Sharon Gospel Chapel in 1992 and along with new converts assembled as the Open Bible Fellowship in the Millwoods area of south Edmonton, under the ministry of Mr. Murdy Getty, a well-known and well-loved evangelist. For much of his life Mr. Getty had brought the Word of God to a multitude of the unsaved in Canada, Alaska, the Yukon, and preached in many assemblies across Canada and the USA. Meeting initially in the Getty home, the believers subsequently moved to a rented location when Mr. Getty's health deteriorated. Though blind he continued to minister to the believers of the Open Bible Fellowship from the whole of the Word, which he had committed to memory at the onset of his loss of sight. Between weekly meetings he continued, with dedicated helpers, in his life-long work as an itinerant preacher of the Gospel. After his passing, this group, though diminished in number, continued in rented quarters in the Millwoods area until the fall of 1997, when its doors finally closed.

* * *

Vermillion is a farming community east of Edmonton. From the 1920s to approximately 1982 several families enjoyed fellowship at the Vermillion Gospel Hall, hosting and participating in several Bible Conferences. Approximately 100, including children, were in the assembly at one point. The surnames of some of these

families were Anderson, Hilcox, Hill, Hutchinson, Mix, and Wilson.

* * *

The families of David and James Calderwood from Northern Ireland began Remembering the Lord in their homestead home near Pibroch, north of Edmonton, in 1907. They were joined by a few Christians who arrived in the area, and the assembly became known as the Pibroch Assembly. Gospel meetings by William Fairholm held in the Pibroch Community Church led to a revival in 1930 and 1931, with much growth in the assembly.

In 1948, the Christians built a chapel in nearby Westlock, a larger town north of Edmonton, and began meeting there as Westlock Gospel Chapel. The assembly built a new chapel in Westlock in 1995. Of the many people who have had leadership roles over the years, we mention the Calderwoods; William Fairholm, who had a great influence on the assembly from 1930 to the late 1980s; James Wallace; Nelson Letts; Daniel and Joseph Hendry Taylor; and later, Keith Bidne, Tim Gurnett, and Harold Lyons. Westlock Gospel Chapel and its predecessor have commended over a dozen workers to the Lord’s work abroad and several locally and to short term missions. About 250 people are in the assembly today.

* * *

In the area of Boyle, about 80 miles north of Edmonton, some Christians were gathering at the Cashe Creek and East Park schools during the late 1930s and into the early 1950s. Traveling preachers William Fairholm and John Sommercall helped in establishing the group as a New Testament assembly. At that time, the Sunday

Gospel service was moved to Boyle, and in 1959, the Boyle Gospel Chapel was constructed. Local individuals were V. Hutton, G. Ivey, E. Splane, H. Siem, and R. Remley. Others active in leadership have been Jim Pettifer, George Van Meer, Jergen Malmedal, Bob Nicol, Wray Naslund, Fred Splane, Murray Bateman, Ken Metcalfe, and Bob Splane. The assembly has joined in a commendation to the Lord's work in Angola. About 100 adults and youngsters attend Boyle Gospel Chapel.

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Neerlandia is a predominantly Dutch Christian Reformed Church community some 90 miles northeast of Edmonton. Three men – Messrs. Brandt, Hendricks, and Berend (Ben) Lievers – began an assembly there – the Neerlandia Gospel Hall – in about 1925 and met with their families in the home of Ben Lievers. An old store building was moved onto the farm site sometime later to accommodate the growing numbers. Finally (approximately 1960), due to the exodus of many of the families to assemblies in Edmonton and elsewhere, this assembly as such closed its doors. However the fruit of its work continues in its heritage, such as Bethel Bible Camp, which was inaugurated in conjunction with the Pibroch Assembly in 1945. A few faithful local believers and former residents hold a Daily Vacation Bible School for one week during each Spring school break in a local school building.

* * *

The assembly at Grimshaw Gospel Hall about 300 miles northwest of Edmonton was a small group consisting of the Nelson and MacDonald families and others, who met and carried on a work in the northern Alberta area. The

work ceased in the late 1970s. At the nearby town of Fairview, where the Nelsons and MacDonalds also worked, an assembly at Fairview Gospel Chapel met for many years, and disbanded in the 1980s.

* * *

Frank Williams was in the navy in World War I and came in contact with the assemblies on the island of Malta. In about 1930, he came to the Paradise Valley area, southeast of Edmonton, as a Canadian Pacific Railway settler. He saw an ad in an Edmonton paper – G.O. Benner was having meetings in the Gospel Hall. Mr. Williams wrote to Mr. Benner, asking him to come to the Paradise Valley area. Mr. Benner came, in part because his brothers Sidney and Henry lived there, and held Gospel meetings at Moyerton school. The area was very much Church of England at that time, but quite a few were saved through Mr. Benner's preaching. The Moyerton Assembly was started in about 1932.

In 1933 or 1934, Frank Flint was saved, and because winter travel was so difficult, a winter meeting place was established in his home. Both groups combined at Moyerton once a month. Also in these groups were the families of John Gaunt and James Steenson.

After John Gaunt and Henry Benner moved to Edmonton, the Moyerton meeting dissolved and the remaining people joined the group at the Frank Flint farm in about 1943. In 1944, the Christians built the Paradise Valley Gospel Hall three miles north of Paradise Valley – a one-room building. In 1980, the Hall was put onto a basement. This allowed a hobby class with a Bible lesson to be held after school through the winter. About 20 to 30 children attend these classes. At its largest, the

assembly had about 70 in fellowship, but now just 13. The assembly at Paradise Valley Gospel Hall has never had designated elders – all the brethren confer on assembly matters.

* * *

For many years, until the mid 1980s, weekend Bible Conferences were hosted by the Edmonton assemblies at Canadian Thanksgiving time in the Jubilee Auditorium in Edmonton, and subsequently in a North Edmonton High School. Attendance peaked at 850 souls on occasion.

* * *

In Calgary, the earliest assembly may have met at Calgary Gospel Hall, also called the Sixth Avenue Assembly because of its location at 6th Avenue and Centre Street. Some of the first brethren there were Jonah Reid, Sam Shannon, a Mr. Stinton, and a Mr. Webb. When the assembly disbanded and the building was sold, some of the Christians went to Bethany Chapel. The others relocated to the north side of the city and became known as North Hill Gospel Hall.

* * *

Bethany Chapel in Calgary hived off from the Sixth Avenue Assembly shortly after the war. As it expanded, services were moved to a nearby high school auditorium. In the late 1980s, a commodious building was put up and a young man from Vancouver, Gary Inrig, was appointed pastor. Under his ministry, numbers grew to 800 or 900. Mr. Inrig later moved to Dallas Seminary. Many of the existing assemblies in Calgary have derived from Bethany Chapel. The assemblies in Calgary hosted

conferences at Bethany Chapel for many years at Easter time.

* * *

West Hillhurst Gospel Hall in Calgary began in 1954 as a hive-off from the Sixth Avenue Assembly. Harry Woods and Henry Franzen were those who initiated the assembly. Leadership has been shared by these and David Speer, Dennis Broadhead, Charles Bradhead, Frank Hull, Bernie Daniels, Leland Conley, Jim Robinson, and Garry Seale. The assembly has commended Gordon Williams to the Lord's work in Canada. About 140 attend West Hillhurst Gospel Hall.

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In September 1979, two young couples – Dan and Ruth Styles, and Jim and Larissa Duffin – from the West Hillhurst Gospel Hall had an exercise to have children's meetings in a day care center. The day care was in a newer area of Calgary known as "The Properties." A good number of young people helped out. Since there was nothing that would particularly appeal to adults, the children were being dropped off and picked up an hour or so later.

The logical step was to arrange a meeting for adults, which was held upstairs in the day care center. While everyone sat around a table with coffee and doughnuts, a brother took up the Epistle to the Romans. A good interest was shown, and the numbers increased. Before long, the majority professed faith in Christ and the primary emphasis switched from the Gospel to teaching.

Shortly after, a good number of those saved were baptized and received into fellowship at West Hillhurst.

As others from the area were saved, the group decided to form a new assembly in close association with the West Hillhurst Gospel Hall. The Styles', Duffins, and Frank and Bethel Hull were the primary leaders in forming the Properties Christian Assembly. In March 1981, the little group Remembered the Lord for the first time in the day care center where quite a few of them had heard the Gospel and had come to Christ.

After a couple of years, the day care facility was too small, so the assembly moved to a spacious local community center where they were able to host conferences from time to time. Many supported the work with their presence and a number of the Lord's servants came from time to time to minister the Word.

In 1994, the new board of the community center doubled the rent, so the Christians moved into the board rooms of the Calgary Construction Association at an attractive rate. They remained there four years. At both places, meetings could be held only on Sundays, so mid-week meetings were held in homes and at North Hill Gospel Hall in Calgary.

During the earlier years, baptisms were held in the West Hillhurst Gospel Hall, at North Hill Gospel Hall, in the canal that ran along side the north-south freeway, in the lagoon in downtown Calgary, and in a local indoor swimming pool which they would rent for an hour on Sunday afternoon.

The numbers at North Hill had been dwindling, and in the latter part of 1998 the Christians there offered the Hall to the Properties Christian Assembly. The final meeting of the assembly at the Association board room was in January 1999. The North Hill Gospel Hall was

renovated and the name changed to Northside Bible Fellowship in Calgary.

Others in active leadership since the early days have been Fen Dorozio, Dave Campbell, and Kevin Broadhead. The assembly has commended workers to the mission field. About 100 adults and youngsters are in Northside Bible Fellowship at present.

* * *

Red Deer is some 80 miles north of Calgary. The congregation which now meets at Balmoral Bible Chapel in Red Deer had its beginning there in 1930, when William M. Rae of Portland, OR held services in a tent pitched near the site of the present Valley Hotel. At the conclusion of these meetings, Mr. Rae decided to reside in Red Deer, and helped rent a hall for assembly meetings above the Stewart Brothers Implement Agency at 5009 - 49 Street. This location was called the Red Deer Gospel Hall. A full schedule of meetings was implemented from the start – Lord's Supper on Sunday mornings, Sunday Schools at noon, Gospel service on Sunday evenings, and several week-night meetings. Samuel Edwards and Walter Stinton were also involved with Mr. Rae in starting the assembly.

Less than a year later, the new assembly held its first Bible Conference, with 85 in attendance. In 1932, the Christians purchased a building at Ross Street and 48 Street, a site directly north of the present Balmoral City Hall. Later that year, the assembly incorporated, with trustees William Baines, Roderick J. Munro, and Samuel S. Edwards. Only 19 months later, the assembly took over a Nazarene church building 4801 - 48 Street. Financial assistance was provided by some of the

brethren at the Sixth Avenue Assembly in Calgary. The building was primitive by current standards – no water or sanitation facilities, and poor heating and ventilation. Speakers at the opening of the new Red Deer Gospel Hall in August 1933 came from Calgary, Granum, and Westlock. Leadership in the early days was supplied mainly by William Baines and Frank Graham in addition to those already mentioned.

Outside speakers at the assembly in the 1930s included Ernest Tatham, Fred Elliot, John Smart, C.O. Bowen, John Sommacal, and Albert Stephenson. Bill and Joan Clark were mainstays of the assembly in its early period up until World War II, when Bill Clark joined the army. The E.B. Godfrey family and the John Tomalty family moved to Red Deer in 1937 and became substantial helpers in the work at Red Deer Gospel Hall. Others who came during and after the war were the families of Jacob Huber, Ben Kits, and Len and Norma Tomalty. The William Gurnetts, who had been in full-time work at the Youngstown Gospel Chapel moved to Red Deer in 1966 and provided needed leadership.

Elders were recognized at that time: Jacob Huber, Allan Edwards, Bill Gurnett, Lewis Edwards, and Frank Graham. Many others have been elders since then. Of the many women who have been involved in leading and teaching youth programs over the years, mention may be made of Verna Tomalty, Barbara Gurnett, Mrs. Godfrey, Myrie Woods, Marjorie Straight, Judy Falk, Ruth Edwards, and Donna Roberts.

The assembly grew steadily and needed a larger building. In January 1971, a funeral chapel on a three-acre plot east of Red Deer was purchased. After many

alterations, it was opened in September 1971 as Balmoral Bible Chapel.

In 1972, the Gurnetts moved to Edmonton. The assembly felt they should have a full-time worker, and selected Terry B. Wiebe, who began in 1980. Students from Prairie Bible Institute became active in the assembly in 1982 and were a great help in speaking, teaching, and working with the youth. Balmoral Bible Chapel and its antecedents have commended many to the Lord's work in Africa, France, Belgium, Italy, India, Spain, and the Caribbean islands. Others have been commended to the home field. Bob Shorten and Fred Lane are full-time workers for the assembly. Over 250 attend Balmoral Bible Chapel today.

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The small town of Elnora is a few miles southeast of Red Deer. The Salem Christian Assembly near Elnora began in 1982 on the grounds of Salem Acres. John H. Adams and Ralph Brundage were those who initiated the work. John Adams, S. George Loney, H.Y. Pedersen, and David Broadhead have been the elders. About 20 adults and youngsters attend Salem Christian Assembly.

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Drumheller was a coal mining community northeast of Calgary in its early days. The assembly testimony there was established by immigrants from Scotland and Europe. Sam Shannon arrived in Drumheller around 1931, at which time an assembly was already meeting on Sundays in the Odd Fellows Hall. Bible studies were held during the week in private homes.

A.B. Hunter, a mine inspector, was one of the leading brothers in the early days, and when he was transferred to Edmonton, the meeting suffered. Those who remained felt they could no longer afford the rented faci1ities, but took possession of a small building in Newcastle, a miner's community west of the city.

Around 1940 the opportunity came up to purchase a building in Drumheller on West 3rd Ave. It was known in the community as the "Tin Hall" because of the sheet metal siding. The meeting place eventually took the name Drumheller Gospel Chapel. The brethren involved in the meeting were Sid Pike, Joe Dewar, Mr. Sanderlock, and Sam Shannon, forming a company of 15 or 20 along with their families, and more for special meetings by some who lived in surrounding communities.

The Pikes moved away in 1943, the Shannons in 1945, and the Dewars in 1946. Mr. Sanderlock continued on as best he could but there was talk of selling the building. When the coal mines closed down following World War II, people moved away. George Vansan arrived about then and faithfully carried on the work. The assembly disbanded in about 1990, but a Sunday School work continued for several more years.

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Granum is a ranching community southeast of Calgary. The Granum assembly was started by two brothers, Jim and Alec Calderwood, sometime after 1923. Jim had moved from the Westlock area to Granum to start farming. The Calderwood families had come from the assemblies in Northern Ireland and from the Presbyterian Church.

The assembly began in the Jim Calderwood house; then a small Jumbo Valley Hall was built on the corner of Alec Calderwood's farm. C.O. Bowen and Willy Wilson were instrumental in helping out in the early years. Mr. Joseph Doukes was also an important figure at Jumbo Valley Hall. The Granum assembly was discontinued around 1960 to 1965.

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Lethbridge is a small city southeast of Calgary. At one time, it had two assemblies – Lethbridge Gospel Hall and Lethbridge Gospel Chapel. The Gospel Chapel disbanded in the late 1970s, but the Gospel Hall, which was started by Mr. Silas Best in the 1940s, continued into the 1980s. Harry Frouse was a leading brother in the Gospel Hall. An assembly called The Good News Centre was begun in Lethbridge at the end of 1998, the result of the initiative of Stephen Kember.

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In the early 1900s, the Burdge, McKellar, Burkinshaw, and other families settled in an area known as Berry Creek, about 25 miles southwest of Youngstown, which is about 60 miles west of the border with Saskatchewan. Some of the homesteaders brought with them a real faith in God through Jesus Christ. By 1914, the Berry Creek Gospel Hall was built. Through the witness of the believers, and the Sunday meetings, many came to faith in Christ Jesus.

A few of the Christians had connections with the assemblies on the west coast. In those early years, a young man, John Smart, came to Alberta to work in the harvest. Archie McKellar was a farmer and an evangelist at heart, and used to reach out to areas around Berry

Creek, driving a horse and buggy in the 1920s. For some years he went about 20 miles east to another area called Crocus Plains. In the early 1930s, John Smart came back and with Archie McKellar held an evangelistic series at Crocus Plains that reached many for the Lord.

The drought and the depression of the 1930s caused many farmers to leave these areas, but Sunday meetings were carried on by local believers using the Crocus Plains school house, about 12 miles south of Youngstown. The William Gurnetts moved to Youngstown in 1953 from northern Ontario and worked to encourage the believers and reach others.

In 1959, a decision was made to purchase the Crocus Plains school house which was not being used as a school, and move it into Youngstown. The Berry Creek Gospel Hall was closed then. Sunday meetings were begun at the Youngstown Gospel Chapel in 1960 and have continued. The Youngstown Chapel has been enlarged several times to accommodate the numbers.

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The Coleman Christian Assembly in southern Alberta was started in 1958 by Cy Bryant and Bob Woods in 1958, and continues. An outreach of the assembly is Crowsnest Camp, a Bible camp for children.

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In the Michichi area of Alberta, approximately 20 miles northeast of Drumheller, a group of believers began home meetings in about 1912, and later met in the Sunbeam school building. In the formative years, the families of Joe Blair, Doug Griffin, Bob Hunter, and Dave Johnston attended, along with John Watt who came 18

miles by horse and buggy once a month to fellowship with his brothers and sisters in Christ.

In 1925, Bob Hunter commenced a Sunday School work, with William Campbell and Mrs. Adams helping with the classes. Later, the assembly began meeting in the Starland School building as the Starland Gospel Hall in Michichi on Sundays for the Lord's Supper and Sunday School, and an evening Gospel service. As many as 90 worshippers were in attendance, with some coming from as far as seven miles away.

The surnames of others who enjoyed fellowship at the Starland Gospel Hall throughout the years were Elliott, French, Gosling, Halbert, Jensen, Johnston, Jolson, Kingcott, Long, and Phillips. Lena Beath, after teaching locally for three years, went as a missionary to Angola where she remained for eight years.

In the late 1950s, the public school was closed, whereupon the assembly bought the school building and continued to meet there until the mid 1970s, when it finally closed its doors after most of the flock had moved away from the region.

Sources:

Questionnaire responses and other correspondence

A History of Balmoral Bible Chapel, Red Deer, by Lewis Edwards, 1999

## Saskatchewan

Taylorside is a country farm district west of Melfort, which is 100 miles northeast of Saskatoon. The assembly now meeting at Taylorside Gospel Hall had its start in 1902 when Herbert and Hannah Taylor moved from

Ontario to the area to begin homesteading. They had been raised Anglican, had been saved in Gospel tent meetings, and had come into fellowship at Deer Lake Gospel Hall in Ontario. Herbert and his two brothers started the assembly, which met initially in the Herbert Taylor log house. In 1908, the Christians built Taylorside Gospel Hall in the area named for the Taylors. Those in leadership have been several of the extended Taylor family, including Jim Foy, Robson Bertram, Roland Seale, and Clifford Paul. The assembly has had a three-day Conference each year since 1936, and has an annual Easter Youth Conference. Many have been saved through the evening Gospel meetings of the assembly, which numbers over 100 today.

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An assembly in Moose Jaw was first listed in the 1908 edition of the city directory. Located at 228 Fairford Street West, the Moose Jaw Gospel Hall was registered in the name of William M. Rae, an itinerant evangelist from Portland, OR. Though the founders of the assembly are not remembered, Mr. Rae is undoubtedly one of them. Early members were Walter Little, Sr., John Campbell Kinloch and his wife Annie, Andrew and Sarah Snowdy, and Mrs. Mary Barley.

In 1911, three Hollands brothers – Charles, Archibald, and Frank – arrived from England. Charles and Archibald and their families played a large part in the assembly for many years. Others at that time were Mrs. Joseph (Brigitta) Lett and her daughter Bertha, Miss Margaret G. Rose, and the Eustace Godfrey family. Most of these had brethren backgrounds.

The Moose Jaw Gospel Hall remained in rented quarters on Fairford until 1935 at which time the assembly moved to the Maybee Block at 121 High Street West. A year later they moved to 124 First Avenue North West. Following World War II, an airport barracks was purchased and moved onto the foundation prepared at 68 Stadacona Street West. In 1949, a chapel was built at that location, and called Stadacona Gospel Chapel.

In addition to those mentioned, active leadership has been provided by William and Mary Wilson, Robert (Sr.) and Mary Farquhar, William and Florence Farquhar, James and Alice Miller, A.L. Stewart, Mrs. Christina Kjarsgaard, Mrs. Leila Coates, Duncan Murray, John and Mrs. Wallace, Ronald Moffit, James Diamond, Marvin Dyck, Stephen Bramer, Bruce Fisk, and John and Karen McCubbing. Mr. McCubbing is the sole elder at present.

Among the many ministries of this assembly of Christians was “Salem Hall,” a children’s outreach begun by Stanley Wells and continued by William and Florence Farquhar. A number of the sisters went out each week for many years to minister to the residents at Valley View Centre, a facility for the mentally handicapped. During the war, a weekly Gospel radio program was conducted, with messages brought by Stanley Wells, Charles Hollands, and William Farquhar, with occasional guest speakers and with music supplied by members of the assembly. Street corner meetings were held into the late 1940s. A puppet ministry under the direction of Mrs. Karen McCubbing has been presented at assemblies throughout the province and at other evangelical churches. The Strasbourg Bible Camp was started in 1938 with the co-operation of the

assemblies at Strasbourg, Moose Jaw, Regina, and Saskatoon.

Stadacona Gospel Chapel has about 50 adults and children in attendance, and has commended missionaries to the Belgian Congo, India, Colombia, Austria, and to various ministries in the U.S. and Canada.

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The assembly at Fairhaven Bible Chapel in Saskatoon was begun in about 1912 by brethren immigrating from England, Scotland, and Ireland. Meeting initially in rented quarters, the Christians in 1914 built Hebron Hall, a small building at Avenue C and 25th Street. A year later, this building was moved to Avenue B and 25th Street, enlarged, and renamed Hebron Gospel Hall. It was often called the Saskatoon Gospel Hall. Those active in leadership from the early days include J. Paxton, W. Marlow, R. Hawkins, W. Wilson, B. Tansley, and A. Matley.

In 1968, the building name was changed to Grace Gospel Chapel. When the area became industrial and families began moving elsewhere, the believers decided to relocate. In 1979, the building was sold and Fairhaven Bible Chapel was built in the Fairhaven district of Saskatoon. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord’s service in France, Quebec, and Saskatchewan. Fairhaven Bible Chapel has an attendance of about 50, down from about 100 in the 1960s.

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For several years beginning in the 1980s, James Ronald and his wife and family visited door-to-door in their neighborhood of Saskatoon, making contacts, having children's meetings, and starting summer and winter camps. Many of the children attending these camps came from broken homes. An assembly was begun in the early 1990s, meeting in rented space in an elementary school on Sundays and in the Ronald's home for midweek prayer and Bible studies. A renovated school bus was used to pick up children for the children's meetings.

As numbers increased, land was purchased, and with the help of two brothers from Ontario, the Lawson Heights Gospel Hall was constructed at 131 La Ronge Road, Saskatoon in 1995. The assembly has been of great help to area university, college, and nursing students. A two-day conference was held in November 1999, with many young people present.

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The small town of Arborfield lies at the northern part of the farming area of Saskatchewan, toward the eastern side of the Province. It was to that district in early 1921 that Fleming May and Eddie Morton came with the Gospel message. These first meetings were held in the farm home of Will and Nellie Miller. Later Gospel meetings were held in the farm home of Frank and Annie Cummings at Old Arborfield, and also in a rented Orange Hall northwest of Arborfield. Then in the summer of 1922, a Mr. Farmer came for more meetings. Through these meetings, a number of souls were saved, believers taught, and several were baptized. Later in 1922, those saved met in the Miller's home to

Remember the Lord in His death. These were Dave and Edith Lloyd, Henry and Bell Cummings, Albert Cummings, Angus and Annie Miller, Will and Nellie Miller, Mrs. Allport, and Bob and Gladys Melrose. The assembly held the first of its annual Bible Conferences in the early 1930s. A canvas tent was used for the meetings, and meals were served in the vacant Viceroy Cafe.

Mrs. Dafoe's house, across the road from the Millers, was renovated and served as the meeting place until about 1929, when the Arborfield Gospel Hall was built in the town. For many years, the hall was also used as a school classroom for grades six to eight. In 1980, a larger hall was built on the same location.

Many of the pioneer evangelists were faithful to come to that out-of-the way area of Arborfield and build up the assembly, which continues today with nearly 50 coming to the meetings. After a lapse of some years, the assembly resumed holding annual Conferences in 1993. Recent leaders in the meeting include Floyd Pickering and Wallace Miller.

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The small town of Maidstone is near the western boundary of Saskatchewan. The assembly at Maidstone Gospel Hall began in 1937 in the home of Howard Perry near the town, and derived in part from the Lashburn Assembly, which has since disbanded. C.F. Broadhead from England is credited with starting the assembly, and he along with Howard Perry, W. Broadhead, S.J. Foster, Dick Robertson, and Harry McLaren have been the leaders. Now at the corner of Main Street and 4th

Avenue W, Maidstone Gospel Hall consists of eight adults and five children.

Sources:

Questionnaire responses and other correspondence

God's Dealings in His Matchless Love & Grace in the Arborfield District, by Vernon Cummings, 1993

Letters of Interest, February 1980, p. 16

## Manitoba

The majority of assemblies in Manitoba were the result of efforts of early brethren who labored under tremendous hardships. Money was scarce, but they trusted God. Traveling was difficult, mostly by horse and buggy. They pioneered where there were no assemblies; they Broke Bread where they could. Souls to them were the most important business in the world.

J. Ronald went from town to town and house to house with printed and spoken messages. Robert McClurkin spent 20 years of his life pioneering on the prairies, living in The Pas in northern Manitoba and spreading the Gospel in the mining towns of Flin, Flon, Sheridan, and others. As did the others, he had often to supply the needs of his family with manual labor.

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The first of the assembly gatherings in Winnipeg, the capital of Manitoba, can trace its history back to about 1880, when settlers were arriving from Europe. A group met when convenient on the banks of the Red River near where the present Louise Bridge stands. Around 1880 this group met as an assembly at the Winnipeg Gospel Hall at 120 King Street. Donald Munro, Donald Ross,

and John Smith came often to encourage the saints and preach the Gospel there. A letter of Alex Marshall dated July 4, 1906, speaks of the Winnipeg Gospel Hall, then having nearly 100 in fellowship. In 1907 the Winnipeg assembly procured a larger hall on Main Street to accommodate its growth. Later, with the city enlarging and the gathering increasing, the brethren at Winnipeg Gospel Hall decided to divide into two assemblies that would better serve the gospel and the saints. The West End Gospel Hall then commenced in an area where most of the Christians were living. A second assembly was started to accommodate those in North end.

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Later, from these two assemblies, another group was formed in Winnipeg, probably in about 1918. This assembly met initially in the Liberal Club Hall on Main Street, then moved through several locations. The last temporary quarters were upstairs in the Icelandic Hall on Sargeant Avenue at McGee Street.

In 1928, the Christians purchased property at 603 Arlington Street, and also purchased the Chalmers Church building on Spruce Street and moved it onto the property. The building was renovated and named Ebenezer Gospel Hall. The elders at that time were T.M. McKay, J.H. Taylor, D.R. Ritchie, and W. Payne. Since then, elders have included James Gilmour, Albert Edgar, Geri Thomas, Cyril Taylor, Sam Okomoto, Dan Ritchie, Gerald Hayes, Andy Koropatnick, Lloyd Hayes, Glen Hayes, Ken Hayes, Ernie Schmidt, and Helmut Zimmermann.

In 1965, the assembly changed its name to Arlington Street Gospel Chapel. The assembly has had many forms

of youth outreach, and has commended several to the Lord's work in Japan, Belize, Zambia, the U.S., and Canada. About 70 adults and youngsters attend Arlington Street Gospel Chapel at this time.

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Another assembly in Winnipeg was founded by P.J. Rich, A.J. Browning, D. Donaldson, and C. Scarff. These men, with the help of others, conducted Gospel meetings and began a Sunday School for children in 1915. The first meeting for Breaking of Bread occurred in the fall of 1916 at the St. James Gospel Hall on Ferry Road. The assembly grew under the guidance of D. Bell, C. Evans, C. Roach, E. Williams, J. Taylor, and A.D. Lockhart.

In 1925, the assembly moved into new quarters at Inglewood and Ness Avenues, its present location. Sunday School enrollment grew to almost 400 in the early 1930s, with two sessions on Sunday afternoons. Youth activities have been an earmark of the assembly. In 1928, a basement was added. Bram Reed's meetings there in 1953 are remembered as an especial encouragement to the assembly. In 1961, the hall was completely renovated. A.C. Fear was in leadership in recent years and was an outstanding preacher, ministering throughout the area. The assembly continues today with the name St. James Gospel Chapel and has about 150 adults and children attending.

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In 1922 and 1923, a handful of brethren felt led of God to begin an evangelistic work in the St. Vital district of Winnipeg. In early summer of 1923, they erected a large tent at the corner of Berrydale Avenue and St. Mary's Road. Gospel meetings were held all through the

summer months. The response of the people in the area was great, so the brethren felt a chapel should be built and the work become a permanent one. A lot was donated by Mr. W. Robertson, and with the help and encouragement of brethren such as H.J. Munro, H.C. Scott, T. Kells, C.N. Pogue, and A. McInnis, Grace Chapel was completed and ready for occupancy in the winter of 1923.

From then until the present, this building has been expanded twice because of increased interest and attendance. In 1973, the building was removed from its foundation, a basement poured and the old building returned to its original place; wings were added to all sides. The building was finished in December 1973 and the dedication service was held in January 1974. Grace Chapel has had much involvement with the development of the work in Fortier.

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Maples Community Church in Winnipeg has its roots in outreach meetings begun in 1975 by Clem Wyke and Murray Taylor of Arlington Street Gospel Chapel in Winnipeg. The assembly began in 1977, meeting then, as now, at James Nisbet Community School. Several elders have served the church, in addition to those mentioned. Maples Community Church has commended a family to serve with HCJB in Quito, Ecuador, and has about 130 adults and youngsters in attendance. In 1999, the Christians began construction of a new building for the assembly at 1640 Leila Avenue.

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Fortier is a small town between Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie. Albert R. Stephenson and David Bell held Gospel

meetings in the area in the late 1920s and saw interest and blessing. A weekly meeting was continued by Winnipeg brethren. In 1929, an assembly began in the Fortier/Oakville area, started by H.J. Munro from Grace Chapel in Winnipeg. It had its first meetings in the home of a Mr. Houston. The Christians called their meeting place Fortier Gospel Hall and later Fortier Gospel Chapel. Those in leadership in the assembly over the years include Austin Burnett, Ed Rempel, Ben Rempel, and John Thornton. About 30 adults and children attend Fortier Gospel Chapel.

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Crescent Heights Chapel in Portage la Prairie began in 1980 at its present address of 1745 Saskatchewan Avenue West. A hive-off of the Fortier Gospel Chapel, it was started by persons living closer to Portage la Prairie. Those involved in the beginning of the assembly were the families of William A. Ronald, Ron Moffit, William Gilchrist, D. Garth Ronald, Morley McDonald, Helen Shapansky, N.M. Tilley, Randy Moffit, and Mabel Watson. The elders have been William A. Ronald, Ron Moffit, D. Garth Ronald, and Anthony Barone. About 75 attend Crescent Heights Chapel regularly. Crescent Heights has commended workers to the Lord’s service.

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In 1881, a young Richard Varder arrived in Winnipeg. He had a good knowledge of the Word of God and a strong desire to win souls. A carpenter by trade, he worked until he had accumulated a little money and then used it to carry the Gospel to surrounding towns. Selkirk, about 23 miles north of Winnipeg, especially

concerned him. Many of the pioneers and townspeople of Selkirk responded to the Gospel.

Mr. Varder's efforts and trials were rewarded in about 1886 by the planting of the Selkirk Assembly. From that company went out a number of brethren such as Brandow and Woods, around 1890, to pioneer the Gospel. The Selkirk annual Easter conferences were a feature of the assembly in its early days.

* * *

Richard Varder and Alfred Goff, both from England, were preaching as a team by 1890. Varder had been mentored by Robert Chapman and Henry Dyer, and Alfred Goff was saved under the preaching of Henry Craik. Chapman, Dyer, and Craik were friends and pioneers among the 'open' brethren in England, so the two young men had a common bond.

William Monkman was saved in 1890 at Gospel meetings conducted by Richard Varder and Alfred Goff in a home near Selkirk. He immediately invited the two preachers to come north to his district at Balsam Bay on Lake Winnipeg. They came and shortly eight more people professed salvation. These nine – Mr. and Mrs. William Monkman, Mr. and Mrs. John Flett, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Derby, and Mrs. John Rupert – were baptized in the waters of Lake Winnipeg by Richard Varder and established the Balsam Bay Assembly in June 1890.

The assembly met first in the Flett home, then the Derby home, and then in a local school house at Balsam Bay. This continued until 1910, when the Alex Anderson family moved further north to Victoria Beach. The assembly disbanded for five years until the Andersons

returned, and the Remembrance Meetings resumed in their home. George Brandow and Alex Monkman came often to Balsam Bay to preach, and others such as John Gunn of Winnipeg also preached there, but otherwise the only meetings of the assembly were the Remembrance Meetings held on Sunday mornings.

In the 1920s, other additions to the assembly included Norman Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. H.G. Thomas, and Harry Newman. Fifteen were in fellowship in January 1921. Messrs. Brandow and Monkman urged the start of a Bible study among the Christians, and this was done on Thursday evenings in the Anderson home and continued for many years.

In 1921, H.G. Thomas moved his family to Stoney Point, about seven miles south of Balsam Bay, and because travel to Balsam Bay was so difficult, it was agreed that a new Stoney Point Assembly would be started in the Thomas home. The two assemblies maintained a close relationship. Two ladies, Doris Treadway and Dorothy Thomas, one from each assembly, were active in door-to-door evangelism in the 1930s, resulting in the salvation of several who came into fellowship.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, several of the Stoney Point Christians moved to Victoria Beach and elsewhere; the Stoney Point Assembly merged with the Balsam Bay Assembly in 1948. With so many having moved to Victoria Beach, an assembly was begun there, and the Victoria Beach Chapel was constructed in 1950. In 1955, the Victoria Beach assembly was helping the small Loon Straits Assembly, 150 miles further up Lake Winnipeg at Loon Straits.

In 1956, the Balsam Bay group purchased a building and moved it onto property at nearby Grand Marais, calling their building the Grand Marais Gospel Chapel. At that point, there were three assemblies in the area: at Victoria Beach, at Grand Marais, and at nearby Beaconia where the Beaconia Assembly had recently started to gather. In time, meetings were held alternately at each of the three chapels because the Christians were so few and not enough at any one place to operate independently. So, in the late 1980s, the men of the assemblies located and purchased a central site with a building, which they call the Wayside Gospel Chapel near Beaconia. This became the meeting place for all the assembly people meeting in the area after the three assemblies in the area were dissolved. Leadership over the years has been provided by Alex Anderson, William Monkman, William Anderson, Harry Newman, Gordon Thomas, Peter Paulson, and John Thomas. About 60 people attend the Wayside Gospel Chapel today.

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The assembly at Ashfield Gospel Hall is the outgrowth of a work started across the river from Ashfield, in McDonald and St. Andrews, by men who pioneered north of Winnipeg about 1890. The meetings were held in a log house on the river bank where a godly old sister, “Aunt Kate” Mowat, lived. The Christians were known as the St. Andrews Assembly. The New Year’s Day conferences of those early days are remembered as special times. Adam McDonald was one of the leaders of the assembly. A letter of Alex Marshall written in 1906 speaks of the assembly at St. Andrews.

Since the river had to be crossed by boat in summer or by foot over the ice in winter, the assembly decided to build their Hall across the river at Ashfield as the older folk passed on and later converts made their homes at Ashfield. Here about 20 meet to Remember the Lord.

* * *

Among the early pioneers to Canada was John Rae, who arrived in 1884 from Scotland. Coming to Manitoba to farm, he began winning souls and before long was in full-time service for the Lord. He instructed those won and they began to Remember the Lord in a home in Portage La Prairie, 50 miles west of Winnipeg. After Mr. Rae moved to Brandon in 1888, this group met sporadically, coming together when a preacher was around. In 1904, evangelist Oliver C. Fish moved to Portage and a regularly meeting assembly was formed. The Christians met at that time in a house belonging to Mrs. Craik, on 5th Street N.W. As the group grew, they moved into a room above a tailor shop, then into the tailor shop when it became vacated. Among the stalwarts in the assembly at that time, Miss Matilda Craik, Mrs. Spence, and Mr. Bert Vanstone are remembered.

Around 1920, the assembly moved to the Review Building on Tupper Street North. For baptisms, the Christians went out to the Assiniboine River. The meeting attracted many of the better-known preachers and evangelists during this period, and the assembly was vigorous, with hearty singing and an active Sunday School at which many of the children were saved.

The Review Building was sold in early 1937, and the Christians met for a while in the Oddfellows' Hall. A

house on the corner of First Street and Lorne Avenue came up for a tax sale at about that time; the group bought the lot and tore down the house. They then contracted with Mr. Stewart, who had constructed the Winnipeg Gospel Hall to come build a Hall for them. The Portage La Prairie Gospel Hall was completed that year. The assembly grew and the Hall was later enlarged. The assembly has commended several couples to the foreign field, and a couple to the home front. Portage La Prairie Gospel Hall has about 100 in fellowship and 50 in the Sunday School at this time.

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When John Rae emigrated from Scotland, he settled first at High Bluff, near Portage la Prairie. In 1888, he moved to Brandon, 80 miles west of Portage la Prairie, and started a testimony in his home on Assiniboine Avenue. This was the origin of the Brandon Gospel Hall. Among that company were Miss Henry, Mr. and Mrs. William Turley, Mr. and Mrs. William White, and Miss Reid, all of whom had left the Salvation Army; and Mrs. John Calder who had been with the Presbyterians. In that same year, 1888, John Smith held Gospel meetings and saw a number saved, and some believers gathered to the Lord's name. Here it was that O.C. Fish, later an evangelist, was saved. Among those who visited Brandon at John Rae's invitation to preach the Gospel and instruct the saints were Donald Ross, Donald Munro, T. D. W. Muir, and Alex Matthews. The first conference sponsored by Brandon Gospel Hall was held in October 1889.

A letter written by John Rae in 1890 states that more than 30 were in the Brandon Gospel Hall. He mentions

five or six small gatherings in the nearby country districts, conversions among Cree Indians, and a new assembly testimony at West Selkirk.

The first meeting place for the assembly was located at 13th Street and Rosser Avenue. The Hall was on the main floor and the Rae family lived upstairs. The second meeting place was at 8th Street and Rosser Avenue, where the meetings were held on the second floor. In 1902, a Gospel Hall was built at 463 - 8th Street. The present Hall was completed in November 1976 at 1412 - 22nd Street. About 25 people attend the meeting today. Brandon Gospel Hall has commended several people full time to the Lord's work, including William Rae and Oliver C. Fish to ministry in the area, and other workers to Burundi and Zambia.

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Around the turn of the century some souls were saved and a testimony formed in the Minitonas district, over 200 miles north of Brandon, when William Rae, son of John Rae, preached the Gospel. Later, Messrs. May and Morton visited and strengthened the saints, and the Minitonas Gospel Hall was built. Conferences were held for a number of years. The next generation used a public address system to preach in surrounding towns and villages. In 1954, Messrs. Ronald and Boyle had five weeks of encouraging meetings in a nearby town, followed up by local brethren with weekly Gospel meetings. A new hall was ready in 1955 to allow for expansion of the Sunday school effort and other work.

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Mr. Gilbert Wastle had been praying that the Lord would send someone to preach the Gospel where he lived in

the Mayfield district near Portage la Prairie. During a hospital stay in 1929, he told this to a gentleman distributing Gospel literature at the Portage Hospital and a few months later a young man, Russel Ronald, paid a visit to the Wastle home. For two weeks Mr. Ronald visited the neighborhood and held Gospel services at the Mayfield Orange Hall and at the Valley Stream School. During the summer of 1930, two other young men from Portage la Prairie Gospel Hall, James Ronald and Samuel Ray, came to Mayfield, canvassed the neighborhood, and held Sunday afternoon services at the Valley Stream School, and in Sunday evenings did the same at Ellwood School.

They returned in the spring of 1931. When one of the neighbors was saved as a result, the men were encouraged to set up a tent that summer, which seated 100. Evangelists Herbert Harris from Orillia and Robert McCracken from Cleveland came as the Gospel preachers. The two men had meetings in the tent six nights a week for sixteen weeks, till the end of October, living in a little tent in the bush and cooking their meals over an open fire and carrying their water out of Pine Creek.

As the meetings continued, the numbers increased till the tent was full and the yard around the tent as well. Often from 200 to 300 people listened to the message. The local Christians knew they must provide a permanent facility to be used after the evangelists left, and built the Pine Creek Gospel Hall, located eight miles north of Austin, where Pine Creek crosses Highway #34, about 30 miles west of Portage la Prairie. About 50 persons were saved during that summer, and 32 were baptized in October in Pine Creek. The first

Remembrance meeting in the new hall was on November 1, 1931.

The next year more souls were saved when Robert Curry joined Mr. McCracken. A growing children's work eventually created the need for larger quarters, and a larger hall was built in 1963. Then in 1984, since most of the assembly Christians then lived nearer Austin, a lot was purchased there and the Austin Gospel Hall was built.

Early leadership of the assembly included Osborne Williams, John Lawford, and Ed Ainsworth. Later leadership includes Kyle Knox, Sam Williams, and Garth Knox. About 35 adults and children are in Austin Gospel Hall.

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In about 1900, a small Gospel Hall was erected at Roseisle, a small town south of Portage la Prairie, where for many years there was a thriving assembly, to whose summer conferences came many believers. The assembly at the Roseisle Gospel Hall continues today.

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Binscarth is a town near the western edge of Manitoba. The Binscarth Gospel Hall began there in 1968, the result of evangelistic campaigns in the district from 1961 to 1967, conducted by Robert Boyle of Brandon and James Ronald Sr. of Togo, Saskatchewan. These were assisted by Earl Ritchie, a public school teacher. In 1983, the Christians changed their name to Binscarth Christian Assembly. Leaders in the early years were Jack Woodhouse, Thomas Tibbatts, and Harvey Ronald. Elders since have been include Kevin Boucher, Don

Salyn, George Boucher, and Bruce McGregor. About 20 adults and children attend Binscarth Christian Assembly today.

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Letters of Interest, June 1955, p. 12

## Canada – Ontario

Since the first work in Ontario was at Parkhill and Forest, towns near the southern end of Lake Huron, we shall start there, then continue in the southwestern part of the province, proceed northeastward to Ottawa, then turn west and work our way through the northern reaches of Ontario.

The first brethren preacher who came to Ontario was Joseph M. Scriven, who wrote the much-loved hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." His grave can be seen at Bewdley, a village near Port Hope on Lake Ontario.

When the Dominion of Canada was only four years old, a small groups of believers began meeting to practice the principles taught in the Word of God. When Donald Munro first came to Ontario from Scotland in 1871, he visited his brothers in Parkhill and Forest, towns near the southern end of Lake Huron. A hall was rented in Parkhill and Mr. Munro preached the Gospel with blessing. His brother and sister-in-law were among those saved. From there he preached in Forest before returning to Scotland. When he returned to Canada in 1872 to stay, having learned of believer's baptism, he taught that and other New Testament truths.

At Parkhill, God worked further in the salvation of souls. A good number of believers gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus at Parkhill that year, 1872. The Parkhill Assembly was the first 'open brethren' assembly in Canada.[1] The following year, Gospel meetings were held again at Forest, and the Forest Assembly, ON was formed in that town.

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Through contacts made in Forest, Mr. Munro visited Lake Shore, five miles north of Forest, and preached the Gospel and church truths in the Congregational church. Its minister asked him to leave, so he went across the road to the Hugh Johnson farm and taught there. Mrs. Johnson and her mother-in-law and father-in-law were soon baptized by immersion in a creek, though it was late winter.

Breaking of Bread began in the Johnson home at the corner of 16th Concession and Lake Road that year, 1873. The Lake Shore Gospel Hall was built in about 1887 a mile up the road from the Johnson's. Fourteen believers from the Ravenwood area, saved under the ministry of the McDonalds, who were barn framers, were added to the 14 already in fellowship at that time.

In 1980 a new hall, still used, was built on the site of the old Congregational church from which Mr. Munro had been asked to leave. Tent meetings for preaching the Gospel have been held in the locality fairly regularly until recently.

Leaders over the years include William Beatty, Henry Hodgson, Herbert Rawlings, Robert Kersey, Kenneth Porter, and Victor Fuller. Lake Shore Gospel Hall has up to 75 in attendance now.

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Grace Bible Chapel in Parkhill started in the mid 1960s when a group of people began a Sunday School program in a Parkhill home. Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Fuller and Mr. and Mrs. Emerson Martin were the prime movers in establishing an assembly from this work. In 1968, the

Christians purchased land in the area and built their present chapel. Elders have been Carl Turnbull, Bruce Fuller, Phil Bruce, Clarence Martin, and Amos Martin. Several people from Grace Bible Chapel have been commended to the Lord's work in Canada. About 175 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

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George Wilson was saved as a young man in the work at Forest. He moved to Sarnia and helped establish the Sarnia Assembly in 1887, which met first in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson at 229 South Vidal Street. Later that same year, joined by John Smith who had recently made his first voyage to Canada, Mr. Munro held meetings at Stratford and Shakespeare amid much persecution, but God saved souls and two more new assemblies were planted.

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The town of Arkona is midway between Sarnia and London. There, the Arkona Bible Chapel started in 1974 and was known initially as Elim Gospel Hall. David Daley was a full-time worker in the assembly from 1975 through 1982. In 1991, some of the Christians at Arkona Bible Chapel formed the Maranatha Bible Fellowship and met in rented space. In late 1996, the leadership of the two assemblies began discussing a merger. After much prayer, this came about in 1997. The combined assembly occupied the former Arkona Bible Chapel, which was renamed Elim Bible Chapel. The new assembly has about 200 adults and children in attendance, with new converts and many baptisms.

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The Windsor Gospel Hall celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1991. One of the brethren who figured prominently in the formation of the assembly was William Lever. Born in Scotland, he moved to Canada in 1911 and came to Windsor in 1912. Knowing of no assembly in Windsor, he fellowshipped at Central Gospel Hall in Detroit. In 1916, he and a small company of Christians, most of whom were connected with that assembly, rented a hall in the Odd Fellow's Temple on Wyandotte Street East, just off Ouellette Avenue, to begin the work at Windsor Gospel Hall. The Christians at Central Gospel Hall continued their support of the Windsor assembly in the ensuing years.

Leaders from that time include J. Stevens, J.W. Russell, D. Ferguson, R.C.E. Young, Harry Gregg, John Craig, William Hynes, and Sebastian Polido, and more recently Raymond Fairley, Lawrence McLean, David Pratt, and Robert Wylie. The believers built the present Hall in 1927 at 644 Partington Avenue and called it Partington Road Gospel Hall. It continues as a testimony, now called Gospel Hall – 644 Partington Avenue. The assembly has commended a worker to ministry in Upper Michigan.

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In 1913, four young men who attended a Methodist church in Windsor – Bert Hall, Joe Hallett, Herbert Farnal, and Erwin Dresch (who later became a missionary to Mexicans living in Texas) – desired to Remember the Lord in a weekly service. They rented an apartment on Sandwich Street (now Riverside Drive) in Windsor for Bible studies and prayer. Others joined them and many came to new life in Christ. Over the years they

met in believers' homes and a rented store on Wyandotte Street. A commitment to the assembly character of the church precipitated the erection of a building on Pierre Avenue, which became known as Grace & Truth Gospel Hall.

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As the Grace & Truth assembly continued to grow, some of the Christians began a Sunday school work in the new South Walkerville subdivision. In 1926, outreach Gospel meetings and a Sunday school commenced in a little building built for that purpose on the corner of Turner and Lens in Windsor. The work grew, and in 1930 an assembly was formed at Turner Road Gospel Hall, at which 31 brothers and sisters from Grace & Truth Gospel Hall formed the nucleus.

Mr. and Mrs. Foggin left to serve the Lord in China after the first Lord's Day in Turner Road Gospel Hall. They were the first of many from Turner Road to serve as overseas missionaries, to China, Taiwan, Zaire, Zambia, Ecuador, Papua New Guinea, Liberia, and to ministries in Canada and the U.S.

The work prospered and soon larger quarters were needed. Land was purchased at the corner of Turner and Tecumseh Roads, which is still the location of the assembly. The new chapel was occupied in 1951. The assembly took the name Turner Road Gospel Chapel about then, and the Sunday Schools and adult Bible class were moved to Sunday mornings, from their previous Sunday afternoon times. Open-air meetings on Saturday nights and Sunday evenings were common. Boy's Clubs and Girl's Clubs were a feature of the assembly. Many of the younger people traveled to

Lapeer, Michigan to preach and sing on the radio broadcast that Mr. Lomax had each Friday night. Sunday School outreaches away from the assembly facilities were conducted by Jim Hendry, Ralph Greenhow, and Vic Kendall.

The Gospel Chapel facilities were expanded in 1976, and the name was shortened to Turner Road Chapel. Elders at Turner Road have included Jack Briggs, Ian Cameron, Jan Cizmanski, Dave Hernandez, Ron Hesman, Alex Hill, Milko Lamos, Cyril Lapsley, Don McFarlane, Ken Palmer, Jim Pitman, and Jerry Potma.

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In 1952, opportunity to help in evangelical work in the town of Harrow, south of Windsor, was given to the Turner Road Gospel Hall, and eventually Turner Road was asked to take over and establish the work on New Testament lines. Thus the Harrow Assembly began. Clifford Beggs, on furlough from Angola, helped establish that work. Many Portuguese families who worked on the farms in the Harrow area came to know Christ.

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Turner Road Gospel Chapel grew and many younger families living in the South Windsor area became exercised about planting an assembly there. In October 1964, about 10 families began a Sunday School in Glenwood Public School for 36 children, with 16 in an adult class. By the end of 1966 the group had grown to 62 children and 28 adults. Bible studies and prayer meetings were also being held in various homes. The neighborhood was canvassed in early 1967.

In November 1967 the group commenced Breaking Bread together, and in September 1968 ground was broken one block from the school for a new chapel. The Oakwood Bible Chapel was completed in May 1969 with much of the labor being done by those in fellowship. Henry Petersen of California came for six weeks to help with visitation and to launch the new chapel.

Since then, two additions have been completed. About 200 are in fellowship, with about 125 in a Junior Sunday School and 40 in the Young People's group.

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Berean Bible Chapel in Windsor began in 1995 in the home of Albert and Shirley Birch, the result of a desire of the Birches, Victor and Marion Salmons, Ray and Connie Vrskovy, Floyd and Waneda Wright, and Miss Marion McEwen to begin a new gathering. They had been in fellowship at Oakwood Bible Chapel. The leaders have been Albert Birch, Victor Salmons, and Floyd Wright. In 1997, the new assembly, consisting of about 60 adults and youngsters, moved into leased space in an office mall at 2280 Foster Avenue.

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In the city of London, the Emery & Edward St. Gospel Hall was built in about 1920. The property had been purchased by a Mrs. Jeffery, who also had the hall built, for an assembly associated with the 'Grant' party. At some point, the assembly became 'open.' In 1952, the name of the hall was changed to Emery Street Gospel Hall and in 1972 to Edward Street Chapel. The assembly has always met at this location.

Over the years, leadership has been shared by Arthur Drennan, James Ross, Elmer Hair, Jack McLaud, Charles E. Lacey, Robert DePhillippeaux, Arthur MacKnight, Gorden Black, and Leslie Doey. About 50 adults and children are in the assembly today. Workers have been commended by the assembly to Angola, to the home field, and to Graphite Bible Camp.

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Bethel Chapel in London began in 1934, two of its founders being Rowland Hill, Sr. and A.J. Phillips. These two men were in fellowship at that time at Hamilton Road Chapel in London and were burdened to begin a testimony in the south part of the city. (The Hamilton Road Chapel closed in the late 1980s and has been superseded by Southdale Bible Chapel.)

Others in leadership in the assembly, which has always been at the same location at 439 Moore Street, have been William Barrington, Rowland Hill Jr., Earnest Bodaly, Howard Elliott, Harry Brown, Gorden McKenzie, Edward Cossey, H.G. Phillips, and Douglas Phillips.

A ladies' coffee hour with ministry is held monthly and is attended by 25 to 30 women, most of whom are not in the assembly. Workers have been commended to local work and to West Africa. Another ladies' ministry consists of filling large shipping crates with clothes and utensils and sending them to needy peoples. About 40 adults and young people attend the assembly.

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Joe and Anna Ebert began the Kintore Bible Chapel in Thamesford, east of London, in their home in 1993. Though the assembly did not hive off from another, the

Eberts had brethren backgrounds. Larry Ball has shared leadership of Kintore Bible Chapel with the Eberts. The assembly has about 40 people attending and continues to meet in the Ebert home.

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Vienna, Straffordville, and Tillsonburg lie southeast of London, just north of Lake Erie. To that area came a 20-year-old T.D.W. Muir from Hamilton in 1875 and began preaching. Soon he was joined by John Smith, just arrived from Scotland. They preached together in school houses, homes, halls, and church buildings. Many were saved, and several assemblies were quickly established, including the South Middleton Assembly, which continued until about 1945. The assembly established near Straffordville continues today as the Straffordville Gospel Hall.

The Tillsonburg assembly was established in 1888 on Harvey Street through the efforts of Mr. Muir and others from the South Middleton and Straffordville assemblies. The assembly met in a rented room in ‘Graves Block’ for about 25 years. In 1914, the Tillsonburg Gospel Hall was built and there the assembly worshipped until the town fathers gave notice in 1976 that the property was to be expropriated and a new shopping mall developed there. In 1979, the Hall was moved to its current location at the corner of Bridge and Queen Streets, and renovated. At that time the name was changed to Tillsonburg Bible Chapel, ON and the assembly developed a strong youth program.

Leaders in the assembly over the years include Thomas Touzeau, J.C. McCormack, William Beckett, Alan

Morrison, Ivor Conod, Burnice McAllister, Len Fex, Jim Rowbottom, and Gordon McEown.

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Two small assemblies that had existed since the late 1800s, one in or near Simcoe and the other near Port Dover, ten miles southeast of Simcoe on the north shore of Lake Erie, merged in 1920.

The merged group met in a rural location until 1945, when the assembly moved into Simcoe. In 1947 the Christians built the Nelson Street Chapel, a small structure. The Lord blessed with conversions. Paul and Dorothy Fletcher began helping in the work in 1957, commuting from Brantford. In 1959 they moved to Simcoe, where Mr. Fletcher took a business position. In 1972, he resigned his position in order to give all his time to evangelism and pastoral ministry on behalf of the assembly.

A larger chapel was erected in 1966 on Cedar Street and called the Simcoe Gospel Chapel. Fletcher Lampkin and Lawrence Misner were among those involved at the beginning of the Simcoe Gospel Chapel. On opening day, 93 were present at the Family Bible Hour. By 1974, Family Bible Hour attendance was running at 250, and the main auditorium was filled for both Breaking of Bread meetings and Sunday evening services. Knowing they must expand or start a branch work, the congregation decided to construct a larger building.

Two acres were purchased on the northeast edge of the city. In the spring of 1975, a Conference was held to officially open the new chapel. Four hundred people filled the auditorium for Saturday and Sunday services.

Others in leadership over the years have been Mark Fletcher, Mark Williams, John Furber, and Ken Shewell. The assembly has commended several to the Lord's work. About 200 adults are in fellowship in addition to about 100 teens and children in the Sunday Schools.

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In the summer and early fall of 1989, six families met in a home in Waterford, a small town north of Simcoe, for prayer and Bible study on a weekly basis. They discussed their concerns for a back-to-basics Scriptural teaching of the Word with faithful men of God in other areas. After much prayer, they Broke Bread in the Marsden home in Waterford in mid November, and on the following Sunday met in the Ferrier farm house near Simcoe, with 22 believers in attendance.

The believers decided to rent a room in the Minden Manor Motel in Simcoe for Sunday meetings and for Wednesday prayer and Bible study meetings. This continued for two and a half years.

The Lord then provided them with a building of their own, which they call Faith Bible Chapel and in which they continue to meet. They now have between 40 and 55 at the weekly Breaking of Bread meetings, and 75 to 80 at the Family Bible Hour and Sunday School.

Shortly after Faith Bible Chapel began, Don and Mae Moffatt, who had served the Lord in Newfoundland, came into fellowship with the believers. Don Moffatt was greatly used in sharing in the ministry of the Word until his home call in 1994.

The first elders at Faith were Ron Oakes, Kevin Marsden, Mike Kekes, and Ivan Ferrier. Lloyd Thompson

has since joined in leadership. Among the men from other assemblies who have ministered the Word at Faith Bible Chapel are John Maring, Colin Anderson, Patrick Long, Brian Gunning, David Robins, and Willie Burnett.

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Burgessville is midway between London and Hamilton. In October 1989, in nearby Norwich, an assembly was formed and met at the Norwich Gospel Trailer. Steve Kember, commended from the Sarnia Gospel Hall, began the work with the help of a few others. In 1994, the assembly purchased and renovated a building in Burgessville and moved there to become the Burgessville Gospel Hall. The assembly has about 70 adults and youngsters in attendance. Steve Kember, Bill Burton, and Ernie Dyck have been the elders.

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In about 1800, the first Mennonites came to Waterloo County, Ontario, from Pennsylvania. By 1820, such names as Martin, Bowman, Hoffman, Gingrich, and Weber were known in the area that is now Woolwich Township. According to John Martin, many of the Mennonite preachers had a meager knowledge of the Bible and the doctrine of salvation was not taught.

In 1922, Alex Stewart of Guelph came with Frank Guthrie to this Mennonite area and held meetings in Elmira, resulting in the salvation of a number of people, including Mr. and Mrs. Emmanuel Martin. A small assembly was brought into being at Elmira, the Christians meeting above Playford’s Garage. That same year, Mr. Stewart held meetings in Linwood; some were saved, including Simeon Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Emmanuel Gerth, Mrs. King, and Mrs. Pem Hosea, and

an assembly was planted there, meeting in Mrs. King's carpenter shop. The Elmira Assembly lasted until 1928, and the Linwood Assembly lasted a few years longer, until the Gerths and Hoseas moved to Waterloo.

But God was working in the area. In 1928, Israel Martin was saved, and in 1931, John M. Martin and others were saved in evangelistic meetings conducted by a Pentecostal preacher. Soon John's brother Noah was saved, and Henry Bauman and his sisters, and the Brubacher sisters. John Martin married Melissa Brubacher in 1932, but they stayed with the Mennonite churches for a while.

In 1931, Israel Martin started a Sunday School in his brother Nathan's house in Hawkesville. Mr. William Goetz had moved to Hawkesville about this time and started Bible studies in various homes. These were later moved to Nathan Martin's house. Sunday evening services were then started there, and Nathan Martin's house became known as the Hawkesville Gospel Mission. Preachers from various denominations were invited to come and preach.

By 1934, it was apparent that the group of believers were going to leave the Old Order Mennonite church. In the spring of 1934, some of the believers had begun Remembering the Lord at the farm home of John and Melissa Martin. To the Hawkesville Gospel Mission were coming the Martin Baumans, John Martins, and Noah Martins from the Wallenstein area; the Israel Hoffmans, Amos Hoffmans, Sydney and David Hoffman, and the Simeon Martins from the Heidelberg area; the Goetz and Weber families lived in Hawkesville. This was the nucleus of the new group about to form.

In September 1934, the first public meeting to observe the Lord's Supper was held at the Hawkesville Gospel Mission. Frank Guthrie and George McKenzie were with them, and fifteen were baptized by immersion that day, with about 1000 curious townspeople in attendance.

The group had to make a fundamental choice at this point. Two of the most respected preachers who had come to the Hawkesville Gospel Mission were Henry Jansen, a Russian Mennonite from Kitchener, and Frank Guthrie from the brethren assembly in Guelph. Should they become part of the Russian Mennonite organization, or should they follow the New Testament church pattern, as espoused by Frank Guthrie?

Though Israel Martin initially leaned toward affiliating with the Russian Mennonites, eventually the whole group decided upon the New Testament pattern, with the Word of God as their sole authority. But Mennonite customs were slow to disappear, the characteristic dress being one of these. The 1934 opening of the Guelph Bible Conference Grounds, 25 miles from Hawkesville, at which the main speaker was Harry Ironside, is remembered as having a major influence upon the Hawkesville Christians.

The number of those affiliating with the new assembly at the Hawkesville Gospel Mission grew, and Nathan Martin's house was inadequate. Property was secured in the center of Hawkesville at the corner of Geddes Street and Hawk Street. The Hawkesville Gospel Hall had its opening in December 1939 with a series of meetings, at which a number were saved. John Martin, who with Sydney Hoffman had been commended to full-time work elsewhere, returned and was one of the speakers.

John Martin developed a radio ministry originating from Kitchener, and was assisted by several from the Hawkesville Gospel Hall. When the Emmaus Bible School opened in Toronto in 1945, five of the young men from Hawkesville attended and were instrumental in having the Emmaus Young People's Rally held at Hawkesville.

By 1951, the Gospel Hall was too small for the increasing numbers, and an addition was built, increasing the seating capacity to 200. In 1960, the name was changed to Hawkesville Bible Chapel, concurrently with the introduction of a Family Bible Hour on Sunday mornings. Elders were first publicly recognized in 1963. Allan and Joyce Weber, then in the Lord's work on Prince Edward Island, were invited to return for visitation work in the area. The elders also visited weekly in pairs in the community.

Once again, a larger building was needed, land was donated near Wallenstein, and in November 1968, the Wallenstein Bible Chapel was ready for occupancy, with a seating capacity of over 500. The elders at the time of this move were Ezra Frey, Amos Hoffman, David Hoffman, Israel Hoffman, John Martin, Noah Martin, and Onias Weber. Urias Brubacher and David M. Martin soon joined them. Growth in numbers has continued, and the assembly is involved in many outreach ministries. Conestoga Bible Camp, which began as a ministry of Wallenstein Bible Chapel, had its first session in 1972. Among the many who have gone out into full-time service for the Lord are Mr. and Mrs. John Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Hoffman, and Vera Bauman to ministry in Canada; and Mr. and Mrs. Abner Bauman, Esther Frey, and Mr. and Mrs. Allan Hoffman to overseas

ministry. In 1989, the assembly hived-off the Alma Bible Church. Recent elders include Melvin Frey, Glenn Gingrich, Wayne Hockley, Ken Hoffman, Aaron Martin, Murray Martin, Ollie Shantz, and Henry Tewinkel. Today about 450 people attend Wallenstein Bible Chapel.

* * *

Woodside Bible Fellowship at 200 Barnswallow Drive in Elmira, north of Waterloo, began in 1975. Neil Martin, Urias Brubacher, Allan Hoffman, and David M. Martin were those involved in its establishment. The assembly was a hive-off of Wallenstein Bible Chapel and was called the Elmira Christian Fellowship for the first couple of years while it met at the Riverside Public School. Others active in leadership have been David McClurkin, Harold Paisley, Paul Fletcher, and Harvey Gingrich. About 300 adults were in attendance in 1996, plus a Sunday School of over 150. The assembly has commended workers to Zambia, Kenya, Senegal, Papua New Guinea, Venezuela, and to International Teams and His Mansion Ministries in Ontario.

* * *

A few miles east of Elmira is the city of Guelph. In the early 1900s, an assembly was meeting in a house on Norwich Street in Guelph, apparently the first in that city. C. Ernest Tatham’s father was the leading brother in this meeting, which later moved to a hall over the old Royal Bank building on Wyndham Street. At that time, the meeting consisted mostly of the extended Tatham family and a few others.

In 1916, the Eramosa Road Gospel Hall was built, after some of the McAllister family moved to Guelph from the Clifford area. A ‘Grant exclusive’ meeting, Eramosa was

apparently the subsequent meeting place of the earlier house meeting, for C. Ernest Tatham fellowshipped there as a young man. Many of the well-known preachers of the day came there – John Bloor, Samuel Ridout, H.A. Ironside, and Alex Stuart. The leading brethren at Eramosa Road Gospel Hall were John McAllister, John Irvine, Frank Guthrie, and later Stuart Burnham. These were the years of amalgamation of the Grants with the 'open' assemblies, and it is fair to assume that Eramosa Road Gospel Hall became 'open.'

In 1958, L.J. Harris, R.W. Farnworth, and others desired to see the work grow, and the present facility at 491 Waterloo Avenue was built in 1960 and the name changed to Guelph Bible Chapel. Elders were recognized beginning in 1973. In 1974, Murray McLeod, a retired missionary from India, was invited to be a part-time pastor, and continued until 1981, at which time David Booker became a full-time pastor, followed by Kirk Lithander and Jack Correll as full-time workers. Other elders, besides those named above, include Les Harris, R.K. Farnworth, Bill Bleach, Gordon Guthrie, Henry Thiessen, Lew Aubrey, Harry Hitchon, Norm Boyd, Jerry Earls, Jim Ritchie, Dave McCready, and Mr. Brewster.

Guelph Bible Chapel has commended several to the Lord's work, and now has about 200 in Sunday attendance. Two assemblies have derived from it.

* * *

Willowdale Christian Fellowship in Guelph began in 1979, with its first meetings at the Willow Road School. Eight families from Guelph Bible Chapel were involved in the start-up. The assembly later moved to Arkell Road to become the Arkell Road Bible Chapel. Leadership

over the years includes Evered Penn, Campbell Round, James Conover, and Peter Bolton. About 110 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

* * *

Lakeside Bible Church began in 1989, hiving-off from Guelph Bible Chapel. The principals in the start-up were Gordon and Frank Guthrie, Phil Fletcher, David Booker, Norm Roberts, and David Neff, all of whom were elders at Guelph Bible Chapel. The assembly met six weeks in a school before moving into its own building in Guelph. Those in active leadership since the formation are the Guthries, David Booker, Jim Lowe, and Ken Rowan. Darryl Milne is the current youth worker, commended to that position. About 750 adults and youngsters attend Lakeside Bible Church.

* * *

Bethel Chapel in Waterloo has its roots in several families that moved to Waterloo from Elmira and Linwood. They met in the home of William Klinck for several years.

In about 1945, William Murray and John Martin had tent meetings in Waterloo; after that they rented a vacant store and carried on the assembly meetings there. In 1948, a small Bethel Chapel was built at 16 Laurel Street and the assembly started to grow. The building has since been enlarged. The assembly has about 75 in fellowship now.

* * *

Lakeshore Bible Chapel in Waterloo, at 470 Glenelm Crescent, was established in 1970 by ten couples: Allan and Joan Poyntz, Henry Ralston, Len and Joan

Habermehl, Henry and Iva Ralston, David and MaryLynn Knight, Larry and Betty Tierney, Murray and Wilma Toman, Rolf and Esme Stockheisen, Dave and Sheila Brown, Ross and Carol Steinman, and Chris and Marnie Watts. The assembly was a hive-off from Bethel Chapel, and had its first meetings at the Cedarbrea Public School. Lakeshore Bible Chapel moved to its present location in 1978 and has helped establish Forestview Bible Church, Cambridge Community Church in Cambridge, and New Hope Community Church in Waterloo. The assembly has about 185 adults in fellowship, with about 100 in the Sunday School. Through the years, several workers have been commended by Lakeshore Bible Chapel to the Lord's service.

* * *

During the fall of 1990, nine families who lived in Cambridge but drove to other cities for their church meetings came together to pray about and discuss forming a new church in Cambridge. Gordon Martin from Lakeshore Bible Chapel gave teaching on the New Testament church to the group, some of whom had brethren backgrounds. These families began meeting on Sundays in September 1991 in the Hespeler Missionary Church building. When the building was sold a year later, the congregation moved to the Clemens Mill area of Cambridge, first into St. Margaret's School and then in 1993 to Clemens Mill Public School, where they took the name Cambridge Community Church. Rob Heintz joined the fellowship in 1992 and serves as a full-time pastor with several elders. About 200 people are in the assembly.

* * *

New Hope Community Church in Waterloo started in January 1996, meeting then, as today, in the Westvale Public School for Sunday mornings, and using homes for small groups. The assembly derived from Lakeshore Bible Chapel, that church's third purposely planted congregation, to reach into the west side of Waterloo where there was no English-speaking evangelical church. Among those at Lakeshore who worked to establish the new assembly were Gordon Martin and Mark Rogers. The leadership team at New Hope has included Jeremy Horne, Randy More, Allan Poyntz, Mark Rogers, Bill Stubbs, Rob Vanderspek, and Dan Zimmermann. From an initial 40 people, about 150 attend the assembly now. Bill Stubbs is a full-time worker at New Hope Community Church.

* * *

Perhaps as early as 1870, Douglas Russell came from Scotland to a district near Galt, where he had relatives in the Clyde and Valens area. These are small towns near Cambridge, between Hamilton and Kitchener. Mr. Russell's preaching was powerful and many were saved, including the grandparents of Lorne McBain. Upon returning to Scotland, he became involved with Donald Ross and his associates, and entered into fellowship in an assembly there. When he returned to Canada, he preached in the area around Clyde. Donald Munro and John Smith came to assist in the work, and the Clyde Assembly was established. The first meeting of the believers was in a blacksmith's shop. This assembly continues today. Within a short time, the Valens Assembly was formed at nearby Valens, and a short time

later the Galt Assembly came into being. T.D.W. Muir had been saved at meetings conducted by Donald Munro and John Smith in 1874 in Hamilton. Within a few months, he was one among many preachers who preached in the area.

In the early 1920s, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Lapsley lived in the Valens area and fellowshipped in the Clyde Assembly. The Lapsleys were exercised to see an assembly in their area, since the original Valens Assembly had discontinued, and with the help of George Dixon and Mr. and Mrs. John Robson, began an assembly in 1923, meeting first in the Robson home. William Bailley held many Gospel meetings in the area, resulting in new converts. Fred Watson also helped in establishing the new assembly. The Christians later built the Valens Gospel Hall on property adjacent to the Robson home. Others in leadership have been Earl Watson, John Holtzhauer, Ted Lapsley; Robert Reeve, and Martin Grinwis. The assembly at Valens Gospel Hall has commended workers to Zambia, and presently has about 30 in attendance.

* * *

In the spring of 1980, five couples living in the Tavistock area, about 20 miles southwest of Waterloo/Kitchener, expressed an interest in starting an assembly there. John Martin had been holding Bible studies for several winters in the Tavistock/Stratford area. The group persuaded John and his wife to move there from their home in Hawkesville. That summer the group purchased and renovated the old Knox Hall at the corner of William and Oxford Streets in Tavistock and renamed it Tavistock Bible Chapel. The principals involved in the

start-up were John M. Martin, Bill Jeffery, Kenneth Wagler, and John Wilkerson. Others in leadership have been Jim Cormach and Mike Bastiaanson. About 140 adults and youngsters attend Tavistock Bible Chapel today.

* * *

Mitchell is a small town near Stratford, north of London. An assembly began there in the mid 1930s, meeting in rented quarters that they called Mitchell Gospel Hall.

In 1948, because most of the Christians in the Mitchell assembly were driving in from the Clinton area, 20 miles northwest of Mitchell, the assembly relocated to Clinton. The Christians met in the home of Samuel McDonald at the beginning. Numbers were small, but in 1953, after much prayer and laying hold of God in faith, the brethren undertook the building of a new Hall on Joseph Street, calling it Joseph Street Gospel Hall. The labor in building the hall was supplied almost completely by brethren from a number of assemblies in that part of Ontario. The Hall opened in late 1953.

Those starting the Clinton assembly were principally Samuel McDonald and William J. Davidson. Leadership has been supplied by these and Douglas McDonald, Willis Switzer, David Kember, Larry Schade, and Keith Bachert. Joseph Street Gospel Hall has commended full-time workers to the mission field, and has about 90 in attendance today.

* * *

The assembly testimony in Mitchell resumed in 1984 with the start-up of Mitchell Bible Chapel. It was not derived from another assembly, and was initiated by

John and Graham Martin, Mark Otten, Frank Ennis, and Steve Vandenbrink, and these have been its elders. About 30 adults and youngsters attend Mitchell Bible Chapel.

* * *

One of the newer assemblies in Ontario is Chesley Bible Chapel, originally meeting in the small town of Chesley, north of Clinton. The assembly was established in 1994 by Steve Cudney and John M. Martin, who were joined in leadership by Stan West. First meeting in a Mennonite Brethren building, the assembly subsequently met in a rented building on Main Street in the business area of Chesley.

In the late 1990s, the assembly relocated to the larger town of Hanover, about 10 miles south of Chesley and meets at present in a building on 15th Avenue; it is now called Hanover Bible Chapel and consists of about 15 adults and as many teens and children. The believers hope to purchase this building.

* * *

Wingham is a small town southwest of Hanover. The present Wingham Bible Chapel has its roots in an old ‘exclusive’ meeting about 12 miles out in the country, which died for lack of gift and numbers.

In 1937, John Martin pitched a tent in Wingham and had some Gospel meetings. Through various efforts, several people were saved and a few from the former meeting started to meet in the home of Gordon and Margaret McInnes. In 1950, the Wingham Gospel Hall was built. The work carried on there for some time. In about 1972, Len and Madeline Fex moved to Wingham and through

their ministry a number of people were saved. The assembly grew considerably and a new building, the Wingham Bible Chapel, ON was put up on Boland Street in 1975.

* * *

Eight families, including those of Claude Martin, Owen Weber, John Langendoen, and Bill Klumpenharve began an assembly testimony in 1985 in the village of Gorrie, south of Hanover. Gorrie Bible Fellowship was formed with the blessings of the assembly at Wingham Bible Chapel. Meeting first in the town hall, they built and moved into their own building, seating 200, in 1991. Leadership has been shared by the four men mentioned and Bob Bramhall, who joined the fellowship in 1986. Mr. Bramhall is now working full-time in the assembly. Gorrie Bible Fellowship has commended workers to Nepal, Indonesia, and elsewhere. About 175 regularly attend the services at Gorrie Bible Fellowship.

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For six weeks in 1874, John Smith and Donald Munro had preached the Gospel in Hamilton, at the western tip of Lake Ontario, seeing little interest. Then T.D.W. Muir, K.J. Muir, and William J. Faulkner were saved under their preaching. The Gospel meetings continued, and many more were saved and baptized. These Christians soon began meeting to Remember the Lord, the beginning of the McNab Street Gospel Hall in Hamilton. This is the oldest continuously meeting assembly in the city of Hamilton. It has since relocated and is called the West Fifth Bible Chapel.

* * *

The assembly now meeting at Stone Ridge Bible Chapel in Hamilton has its roots in a children's work carried out by believers from MacNab Street Gospel Hall. The children's work was begun in 1952 in a basement structure and first consisted of hobby classes, but expanded to include a Sunday School and a Gospel meeting. Funds for a down payment on the lot and building in which these activities were held were donated by some elders from MacNab and the structure was named Queensdale Gospel Hall. The first official meeting of the new assembly was in 1955. An upper level was added in 1958, and the name was changed to Queensdale Bible Chapel at that time.

In early 1994, the building was heavily damaged by fire set by arsonists. The structure was demolished and the lot sold. After that, the assembly met at a series of rented locations. Construction of a new building was begun in 1998, and the name Stone Ridge Bible Chapel was chosen to reflect the new location. Present attendance is about 35, a third of what it was before the fire. The assembly has commended servants to the Lord's work in Ontario, Quebec, and elsewhere.

* * *

Shoreacres Bible Chapel in Burlington, north of Hamilton, began in 1959 as the Burlington Gospel Hall. The principal instigators were James and Annabelle Weaver. James had come out of the Needed Truth faction, and Annabelle from an assembly in Toronto. The Beukers joined them out of the Christian Reformed Church. The Greens came from the former Queensdale Gospel Chapel, which was destroyed in a fire. The

remaining nucleus of those starting the new assembly came from Bethany Gospel Hall in Hamilton.

The meeting began as bi-weekly hymn sings in the Weaver home, with about 20 in attendance. The first Remembrance Meeting took place in February 1959 in the Weaver home. By the fall, the group had moved to Old White Chapel, now the Red Cross quarters, and early the next year was meeting at Trefoil Lodge, with about 50 adults and children in attendance. Property was purchased on Shoreacres Road and Shoreacres Bible Chapel was completed in 1969. The building was expanded a decade later.

Recognized elders over the years include William Allen, Henry Bingham, James Currie, William Hislop, James McNeice, George Patterson, and James Weaver, and others for shorter periods. Workers have been commended by the assembly to the Philippines, Botswana, and to itinerant ministry. Shoreacres Bible Chapel now has about 200 in attendance.

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In 1993, Forestview Bible Chapel in Burlington began in the north part of Burlington, a hive-off of Shoreacres. The group meets in a school with about 70 attendees.

* * *

Assembly testimony began in 1871 in the Niagara Peninsula, the same year as in areas to the west. The Lord blessed His people as they met in homes, stores, above a drive-shed, and even in a blacksmith’s shop. From an insignificant beginning, five assemblies are now in the Niagara Peninsula area. They meet in the Brockview Bible Chapel, Thorold South Gospel Chapel,

Ridgeville Bible Chapel, Portal Village Bible Chapel, and Scottlea Gospel Chapel.

The assembly testimony in St. Catharines began in 1871 when a few Christians met in a home to Remember the Lord. In 1914, the growing assembly met in its new building known as the Queenston Street Gospel Hall. Located in the business district of the city, this building served well until 1966 when the Scottlea Gospel Chapel was built in a residential neighborhood in the northern part of St. Catharines, to accommodate the assembly that remained there after some had left to form the Brockview assembly. The evangelist Ernest Sprunt was in fellowship at Queenston Street/Scotlea.

On Easter Sunday morning in April 1966, the Scottlea assembly met for the first time in its new Chapel to Remember the Lord and with the prayer that the Lord would bless its presence in that growing area of the city. There are now 175 in fellowship.

Since its inception, the Scottlea Gospel Chapel has had a strong and consistent emphasis on the preaching of the Gospel and ministry of the Word, teaching in Sunday Schools, AWANA, Daily Vacation Bible Schools, and youth and camp work. Some believers take the Gospel into the Homes of Senior Citizens, and others to go door to door in tract distribution and personal visitation. For forty-four years the assembly has supported the Family Bible Hour’s world-wide radio broadcast financially and with personnel. The assembly has shown an interest in World Missions through its Ladies Missionary Work Class, short term missions involvement, and in other ways. The annual Spring and Fall Conferences present

six messages beginning Saturday evening and running through Tuesday evening.

A number of the young men teach within this and other area assemblies. Over the years two brethren have been commended to the work of the Lord. Joe Sherlock serves the Lord from Summerside, Prince Edward Island; Arnot McIntee, who served with the Family Bible Hour Radio Broadcast for 42 years, continues to serve in a variety of ways.

The elders of all area assemblies meet annually for a time of fellowship and the sharing of relevant information. These times of fellowship are broadened on five occasions each year when believers in the five assemblies meet in alternate Chapels for a time of prayer, teaching and fellowship. Also, there is an Annual Picnic each Labor Day, which is always well attended.

* * *

In 1959, the Pelham Road Gospel Hall in St. Catharines came into being with 95 in fellowship initially. A group of believers had come from the Queenston Street Gospel Hall to form the new assembly, in harmonious relationship with the parent assembly. The meeting place for the assembly is now called Brockview Bible Chapel, still on Pelham Road. Boyd Nicholson made that assembly his home base.

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Thorold is on the southern edge of St. Catharines. It was to that city that Ross McIntee and John Funk, both in fellowship at the Queenston Street Gospel Hall, came in 1949 for open-air Gospel meetings. There they made contact with Christians such as William Wilkie and his

wife Lorene and her mother Mrs. Hughes, who had a small Sunday School there. These invited Messrs. McIntee and Funk to take over their work. They turned the work into a Thursday night children's meeting. From that beginning, a Sunday School and Sunday night Gospel meeting developed, with many others helping; the Lord saved many during this time.

A building was constructed and in 1966 an assembly was formed, called Thorold South Gospel Chapel. The original elders were Gordon Bye, Ross McIntee, William Wilkie, and Jack Trotter. Others in leadership over the years include Ben Andress, Malcom Lowrie, and Larry Jane. The assembly has kept the same name and meets at the same location – 319 Davis Street – since its inception. Thorold South Gospel Chapel has commended workers to assembly planting and itinerant preaching in Canada and the U.S. About 75 persons are in the assembly.

* * *

Ridgeville is about 14 miles southwest of St. Catharines. The brethren who were exercised about an assembly in this area were James and Donald Pirrie, Wesley Payson, Lester Shoalts, Bob Shedden, Al Walker, and Don Steele. Most of the original group who formed Ridgeville Bible Chapel had been in fellowship at Pelham Road Gospel Hall. Bill Hillis, Jim Lenaghan, Al Nickel, and Tim Hartwick have shared leadership at Ridgeville with those mentioned above. One brother has been commended to the radio work in Ecuador. About 55 adults and younger people are in fellowship, plus more than 30 in the Sunday School. The Canadian headquarters of the Awana Clubs were established in

nearby Fonthill by a brother who was in Ridgeville Bible Chapel at the time.

* * *

Welland is a few miles southwest of Niagara Falls and south of St. Catharines. It was to that city that C. Pinches came with his tent in 1918 to preach the Gospel. The Gospel meetings were carried on for about two months. Mr. Norman Klager and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Gladwin were among those who attended the meetings. Mr. Pinches came again in 1920, and this time the meetings were held in the Gladwin home at 12 Locust Street. The Gladwins and Klagers soon began Remembering the Lord in His death, meeting first in the Klager home on Church Street, and later back at the Gladwin home. Just five persons comprised this first Welland Assembly. The Gladwins moved to the east side of Welland in 1944. The assembly continued to meet in the Gladwin home at 33 Scholfield Avenue for over 40 years.

In 1946, the Welland Assembly was back to five people in fellowship – Mr. Gladwin and his wife, Mrs. Ronald St. Clair, Mrs. E. Garner, and Miss Clara Doan. Within a few years, Mr. St. Clair, the two St. Clair daughters, and their husbands Lorne Yade and William Montean, were in fellowship. Baptisms were held at the Willmott Street Gospel Hall in Niagara Falls, ON.

The Niagara Falls assembly gave much help to the Welland Assembly in conducting open-air meetings. Mr. G.P. Taylor came from Deseronto for a 13-week series of meetings in 1954, at which 25 souls professed salvation. The basement of the Gladwin home was converted into a meeting place for the growing fellowship. In 1959, the

William Monteans, Lorne Yades, and G. Hannigans started a Sunday School work. In 1960, a building fund was begun, and the assembly moved to rented space above the Martin Dairy on Burgar Street, and in 1964 to the Winstonville Hall for two years. In 1965, a lot was purchased and the Welland Gospel Hall was built, which could seat 90 in addition to a basement for children's meetings. Lorne Yade, William Montean, and Lanny Brown were the elders at that time. Others who joined the assembly in the 1960s were the James Smiths, Stan Booths, and Reg Lawsons, and Mr. Booth was added to the oversight. The hall has been expanded three times since its initial construction, and over 100 adults and youngsters are associated with the assembly.

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Port Colborne is on Lake Erie, just south of Welland. Portal Village Bible Chapel in Port Colborne started in 1986, growing out of Ridgeville Bible Chapel. With a special ministry to seniors, many of whom have been saved as a result, the assembly met for a time in a senior's apartment block before they erected a chapel next to it in 1999, with the expectation of reaching out to a younger generation while maintaining the older contacts. Ken Brady, Gordon Bye, Peter Kay, William Duncan, Lewis Shedden, and Lester Shoalts were among those who initiated the assembly. Mahlon Martin, Lewis Shedden, and Lester Shoalts have been the elders. Portal Village Bible Chapel has commended workers to the Lord's service in England and the United States, and has about 40 adults and children in attendance.

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In the early 1920s, some of the pioneer evangelists arrived in the town of Barrie and held Gospel meetings. As a result, several families were saved and formed an assembly, meeting in the homes of the believers. After a few years, under the leadership of Walter Cameron, John W. Gossling, and Walter Havercroft, the Christians decided to have a permanent meeting facility. In 1928, Grace Gospel Hall at 37 Mary Street in downtown Barrie was opened with approximately 40 to 50 in fellowship.

In 1932, only four years after the beginning, a split occurred, with about 75% of the people leaving to form a new assembly (see below). From 1932 to 1945, Grace Gospel Hall continued with Mr. and Mrs. Walter Cameron, Ida Cameron, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Cameron, John W. Gossling, Walter Havercroft, Ben Knapp, Mary Brook, Mr. and Mrs. Garnet Soules in fellowship.

However, the Sunday School work was very large and well run by Ida Cameron and Mary Brook, who sent taxi cabs around the town to bring in the children at their own expense. Donald Cameron and his wife brought two and three car loads of children in from the country. There were always 60 to 75 children in attendance. The Gospel meetings on Sunday evenings were sparsely attended.

After 1945, the assembly grew, reaching 24 in fellowship in 1958. The downtown location was no longer suitable, so the assembly purchased property in 1959 at Peel and Gunn Streets in the north end of the city, and built the Northside Gospel Chapel. A one-day Conference in 1960 brought in 100 people to Remember the Lord. In 1981, a new auditorium was added. The new addition

accommodates the 165 adults and children who attend the assembly now.

Leadership over the years has been born by Donald Cameron, George Bishop, Archie Gavin, Jack Greaves, Gord Benner, and James Cummingham. A number of full-time workers have been sent overseas by the assembly. An Awana program at Northside Gospel Chapel has about 100 children in it.

* * *

The Christians who left Grace Gospel Hall in 1932 met at first in a home on Bradford Street, then moved into the second floor of a drug store on the corner of Owen Street and Dunlop Street East in Barrie, where they remained until 1938. Because this location had stairs too steep for the older folks, the group moved across the street for a time, then in 1939 purchased a livery stable on Parkside Drive and renovated it into a meeting hall, known as Parkside Gospel Hall. The meeting grew rapidly for a time, but has declined over the years to about six in fellowship today.

* * *

In 1885, Thomas and Jane French, immigrants from England, donated a parcel of land from their farm near Waverley, north of Barrie, for the erection of the Waverley Gospel Hall. The evangelist Alexander Marshall is credited with initiating the assembly, and for a time the people attending the Hall were called Marshallites by the local folks. An assembly was started in nearby Vasey at about the same time.

Others in the Waverley assembly in the early days were the John McCaw, Robert Anderson, Sam French, Joseph

Mertz, Ed Grexton, William Herbert, Minnie Campbell, Robert Anderson, John Isaac, John Farquharson, Sarah Truax, Brolley, Stamp, Minnie Blackmere, Emma Draper, Herb Sweezie, Adrian Isaac, Elmer Isaac, Sterling MacDonald, and Bowden Mertz families. The Mertz and Isaac families are remembered as being the leading families. George Benner, as well as Alexander Marshall, came often in the early days to preach at Waverley Gospel Hall.

After some years, Waverley Gospel Hall became small, with just Mr. Mertz and a few women at the Remembrance Meeting. The Christians from the Vasey Assembly joined with them at that time. When Mervyn Paul came to preach, he often stayed at the Blackmere's near Wyevale and walked to Waverley. He is remembered for his ability to teach the children. Ernest Sprunt is another who preached at Waverley Gospel Hall and was loved by the young people. Many of the well known traveling preachers came to Waverley. After the days of the traveling preachers had largely passed, Adrian and Elmer Isaac, Sterling MacDonald, Ferguson Blackmere, and Bowden Mertz were those who kept the assembly going when attendance was low.

In about 1950, a small room was added at the back of the old Hall for Sunday School classes. Not many years later, further growth resulted in a decision to build a new Hall, which was completed in 1964. Today about 40 adults and youngsters attend Waverley Gospel Hall.

* * *

Strongville is a village near Stayner, near Barrie. The families from which the future Strongville Assembly developed moved into the area in about 1885, cutting

down the trees of the virgin forest to make homes for themselves. These families typically had religious backgrounds but many knew little of their need of a Savior. Mr. Duncan MacColeman, a Mennonite, was one of the early settlers. He preached among his neighbors, and many came to the Lord. Among them were the families of Andrew Johnston, Robert Armstrong, Thomas Armstrong, and Donald MacKinnon.

Mr. MacColeman preached sinless perfection, and this soon became a problem with the new believers. News of the new group of babes in Christ reached a small assembly of ‘exclusive’ brethren in Stayner, nine miles away, and a Mr. John Rodgers came to visit them, explaining the Scriptures. The believers from the Johnston, Arnstrong, and MacKinnon families subsequently sought fellowship with the Stayner assembly, and were accepted by them. Traveling to Stayner was very difficult, and the assembly there gave consent for the six new believers to have their own meeting in the log home of the Johnstons.

Some little time later, W.P. Douglas and John Haliburton, both associated with the ‘open’ brethren, held a long series of Gospel meetings in a tent in Bethel, four miles from Strongville. One Saturday they walked over to Strongville, met the believers, and said they would like to Remember the Lord with them, also pointing out that the Stayner ‘exclusive’ brothers may not be comfortable with that. However the Strongville Christians could see no reason not to accept them, and did, having many weeks of fellowship with them, and traveled to the tent meetings when they could. When it was clear that the Strongville group desired to maintain fellowship with Messrs. Douglas and Haliburton, whom they had grown

to respect, the Stayner assembly refused further fellowship with the Strongville brothers.

It was at about this time, 1890, that the Strongville Assembly built the Strongville Gospel Hall, ON on a lot near the Johnston home. That location has served the assembly continuously since then, though a new hall was built on the same lot in 1990 and the old one moved off.

Others that came into the assembly in the early days were the Cole, Fleming, McLeish, Black, Smith, Lincoln, George Johnston, and Partridge families. Preachers who held meetings there include George Pinches Sr., George Garret, Albert Joyce, and Herbert Harris. The assembly held its first conference in 1906, and many since then. The Strongville Gospel Hall has had as many as 40 in fellowship, has commended workers to the Lord's service, and now has about 40 adults and children in attendance.

* * *

The original Orillia Assembly was established in 1881 after Gospel meetings by Alexander Marshall, recently arrived from Scotland. The Gospel meetings were held in the YMCA building, and then in an upstairs hall in the Kennedy building at the corner of Peter and Mississaga Streets. Many were saved and others were established. A baptism for eleven converts was held in April that year in Lake Couchiching near Cedar Island. and on April 17, the believers (as elsewhere, nicknamed "Marshallites" by the townspeople) gathered to Remember the Lord – the establishment of the first assembly in the area. The first meeting was in Quinn's Hall. Some 60 gathered in fellowship at the assembly in May. Evangelists Alexander Marshall and Richard Irving, along with John

Hutson and George Calverley were among those who initiated the assembly. During that year, over 200 believers were baptized in this area.

Later, the Orillia group met in Shaftesbury Hall on Mississaga Street. Robert Telfer had gospel meetings at that time in the nearby Dominion Hall. In September 1907, the West Street Gospel Hall that had been built at 56 West Street North was opened, and this served as a gathering place for 71 years.

Many traveling preachers visited the assembly, including C. Ernest Tatham, Charles Innis, Richard Irving, Sam Taylor, and Ross McConkey. The whole district around Orillia was stirred by the Gospel preached with power. The movement was given publicity by the press in censure and commendation, and this brought the people from far and near to hear what was regarded as ‘the new doctrine.’ Assemblies were formed in that period at Foxmead, Warminster, and Severn Bridge.

Shortly after this, a division took place among members of the Orillia Assembly, and part of the company returned to the Dominion Hall at 9 Andrew Street North. Later, that group acquired a small piece of property a half block south at 30 Andrew Street South and erected a new building, which they called Dominion Gospel Hall in memory of the previous place of gathering. The building opened in 1938 and is still in use today. Extensive renovations were made in 1986.

Elders at the Gospel Hall in the 1930s to the 1950s were Cecil Clark, Norman Clark, Charles Canning, William Polk, Charles Rankin, Joseph Stubbs, and a Mr. White. In the 1960s and 1970s, the leaders were George Clark, Reuben Pears, John Stubbs, and Raymond Stubbs. From

the 1980s and on, the elders have been Andrew Adams, Earl Pears, and Douglas Stubbs.

Herb Harris, Russell Harris, and George Heidman were commended to the Lord's work in the Canadian Maritimes (which see). The size of the assembly at the Gospel Hall has varied from about 50 to 70 in fellowship, with about 55 at this time.

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The Christians who stayed at the West Street Gospel Hall changed the name to West Street Gospel Chapel in April 1960 and remained there until September 1978. These believers then constructed a new building on Highway 12 West at Fairgrounds Road, calling it Hillside Bible Chapel, the current location of that assembly.

Roland Jutson, A. Gurton, G.V. Hartshorn, Hilliard Orton, Farnak Calverley, and Mr. Irwin have been active in leadership at Hillside. About 230 adults and youngsters attend the assembly, which has commended full-time workers to Zambia, Ontario, Newfoundland, and ministry in Maine and Florida.

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In 1966, a Sunday School work was begun in the South Ward of Orillia by the West Street assembly. By 1971, another congregation formed in that area and is today known as Simcoeside Bible Chapel.

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The Severn Bridge assembly began at about the same time as that in Orillia. The Severn Bridge Gospel Hall was located on Southwood Road, Severn Bridge, a few miles from Gravenhurst, and is still at that location. Alexander Marshall is credited with starting the

assembly, but other details of the early days have not been uncovered. Since about 1950, leadership has included Bernard Mitchell, Larry Babineau, and Aubrey Dellandrea. In 1987, the Christians changed their name to Severn Bridge Christian Assembly. About 30 people are in the assembly today.

* * *

Brampton is on the western side of the Toronto metropolitan area. It was there that the assembly known today as Bramalea Bible Chapel began in 1964 in Parkway Public School, with the attendance of perhaps six believers. It was named Brampton Bible Chapel at first, and did not derive from any of the area assemblies. Two or three families who had been transferred to the area for business reasons were exercised to start the assembly in that location. Fred Clarke, from the Turner Road Chapel in Windsor, and Robert Saynor from the Sarnia area, were among the first to commence the work.

The work grew and in 1971 the assembly moved to a new building at 725 Balmoral Drive, Brampton, and took the name Bramalea Bible Chapel. Leadership has included Robert Dickson, William Dickson, James Dodds, Phil Lee, Fred Clarke, Bob Saynor, Richard Upfield, and Bruce Greenstreet. The work prospered and in 1979 an addition to the chapel was constructed. Work among children and young people was strong at that time.

In the 1990s, the work declined and the chapel was sold. The assembly now meets at 10 Bramhurst Avenue, Unit 13, Brampton, and has about 70 in overall attendance. Leadership is now in the hands of Ian McNeil, Harry Schienke, Ken Veale, and James Dodds. Missionaries in

the Philippines and Malaysia are being supported by the assembly.

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As early as 1866, an ‘exclusive’ assembly was meeting in Toronto on Alexander Street between Yonge and Church Streets. Another ‘exclusive’ assembly was meeting on Albert Street by 1873, and was called ‘The Tabernacle.’ Lord Cecil, prominent in the split of the Grant brethren from other ‘exclusive’ groups, met at Albert Street.

Elizabeth Street Hall was begun by Walter McKenzie in that period. Mr. McKenzie had been converted under the preaching of John Darby in Toronto, but soon disagreed with Mr. Darby on questions of local discipline.

In 1875, the evangelists Donald Munro and John Smith, arrived in Toronto. Not finding a suitable place for preaching, they rented a hall and preached there. They often stayed at the home of John Ironside, who met with the Christians at Elizabeth Street. In 1879, Donald Ross held meetings for at least three weeks at Elizabeth Street Hall, and it is thought that this was the beginning of the first identifiable ‘open brethren’ assembly in the city.

Later in 1879, Donald Ross and T.D.W. Muir preached together in a tent on Yonge Street, and later Mr. Moyse of Australia joined them. The following year, Alexander Marshall conducted a Gospel campaign in the city; Harry Ironside was his co-worker for a time in these meetings.

During this period, Brock Street Temperance Hall, which stood on Brock Street at the corner of Little Richmond, emerged as the center championing ‘open’

principles. Brock Avenue Gospel Hall and Central Gospel Hall both have their roots in the Brock Street Temperance Hall.

When Little Richmond Street was renamed Farley Avenue, the Christians at Brock Street Temperance Hall began referring to their center as the Farley Avenue Hall.

In the course of time, the two groups – Elizabeth Street and Farley Avenue – followed divergent lines. Also, a son-in-law of Walter McKenzie built a new hall on Buchanan Street, which he called Beulah Hall. This grew to be a very large meeting. When the Christians built a new hall at 25 Charles Street, they retained their Beulah Hall designation.

During this period, there was a degree of interaction of these ‘open’ brethren with some denominational churches and with the‘exclusive’ brethren. For example, J.W.C. Fegan, the well known ‘open’ brother who started the Boy’s School in England, preached at Farley in 1884 and at the Queen Street Baptist Church in 1886. In 1892, T.D.W. Muir preached at the ‘Assembly Rooms’ at Yonge and Maitland, where F.W. Grant attended before moving to Plainfield, NJ. Donald Munro and John Smith preached for a time at a Methodist church in Bolton.

In 1886, Donald Munro married and established his home in Toronto. He was an active evangelist in the city, and was responsible for the first Conference at Farley Avenue Hall. The Conference became an annual event that served to launch the activities for the year. Many of the well known pioneers were speakers at these Conferences.

Among those remembered at Farley Avenue Hall are the families of George Watson, Tom Holmes, George Ironside, John Berrie, W. Dewsbury, and J. Tough. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Skeeles joined with the Christians at Farley in 1872; their daughter, Jennie May, began keeping assembly records in 1890. Her record shows 128 on the roll for the Sunday morning meeting that year at Farley. William Beers came around 1890 and is remembered as a real shepherd to the flock at Farley.

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Two other small meetings had sprung up in Toronto by the late 1880s, but were of short duration. One was at Walton Street at Yonge, and the other in the Red Lion Hall on Yonge, above Bloor Street.

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The Christians at Brock Street Temperance Hall/Farley Avenue Hall desired to start an assembly in the east end of the city, so Donald Munro started Bible Readings in a rented hall there. He was followed the next year by James Kay from England. As a result, a testimony began in 1891 at 639 Queen Street East. James Lynn, a letter carrier, is remembered as one of the real servants in this east-end assembly. Robert Telfer was married in 1892 and took up residence in the area and became associated with this assembly. The Christians called their group simply Christians in the East-End of the City. The growing work needed larger quarters, so the Christians moved to Queen and Bolton Avenue, and used the name East-end Gospel Hall. At the end of 1901, they moved to 194 Broadview Avenue where they still meet as the Broadview Avenue Gospel Hall. The Pape Avenue Gospel Hall in Toronto hived off from Broadview in 1921.

Early leaders at Broadview include Thomas Breckles, James Roy, William Dobbin, John Clarke, James Mahaffey, and Adam Ross. Elders since 1950 include John Virgin, Robert Boam, Joe Higgins, Don Jennings, Cyril Lallion, and Andrew Wilson. Broadview Avenue Gospel Hall commended Albert Joyce and Fred Nugent to ministry in Canada and the U.S. and others to Venezuela and ministry in the Toronto area.

* * *

Farley Hall was in the central part of Toronto. At the same time that interest in the east end began among some of the believers at Farley, others became exercised about the west end. John Grimason conducted meetings in the area in 1891; in November 1892 eleven persons sat down to Remember the Lord at 1180 Queen Street West, including Mr. and Mrs. George Watson, Mr. and Mrs. William Stubbs, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Skeeles, Minnie Watson, and May Skeeles. The number rose to 17 the following Sunday. In July 1898, the group moved to a hall on Brock Avenue, south of Dundas Street. In 1928, the present Brock Avenue Gospel Hall was built north of Dundas Street, at 311 Brock Avenue.

William Stubbs, George Watson, and Richard Skeeles are considered the initiators of the assembly. These and Albert Jackson, Robert Bunting, James McClintock, Will Palmer, Tom Malcolm, Tom Williamson, Joe Coleman, Adam Walker, Ormer Sprunt, William Agnew, Robert Hamilton, Robert Steen, John Emerson, David Peat, Jack Joyce, Nelson Brooks, and George Beggs were among the early leaders. In later years, elders include William Lutley, John Vance, James E. Garvin, James S. Garwin,

William Ensom, Sam McIntosh, William Brooks, Peter Waldrond, and Chris Boyko.

A hive-off from Brock Avenue is Mimico Gospel Hall in Toronto, which started as a Sunday School work in the 1940s, and first Broke Bread in January 1950.

Brock Avenue Gospel Hall built a hall on Ennerdale Road, Toronto to accommodate Sunday School work, and later sold it to the Ascot Assembly, then looking for a hall. This became the Fairbank Gospel Hall, an Italian Assembly.

Brock Avenue Gospel Hall has commended workers to Venezuela, Quebec, and Chile. Commended or co-commended evangelists have been Fred Watson, Ernest Sprunt, Frank Pearcey, Bert Joyce, George Heidman, and Bert Grainger.

* * *

Those left at Farley after Brock Avenue Gospel Hall was formed decided to move, and in 1893 began meeting at Elm and Teraulay Streets. They later moved to 25 Charles Street and took the name Central Gospel Hall. The three assemblies – Broadview, Brock, and Central – united for the 1894 Conference.

The Toronto Conferences were major events of assembly life in that city. Initially held in January of each year, in the late 1890s, they changed to Easter. Massey Hall became the venue of the Annual Conference in 1916. The final Conference at Massey Hall was in 1932.

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In 1937, young Sam Montgomery, whose parents were in the Brock Avenue Gospel Hall, was instrumental in the salvation of several young people attending a United

Church in the Mimico area. Jack Joyce and William Agnew helped disciple these new converts. A group of maturing believers developed from these Bible studies and met in homes, at St. Andrews Hall, and at the Orange Hall.

William Agnew purchased a lot at the corner of Melrose and Royal York Road for Gospel purposes. Tent meetings were held there by Messrs. Fred Watson, Albert Joyce, Sylvester, Blackwood, and William McBride over a period of years. In 1948, a building fund was started at Brock Avenue to build Mimico Gospel Hall on the property. The basement was finished first and meetings were started there in January 1950, with 20 in fellowship. The top of the Hall was finished in 1955.

Leadership at Mimico over the years has been shared by Ken Beasley, Ernie Jeffries, Frank Robinson, William Spencer, and Paul Robinson. Mimico Gospel Hall has commended workers to the Lord's service in St. Lucia. About 110 adults and children attend the assembly.

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Leaside Bible Chapel in Toronto was started in 1948, always located at 826 Eglinton Avenue East. Its founders were C. Ernest Tatham, Elwood Reid, Sydney Hoffman, George Marsh, and Horace Holt. The leading brothers over the first 30 years were Elwood Reid, Wilson Flanagan, and David McNab. Leaside Bible Chapel has commended many full-time workers over the years. About 50 adults and children now attend Leaside Bible Chapel.

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Bethany Chapel in Toronto was established in 1953 in the area of Dufferin Street, north of Lawrence Avenue, and has been at that location since. Walter and Mary Ireland had moved into the area, which then had no evangelical church, little public transportation, and was considered isolated. Mary went from door to door and invited the neighborhood children to come to Sunday School at her house. Soon every room in the house was occupied with classes, as well as one on the stairway. They then bought a piece of land, and with the help of volunteers from various assemblies in Toronto, built Bethany Chapel.

The Irelands were assisted in their ministry by their family and by Betty Ismay and Pearl Winterburn, as well as others. Mr. Ireland was an elder at Bethany until he retired and moved away. Others leaders over the years have been Redvers Warren, George Dunning, Clinton Russell, Max Blom, Ian Malloch, John Dunning, Ron Crews, Ray Crews, Dieter Wisotzky, Brad Wilson, Leroy Blake, and Wilbert Clarke. The small assembly has commended workers to Japan, Pakistan, the Phillippines, Italy, Argentina, and to local ministry.

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Hilltop Chapel in Toronto began as an assembly in about 1957, meeting initially at Hilltop Public School. It officially became Hilltop Chapel in 1962 when it built its present chapel a few blocks away. Its founding members came from area assemblies such as the Olivet Assembly and West Moreland Assembly. Among these were James and Dorothy Copland, George and Ruby Wilkinson, Hugh and Irma Quigley, Gordon and Mary Mitchell, and David and Mary Connell. Elders over the years include the

above men and Robert Bernado, Lawrence Clode, George Sinclair, John Cornish, Dave Rycroft, Andrew Rennie, Herb Ward, and Hugh Rodger. Hilltop Chapel has commended workers to Ecuador and to Intervarsity Christian Fellowship. Hugh and Marnie Rodger have been commended by the assembly to work with the senior age group. Hilltop Chapel has about 100 to 120 in attendance.

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Gilead Gospel Hall on Broadview Avenue in Toronto, was in existence prior to 1932.

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Grace and Truth Gospel Hall in Toronto was at the corner of Greenwood and Queensdale Avenues. A.S. Brown was an elder there in 1945. Grace and Truth later became known as Greenwood Gospel Chapel, still at the same address.

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Lansing Gospel Hall in Willowdale, a suburb of Toronto, began when a blind lady, Mrs. Moss, who was unable to attend the existing assemblies in Toronto, prevailed upon Hubert Lucas, Sr. to begin a Sunday School in the home of her daughter and son-in-law, the Burfords. Mr. Lucas, in fellowship at Central Gospel Hall in Toronto, had moved to the area and began the Sunday School in 1917.

The growing work moved to the Lucas home for a few years. During the summers, meetings were held in a tent owned by Mr. Burford. Thomas Street became involved in the work in the Lansing area at about that time. In 1922, he constructed a hall on Elmhurst Avenue for the

preaching of the Gospel, and the Sunday School work began meeting there.

Robert McClintock, George Shivas, and Joe Pierson carried out Gospel campaigns in the new hall. Souls were saved and people were baptized. These were received into fellowship at Central Gospel Hall. With the blessing of Central Gospel Hall, an assembly was established at the Lansing hall in 1924, which became known as Lansing Gospel Hall.

Leaders over the years include Hubert Lucas, Mr. Burford, Ged Crary, Tom Taylor, Laurence Granger, Harold Virgint, Larry Steers, Ernest Barrett, Herbert Simmons, Craig Peat, Michael Pears, Edward Chan, and Joseph Paul. The assembly has commended workers to the field in Canada, the U.S., and El Salvador, the latter jointly with Pape Avenue Gospel Hall in Toronto.

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Richvale Gospel Church began in 1949 in Richmond Hill, just north of Toronto. Those involved in the start-up were George Selkirk, Marg Cundy, and Wanda Smith. The church was not derived from another assembly, though Mr. Selkirk had a brethren background. Leadership over the years has been shared by Charlie Fevez, Henry Heidman, Floyd Wright, Ted Cundy, and Conrad Adams. Now known as Richvale Bible Chapel, and located one mile south of Richmond Hill, the assembly has over 150 in Sunday attendance.

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In about 1950, Fred Daniels of the Lansing Gospel Hall in Toronto established a Sunday School outreach in the area north of Newmarket, about 30 miles north of

Toronto. Harold McCarthy joined in the work a little later, and the work continued faithfully for many years. In the 1980s, Rexdale Gospel Hall in Toronto, where Mr. Daniels was then in fellowship, acquired ownership of the building in which the Sunday School work was carried out.

At about the same time, the Gwillimbury Bible Fellowship was established and was meeting in a home in Holland Landing, near Newmarket. The leadership of the Rexdale assembly inquired if the Gwillimbury fellowship would have an interest in the Newmarket property, which they offered free with legal bills paid, and provided some funds to improve the building. Stephen and Ruth Adams, Peter and Susan Crowe, David and Emily Garvin, Harold McCarthy, and Stan and Barb Shields, all of Gwillimbury Bible Fellowship, felt led to accept the offer. Thus River Drive Park Bible Chapel was born. The official opening was in September 1984.

The Lord blessed with new families, and the new assembly soon needed more space. In 1987, they purchased five acres a short distance away. In 1989, River Drive Park Bible Chapel occupied its new chapel. About 90 adults and children attend the assembly.

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Pickering Bible Chapel in the town of Pickering just east of Toronto, came into existence in 1981, formed by a group of eight families who came from Bendale Bible Chapel in Scarborough. The Christians initially met in a school in Pickering, then moved into their own building and took their current name Forest Brook Bible Chapel. The assembly has an attendance of around 800; leadership has been shared by many. Rod Wilson and

Angus Henderson have been commended to ministry at the assembly.

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Another city just east of Toronto is Markham. People from several assemblies and other churches began home Bible studies there in 1956. These continued until 1959, when an old, unused church building at 11 Church Street was purchased and the Christians began Breaking Bread and having other meetings.Thus the Markham Gospel Chapel was established. Those starting the assembly included Colin Anderson, John Farquharson, Fred Alsop, Douglas Gee, Walter Hayes, and Abe Stouffer.

That building was sold in 1990 and construction of a new chapel begun at 50 Cairns Drive. The assembly met at Ramerwood Public School until Markham Bible Chapel was opened in May 1991. The above men and Sam Nelson, Ron Gee, Eric Tennant, Bill Yuille, Dave McClure, Gary Corbett, Jim Lenaghan, Bill Letkeman, Hugh Beattie, Brian Doyle, and Daniel Masuello have served as elders. The assembly has commended workers to serve in the Philippines, Angola, Portugal, Turkey, and local evangelism ministries. About 260 attend Markham Bible Chapel.

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Port Hope Christian Assembly in the city of Port Hope on Lake Ontario, east of Toronto, began in 1983, renting space at the Art Smith Hall on Strachan Street. John and Ruth Barnard, in fellowship at West Hill Gospel Hall in Toronto, and Doug and Betty Ann Booth from Campbellford Gospel Hall were those who initiated the assembly. Both families had been commended by their

parent assemblies to begin the new work. Three other families joined in fellowship at its beginning in April 1983 – those of Bob and Agnes Banks, Doug and Roma Bee, and Bruce and Pat Gilley.

The group met in the rented building for a year, then purchased a store at 182 Cavan Street, and rebuilt it as Port Hope Gospel Hall. Jack Barnard maintains a web site for daily reflection. About 15 people are in the assembly today.

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Peterborough is a city some 20 miles north of Port Hope. There, in March 1965, the Edmison Heights Bible Chapel began, deriving from McDonnel Street Gospel Hall, Braidwood Bible Chapel, and Auburn Bible Chapel, all in Peterborough. Walter and Eleanor Best, Ralph and Marie Bigelow, Norm and Naomi Budge, Cecile and Dorothy Carveth, Don and Ada Ephbrave, Grant and Elaine Reader, Don and Gerrie Steele, and Jack and Marion Stevenson are those who started the assembly, and have taken leadership. The assembly has commended several to the Lord's work away and at home. About 120 are in Edmison Heights Bible Chapel.

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Springbook is near Hastings, east of Peterborough. Springbook Gospel Hall began in 1900, the result primarily of efforts by Jim Gibson and Mark Shortt, who had been saved shortly before. Active leaders over the years include Jim Gibson, Bob Scarlet, Tom Reid, Tom McKeown, Bob Reid, Harold Stapley, Paul McKeown, and Hubert Andrews. Now called Springbrook Bible Chapel the assembly has about 35 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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A few miles east of Belleville is Deseronto. The Deseronto Gospel Hall began around 1900, and has always been at the same location on George Street. Its origins have been lost in time, but leaders over the years include Edgar Beerley, William Root, and Allen Madigan. The evangelist G.P. Taylor was jointly commended by the Deseronto Gospel Hall and an assembly in Hartford, CT. About 25 adults and youngsters are in the assembly today.

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River Road Gospel Hall in Ottawa, the capital of Canada and near its eastern side, began in the late 1870s or early 1880s; the assembly is known to have been in existence well before George Smith arrived from England in 1890. Though no founding names are available, the originators were no doubt immigrants from England, Ireland, and Scotland. The earliest known meeting place of the assembly was before 1910 at the old Orange Hall on Albert Street. In 1910, the assembly built the Gospel Hall on McLeod Street. In 1914, a division occurred, and the remnants of the assembly moved into the new Orange Hall on Gloucester Street.

During the war years from 1939 to 1945, rental accommodation in Ottawa was very difficult to obtain because of expropriation of any available property by the Government for war use. On a number of occasions the meetings had to be held in homes. In 1941, the assembly occupied a small room at 283 Bank Street; in 1942 they were at 780 Bronson Avenue. After the war, the assembly moved to Orange Hall on Gladstone Avenue in 1947; in 1957 to the Gospel Hall at 857

Somerset Street West; and finally in 1964 into the Gospel Hall at 1087 River Road, their present location.

Principal leaders in the years after 1900 included Herbert Hume, George Smith, and Thomas Shields, and in later years Kenneth Prince, Mervyn Cottrill, Raeburn MacDougall and Douglas Patten.

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Rideauview Bible Chapel in Ottawa, at 1249 Prince of Wales Drive, has been in existence since at least the early 1970s. Bridlewood Bible Chapel in Kanata on the west side of Ottawa began in 1984 as a hive-off from Rideauview Bible Chapel. Fred Shaver, Alex Kilgour, Harry Norris, and Gary Allan were the principals in forming the new assembly, which met initially in a house at 465 Eagleson Road. Over a period of several years, 1988 to 1993, the Christians built a chapel on the same property. Bridlewood Bible Chapel has commended workers to local ministry in the Ottawa Valley. About 150 adults and 50 children attend Bridlewood Bible Chapel.

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On the east side of Ottawa was the Castle Heights Assembly, where Louis Germaine and Leonard Thomas held cottage meetings for French-speaking people in the 1950s. Plans were laid by believers at Clarey Avenue Chapel in Ottawa to build a chapel in that section, but the French population had moved out before the chapel was completed. Eight Christians from the Clarey Avenue assembly then moved to the area to form the English-speaking Castle Heights Assembly.

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Osgoode is a small town south of Ottawa. In the 1890s, the Everets family Remembered the Lord together, and others joined them. The group grew and in 1900 George and Minnie Otto donated property with a building for the purpose of assembly worship. This was called the Osgoode Gospel Hall. In 1904 an addition was put on, doubling the size of the building. Today, the same building is called Osgoode Bible Chapel.

Leading brothers in the assembly include Karl Knuth, Murray Oickle, Percy Jackson, Rick Oickle, David Cox, Keith Lapsley, George Maxwell, Bligh Stockwell, Leonard Thomas, George Grey, Louie Germain, Rolly Jaekel, Alonzo Scherdfiger, Arnie McClelland, Sam Smith, Dan Everets, and Lionel McKean. The assembly has commended a worker to the foreign field. About 15 adults and children are in the assembly today.

* * *

At Winchester, 30 miles from Ottawa, Gospel meetings were held in the early 1950s by different brethren in the home of a local farmer, Arrington Stewart. Other meetings were held in the town hall. Several were saved, and the Christians built their own meeting place, Bethany Chapel, in the heart of Winchester.

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Sixty miles northwest of Ottawa is Renfrew. A new assembly started through cottage meetings in the home of Alex Kilgour. Much interest was shown among church people in the town, and in about 1956, the Renfrew assembly was established in the mid 1950s and built Elmwood Gospel Chapel. William McRae gave much help to this assembly in its early days. Now called

Elmwood Bible Chapel, the assembly is still at the same location at 200 Francis Street.

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Two older assemblies in the Ottawa area are Deacon Gospel Hall, which continues, and Bethel Gospel Hall in Arnprior a few miles from Renfrew, which disbanded in about 1990.

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North of Renfrew, on the Quebec border, is the city of Pembroke. Cottage meetings in the home of L. Pilatske resulted in the formation of a new assembly in 1957. Jim Booker was instrumental in the beginning of this assembly, meeting at the Emmanuel Gospel Chapel at 235 McKenzie Street, originally a one-room schoolhouse. After a time, the assembly met in the Pinewood School in nearby Petawawa. Later, the assembly moved back to Pembroke as the Pembroke Bible Chapel on Highway 62. In leadership over the years have been Messrs. Pilatzke, Noss, Schutt, Axford, Floyd, Ghent, Lockley, and Renault. Workers have been commended by the assembly to the Lord's work in Tennessee and Guinea, West Africa, as well as local work. About 60 adults and children attend Pembroke Bible Chapel.

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The nine northern townships in Hastings County were struggling with their identities in the second half of the nineteenth century. The area, close to what is now the Algonquin Provincial Park, was in an uneasy transition from the dominance of roving loggers to that of settlers.

The evangelist Richard Irving was responsible for the establishment and encouragement of many assemblies

in the area usually called North Hastings. He provided this account: “In April 1885, I heard from a young convert of a needy section of country about one hundred miles north of Belleville, Ontario, then known as the backwoods of Ontario. This brother, named Colp, had just moved there and had taken up land a few miles outside the village of Bancroft.… I found brother Colp’s house in the midst of forest with perhaps twenty yards of clearance around it. We also found, among these humble settlers, converted people of the old-fashioned Methodist type. They listened hungrily to the gospel, preached perhaps in a simpler way than they had previously heard it with constant reference to the Scriptures. The Bible became a new book to them. It caused a stir among these people and many were saved; others were established.… The ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper were quickly understood, as also what the Word said about His coming. The Table was spread, and a small company assembled in His name alone and partook of the emblems… Thus in this simple way this first assembly was formed in that locality.…”

This would become the Lakeview Assembly. The community of Lakeview is about five miles east of Bancroft. James Maxwell had opened his home for Mr. Irving’s first meeting in the Lakeview area in May 1885. He emerged as a spiritual leader and stalwart of the Lakeview Assembly. All his twelve children were at one time in fellowship in that assembly.

Lakeview and the Maxwell Settlement were centers of concentrated activity in the early years primarily because of the zeal of Godfrey and Rosetta Colp. Mr. Colp had moved his family to the area to begin homesteading, and started having house meetings at

which some were saved. He could not read, so through the week his wife would read him the passage from which he expected to preach. Knowing his limitations, he contacted Richard Irving, then living in Belleville, to come help. Mr. Irving came and continued during May and most of June, seeing several saved and baptized, then started the assembly. J. Norman Case, later associated with the China Inland Mission, also helped initiate this work and spent three entire summers in the area with good results.

In October 1891, John and Barbara Sararas deeded a parcel of land to Thomas Maxwell, William Redman, Henry Switzer, John Sararas, Henry C. Gaebel, Robert Graham and Richard Payne, “Trustees of the Hall of the Christians gathering in the name of the Lord in the Township of Dungannon.” This was the first ownership of land by an assembly in the area, and shows that the work at Lakeview was reasonably well established by then and that a number of families were clearly committed to a simple gathering of believers unto the name of Jesus Christ.

A purpose of the trust was described as “...to build a Hall and other buildings to be used as a Hall for the gathering of the Christian Brethren: to permit Dwelling House on said premises..., to permit Sunday Schools to be carried on in the said Hall, to take down and remove buildings and to rebuild, ...and to sell graves and tombs...”

The first building the assembly used was a log building which burned after a Christmas tea one Sunday evening, not later than 1902. After the fire, a frame building was constructed and is still in use as the Lakeview Gospel

Hall. John Sararas placed Scripture texts on the inside wall of the Hall. It was through these texts that Wellington Maxwell came to faith in Christ. In the absence of preachers, James Maxwell Sr. spoke and led the 'Bible reading,' as the mid_week Bible study was then called. Mr. Maxwell had a large heart of concern for the flock. If people were absent from the Lord's Supper meeting they could expect that they would receive a visit from him early in the week. His intention was to encourage rather than scold. After the seventy-year-old James and his wife Jane moved to Bancroft in 1912, his sons Wellington and Archie appear to have shared the major responsibilities of the Lakeview Assembly.

During this era, Sunday School was held in the morning, the Lord's Supper was observed in the afternoon, evening services were held on Sunday if a preacher was present, and a Bible Study and Prayer Meeting were held on a weekday evening. Attendance at the Breaking of Bread was around 30; the Hall would be full for Sunday evening meetings when a preacher was there.

Around the turn of the century several of the Reynolds family moved to Bancroft and most of them attended meetings at Lakeview until the assembly in Bancroft was firmly established. Elvin Reynolds married Alberta Maxwell, daughter of James Sr., and moved onto a farm in the Maxwell Settlement; they began taking an active and responsible part in the Lakeview Assembly.

Around 1915, Sunday School attendance averaged about 35. Teachers included Wellington Maxwell and his wife Catherine, Walter Maxwell, and Eunice and Gertie Mountney. Families involved in the Assembly around

1920 included Frasers, Maxwells, Mountneys, Reynolds, Shannicks, Sickers, Vardys and Yorks. In the coldest part of winter the Lord’s Supper was sometimes observed in the home of Wellington Maxwell or Elvin Reynolds. For a period of time in the 1920s and perhaps earlier, Wellington Maxwell also conducted Sunday School at the Maxwell Settlement Schoolhouse. He is remembered with much respect as a leader.

In the late 1920s, Elvin Reynolds, Archie Maxwell and Max Reynolds started carrying the major responsibility for the meetings. By 1931, Max Reynolds was taking an active part at Lakeview and frequently speaking at other assemblies. A pump organ was purchased after Max and Helen Reynolds’ marriage and Helen played this at meetings other than the Breaking of Bread until they stopped having meetings at Lakeview in the early 1960s. Throughout the history of the Lakeview Assembly The Believer's Hymn Book was used for the Lord’s Supper and Redemption Songs was used at other meetings.

Shortly after the return of the Audry Maxwell family from Prince Edward County in 1941, Audry began teaching the boys in Sunday School. By 1944, the attendance was about fifteen. Surnames of people involved in the mid 1940s included Barkers, Cards, Frazers, Maxwells, Reynolds, Shannicks, Sickers and Vardys.

A post World War II migration of people from Lakeview area farms to Bancroft and other places greatly reduced the number of people involved. By the mid 1950s the Max Reynolds, Bob Jenkins and Ed Vardy families were all driving from Bancroft to keep the work going.

By the early 1960s, the families responsible for the Sunday School were getting past the age where they found it easy to relate to the younger children, attendance was down and little local interest seemed to be evident. Sunday School at the Bancroft Gospel Hall was growing and busing was playing a major role in attracting children to that Sunday School. Consequently, in about 1961 the Lakeview Gospel Hall was closed, children from the area were bused to Bancroft for Sunday School, and the families who had been involved there were received into fellowship in Bancroft. The Lakeview Gospel Hall was reopened in 1966 by people who had been driving from the immediate Bancroft area to New Carlow for Breaking of Bread, Sunday School and a mid_week meeting. This group emerged after the extended meetings Robert McLaren held in Bancroft in 1960, out of a concern that area assemblies were drifting away from their historic biblical position.

Lakeview Gospel Hall functioned in its original location near Clarke Lake until 1994, when a new hall was built at Boundary Lake about two miles north of the original location. Five families are in the assembly today. Leadership over these many years has been shared by these named, and more recently Audrey Maxwell, Cecil Brownson, Herman Mitchell, Andy Freymond, and Mark Freymond.

* * *

Another assembly in the area soon began in the “Fiss Settlement,” now called Graphite. On the day after his arrival at Mr. Colp’s in May 1885, Richard Irving walked ten miles to hold a Gospel meeting. The most probable location was the Fiss Settlement because of the distance

mentioned, the number of German settlers living in that area and Colp's German background. The first simple Lord's Supper meeting, with eight persons in attendance, was held there on the afternoon of Sunday March 29, 1887, probably in the Fiss Schoolhouse or the home of Fred Fiss Sr. Mr. Irving held many Gospel meetings there over the next several years.

In October 1900, William and Albertina Bahm of the Fiss Settlement deeded land in Monteagle Township to three trustees – John Goodkey, Herman Kelusky, and Richard Irving. The Graphite Gospel Hall was built shortly after this. The only known detail of the construction of the building is that John Goodkey made bricks and built the chimney. The building was used until 1976 when a new building, the Graphite Bible Chapel was erected on the grounds of the Graphite Bible Camp.

The Breaking of Bread services at the Fiss Settlement were on Sunday afternoons. Mr. Irving recorded that 11 attended on one of his visits in 1917, showing almost no growth in the three intervening decades. He remarked that "Mrs. Brose keeps Sunday School going to her credit." The movement of several of the Bahms and Fisses to other areas, as well as the migration of other families to the West, greatly reduced the number of people committed to the Graphite Assembly in the early years of this century.

In the early 1930s, Fred Brose invited Robert Jenkins to help with the work at Graphite where ten to fifteen children were then attending Sunday School. Through the nonwinter months from 1933 to 1943, he traveled to Graphite for a morning Sunday School and returned to his home in Hybla for afternoon Sunday School classes.

Sunday School attendance at Graphite increased to between forty-five and fifty.

Work among the adults continued though remaining small until the 1940s. During his second visit to the Bancroft area in 1937, John Martin was introduced to the Graphite Assembly and the Brose family by Simon Brownson. In about 1940, he arranged for a week of meetings at Graphite, and recalled a small Breaking of Bread meeting, with the Brose's and Mr. and Mrs. Ross Olmstead as regulars.

In 1947, George Butcher Sr. and Gordon Bigelow were in the area showing a Gospel film. One of the people whom the faithful Mrs. Brose invited to the meeting at the Graphite Gospel Hall was Mrs. Sam Robinson, whose son Doug was gloriously saved under the ministry of Robert Jenkins. Doug Robinson later sold his business and went into full time work for the Lord.

In 1961, when the area assemblies were reluctant to get involved, Doug Robinson formed a committee, bought land on Graphite Lake, and started Graphite Bible Camp, a fee-free day camp for children. Mr. and Mrs. Robert McLaren Sr. helped for three years at the camp and then John and Melissa Martin helped in this work through the summer of 1971. Doug's nephews, Garry and Boyd Robinson and their spouses would later take over the responsibilities of the day-to-day operation of the Camp. The Camp has proved to be a great blessing in the area.

Leadership at Graphite since the earliest years includes William Boehme, Fred Brose, Ross Olmstead, Harvey Peelow, Doug Robinson, Boyd Robinson, and Garry Robinson. Mrs. Fred Brose and Mr. Robert Jenkins are

especially remembered for their long and faithful work with the young people in the 1930s and 1940s. From its small numbers in the early days, Graphite Bible Chapel today has about 150 in attendance at the Family Bible Hour.

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In 1925, Fred Brose heard David McLean preach in a logging camp and invited him to the Graphite area. One of the many people who were saved under his ministry was Robert William Jenkins. Not long after his conversion, Robert Jenkins began to witness to family and friends giving evidence of an evangelist's heart. In 1928, he married Janie Rutledge and moved to a farm east of Hybla. During the summer months of about 1930 through 1932 he held Sunday school in the morning in his childhood schoolhouse at Greenview, often walking the seven or eight miles to Greenview, conducting a Sunday School, then walking back home for an afternoon Sunday School. In about 1933, the Jenkins' moved into Hybla Station and continued with an afternoon Sunday School in their home. By the early 1940s, attendance at Hybla averaged between thirty-five and forty.

In the fall of 1943, the Hybla Gospel Tabernacle was opened through the efforts of the Jenkins'. Although this work was not a brethren assembly in the historical sense, many assembly preachers were invited and held meetings there. The Lord's Supper was held there only during the first year or so and even then it was on an irregular basis. Janie Jenkins later stated that Robert chose to call the building a Tabernacle to avoid the use

of the word Hall, because of its association with dances, the Orange Lodge, and other halls.

Les Sutherland was faithful in his assistance with the Hybla work. Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins moved to Bancroft in the spring of 1947, but continued with the Hybla afternoon Sunday School and evening Gospel Meeting for another year or two. With better roads and more reliable automobiles available, people were able to travel with greater ease to either Graphite or Bancroft and the decision was made to discontinue the Hybla work.

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Bancroft was one of the larger villages in North Hastings. Settled in 1862, it consisted primarily of flour, saw, woollen, and shingle mills in its early days. In 1855 a young Englishman, Alfred Barker, was among those who first arrived in the area. He was the grandfather of Roy and Gordon Barker and great grandfather of Ken Barker, all of whom have been in fellowship in the assembly meeting in the Bancroft Bible Chapel.

Up until 1902, some of the families who lived in Bancroft, such as the Reynolds, traveled the few miles out to Lakeview. In 1902, Tom Maxwell moved his family to town and opened a harness shop. At about that time, Bancroft residents began to meet over Tom’s Harness Shop and the Bancroft assembly has been in existence ever since. Early leadership was in the hands of Tom Maxwell, Jim Reynolds and Albert Reynolds.

The earliest clear reference to the Bancroft Gospel Hall comes from the local newspaper’s Halloween report for l903, in which the Gospel Hall sign was noted to have

been transported to a conspicuous position on Flynn's liquor store.

In the years which followed Richard Irving's first visit to Bancroft, the area received constant rounds of visits from many itinerant brethren preachers. These preachers would arrive without invitation or warning, and announce their intentions with respect to meetings and accommodations.

A report from Hybla that a "large number from here attended the conference held in Bancroft last week" suggests a central conference at Bancroft for the area in the early 1900s. Richard Irving was a frequent speaker at the Bancroft Conferences. In 1905, a fall conference was held in Bancroft at which Tom Black, Robert Telfer, Irving, Pinches, Robert McClintock, and Joe Pearson participated. Richard Irving's last known visit to Bancroft was in the fall of 1942, when he was 85 years old. Although his work was primarily that of an evangelist, he was diligent in instructing new converts about Christian life and practice.

By 1908, Mr. E.W. Roughley had moved into Bancroft from his farm near Paudash Lake and John Gilchrist had moved to town from the Highland Grove area. The Bancroft Times reported the September 20, 1911 marriage in Bancroft of Mr. and Mrs. Clapp's eldest daughter Pearl to a young assembly evangelist, Leonard Sheldrake from Toronto. Mr. Roughley performed the ceremony.

At the turn of the century the North Hastings region was experiencing unprecedented prosperity and its population was at a peak. When the l901 Census was taken, Bancroft's population was about 600 and by

1904, its population had risen to 815. However, the migration of families and young men to Western Canada was gaining momentum. This movement of people not only had economic repercussions but also profoundly affected the brethren assemblies of the area and eventually claimed several preachers who lived and ministered here. The North Hastings area, which at one time was home to at least five and perhaps even seven brethren preachers, by 1921 was home to at most one.

In the 1901 Canadian Census, 6361 people were living in the nine northern townships of Hastings County. In 1911, that number was 6273, and in 1921 the Census recorded 6060 residents.

The first known references to Harold Jones and George Calverley ministering in the district were contained in the February 8, 1917, Bancroft Times. Harold Jones and his in_laws the Hookers had moved to Bancroft by 1918. Mr. Jones had a Gospel tent which he and Mr. Hooker pitched from place to place. Harold Jones is remembered as an energetic, boisterous fellow who loved to sing. For the two years that he lived in Bancroft, his presence was felt. For most of July 1919, he had his tent pitched at Baptiste Lake.

By 1918, the Clapps were living in Alberta and Mr. Roughley probably had passed away. In July 1920, Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Hooker, and Mr. and Mrs. Jones, moved to Orillia.

At the turn of the decade it would appear that Mr. Rowe was the only assembly preacher who might have been living in North Hastings. The apparent stagnation in which the area assemblies found themselves however was broken by the arrival of the powerful and

personable Gospel preacher, R.J. Brooks. Mr. Brooks was an energetic, down_to_earth man who was deeply respected by those who knew him.

In January 1924, Richard James Brooks arrived from Shelbourne for Gospel meetings. On the first night of the meetings, Eunice Maxwell was saved, and when Richard Irving arrived, he discovered “Great meetings in progress by Lynn and Brooks, about 16 or 17 have professed.” In March, Mr. Brooks came again to Bancroft to hold meetings in the Bancroft Gospel Hall.

A special open air Baptismal Service was held at Lakeview on Sunday, June 22nd, at 2 p.m., conducted by Brooks and Lynn. That day over 30 people were baptized and most of them had been saved during meetings the previous winter. Another seven or eight were baptized at Lakeview in September.

The large number of converts the previous winter were now crowding the meeting room over the Drug Store at 3 Bridge Street West in Bancroft, then the location of the Bancroft Gospel Hall. At Mr. Brooks’ prodding a larger facility, the previously closed Presbyterian Church, was rented in July 1924 and later purchased by the assembly. That October, about 125 Broke Bread at the Bancroft Conference in the Community Hall in the morning; in the afternoon the Hall was full as Messrs. Wellman, Gilchrist, Irving, Miller, and Brooks spoke.

Richard Irving was sensitive to the vacuum which had been created in the area by the departure of preachers such as Clapp and Gilchrist, as well as the death of Mr. Roughley, and sought to compensate with biannual month_long visits. In March 1925, he was in Bancroft having meetings almost every night; he noted that 55

Broke Bread in Bancroft one Sunday of his stay. The Bancroft Conference was moved to June in 1925, and the number of people in attendance reflected the effects of the revival under the ministry of R.J. Brooks. Mr Irving recorded that “about 215 Broke Bread in the Community Hall.” By late summer of 1925, Mr. Irving was back in the area and on September 6, thirty_eight people were present at a Lord’s Supper meeting at the Hartsmere Assembly. In July 1927, Richard Irving was at Hartsmere where he spoke at a full schoolhouse.

In February 1926, R.J. Brooks held a series of meetings in the Old Presbyterian Church in Bancroft. At the Bancroft Conference, about 250 observed the Lord’s Supper, and approximately 400 people filled the Community Hall to hear George Rainey , Mr. Pinches, Mr. Heathwood, Sam Benner, Richard Irving, and R.J. Brooks preach. Small and large baptisms were a regular feature throughout the district in the years after Mr. Brooks’ first visit.

With Mr. and Mrs. Lynn living in Bancroft, the area assemblies received pastoral care which had been missing for several years. Although Mr. Lynn was not a good ‘platform man,’ he was diligent in visitation and personal witness. Mr. and Mrs. Ross McConkey moved to Bancroft in the mid 1930s and remained there most of the years into the 1950s. Leadership in Bancroft was shared by Albert Reynolds and Tom Brownson in the 1930s and 1940s. Tom continued faithfully into the late 1980s. Simon Brownson, Tom’s brother, faithfully preached the Gospel and visited homes in the area from the 1940s into the 1990s.

A new larger building was built on the main street in 1952 with much volunteer labor under the supervision of George Easton. After the first prayer meeting, it was badly damaged by fire, was rebuilt, has had two renovation/expansions since, and is known as the Bancroft Bible Chapel.

Robert McLaren Jr. came in February 1960 for two weeks of Gospel Meetings. The Spirit of God caused a 'stir' and when the meetings ended 10 weeks later, at least 75 people had professed salvation or been restored to the Lord. Many were young people. People were burdened to pray at 6:00 a.m. prayer meetings and after the evening meetings. The youth group grew to over 70, and the Sunday School began to grow. In the years which followed many were commended to the Lord's work in North America and overseas.

Ernie Belch and his wife Evelyn moved to Bancroft in the mid 1960s and worked with the assembly until the end of 1984. George Butcher and his wife Eunice began working with the assembly in 1985 and continue to the present. Messrs. Belch and Butcher did about fifty percent of the Sunday preaching. By the early 1980s, about 225 were in fellowship in Bancroft and about 275 adults and teens were attending Family Bible Hour regularly.

In 1987 a committee was formed to evaluate a government program for housing for seniors. By 1988 the Bancroft Bible Chapel Non-profit Housing Corporation was formed, and by April 1989, seniors occupied the attractive 40-apartment R.J. Brooks Living Centre immediately behind the Chapel.

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In 1983, the assembly at Bancroft Bible Chapel was considering whether to enlarge their facilities, move to a new location, or hive-off a new assembly. It seemed that a natural hive-off of those living in the L'Amable area, which is about four miles south of Bancroft, was the better idea. So with the blessing of the Bancroft elders, the new assembly, called L'Amable Bible Chapel began in September 1983 in an old school house with four class rooms. The Christians were given freedom to renovate it to suit their needs. Although it was old, it met their needs for the first 10 years.

The Christians saw the desirability of having their own building to show the community they were a permanent part of it. Over a period of approximately two and a half years, a new building was constructed by the Christians in the assembly, having about 6000 square feet. The chapel was ready in October 1993, and the assembly was debt free in two years.

The first elders were Roger Easton and Glenn Sargeant; later George Tenthorey joined, and after that Durl Lott and David Burke. Several have been commended to the Lord's work in Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Ireland. Others have been commended for work at Joy Bible Camp, Kawartha Lakes Bible College, and ministry within Ontario. About 200 attend L'Amable Bible Chapel.

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The fact that 40 observed the Lord's Supper at one place in North Hastings in 1889 is significant and reflects the growth in numbers which was experienced in the early years. The only preachers known to have preached in the area up to this time were Richard Irving, J.N. Case, W. H. Stanger and Henry Turner.

While J.N. Case was ministering in the Lakeview area in 1885, Henry Turner was at Boulter in Carlow Township. Initially Mr. Turner was given permission to hold meetings in the Presbyterian Church but the leadership became concerned when people started to get saved, and Mr. Turner was asked to leave. He obtained a tent which he pitched down the road from the church and continued the meetings.

The work received added impetus in 1890 when a 52 year old bachelor, Fleming May, left the mercantile business, entered full time Christian service and moved to Carlow Township. The same year, he and Mr. J. E. Morton began preaching together and continued to do so until Mr. May's death in 1924.

Fleming May lived in Carlow Township in the 1890s, and it is probable that Ed Morton did as well. Some time before 1898, they worked in Gooderham, Bear Lake and Irondale in Haliburton County. The Gooderham Assembly was formed at that time. From August 1898 until May 1899, they lived and preached in the Silver Lake, Harvey, and North Veralum areas near Napanee and started the Harvey Assembly. These assemblies have long been disbanded.

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In September 1897, G. C. Rolph and his father Alfred Rolph were creating a stir in the Boulter area as they held meetings in the Havergal Schoolhouse. The work in the Boulter area was progressing and in February 1901, William and Sarah Demeral deeded land in Carlow Township to Fleming May. Construction of a building on this property began in 1902. Last names of those who worked on the building include Demeral, Graham,

Hannah, Hoover, Inwood, Loney(s), Lott, Ralph, Reddick(s), Stringer, Sutherland(s), Taylor(s) and Wannamaker. In September 1902, the Bancroft Times reported that “Mr. Clapp, Gospel minister, is preaching in the old Orange Hall at Boulter.”

In May 1905, a conference was held at Boulter and Mr. Irving noted that perhaps 50 Broke Bread; he, Gilchrist, and William Pinches spoke at other meetings during the day. The renamed Boulter Gospel Chapel is still in use in 1999. On Sunday February 3, 1924 only eight persons Broke Bread in the Boutler assembly, according to Richard Irving’s diary.

James Pennock carried a lot of the responsibilities for the work in the 1920s and 1930s. Other families attending in those years included the Taylors, Chatertons, Bronsons, Caverleys, Inwoods and Hannahs. In the late 1920s, the Boulter Assembly also received renewed vigor from the preaching of Mr. Brooks.

The same post Depression factors that caused people in the Lakeview, Graphite, New Carlow, Hartsmere and Beechmount areas to migrate to Bancroft and larger centers, affected Boulter. By 1939, the Chapel was only being used for special meetings when a preacher came for a visit and for a few meetings in the summer.

In 1949, Glendon Budarick and his sister Irene, and Llewellyn Hartwick and his sister Gwen were saved and baptized. In 1950, these young people started the Sunday School which continues to the present. They were helped by Mrs. Myrtle Edwards and George Lackey. By 1953 Sunday services were being held on a regular basis. Through the years since, George Lackey,

Lee Caverly, Glen Budarick, and Gary Hass have carried the responsibility for this work.

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New Carlow or Little Carlow also received many visits from assembly preachers. On May 28, 1908 Nesbitt Thomas Armstrong purchased the log school house from the school trustees and sold it for the same price to three trustees for the “Assembly of Christians” on June 25. Richard Irving reported that he went with James Maxwell Sr. to Carlow and Remembered the Lord at the Little Carlow Assembly on a Sunday afternoon in December 1909. In September 1926, Mr. Irving Broke Bread at the New Carlow Assembly with “about a dozen” people. The log structure was replaced by a frame building in the 1940s. Jack and Irene (Budarick) Allison and Buddy Armstrong helped with the Sunday School in the 1950s and Audrey Maxwell and others traveled from Bancroft in the early 1960s. The assembly closed in 1966.

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After the death of Godfrey Colp Sr., his widow Rosetta married Abraham Brethour, a bachelor from Beechmount, west of Bancroft. Through her efforts and encouragement a few believers began to meet in their log house in 1896 or 1897, to observe the Lord’s Supper. This was the beginning of the Beechmount assembly. The work was growing and the need for a building of their own was clear. Consequently, in March 1905, Abraham Brethour and his wife Rosetta deeded land in Faraday Township to the local brethren. By late summer 1906, a building was in service, the Beechmount Gospel Hall. In June 1927, Mr. Irving was with the Beechmount

assembly, where he gathered with about twenty people to Remember the Lord. Families involved in this work included Brethours, Clarks, Coverts, Mitchells and Plumleys.

In the 1930s several of the families moved to Bancroft or larger centers such as Peterborough and by 1942 it was decided to close the Beechmount assembly.

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West of the North Hastings area is Huntsville, a town a little over 100 miles due north of Toronto. About twelve miles from there is Deer Lake. In about 1890, evangelist David Scott came to Deer Lake to preach. He found an old unused school house, and found people receptive to the Gospel. He labored there until an assembly was planted, even bringing his bride there. The Christians probably first met in the home of John and Martha Nickason or James W. Nickason in 1890.

Under Mr. Scott's direction, the Christians built a small Deer Lake Gospel Hall on a piece of land on the north side of Stephenson Road 1. Traveling preachers held Gospel meetings there over a period of many years, including N.D. Brown, J.J. Rouse, Fred Watson, Herbert Harris, Ormer Sprunt, Ed Heels, and many others. J.J. Rouse pioneered at Emberson, and would walk 14 miles down to Deer Lake on a Saturday and stay at John Nickason's, Remember the Lord on Sunday, and walk back to Emberson in the afternoon to hold a Gospel meeting there in the evening. As was the custom, the Christians at Deer Lake Gospel Hall held yearly conferences for many years, in a tent pitched in a field just west of the Hall.

One early member of the assembly was Herbert Taylor, who was saved in 1891. He later moved to Saskatchewan and settled near Taylorside, an area named for him, and was instrumental in the formation of the Taylorside Assembly. Some other early members of the assembly were Mr. and Mrs. Sam Orr, Mr. and Mrs. Irwin Orr, Mr. and Mrs. James Hughes Sr., Mrs. Joe Oliver Sr., Mrs. Humphrey, and the Huggins family.

It seems that the assembly ceased to Break Bread about 1925. Some of the Deer Lake Christians traveled to Huntsville to Break Bread in the Huntsville Gospel Hall. Alfred Huggins continued on in Deer Lake with a Sunday School work that he carried on faithfully for over 40 years. Gospel series were held in the little Deer Lake hall many times in the 1930s and 1940s. Among the preachers then were Ben Widdifield, Ernie Sprunt, and David Adams. From 1957 on, Gospel meetings were held every Sunday evening in the little hall. Brethren came from Huntsville to preach, and Alf Huggins and Bert French would help.

About 30 assembly Christians living in the Deer Lake area were in fellowship in the Huntsville Gospel Hall in the 1960s. With encouragement of the Christians at Huntsville, they began talking of hiving off and reviving the assembly at Deer Lake. When a level plot across from Alf Huggins' home was donated, and several large financial contributions were made, these Christians began construction of a larger hall in 1976, and in 1977 the Christians were Remembering the Lord in the new Deer Lake Gospel Hall. Today, there are about 40 to 50 adults and youngsters in the assembly.

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North of Huntsville is the town of South River. A Bible study began there in about 1885 in the home of William and Elizabeth Holditch. William had left the Anglican church, and Elizabeth was the daughter of a Methodist circuit rider in the Muskoka area. How they came to a New Testament style of meeting is not remembered. William Holditch died in 1899, and it was about then that a Gospel Hall was built. Early leaders can be inferred from an announcement dated 1901 of the Second Annual Convention held in the Gospel Hall, signed by G. Wilson, George Doolittle, L. Malley, and D. Ganton. From 1899 to 1983 the group's meeting place was called the South River Gospel Hall and since then it has had the name South River Christian Assembly. Among the more recent leaders have been Jim Craig, Ed Brooks, and Ken Hall. The assembly has commended workers to the field in Russia and Zambia; Matthew Craig is commended as a youth worker for the area. South River Christian Assembly has a Sunday attendance averaging about 50, but sometimes reaching about 100.

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Burk's Falls is about 20 miles north of Huntsville. Burk's Falls Gospel Chapel was started there in 1975, derived from Dunchurch Gospel Chapel, which disbanded in the late 1980s. The Don Lane and Clarke Kennedy families initiated the assembly. Clarke Kennedy and George Hosick are the elders at Burk's Falls Gospel Chapel, which has six adults in fellowship, and meets at 239 Queen Street.

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Haliburton is southeast of Huntsville and is the location of West Guilford Gospel Chapel. The Haliburton assembly was started in homes around 1928 by a Mr. May and a Mr. Morton, both of them of brethren backgrounds. In leadership have been Benjamin Sawyer, Ernest Cooper, Stuart Wilson, and James Cooper. Missionaries have been commended by the assembly to Zambia. About 50 adults and children attend West Guilford Gospel Chapel.

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In about 1918, Sam Taylor, a Scots evangelist, came to the 'Tri-Town' area of Cobalt, Haileybury, and New Liskeard, about 80 miles north of North Bay near the boundary with Quebec. Through his efforts, assemblies were planted in Haileybury and New Liskeard. At the New Liskeard Gospel Hall in 1946 were the Wesley Richards family, the Whittles, and Tom and Alma Wood. The Haileybury Gospel Hall amalgamated with the New Liskeard Gospel Hall in the late 1960s.

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Earlton, Charlton, and Englehart are a trio of small towns about 25 miles north of New Liskeard and near the Quebec province boundary. Assemblies established in those three villages had much interaction. The railroad was pushed north from North Bay, reaching New Liskeard in 1904 and Earlton in 1905, then continued north to Englehart from there. As the railroad came through, farm lots were made available to settlers.

In the fall of 1905, four young men from Muskoka came to establish their farming claims. These were Albert and Alfred Carr, Hugh Fergusson, and Jim Baldwin, all related. In 1903, Albert Carr had been in Toronto, where

he was saved and became associated with the Brock Avenue Gospel Hall. There he met John Sylvester, who was just starting out in the Lord's work, and Fred Watson. John Sylvester and J.J. Rouse had held Gospel meetings in New Liskeard prior to that time.

In 1907, John Slyvester and Fred Watson held Gospel meetings in New Liskeard. Albert Carr walked the 24 miles from his home at Earlton to meet them and encourage them to come to Earlton for more Gospel efforts, which they did. Many were saved, and an assembly was established, meeting first in the log shanty that Albert Carr lived in while building his house. Breaking of Bread and Gospel meetings were held in this shanty, and people crowded into it and around the outside. When Mr. Carr completed his house about two years later, the assembly met there; in 1911 the Christians were able to build the Earlton Gospel Hall three miles west of Earlton. A new hall built in 1984 at the same location.

Early conversions and additions to the assembly were the families of Alfred Carr, Hugh Fergusson, Jim Baldwin, Harry Baldwin, Arthur Burley, Edgar Burley, George Eaton, and Alton Ralph. Among those who came a little later were the William Potter, Percy Booth, Sam Hall, and Ivan Field families. Traveling preachers came regularly to Earlton, including John Sylvester, Fred Watson, George Shivas, and Ben Widdifield from Huntsville.

Leaders of the assembly, besides those already mentioned, include Fred Hall, Fred Taylor, Bethuel Carr, John Potter, Clifford Hall, Eric Taylor and Philip Potter. The assembly has commended a worker to Manitoulin

Island. About 35 adults and children attend Earlton Gospel Hall.

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Benjamin Widdifield had been commended to the Lord's work by the Huntsville Gospel Hall. In 1921, he came to the Charlton district, where several of his family lived, with the Gospel. With R. Bruce and D. Miller, he held meetings in homes and schools. Many were saved and baptized, and the Charlton Assembly was formed in 1923. Among those saved and forming the assembly were the families of Stewart Rodgers, Sam Rodgers, Roy Rodgers, and Mr. DeVrice. The group was able to purchase an unused school house in the fall; it was used for many years. The first Earlton-Charlton Bible Conference was held in 1927.

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Englehart is about 25 miles south of Kirkland Lake and nine miles from both Earlton and Charlton. In 1929, Ben Widdifield and R. Bruce returned to Englehart for a series of Gospel meetings. These men visited all around the countryside on foot or bicycle. When people were saved, these men urged the formation of a new assembly in that area.

Englehart Gospel Hall was formed in 1933, meeting first in the home of Tom Holcroft. Then the Christians moved to the home of Alex Spence, and in 1935 began holding assembly Sunday meetings at the Orange Hall. Some of the Christians who had been traveling to the Earlton or Charlton Assemblies began fellowshipping at Englehart. The Albert Carr family moved to Englehart in 1938 and became stalwarts in the assembly.

Not until 1952 was the Gospel Hall built, and then just a basement, located at the corner of Fifth Street and Sixth Avenue. The upstairs seems to have been built about a year later. The Huntsville Gospel Hall donated 100 chairs. The growing assembly has been very evangelistic, with children's works and having its own Conferences. Leadership over the years includes Mr. Spence, Mr. Carr, Mr. E. Smart, and Mr. Gordon Wood, among many others. About 50 adults and youngsters attend Englehart Gospel Hall now.

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About 45 miles north of New Liskeard is Matheson. The 4th Avenue Gospel Hall in Matheson was established probably in the 1920s. When the assembly moved to 7th Avenue, they renamed their meeting place 7th Avenue Gospel Chapel. James Johnston, Sam Taylor, and William Green are credited with starting the assembly. John Martin and Sydney Hoffman worked with the Matheson assembly during the summer of 1935, as well as at the nearby Monteith Gospel Hall. From 1932 to 1943, William Murray preached in this area of northern Ontario, and helped build some of the Gospel Halls.

When William Green died in 1948, the Matheson assembly disbanded. Chester and Marion Donaldson moved to the Matheson area in December 1948 and helped re-establish the assembly. A new hall was constructed in 1955. The Matheson Gospel Chapel, located at 294 2nd Street, was built in the 1990s. John and Elza McLaughlin have been mainstays in the Matheson assembly and Clifford Campbell has also been in leadership. Other families in the assembly have been the Harbridges, Childs, Olivers, McMains, and Grants.

Matheson Gospel Chapel has commended workers to the field in Guatemala, France, and Ireland. About 60 are in the assembly at present.

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Thirteen miles north of Matheson is Monteith. William Murray had started meetings in the Monteith Community Hall in about 1935. When John Martin and Sydney Hoffman arrived in the area, the Christians put up a log cabin, the Monteith Gospel Hall and first Remembered the Lord there in July of that year. In about 1946, it seems that a new Hall was built through the efforts of the Wesley Clarke, William Murray, and Victor Booth families. In Montrock, a suburb of Iroquois Falls, William Murray also built the Montrock Gospel Hall, now Iroquois Falls Gospel Chapel, with an apartment in the back, where his family lived for about five years. The Herb Peever family was active in that assembly. Here also, Chester and Marion Donaldson labored for a time, as did Arnold Spears from Leaside Bible Chapel in Toronto.

* * *

The assembly now meeting at Kirkland Lake Gospel Hall began in about 1934, deriving from the Charlton Gospel Hall. Brethren from Charlton moved to the Kirkland Lake area in the 1930s to work at the gold mines, and established the assembly. The Christians met first in Wilbur Rodger's home, then in a Union Hall, and in 1950 built their own Hall at 38 Porteous Avenue, where they have continued to meet since. Those involved in the start-up were Wilbur and Margaret Rodgers, Ben Widdifield, Mr. Miller, and Mr. and Mrs. Bert Scott. Ernie Dellandrea was much involved in the construction

of the Hall. Elders include Wilbur Rodgers, Tom Clark, Vernon Pratt, Doug Yade, Larry Pratt, and Howard Pratt. The assembly has commended Murray Pratt to full-time service in Northern Ontario and elsewhere. About 60 adults and youngsters attend Kirkland Lake Gospel Hall.

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Chester Donaldson helped establish the Kirkland Lake Gospel Chapel in about 1950. The Whittles, Reeds, and Treens fellowshipped there in its early days. After moving through several meeting places, the Kirkland Lake assembly purchased a building in Chaput Hughes. They remained there until 1987, at which time they purchased a lot in the eastern section of Kirkland Lake and built Kirkland Lake Bible Chapel. Gary and Gloria McBride worked with the assembly for a number of years.

* * *

Timmins, Schumacher, and Porcupine are a trio of towns about 40 miles west of Iroquois Falls. Sam Taylor encouraged Tom and Emily Busby to move to Timmins to start an assembly work. This they did, beginning in the Caddy home in 1925 for Bible studies. Mrs. Belle McCrory and Mrs. Ethel Dunn were charter members of that study. In 1926, the group began Breaking Bread together and in 1927 purchased a lot and constructed Grace Chapel in Timmins with help from individuals and other assemblies. By the mid 1980s, the name had changed to Grace Bible Chapel.

When Mr. Busby died in 1955, Chester Donaldson moved to Timmins to help Grace Chapel, and labored there for seven years. During this period, the Sunday School grew to over a hundred children. Elders at Grace Chapel in

those days were Lemuel Carr, Isaac Scott, Albert Montgomery, and George Michell.

* * *

The Donaldsons, with encouragement from many sources, started Northland Bible Camp on Butler Lake during these years. In 1963, they moved to South Porcupine, a neighboring village to Timmins and began an assembly work, called Bible Fellowship Assembly as a hive-off from Grace Chapel in Timmins. The Breaking of Bread was held first in their home. In 1964, they purchased a lot on Huot Street in Timmins; a prefabricated building was used as a chapel until 1974. The Christians then built a larger building on the same lot. In 1990, the assembly purchased a larger lot at 207 Lawrence Street in Timmins, and constructed a new chapel for the Bible Fellowship Assembly. Others active in leadership over the years include Leonard Bell, Terry Budd, and Phillip Donaldson. Jointly with other assemblies, Bible Fellowship Assembly has commended workers to the Lord's service. About 140 persons attend the fellowship today.

* * *

Seventy five miles north of Huntsville is the city of North Bay. In 1912, Mr. and Mrs. John C. Thompson, having been in fellowship in an 'open' brethren assembly in England, emigrated from that country to North Bay. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Vrooman came from the Odessa area near Kingston, Ontario at about that time; they seem to have been in an assembly started by the Scots evangelists, or perhaps were associated with a Grant 'exclusive' assembly there. Mr. and Mrs. John Poidevin arrived in 1905; Mr. Poidevin was converted under the

ministry of evangelist Alexander Marshall. These three families are considered to be the root of what later developed into Bethel Gospel Chapel in North Bay.

Mr. Thompson had started a Sunday School, and in 1922 he built a ‘Clubhouse for Children’ who attended the Sunday School. This property at 333 Fisher Street was listed as a Gospel Hall in 1924. In 1942, the assembly moved to the corner of McIntyre and Fisher Streets, and the assembly was called Bethel Gospel Hall. In 1964, the assembly moved to its present location on O’Brien Street and the name was changed to Bethel Gospel Chapel.

Mr. Thompson was the main leader from the beginning of the assembly until the early 1960s, serving as correspondent and treasurer. In later years, we turned these tasks over to his son Dennis. Sydney Hoffman worked full time at North Bay from approximately 1935 to 1938. He and his wife Florence returned in 1941 and served as resident full-time workers until 1947.

The formal establishment of elder and deacons did not begin until 1969. Since then some of the elders have been Harold Fiss, John Stackhouse, Frank Dellandrea, Walter Hayes, Allan Ure, David Dellandrea, Aubrey Dellandrea, Ted Simms, Val Croswell, Greg Gilbert, Don Carney, Randy Bushey, and Don Bushey.

The assembly was relatively small until about 1960. In 1972, about 100 were in fellowship; in 1992, about 175; and today about 200 in fellowship, with about 85 Sunday School children. Bethel Gospel Chapel has commended workers to France, India, Africa, New Zealand, and to various ministries in Canada and the United States.

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Sudbury is a good-sized city 180 miles east of Sault Ste. Marie and 250 miles north of Toronto. It is the area of a vast ore body of copper and other metals, discovered in the 1880s. In about 1925, Christians began to Remember the Lord in a home in Copper Cliff, adjacent to Sudbury. In 1929, the Orange Hall at Copper Cliff was rented. The original families were the Patricks, Holditchs, and the Princes. The testimony was maintained through the ministry of itinerant workers such as Sam Taylor, Mr. Bailey, and Mr. Hind. In later years, workers such as John Sommacol, John Martin, James Naismith, and many others have ministered at the assembly. Harold Fiss, who spent his early years in the assembly, was one of these.

As people were saved and added to the fellowship, the group constructed in 1935 the Gatchell Gospel Hall in the community of Gatchell adjoining Sudbury, on land donated by the Holditch family. This was a frame building, 40 feet by 21 feet. Eighteen families were in the assembly then. The work grew, and in 1950 a larger brick building was erected on the same property. Two hundred were in fellowship by the 1950s.

In 1976, the assembly moved to another area, into the Agincourt Public School, because street parking had become nearly impossible where they were. They took the name Sudbury Bible Fellowship at about that time. In 1983, they purchased a lot in this area and constructed a chapel at 1661 Lansing Avenue, largely with volunteer labor. Though numbers are smaller now, with about 75 considered to be in fellowship, the assembly is active with vacation Bible schools, meetings weekly in three retirement homes, and tract distribution. Robert Bibby has been a leading brother in

the assembly for many years. Sudbury Bible Fellowship has commended workers to Newfoundland and to local ministry.

* * *

The city of Elliot Lake lies about half way between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury, and is an area of several former uranium mines. The assembly at Elliot Lake Bible Chapel started in about 1957 as the result of a Sunday School run by Mrs. Jean Hellberg and assisted by Mrs. Evelyn Miller. Mr. and Mrs. Robert McLaren Sr. were early workers in the assembly, as were Gaston and Margo Jolin. Others who have worked in the assembly were Bob and Helen McLaren, Murdy Getty, and Alex MacDonald and his family.

The meetings for several years were held in the Moose Lodge, Collins Hall, and the local High School, as well as in several homes. The assembly now has its own chapel on Mississauga Avenue. Elders have been Basil Pearse, Adrien Piche, Charlie Collins, John Rowe, Ken Stainthorpe, and Douglas Price, who works full-time in the assembly and along the North Shore district. The closing of all thirteen uranium mines has caused many assembly families to move away, and Elliot Lake Bible Chapel now has about 60 people. The elders permit a few organizations to use the building as a bridge into the community. In recent years, several thousand seniors have moved to Elliot Lake and a few have found their way to the Chapel.

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About 30 miles south of Elliot Lake is the North Channel, a body of water separated from Lake Huron by the large Manitoulin Island. Gore Bay is a town on the

north side of the island, to which Robert Booth and Robert McClurkin came in 1948 for Gospel work, at which time a number were saved. A year later, they returned, taught the believers, and formed an assembly and built the Gore Bay Gospel Hall, which still continues. About 30 believers met there in the 1950s. The Gore Bay assembly built another hall at Providence Bay on the south side of the island in 1955. Messrs. Booth, McClurkin, and Wilson were involved in the start of this assembly, which has since disbanded.

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Manitowaning is toward the east side of Manitoulin Island. To that area, Christopher and Veronica Cawte and their family moved in 1990, having been associated with an ‘exclusive’ assembly in Gravenhurst, Ontario. They began attending the Gore Bay Gospel Hall, and Christopher Cawte became an elder at Gore Bay in 1994. Other families who moved into the area were Alvin and Jackie Cook and John and Kelly Tucsok.

In September 1994, children’s meetings were begun in the Clover Valley Schoolhouse, and continued at the Assiginack Public School in Manitowaning when the weather turned cold. Gospel meetings then began in the Tucsok home. Several persons were saved and joined with the group. In the summer of 1995, yearly tent meetings were initiated, with Alvin Cook preaching and different men assisting. Others were saved in these meetings.

In October 1996, the group had its first meeting to Remember the Lord in the old Clover Valley Schoolhouse, and thus the Clover Valley assembly was formed. The assembly began with 13 in fellowship and

18 children. The building, now called Clover Valley Gospel Hall, is primitive but a place where warmth and love have shown forth. Property has been purchased on the Cawte farm, and a new building is planned.

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The Wellington Ross family of Toronto and the George Lewis family of Petrolia came to Sault Ste. Marie during the fall of 1899. Mr. Lewis met a few like-minded local Christians, and together they decided to meet together as a New Testament church. And so in January 1900, eleven believers formed an assembly, which met in the Ross home.

During 1901, the evangelists J.C. Beattie and R. Duncan pitched a tent at the corner of Pilgrim and Queen streets for a series of Gospel meetings, and the assembly saw the first fruits of its work in the salvation of Ada Armstrong and Archie West. Eventually, most of the extended West family knew God’s salvation and became stalwarts in the assembly.

By 1904, Mr. Ross had died, and Mr. Lewis had to move away when a local company ceased operation. The assembly carried on and by 1910, was large enough to consider erecting its own building on Murray Street in Sault Ste. Marie, which they called the Murray Street Gospel Hall. When the street was renamed later, the Christians changed the name of the Hall to Albert Street Gospel Hall. Early leading families included James and Jane Clark, and R.H. and Mabel Davis.

Leonard Sheldrake and Fred Mehl often came and drew crowds to the Hall by singing Gospel songs from the front porch. George Shivas, in fellowship in the assembly, often traveled down to Michigan to carry the

gospel. Robert Telfer and R. McClintock came in 1917 for a two-week series of meetings, and William Ferguson and Ed Steen came in 1920 for another series.

Many Italian immigrants worked in the area. One of them, Peter Chiarello, was saved in about 1925 by the witness of a Mr. Parks of the assembly. The testimony of these two resulted in the influx of a sizeable number of the Italians into Albert Street Gospel Hall. Cesare Patrizio was the first Italian commended worker to come to the Sault, and in 1928 he conducted a series of Gospel meetings in Italian, at which a number of Italian folk were saved. The last series of Gospel meetings in the Italian language was in the 1950s, conducted by Frank Pizulli.

Open air meetings were commonly held in all the surrounding communities during the twenties and thirties, at which preachers such as John Sylvester, A.R. Crocker, Albert Joyce, William Warke, James Key, T. Dobbin, and John Govan participated, in addition to those already mentioned. In the forties, the assembly grew in spite of the world wide war raging, and Conferences were held by the assembly.

In 1947, the assembly moved into a new hall at the corner of Spring and Wellington Streets in Sault Ste. Marie, and from that time has been referred to as the Spring Street Gospel Hall.

The 1950s are noted for the large number of souls saved and added to the assembly. The Franklin Street Hall was erected in 1954 as an outreach to Italian families in the area. It was later converted to a residential dwelling. In 1966, the Spring Street meeting held its 50th Conference. In 1975, the Sunday School work required

the purchase of two buses for transportation. The assembly continues today with Conferences and special series of meetings with traveling preachers. In addition to the founding fathers of the assembly, R.H. Davis, James Clark Sr., Peter Chiarello, A. Hastings, and R.A. Clark have been among those in leadership over the years.

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Thessalon is a town east of Sault Ste. Marie. The assembly now meeting at Thessalon Bible Chapel was started prior to 1950 with help from assembly Christians from Sault Ste. Marie. Lucy and Allan McDougal, the Alton family, Mr. and Mrs. Overman and her parents, and Willie McLellan were involved in establishing the assembly, and built a chapel from cement blocks, working long hours. Those in leadership after the earliest years include Harold Wagler and Robert McLaren. For 50 years, the assembly had an active Thursday night Sunshine Hour, attended by 50 to 75 children; Lucy McDougal was actively involved in that ministry for many years, and many children came to know the Lord. The assembly is building a new chapel, scheduled for completion in the year 2000.

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The Spring Street Gospel Hall in Sault Ste. Marie had conducted children's meetings in Bruce Mines for some years, and these had been well received in that town. A number of the Christians from Bruce Mines attended the assembly at Thessalon, a few miles away.

In the early 1970s, the Legion Hall in Bruce Mines, which had been a Baptist facility formerly, came up for sale. It was purchased and the assembly Christians

developed a Sunday afternoon Sunday School in it, calling it the Bruce Mines Bible Centre. At about the same time, the Gospel Hall was no longer able to continue the children's meetings in Bruce Mines, and that work was turned over to the Bible Centre. When other brethren moved into the area, the Christians expanded the work into a full New Testament assembly. A group of about a dozen Christians commenced Remembering the Lord early in the 1970s.

While the Bruce Mines assembly has never been a strong work numerically due to lack of employment in the town, a number have been saved over the years, and the Annual Day Camp has reached the majority of the children in the town.

* * *

Riverside Bible Chapel at 153 Hugill Street in Sault Ste. Marie was established in 1983 through the efforts of the families of Don Robert, Len Lane, Patrick Cormier, John McLennan, Douglas Rankin, and Robert Ackert. A hive-off of Bethel Bible Chapel in Sault Ste. Marie, it met first at the Grandview Public School and moved to its present location in 1986. In 1996, the assembly had about 50 adults in fellowship and 40 in its Sunday Schools. Jack and Mae Correll have been commended to work in Riverside Bible Chapel as well as in other Northern Ontario assemblies. Riverside has also commended others to youth and summer camp work, and to service with International Teams in Romania and in Toronto, and with Venture Teams International.

* * *

Queen Street Bible Chapel in Sault Ste. Marie began with an exercise to start a fresh work in the city. Peter

Aceti, Joe Reese, and Joe Kargiannakis, along with their families and extended families began to meet together in December 1993. These families originally were in fellowship in Bethel Bible Chapel in Sault Ste. Marie.

This group received the support of the elders of Bethel Bible Chapel, as well as the elders from the other assemblies of the city. In June 1994, twenty two believers formed the original fellowship of Queen Street Bible Chapel. The meeting is in a store front location at 762 Queen Street, which has been made available by the kindness of the owner of the building, a fellow believer. Currently there are 38 families in the fellowship. Among other services, the assembly has a monthly Search the Scripture Bible Study in which they invite brethren from the U.S., Canada, and abroad to teach and exhort. Peter Aceti and Joe Reese are the elders.

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A hive-off from Northland Bible Chapel resulted in the formation of Heyden Bible Chapel in Sault Ste. Marie under the leadership of Dieter Fischer.

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Northland Bible Chapel in Goulais River near Sault Ste. Marie began in a farmhouse in 1968 as part of an outreach of Northland Bible College. The staff of the college, particularly A.V. Clark and his wife Lila, and Mr. and Mrs. Norvin Jones, began a Sunday School work and then instituted Breaking of Bread. Leaders of the assembly have included A.V. Clock, Stephen Clock, Dan Bernard, and John LaCrosse. Northland Bible Chapel has always been located at Mountain View Farm, Goulais River, first in the farmhouse, then at a chapel building. Northland has commended missionaries to

work among the Sikhs in British Columbia, and with New Tribes Missions in Papua New Guinea.

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Richards Landing is on St. Joseph Island, southeast of Sault Ste. Marie. Island Bible Chapel started there in 1974 in the home of George and Jan Yule. The Yules had moved to the Island and began friendship evangelism. Jim and Maureen Tulloch later commenced Bible teaching, and this led to the formation of the assembly. The assembly soon moved to the St. Joseph Island Central School gymnasium, but in 1978 built a chapel with financial aid from a person from the Gore Bay Gospel Hall. Bethel Bible Chapel in Sault Ste. Marie helped to finance an addition in the 1990s.

Elders have been Jim Tulloch, Ted Windle, Bruce Cain, Paul Rowe, Ken Golder, Stephen Tulloch and Grant Kahtava. Stephen Tulloch has been commended to the local ministry. In leadership in women's ministries have been Maureen Tulloch, Jan Yule, Dawn Rowe, Mona Cain, Lois Lambert, and others. Typical attendance at Island Bible Chapel on a Sunday is about 125.

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Farther west lies the city of Thunder Bay on the north shore of Lake Superior, an amalgamation in the 1970s of the towns of Fort William and Port Arthur. The assembly now meeting at Pine Street Gospel Hall in Thunder Bay commenced in a home in Port Arthur in April 1912. It was called the Gospel Hall Assembly then and may have come out of an 'exclusive' assembly that existed in 1909. The assembly moved to a room above a store in downtown Port Arthur later, and then to its present

location in 1926. W.J. Chawner was the special speaker at the opening of the new hall in August 1926.

The principal people involved in getting the Gospel Hall Assembly started were Henderson Brown, Archibald Baxter, H. McLements, Margaret Colquhoun, and Mr. and Mrs. William McDowell. Elders leading the assembly over the years have been William McDowell, Leonard Coldridge, Richard Weston, Joseph Pickering, Brian Weston, Gordon Wilson, Kenneth Pickering, and Matthew Frank. About 40 adults and 50 youngsters presently attend the assembly.

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In the mid 1950s, Fred and Betty Jones from Calgary, and Barry and Kay Wagar from Peterborough, moved to the Port Arthur/Fort William area and fellowshipped at Pine Street Gospel Hall. These two couples then began to meet for Breaking of Bread at the Wagar's home in Slate River. During this time they were joined by Dawson and Margaret Allan.

The Wagars worked with the young people in their area, and the Jones' began having children's meetings in their home. The work grew and a building seating about 100 was purchased in the south side area called Westmount. The believers named their building Westmount Gospel Chapel, with an official dedication in October 1959. The young work was greatly aided by the work of James Boswell, an evangelist from London, Ontario.

By the 1980s, the assembly had outgrown its quarters and decided to hive-off a new work in the north end, in old Port Arthur. That move was spearheaded by Arnot Hawkins and Herman Dost, elders at Westmount. A church building was located at 246 Farrand Street, and

the new assembly occupied Farrand Street Bible Chapel in 1986. Other leaders at Farrand Street are or have been Rod Muir, Joe Vieira, Bill Pendergrast, Brian Phillips, Malcolm Postings, Trevor Lewis, and Larry McFarling. Apart from Messrs. Hawkins and Dost, these men had not come from brethren backgrounds. About 75 adults and children attend Farrand Street Bible Chapel, which has jointly commended several people to the Lord's work in Austria and within Canada.

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East of Kenora, which is close to the border of Manitoba, is the small town of Sioux Lookout. To that village came Henry Southall in the 1920s. He and his wife came from Manitoba where they had been affiliated with some assemblies. Finding no testimony in their new surroundings, and concerned about the spiritual needs of his neighbors, Mr. Southall began open-air preaching and cottage meetings. Soon a building was needed and in about 1927 a small Sioux Lookout Gospel Hall was constructed on the corner of Mr. Southall's lot. The common problem of few employment opportunities in the area reduced the number in fellowship to about 15 in the mid 1950s. Chester Donaldson from Matheson, hundreds of miles away, would come about once a year to preach and help, but few other brethren preachers visited the area. The assembly continued to about 1960.

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To Kenora came John Dalzel and William Howard in about 1890, both of whom had brethren backgrounds in Scotland. They jointly decided to establish an assembly in the town. Always called the Kenora Gospel Hall, the assembly met first in the Dalzel home. After that they

met for a time in a store front, and then in a series of other homes. In the early years, a number of the Christians lived in Keewatin, three miles from Kenora, and walked to the meetings along a railroad track in the winter, and came by boat in the summer. In 1947 the present hall was constructed and occupied at the corner of 1st Street and 7th Avenue in Kenora.

In leadership over the years have been John Dalzel, William Howard, J. Adams, J. Gould, R.J. McCammon, E.L. McCammon, C.F. Sawatsky, E.E. Gould, W. Yocum, A.E. Clark, J.F. Gould, and G. McChesney. Kenora Gospel Hall has commended workers to Zambia and St. Lucia. Emily Gould married Albert Joyce in 1952, and they have been commended to the work in Labrador and Newfoundland. The assembly has been active in Gospel outreach through the years, holding meetings in outlying areas. The town has been covered many times with tracts. About 15 adults and children attend the assembly now.

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## Notes

1. The first in North America may have been in Key West, Florida, starting in 1869.

## Canada – Quebec

Brethren assemblies first appeared in Quebec in the late 1850s or shortly thereafter. These were associated with the ‘exclusive’ groups. Lord Adelbert Percy Cecil ministered among such until his death in 1889.

Open brethren assemblies appear to have sprung up in Montreal about the turn of the century. The earliest of these assemblies were English-speaking. The first traces of an effort to establish an assembly testimony among the French Canadians date from the 1870s. Not until the mid-1920s, however, was a sustained effort put forth by persons connected with the brethren movement to evangelize the French-speaking population of Canada.

The evangelical revival in Quebec that occurred during the days of the converted priest Charles Chiniquy in the latter half of the 1800s, had practically died out by the 1920s. Opposition to the Gospel was at its peak. In those days Quebec was in the grip of the Roman Catholic Church. French Canadians saw the Church as part of their cultural heritage and identity. Any who abandoned it were said to be abandoning their own people.

Louis Germain had worked among French Roman Catholics on the Gaspé Peninsula as early as 1911, distributing literature and speaking to the people amidst great persecution. In 1927, after fourteen years abroad as a missionary in other countries, he returned once again to Quebec.

John H. Spreeman is considered by many to be the father and first pioneer of brethren assemblies to the people of French Canada. In December 1926,

commended from Toronto, he arrived in Quebec at a time when there was almost no witness to French Canadians. Both the French Canadian people and the government of Quebec were solidly Roman Catholic and that church was as intolerant of other religious beliefs and of allowing its people to read the Bible for themselves as it had been at the time of the Reformation.

Mr. Spreeman endeavoured to spread the Word through tract distribution and street preaching in Montreal, Sherbrooke and other cities, but the work was difficult, especially in the first six years. G. G. Johnston and Russell Harris spent some time with him. Tracts were distributed in towns and cities, but there was little desire to hear the truth of the Gospel, and John Spreeman at times found himself in prison for preaching on the street.

About this time, in the northern Lac St-Jean region of Quebec, an unpopular priest had been causing considerable difficulty for some of the parishoners in the area of Girardville. One of the men had recently obtained a New Testament and found many things in it contrary to what he had been taught. Some decided to advertise for a Protestant minister to come to Girardville and preach what the New Testament taught. John Spreeman spoke French and responded to this appeal. In the spring of 1933 he went with Noah Gratton to take the Gospel to Girardville.

On the first Lord's Day after they arrived, the whole community gathered in the unused Roman Catholic chapel and heard the two brethren expose the folly of worshipping Mary. This met with a mixed response –

some opposed the Word, others began to see the light, and all were quite unsettled from their old beliefs. For weeks the two missionaries travelled up and down the community, holding little meetings in homes, working with men in the fields, and everywhere preaching the Gospel.

The priest was very active in the meantime, and stirred up considerable opposition. This came to a head when a group of armed men kidnapped Spreeman and Gratton, destroying their Bibles and literature, and drove them out of the district with many threatenings. However, they were back again in the summer of 1934 and this time had the joy of baptizing a number of believers, and of gathering about a dozen Christians for the Lord's Supper. This Girardville Assembly, the Église des frères chrétiens de Girardville, was the first French assembly in the Province. It continues to this day.

All schools in Quebec were either Roman Catholic or Protestant. In Girardville, there was no Protestant school, either English or French at this time. However, by 1936 there were enough Christian families in Girardville to justify a government grant for a Protestant school. The school was organized in 1936 and a school house was built in the following year. Miss Leila Boyd of Toronto was the first teacher in the Girardville school. Arnold Reynolds also taught in this school. A second school began in Rollet in 1941.

In 1934, there were three French assemblies in Quebec. Growth was slow but steady, punctuated by sporadic persecution. Two assemblies in the Lac St-Jean region carried on courageously in spite of a campaign of opposition mounted against them by the local Roman

Catholic clergy. Two more French_speaking assemblies developed, at Rollet (1942) and Sherbrooke (1946). The Spreemans, the Emmanuel Laganières, the Arnold Reynolds' and the Norman Buchanans all helped in its early days.

In 1936, Arthur Hill set up a medical practice in Sherbrooke with a view to helping the French work. God used him first to establish an English work there, known as Grace Chapel. At the same time, he began efforts to develop a camp work, which became known as Frontier Lodge. The publication News of Quebec was founded in 1944 by Arthur Hill as an annual report on assembly missionary work among French Canadians. Subsequent editors have been Arnold J. M. Reynolds and Richard E. Strout. It is now a trimestrial magazine, giving news of assembly missionary work among the French population of Quebec.

Bethel Bible School (Institut Biblique Bethel) was started in 1948 at Sherbrooke. Students came to learn French, but a small number of French Canadian Christians attended to get Bible training. Bethel Bible School came into being when Miss Dorothy Kenyon, along with Arthur Hill and others, became burdened about a training center for French Canadian workers. A 90_acre farm was purchased in 1948 on the eastern edge of Sherbrooke, not far from Lennoxville. The following year Mr. and Mrs. Walter Angst of Emmaus Bible School in Lausanne, Switzerland, joined Miss Kenyon, and a three_year Bible program was inaugurated.

Mr. Angst was the director for the first 21 years of the school's existence. In 1972, the leadership passed to

Sheldon Bard, then to Richard Strout (1975 _ 1977), to Norman Buchanan (1977 _ 1984), to Homer Payne (1984 - 1989), and ultimately back to Richard Strout. In 1992, the entire operation was turned over to Word of Life Fellowship, whose international headquarters are in Schroon Lake, New York. Norman Buchanan and Walter Angst of the Bethel staff spent most weekends ministering in the French assemblies.

Assemblies in Quebec in the mid 1950s were small, with one or two exceptions – more like

mission stations than full-grown assemblies. Most built their own chapels – necessary because it was practically impossible to rent premises for Gospel work anywhere in the Province. The French Canadian workers themselves could look for very little support from these assemblies. Their support had to come from outside the Province.

The Roman Catholic church left the stamp of its control on every phase of public and private life. For example, Mr. Walter Angst was unable to post a simple announcement in a French newspaper. In 1956 an evangelical broadcaster succeeded in getting a French program on a station in Quebec City, but after a few weeks the station had to yield to pressure and discontinue the broadcast.

From five established assemblies in 1946, the work nearly tripled by 1956. The new assernblies were in Cap_de_la_Madeleine (1948), Chicoutimi/Arvida (1949), La Tuque and Shawinigan (1950), Quebec City and Thetford Mines (1951), and Granby and Drummondville (1952). In the late 1950s, the largest of these was the assembly at Cap-de-la-Madeleine.

By 1956, there were 14 French Christian assemblies in Quebec, with a total of about 400 believers. Tens of thousands of Gospel tracts and offers of New Testaments were sent out into Quebec by believers in the Toronto assemblies, other parts of Canada, and the United States. They covered the Province many times, enabling the pioneers of the Gospel to make contacts. This was an excellent way of reaching Roman Catholics in their homes; these were forbidden to enter a non_Roman Catholic place of worship.

After the war, assembly work in Quebec was subjected to increased persecution. At Drummondville, demonstrations involving blaring horns and banging pots and pans disrupted meetings. Paul Boèda was arrested at Cap-de-la-Madeleine and fined for having used a public address system to announce the Gospel. The radio program at Sherbrooke was ejected from the air in the spring of 1950. John Spreeman and his wife were forcefully driven out of Thetford Mines, an incident that seriously affected Mr. Spreeman's health.

In March 1950, Paul Boèda had been forcibly escorted from Shawinigan Falls, a predominately French Canadian city of 25,000, by a small unidentified group, taken to Trois Rivières 20 miles away, and placed on a train for Montreal. However, he returned shortly. The Christians didn’t try to find the abductors, but neither did the police. The brethren in Sherbrooke and Montreal tried to get the press to retract their inflammatory articles about Mr. Boèda, with little effect.

In April 1950, a mob wrecked the rented hall where the new assembly in Shawinigan Falls was meeting. The group consisted of about eight families. The attack

occurred during a meeting of the assembly. No one was reported injured, but damage to the building and cars was extensive.

Joe Darling and his wife Gertrude, commended from the Grand Haven Gospel Chapel, MI in Michigan, carried on this work in homes while Paul Boèda and his wife rested from the ordeal of the ruined hall. Sheldon Bard convinced the saints that they should not go to law, believing that the attack would work to the furtherance of the Gospel. His assessment proved correct, for after that, new Gospel opportunities opened in Quebec, and the local saints got another hall. The Supreme Court of Canada passed down a decision that non_Roman Catholic religious activities must be permitted everywhere in Canada, and mob persecution quieted.

Some 30 commended workers were laboring in French in the Province in 1956. Wider doors were opening in a quietly changing Quebec. Public education was removed from the control of the Roman Catholic church and placed in the hands of the government. Children of converts could now attend Catholic schools without undue persecution and indoctrination in Catholicism. The assemblies blanketed the entire Province with literature through Quebec's Every Home Crusade.

Publications Chrétiennes was established in the late 1950s by Norman Buchanan in a corner of the basement of the chapel at Cap-de-la-Madeleine. It started with one man and a small press, but rapidly grew. Message de Vérité (Message of Truth), its monthly publication, presented the Gospel regularly and in a variety of ways. Its chief purpose was for follow_work and for mass distribution.

Glad Tidings began in 1955 as an English_speaking radio broadcast directed by Robert McLaren and serving northern Ontario. In 1961, with the arrival of Gaston Jolin, the ministry was expanded to include French_speaking programming. A French television broadcast was added in 1964 to reach into Quebec. By 1969, all English_speaking broadcasts were discontinued and efforts were concentrated in French radio and television

The Sermons from Science pavilion at the 1967 Montreal World's Fair was a watershed event in the history of Quebec evangelization. Thousands of souls were saved. Among others, Arnold Reynolds, Sam Coppieters, and Fernand Saint_Louis were all active at the pavilion. Christian Direction Inc. was formed at that time as an umbrella organization for the Sermons from Science ministry. It was under the direction of assembly workers Keith Price and later Glenn Smith. New radio and television programs were born in this period. Fernand Saint_Louis began a radio program in 1963 at Montmagny, followed in 1972 by a TV program from Montreal. But most important was the personal witnessing of the growing number of believers.

A corporation known as The Christian Brethren Church in the Province of Quebec was set up in 1942 to serve as a necessary legal body, representing the interests of the assemblies in Quebec. Conseils et services missionnaires (CSM), a branch of Missionary Service Committee, Toronto, was formed in 1984 for channeling funds and stimulating missionary interest. Programme de formation pour les assemblées chrétiennes (ProFAC) was begun in 1995 for the training of assembly leaders. CARO (Conférences d'anciens, de responsables et

d’ouvriers) was begun in 1998 for the purpose of bringing workers and assembly leaders together for an annual conference.

Assembly camps include Frontier Lodge on the Canada-U.S. border (1936), Joli_B in northwestern Quebec (1963), Parkside Ranch near Sherbrooke (1964), Camp Brochet near Chicoutimi (1967), Camp Joie-de-Vivre in the Gaspé (1975) and Villa Carmel (1995) in the vicinity of Trois-Rivières.

French assembly efforts have also been established outside of Quebec, in Northern Ontario at Timmins (1968) and Hearst (1981), as well as in the neighboring province of New Brunswick..

* * *

Having surveyed assembly work in Quebec in these general ways, we turn now to specific assembly histories. We begin in the Montreal area; the English-speaking assemblies are treated first, then the French-speaking.

The original English work in Montreal was associated with the efforts of J.N. Darby, who made several visits to the city, beginning in 1859. The first of these assemblies eventually met on City Counsellors Street.

One of the earliest ‘open’ assemblies, whose specific beginning is lost from memory, met at 2481 St. Antoine Street in Montreal. It consisted of a number of local brethren as well as a number from the British West Indies. At some point, the work divided, with the more conservative element moving away. In 1926, several years later, that group established their work at the Park Extension Gospel Hall in Montreal (see below).

Meanwhile, the more open group continued meeting at St. Antoine Street. The area had deteriorated somewhat and the white believers found it increasingly unattractive. The assembly amicably divided, many of the believers moving into the Draper Avenue Gospel Hall in Montreal (see below). These continued for some time to help financially with the original work. Some time after 1955, the land where the St. Antoine work stood was expropriated and the assembly purchased an unused church building in Westmount, now known as Bethel Gospel Chapel.

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Draper Avenue Gospel Hall, the outcome of the above amicable division, first located in the Notre Dame de Grace district of Montreal. Later they moved to Côte St-Luc and took the name Côte St-Luc Bible Chapel. They continue to meet today on Lansdowne Avenue in Westmount as the West End Christian Fellowship.

* * *

Park Extension Gospel Hall in Montreal began in 1926 when a brother whose occupation was installing gasoline pumps saw the need for a Gospel testimony in the territory surrounding Montreal. The initial purpose of this testimony was to carry out farm_to_farm and village_to_village visitation with the good news of Jesus Christ. These English_speaking workers also attempted to distribute French literature to the French communities, but encountered severe opposition and were prevented by newly passed laws from conducting a French work. When John Spreeman and Noah Gratton began French work in Quebec, they made this assembly their English base of operation.

In the mid 1950s, the assembly, often referred to as the North End Assembly because of its location in the northern part of the city, was the largest in Montreal. There were some 100 in fellowship, all English, and they conducted an annual Bible conference. The assembly later moved into a former Anglican church building on Ogilvy Avenue and changed its name to Ogilvy Avenue Gospel Hall. The assembly now meets as Grace Gospel Hall in Ville St. Laurent.

* * *

Rosemount is a district of Montreal having a mixed population of English_speaking and French Canadians. In 1945, two assemblies were in Rosemount, one of them French_speaking, formed in the early 1940s. The English assembly, Ebenezer Gospel Hall has been in existence since 1928. Ebenezer was located in the heart of the English_speaking population and situated opposite the Rosemount Protestant School, one of the largest schools in Quebec.

Alfred P. Gibbs had two weeks of meetings with children in 1945 and each night the hall was filled. At that time, John Dawson and George H. Dixon were the elders. In 1953, the assembly moved into a new chapel at 2900 Rosemount Boulevard, Montreal. Ebenezer Gospel Hall at that time had about 40 or 50 in fellowship along with a progressive children's work. The assembly later relocated to 6000 13th Avenue in Rosemount as Ebenezer Gospel Chapel. Today it is a thriving assembly known as Rosemount Bible Church.

* * *

In the late 1940s, an assembly meeting at Bethel Chapel in Pointe Claire was started in Pointe Claire, a suburb on

the west end of the island of Montreal. It prospered and when the building could no longer accommodate the numbers then attending, a group of about 160 people left Bethel Chapel to establish a new work called Westview. This was in 1985. Bethel Chapel continues as a strong assembly.

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The Westview Bible Church first met in rented quarters in Dorval, a southern suburb of Montreal. Joseph Kass, a chairman of the elders at Bethel Chapel, resigned in order to help establish the new assembly. The Westview assembly subsequently moved through other locations, and in 1987 purchased a six_acre lot further west on the island in Pierrefonds. Here they built a chapel with a 500_seat auditorium and a full gymnasium.

The leaders at Westview Bible Church have included Richard Kimoff, Roy Hoffman, David Knight, Robert Reynolds, John Kelsall, Rowland Phare, Ted Kass, John Reoch, Don Liesemer, and Joseph Kass. Westview Bible Church holds two Sunday morning services, one being a mix of traditional and contemporary styles, at which up to 150 attend. The second is more contemporary, and approximately 400 attend that service, including a significant number of seekers. Over two-thirds of the congregation are under 35 years of age. About 30 to 40 people, a mixture of believers and seekers, have attended the Alpha program of Gospel outreach, in which a number have been saved. The Lord’s Supper is celebrated each Sunday evening, once a month on Sunday mornings, and small groups are encouraged to Remember the Lord in their homes for those who don’t come to the other services. The church is involved in a

number of parachurch ministries, such as Intervarsity, Youth for Christ, Hockey Ministries, On Rock Ministries, and MAP International.

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In Verdun, a suburb in the southwest of Montreal, Hebron Gospel Hall existed for many years in a store-front on Wellington Street. It has since ceased to function.

* * *

We move now to the French assemblies in the Montreal area.

The Assemblée chrétienne du centre-sud de Montréal is the continuation of a work begun many years ago by brethren associated with the Park Extension Gospel Hall. John Spreeman and Noah Gratton helped in the early days; Vincent Davies also gave added help. This assembly met initially in the Rosemount district of Montreal and has since moved to several other locations in the city, and continues to the present time.

* * *

The Assemblée chrétienne Maranatha in the heart of Montreal has occupied its present building, a former bank, since 1969. This work was begun through the efforts of Bill and Nadine Learoyd who came to the area in the late 1950s. Since the Learoyds left in 1986, the work has been carried on largely by French Canadian leadership. The Daniel Paquettes were followed by Michel and Diane Lafleur, both couples having been commended by assemblies in the area.

* * *

In May 1982, a new assembly was pioneered in Montreal. This eventually came to be known as the Église évangélique La Source. Leslie Muirhead along with others labored to bring this work into existence and to carry it on. From its inception it was a regional assembly, i.e., its members coming from all over the greater Montreal area. Cell groups were formed to better meet the needs of its scattered members, with all coming together each Lord's Day for the Breaking of Bread. By the fall of 1991, nearly 150 adults and children were in attendance each Sunday morning. Unfortunately, the work was disbanded in early 1997.

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The Groupe biblique de l'ouest de Montréal, QC began as a house church in 1982. A number of young families and singles living in the southwest part of Montreal, who were attending the assembly across the river at Longueuil, joined with other believers in the immediate area to begin meeting for the Lord's Supper. The work continues today at its present location in Ville LaSalle. Commended workers Bill and Marion Snyder gave many years of labor to this work.

* * *

We now leave Montreal and consider assemblies around the Province, beginning with the English-speaking.

The assembly at Grace Chapel in Sherbrooke was begun in 1940 at 489 Montreal Street, principally through the efforts of two medical doctors, Arthur Hill and William Klinck, and their families. The Christians moved through several addresses on the same street until the present building at 267 Montreal Street was purchased in 1942. David Long gave a helping hand during and after World

War II, conducting a popular and well-attended evening Bible school. A profitable campaign was conducted in 1951 by Ernest Woodhouse. Five weeks of meetings were held with Bram Reed in the fall of 1953. Alfred P. Gibbs was among those whose visits encouraged the growth of the assembly. By 1955, some 100 were in fellowship, with a Sunday school running as high as 250; a Gospel rally on Saturday evenings was broadcast over the radio.

In addition to those already named, leadership over the years has included commended workers H. Addison Welch, Arnold Reynolds, Brian Fox, Tom Ryan, and Richard Strout and his son Mark. Grace Chapel carried on regular Gospel services in the surrounding communities including those of Albert Mines and Canterbury. Several area assemblies sprang up due, in part, to the efforts of these believers. The assembly at Grace Chapel participated in the establishment of a Christian campground, known as Frontier Lodge, on Lake Wallace near the Vermont border, about 40 miles south of Sherbrooke. The assembly also participated in the beginnings of two Christian retirement homes in the area – Grace Christian Home and Connaught Home. The assembly has commended workers to Angola, Nigeria, and to French work in Quebec. About 65 adults and youngsters attend Grace Chapel today.

* * *

Huntingville Community Church began in 1955 as a mission outreach of nearby Grace Chapel in Sherbrooke. Huntingville is a village of about 600 predominantly English_speaking people. Meeting initially in the Huntingville Universalist Church building, the assembly

now has its own building on Campbell Avenue. Those initiating the assembly were William Klinck, Gordon Wright, Arthur Heath, and Arthur Hill. Andrew Patton was responsible for much of the preaching in the early days. Norman Gentry followed Mr. Patton in that role. Prior to 1964, the nucleus of Christians at the Huntingville Community Church still went to the Sunday evening Lord's Supper at Grace Chapel; after that they instituted their own Sunday evening Remembrance Meeting, and later changed it to Sunday mornings.

As the work grew, the assembly was able to engage a full_time worker. After the Gentrys left, Robert Seale, Leslie Picard, and Mark Strout have served as full_time workers. David Dytynyshyn currently serves in that capacity. Other leadership has included Gordon Warnholtz, Richard Stymiest and Warren Heath. Huntingville Community Church has commended workers to the Lord's service in Africa and Madagascar. With several types of programs for all ages, the assembly has an average Sunday morning attendance of about 300.

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In about 1946, Mrs Altheas Young of Stanstead, just north of the Vermont border, was a patient of Arthur Hill. He gave her a Bible and invited her to a gospel meeting at Grace Chapel in Sherbooke. Soon, she and her husband were saved.

They commuted 35 miles each Sunday to Grace Chapel. Arthur Hill suggested that they have Bible studies in their home, to be conducted by a number of young men, several from Emmaus Bible School. After two years, in

1948, a hall was rented in the town and an assembly formed – Stanstead Gospel Chapel.

Those who initiated the assembly included Harry Pilkington, Lloyd Alan, Sydney Surlander, Roy Langley, Art Chamberlain, Mike Utz, Keith Orr, Joe Wooton, Ed Anderson, Jim Grady, Spencer Dibble, and Gordon Warnholtz. Doris Pitman and Ednas Climber conducted children's meetings at that time.

In 1959, Miss Doreen Neil came from British Columbia to teach in Stanstead. She was instrumental in Lawrence Wallace's decision to sell his business and come to work in the assembly full time. Believers from adjacent Rock Island and Beebe on the Vermont border, helped. Roy Buttery, while living in Waterloo, would go to Stanstead to give help when he could.

In 1960 the assembly had dwindled to a dozen, but subsequently grew to approximately 35 by 1962. They purchased a lot that year on which to build a basement, and later an above-ground auditorium. Mr. Lawrence Wallace conducted a home meeting at nearby Graniteville where each Friday evening 40 gathered to hear the Gospel, many of them teenagers. The work at Stanstead Gospel Chapel carries on today, being blessed by the ministry of the Walter Scott family. The assembly is also known by its French names Assemblée chrétienne de Stanstead and L'Assemblée de Stanstead.

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For several years, David Wilson worked in the village of Cherry River, about 12 miles from Sherbrooke. The Christians there established an English Sunday School and Gospel work in Magog, three miles from Cherry River. They also held children's meetings and Bible

readings in Bolton Centre, some 20 miles away. In 1962, the Cherry River Gospel Chapel, QC meeting in their own building, had 35 in fellowship. On Sunday mornings, the believers from Magog met with the Cherry River Christians for the Lord's Supper, but for the Sunday School and Gospel services they met in a rented hall. Fred and Jean Warnholtz, in addition to their ministry at nearby Parkside Ranch, have served for many years in this assembly.

* * *

In the fall of 1961, the small English assembly at Ayer's Cliff in the center of Stanstead county moved to a rented room off Main Street. The four families involved in the work carried on the Sunday School, averaging 40, and Gospel service as well as a mid_week prayer service. Lawrence Wallace, who worked full time in the south end of Stanstead county, ministered at the mid_week meeting. The assembly continues to meet in the Ayer's Cliff Gospel Chapel, QC at 873 Clough Street.

* * *

The Gaspé Peninsula of Quebec juts out into the Gulf of St. Lawrence for about 200 miles. It is predominantly French, but scattered here and there are communities which originally were settled by the English. Pioneers from the assemblies established little places of testimony in some of these localities on the southern coast of the peninsula.

English assemblies were started on the Gaspé Peninsula in the early 1900s. Once there were eight, with another one across the bay at nearby Campbellton, New Brunswick. Gospel radio broadcasts were a feature of the work once radio became popular; George Campbell

preached over the air every Sunday. Alex Irvine and Victor Harrington gave full time at Black Cape and Grand Cascapedia, respectively.

Eight halls were on the peninsula in 1955. Five functioned as assemblies, and the other three provided places for Gospel meetings when help was available. Each year conferences were held in several of the assemblies throughout the area.

By the mid 1900s, many of the English-speaking young people were leaving for other areas. In even greater numbers, French-speaking Roman Catholics were moving in. The population change made serious breaches in the testimony. Only four assemblies still functioned in 1963, while occasional meetings were held in one or another of the other Gospel halls. Today, only two assemblies remain.

For many summers, the French Open_Air Campaigners, headquartered in Sherbrooke, made a loop around the Gaspé coast, preaching wherever a group was found and distributing literature. Commended worker Cyril Shontoff was very active in this endeavor.

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The Hopetown Assembly was started in about 1895 by brethren McCaffery and Lyman. This meeting was numerically stronger than others in the area but always seemed to lack local gift, and dwindled away as some died and others left the district. When the New Carlisle meeting started, many of the Hopetown group gravitated there.

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Black Cape Gospel Hall started in 1889 in the town of that name on the south shore of the Gaspé Peninsula. B.C. Greenman, E. Lyman, Mr. McCaffery, and Mr. Harvey are those credited with starting the assembly, all of whom had brethren backgrounds. Alex Irvine worked full time there for many years. At Black Cape, as with many of these Gaspé assemblies, the work suffered because so many Christians found it necessary to go elsewhere to find suitable employment. In the early 1980s, the Hall was closed and the assembly relocated to Bethel Bible Chapel in nearby New Richmond.

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The Port Daniel Assembly was begun in about 1915 by H. L. Campbell and A. H. Stewart. This was never a strong meeting, and when some moved away and others died, it petered out.

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The New Richmond Assembly was one of the older meetings on the Gaspé Peninsula. It was small in the 1950s but continues to this day as Bethel Bible Chapel. Bethel Bible Chapel has about 40 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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An assembly in New Carlisle began in the 1950s, with George Campbell giving help and carrying on a biweekly broadcast over the local radio station. Initially called the New Carlisle Gospel Chapel, today it has the name New Carlisle Bible Chapel.

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Grand Cascapedia Gospel Chapel which disbanded in the early 1980s, was a hive-off from Black Cape Gospel

Hall. Samuel Stewart and Victor Harrington served there for many years. In the 1950s, the only Gospel testimony in the small community of Cullens' Brook was the Cullens' Brook Assembly.

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We turn now to the French-speaking assemblies in the remainder of the Province.

In the Lac St-Jean area is Albanel. The oldest French-speaking assembly in Quebec was in that town. John Spreeman worked in the area many years. The assembly later moved to Girardville where it continues to meet as the Églises des frères chrétiens de Girardville.

* * *

The beginnings of the Assemblée chrétienne de Sherbrooke were modest. The first meetings as an assembly were held on the first Sunday of January 1946. Less than a dozen persons, of whom several were newly converted, met in various homes on Sunday mornings. After that they met for a short time in the basement of Grace Chapel. As the work grew, it became difficult to have two meetings going on simultaneously in the same building and so the French assembly rented space over a store on King Street in the downtown area, and then met on Belvedere Street for a short time. Among the pioneers were Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Reynolds. Others have followed in their footsteps over the years. In 1955, a lot was purchased on Desormeaux Street in the east end of Sherbrooke and the present building was erected with the help of Stewards Foundation. In 1996, 50 years after the beginning, some 160 adults and children were in regular attendance. The assembly continues to meet at the same location.

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The Assemblée chrétienne de Cookshire was begun in 1977 as a hive-off from the assembly in nearby Sherbrooke. Growth at the latter had reached such proportions as to necessitate this move. Commended workers Richard and Virginia Strout, together with André Roberge and Lawrence Fortin and their wives, led in the new effort. Meetings were begun in homes, but soon moved to the gymnasium of the local English school whose janitor was a believer. In 1980, the assembly purchased and moved to its own quarters in the Victoria Hall. At one time, over a hundred were in attendance on Sunday mornings. The assembly, located in a rural setting, still carries on faithfully. Leadership is in the hands of commended workers André and Léona Roberge.

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The Assemblée chrétienne Source de Vie in Lennoxville, near Sherbrooke, began in 1988, having spun off from the Assemblée chrétienne de Sherbrooke. Meeting first on Belvidère Street, it has since moved to rented space in the United Church at 6 Church Street, its present location. Those starting the assembly were Pierre Pellerin, François Audet, Homer Payne and Leigh Clarke. Norman Buchanan and Arnold Reynolds have since served as elders. Many of the assembly returned to Assemblée chrétienne de Sherbrooke in 1995, which sent out a call for help. Source de Vie benefits from the ministry of commended workers in the area and now has about 30 adults and children in attendance.

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In 1946, a tract distribution campaign in the town of Cap-de-la-Madeleine offered a free New Testament to anyone who requested one. About 100 responded, and Paul Boèda, Noah Gratton, and John Spreeman from Montreal came to visit those homes in early 1947. This resulted in the formation of the Assemblée chrétienne de Cap-de-la-Madeleine, meeting in the home of Fernand and Yolande St. Louis. Dorothy Kenyon and Elsie Scott were actively involved in the beginning of this assembly. After nine months, the Christians were able to buy a small building seating about 40 persons. They affectionately called it “The Shack.” Roland Lacombe was commended by the Assemblée chrétienne de Cap-de-la-Madeleine in 1950, the first French Canadian Christian to be commended to full-time work. Since then, Fernand and Yolande St. Louis and others have been to the Lord’s work by the assembly.

Paul Boèda and Sheldon Bard were full-time workers in the assembly for about the first ten years. In 1955 the assembly had a fellowship of about 100. In about 1957, Norman Buchanan came to work in the assembly. Michel Pedneault has been a full-time worker since 1988. Douglas Virgin, Fernand Montplaisir, and Guy Dupont serve as elders. About 400 are in the assembly today.

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The Assemblée chrétienne de Trois-Rivières-Ouest and the Assemblée chrétienne de Grand’mère both came into existence in 1977 as a result of home meetings in these two areas, separated from each other by about twenty-five miles. Marc Champagne, commended to the work by the French assembly in nearby Cap-de-la-Madeleine, was actively engaged in the realization of

these new testimonies. In 1979 and 1982 respectively, new buildings were completed for both of the assemblies and the work continues in each to the present time.

* * *

The Assemblée chrétienne de Shawinigan in Shawinigan Falls, 20 miles north of Cap-de-la-Madeleine was established as an outgrowth of the Cap assembly. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Boèda began the work in 1949, followed soon by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Darling. The Shawinigan assembly began about 1950. Almost immediately these Christians came under persecution, for when 10 fellow-believers from the nearby Three Rivers/Cap-de-la-Madeleine area joined them for a meeting, a mob attacked and greatly damaged the building they were in. For a long time the assembly was unable to get a meeting place, so they met first in a rented basement and then in the Darling's kitchen. In 1954, Mr. Darling obtained permission to build a chapel at 1894 St. Laurent Street. Persecution continued from neighbors objecting to their presence and by physical damage to the building. Gradually the tension abated, but many years passed before any neighbors began attending the fellowship or any were saved.

Among the first saved in Shawinigan were Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Legendre. Mr. Legendre became

a forcefu1 speaker. Mr. Beaulieu, a barber, was saved at the time of Mr. Legendre's untimely death. His shop became a place where the Gospel was promoted. Arthur Legendre's son Denis later became an elder, shouldering most of the responsibility in the assembly. Other leaders in the early period were Emile Ricard, Jules Juneau, Antoine Beaulieu, and René Bellemare. Gospel meetings

with John Spreeman, Noah Gratton, and Vincent Davey were held in the early days.

The Darlings continued as full_time workers at Assemblée chrétienne de Shawinigan through 1986. Since 1988, Jean and Liliane Lépine have served full time at the assembly. Guy Bourassa serves as an elder along with Denis Legendre and Jean Lépine. The assembly currently sponsors an annual youth conference, attracting nearly 300 young people. About 170 adults and youngsters attend Assemblée chrétienne de Shawinigan today.

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Roland Lacombe served the Lord in Quebec beginning in 1952. He had come to the Lord in 1948 at the assembly in Cap-de-la-Madeleine. Three years later, he started in the ministry that God had reserved for him in the small town of La Tuque, about 100 miles north of Cap-de-la-Madeleine. There he distributed New Testaments. The transition from Scripture distribution to an assembly of believers was an arduous one. Preaching the Gospel in French was opposed by police,

magistrates, and religious leaders in attempts to stifle the Gospel. In spite of opposition, a brethren assembly was founded. Paul Boèda also helped in the ministry. Today the Christians at the Assemblée chrétienne de La Tuque have their own chapel, built in 1961, and carry on a good work.

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Drummondville is a sizeable city south of Trois-Rivières. The assembly there was started by James B. Howitt, who spoke only a little French but desired to start a

French_speaking work. When two married couples from the Cap-de-la-Madeleine assembly moved to Drummondville in 1951, a Remembrance Meeting began in one of their homes. However, by 1953, both couples had moved to Richmond, and J.B. Howitt was alone once again. He invited Roland Lacombe, who was evangelizing in La Tuque, to come to Drummondville for door_to_door visitation and literature distribution. Several people were converted as a result of this effort, and in 1954 Mr. Lacombe moved his family to Drummondville. The revitalized assembly met in his home.

The assembly grew and in 1955 purchased a small country school building, 24 feet by 36 feet,

which they moved on to their property. The Assemblée chrétienne de Drummondville still meets at this location. By 1958, the building was too small and was enlarged to accommodate 125 benches. It was often filled.

Permission was secured to distribute pamphlets in mail boxes, and these seeds brought forth fruit. Numerous answers were received, which opened doors for visitation. Two politicians, well-known in the town and with good reputations, accepted the Lord and soon lost interest in politics. The members of the political party accused Mr. Lacombe of hypnotizing them and caused him many difficulties, hoping that he would leave town. Not having succeeded, they threatened to throw him in the river. Not only did they not go through with their project but the leader of the group accepted the Lord, and several years later Mr. Lacombe’s son married his eldest daughter.

A division in 1965 left the assembly significantly smaller. Roland Lacombe moved to Sorel after the division and began a successful assembly work in that town. The Assemblée chrétienne de Drummondville continues to this day. About 20 adults are in fellowship. Commended workers Donald Cox and Wilfred Buchanan both spent time at the Drummondville assembly. Normand Gosselin is the current full-time worker.

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Following ministries in La Tuque and Drummondville, Roland Lacombe and his wife moved to Sorel, on the St. Lawrence River, northeast of Montreal. In November 1966, the Assemblée chrétienne de Sorel first met to remember the Lord in the basement of the house in which the Lacombes then lived. Many were saved at the opening of the assembly, and seven of the newly converted were baptized.

In 1984, the assembly purchased the Lacombe house with the agreement that the Lacombes could

continue to live upstairs. In 1995, Mr. Lacombe, then widowed, moved to his son’s home. The believers demolished the upper story and built a large chapel, which was opened in June 1996.

Roland Lacombe was in leadership until the late 1980s. Since 1986, commended worker Jean_Pierre Cloutier along with Jacques Bussières have been elders. Jean_Marc Joyal has worked faithfully in the assembly since its inception. Jean_Pierre Cloutier was first commended by the assembly for work in the eastern part of the province; however, since 1986 he has worked full time in this assembly. Over 100 adults and children attend Assemblée chétienne de Sorel.

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With the encouragement of Samuel Clark, a meeting began in 1951 in the home of Archie Lloyd in Roxton Pond, near Granby, halfway between Montreal and Sherbrooke. This was the beginning of the Assemblée chrétienne de Granby. Christians from Farnham helped, and the Assemblée chrétienne de Cap-de-la-Madeleine sent encouragement in the persons of Paul Boèda and Alphonse Lacombe.

Raymond Taylor, after his studies at Bethel Bible Institute in Sherbrooke, came in 1952 to stay with the Lloyds, his aunt being Wilda Lloyd. He started a Sunday School on Sunday afternoons in the home of the Alberts at Roxton Pond, which was received with enthusiasm. When Mr. Taylor married and returned to Sherbrooke, Gerard Lacombe and his family moved to Granby and picked up the Sunday School work, holding it in his apartment at the corner of Ottawa and Elgin Streets in Granby. Raoul Auger joined the group at this time.

The Lacombe apartment soon was too small for the growing assembly, and in 1953 the Christians constructed a chapel for Assemblée chrétienne de Granby at 324 Denison Ouest. The official opening was in May 1954. Among the first families in the assembly were those of Barabé, Beaulieu, Deschènes, Harvey, Lacombe, Eveline Langevin, Lehman, Lloyd, Taylor, and Tétreault. Roland Lacombe (a brother of Gerard), Roger Dupont, Samuel Coppieters, and Claude Vachon have served as elders. About 100 are in the assembly today.

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After John Spreeman's wife died, he remarried and moved to Farnham, near Granby in the southern part of

the Province, where a group of Christians from Girardville had begun a little assembly. What began as the Salle Evangélique is now the Assemblée chrétienne de Farnham.

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Groupe biblique du Richelieu in Beloeil has its roots in home prayer meetings beginning in 1976. From that group of 15 adults, most of whom were attending Groupe biblique de la Rive_Sud at Longueuil on the south shore of Montreal, the assembly was begun in 1980 through the efforts of Fernand and Yolande Saint_Louis and Leslie Muirhead. Elders over the years include Fernand Saint_Louis, Leslie R. Russell, Marcel Larin, James Copeland, Philippe Klopfeintein, and François Cholet. Groupe biblique du Richelieu meets in a school on Sundays, has commended a worker to the Lord's work in France, and consists of about 20 adults and children. Fernand Saint_Louis is known for his French_speaking radio program "La Foi Vivifiante," which is beamed throughout the French_speaking world.

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French_speaking believers began meeting in homes in the Quebec City area about 1951, seeking to follow the New Testament pattern. At that time they were known as Assemblée chrétienne de Québec. With the help and encouragement of Christians in Toronto, the assembly built a chapel in 1953 seating over 100. Paul Boèda and Alphonse Lacombe helped regularly. Raymond Taylor moved to Quebec City in 1955 to help in visitation and ministry.

The building was used for about 20 years and then sold. A more functional building was erected in 1974 in

Sainte_Foy, a suburb of Quebec City. The assembly became known as Assemblée évangélique de Ste_Foy. Through the years many have been saved in connection with the gathering at Sainte_Foy. Several Africans studying at nearby Laval University have been saved, and gone on for the Lord in their native African countries. About 120 people attend Assemblée évangélique de Ste_Foy at 3033 rue Dompierre. Jean-Paul Berney has been used of the Lord down through the years in connection with this assembly.

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In the early 1970s, several families living on the south shore of the Saint Lawrence River, across from Quebec City, came to know the Lord and began to fellowship with believers at the Ste-Foy assembly. The latter being located on the north shore, much travel was entailed. Beginning in 1983, assembly meetings were held on the south shore in rented quarters at Saint-Romuald. Following several fruitless searches for a suitable meeting place of their own, the brethren purchased a lot in the nearby town of Saint-Jean-Chrysostome. In 1992, the Assemblée évangélique de la Rive_Sud moved into their new building.

* * *

Montmagny is 30 miles east of Quebec City. Fernand Saint_Louis, a graduate of Bethel Bible School, moved there to follow contacts established through literature distribution. He and his wife established an assembly testimony there in 1962, called the Assemblée chrétienne de Montmagny. The meetings were in their home until 1965, at which time the Christians built a chapel. Fernand and his wife left Montmagny in 1972.

Since that time, René Lavoie has provided leadership for the assembly. Today the assembly consists of a handful of adults.

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The work in Rivière-du-Loup, located east of Quebec City on the way to the Gaspé Peninsula, was begun in 1975 with the arrival of Joseph and Jessie Tremblay. This brother, a converted Roman Catholic priest, carries on a French radio ministry which over the years has reached many with the Gospel. The Assemblée chrétienne de Rivière-du-Loup meets in the Tremblay home.

* * *

Ste-Anne-des-Montes is on the St. Lawrence Seaway, close to the Gaspesie Provincial Park on the Gaspé Peninsula. Jack Kimple and Donald Cox preached in that area in 1970. The Assemblée chrétienne de Sainte-Anne-des-Monts was begun in 1972. Donald and Beth Cox were God's instruments for the beginning of that work. Gaston Jolin's TV show Parole de Dieu was also of benefit in getting the assembly started. The Cox's were followed eight years later by Jean and Lilianne Lépine, who had just completed a year of study at Bethel Bible Institute. The assembly moved from house to house until 1982 when the Christians were able to rent space. In the 1990s, the believers purchased and currently meet in their own building.

Those in leadership over the years include Robert Baronet, Donald Cox, Norbert Chabot, Mare St-Laurent, Yvan Gaudreauet, Jacques Collin, Jean Lipine, and René Lepage. About 45 adults and young people are in the assembly.

* * *

Chicoutimi is a city 130 miles north of Quebec City and east of Lac St-Jean. Roy and Evelyn Buttery came to the region in 1960, having been commended in 1956 to the work in French Canada. After some 15 years of Gospel pioneering activity, they began an assembly in the basement of their home in Chicoutimi in 1977. The assembly was called, then as now, the Église évangélique de Chicoutimi.

The growing assembly moved to rented quarters in 1979, then to larger quarters again in 1981. In 1984 they moved into their own building at 265 Malraux. Others involved in the start_up of the assembly were Claude Boucher and Renald Landry. Leadership has been shared by Roy Buttery, Jean Claude_Gaudreault, Jean_Marc Petit, and Pierre Munger. About 250 adults and youngsters are in the assembly. This and other assemblies of the north_central part of the Province have established and maintain Camp Brochet, a year_round Christian camp on the lake.

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In 1948, an assembly testimony was begun in the town of Arvida, adjoining Chicoutimi, through the efforts of Sheldon Bard, Charles-Eugène Boulianne, Leslie Russell, and others. Howard Forbes arrived the following year to be followed ten years later by Roy and Evelyn Buttery. An active assembly was formed and a chapel built in 1954. In 1966, the assembly purchased the small Anglican Church building in nearby Kenogami. A large, new building was erected in 1987 to house the ongoing ministry and activities of the assembly, now known as the Église évangélique de Jonquière. Commended

workers Don and Beth Cox have labored here since that time.

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In the 1950s, several believers from Girardville moved to the area of Chibougamau in order to find employment. With the encouragement of Charles-Eugène Boulianne, Howard Forbes and Roy Buttery, regular meetings were launched in 1960. Having begun in the homes of believers, the assembly soon moved to a rented basement and then to an unused Anglican Church building, which was subsequently purchased and renovated. Over the years, and without a resident worker, the Église évangélique de Chibougamau has carried on steadfastly.

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The Assemblée chrétienne de Rollet began in 1940 in a farm house which had been remodeled to accommodate an assembly meeting as well as a school. John Spreeman had come to the area, northeast of New Liskeard and close to the Ontario border, in 1939 to visit those who had requested a New Testament by mail as a result of the tract band coverage. Noah Gratton joined him in 1940, about the time the assembly was formed. The initial believers were almost all converted Roman Catholics. Vincent and Della Davey came later and spent several years helping to establish the assembly. After the Daveys left, Jacques Jolin helped lead the small assembly; then in 1961, Gaston Jolin and his wife came and have ministered there since then. Gaston Jolin has a television ministry called l'Heure de la Bomne Nouvelle, which is broadcast on several commercial stations in French Canada. The assembly assists in the operation of

Camp Joli_B, started in 1963, which has a full summer program. Three Jolin brothers have been commended to the Lord's work in Quebec and Ontario by the assembly.

The Assemblée chrétienne de Rollet built its own chapel in the village of Rollet in 1966, where it

remains today. About 50 adults and young people are in the assembly.

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In 1988 a new work was launched at Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce, thanks to the initiative of believers meeting at Sainte-Foy and Saint-Romuald, now Saint-Jean-Chrysostome. Donald Cox soon joined the effort and, together with Lawrence Fortin who had helped pioneer the work in Cookshire, meetings were begun in the local school. In 1990, the Assemblée chrétienne évangélique de Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce purchased the former Kingdom Hall and have since seen much blessing upon their efforts.

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Not far from Trois-Rivières is the village of Ste. Narcisse which had a small assembly and a Gospel effort carried on by the Christians at Trois-Rivières. For a time, a small assembly south of Sherbrooke at Coaticook met in homes. French meetings were also held at Scotstown. John Samuel Clark worked at the New Brunswick border at a place called Pied-du-lac, where are a number of Christians in this area gathered together in a small assembly. Noah Gratton and Bert Grainger faithfully labored in Montreal, visiting from home to home and reaching out to several towns around. North of Montreal is the small village of Montbeillard. A small French

assembly, begun by John Spreeman, was carried on in Montbeillard for some time by Vincent Davey and his wife.

* * *

There about two dozen additional present-day assemblies of French-speaking believers in Quebec for which the necessary historical information is lacking

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## Canada – Atlantic Provinces

Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland are called the Atlantic Provinces. The earliest settlers were French Catholic; later settlers were Scottish, mostly Presbyterian. From the time of the first assembly in those provinces in 1885, bitter opposition marked the movement.

### Nova Scotia

Brethren testimony in Nova Scotia has its roots in the preaching of a Presbyterian minister named Stirling. He preached the Gospel in Pugwash in the 1870s and was used in the salvation of Dan Kennedy, a young farmer in Port Howe. Then in about 1882, Samuel Wallace from Ireland, who had employment in Pugwash, began preaching in Port Howe, walking six miles from Pugwash to preach the Gospel in the school house each Sunday at noon. The people said he was a strange looking man and preached a strange doctrine at a strange hour. However, God blessed the Word spoken and some were saved. Miss Fanny King, a neighbor to the Kennedys, and later the wife of Dan Kennedy, was soon rejoicing in Christ Jesus as her Savior.

The following winter, John Knox McEwen, who had been laboring in Ontario, came to Nova Scotia and joined Mr. Wallace. They preached to individuals, in homes, and in halls, meeting with much opposition, but God blessed His Word to the salvation of many. Mr. McEwen then labored for sometime alone, but God sent him a number of helpers from time to time, including George and Allen Simpson of Galt, Ontario, and John Mitchell. The fiery

preaching of Mr. McEwen awakened such an interest that the whole community around Port Howe was stirred. Early in 1885 a number more were saved, including Dan Kennedy's sister and three of the Misses King. Miss Emma Copp was led to Christ by Mr. McEwen. Later she became the wife of the evangelist William Matthews of Boston.

In the fall of 1885 the first assembly in Nova Scotia was planted in Port Howe. Dan Kennedy and his wife were among the first to take their stand in the assembly. Their home was a sanctuary for the people in the years that followed. The assembly met first in a home; later the Christians built Port Howe Gospel Hall. The old Gospel Hall has since been rebuilt and added to, and occupies the same location. This community was the scene of a number of stirring revivals. A good number still gathered there in 1955, but the assembly today is small. The area around Pugwash and Port Howe is less populated now than when the assembly work was begun.

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John Grimason and Mr. McEwen opened up a work in Docherty Creek, now called Pugwash Junction, a little farming community five miles south of the village of Pugwash in Cumberland County. Among those saved through this effort were Mrs. MacLeod and Mrs. Piers. Mr. Oswald MacLeod, the evangelist, was a grandson of both these women. In 1886 or 1887, an assembly began in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Eaton, parents of Cyrus Eaton of Cleveland, who was to become a very wealthy business man, well known in financial circles around the world. In the early days of the work of God at

the Junction, the old schoolhouse was the only public place available for the preaching of the Gospel. In late 1888 or early 1889, the Pugwash Junction Gospel Hall was built on the corner of a field owned by Phillip Tuttle, about a mile from the current location.

Those gathered in the Pugwash Junction assembly at the beginning were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Eaton, Mr. Daniel McLeod, Mr. and Mrs. John Wesley MacPherson, Ada MacPherson, Mrs. Fred MacLeod, Mrs. Nelson Piers, and Mrs. Silas Wacome, and a few others.

A large number of preachers spent time in the area of Pugwash Junction over the years. By far the greater part of the early preachers came from Northern Ireland.

George Simpson from Ontario, as well as John Grimason, worked with John Knox McEwen during the early period. Mr. Simpson married Ada MacPherson, but died young. Mr. Grimason labored up and down the coast of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Mr. McEwen returned to England, and for a few years there was little gospel activity in the little assemblies that had been planted, and the assembly at Pugwash Junction essentially died.

But in the fall of 1902, David Scott, a preacher in Ireland, became exercised about returning to that needy field. He corresponded with W.N. Brennan, who encouraged him to come. Arriving with his family in Truro, Mr. Scott began meetings in Port Howe. The hall was filled nightly and many souls were saved. He then began in Pugwash Junction, where a similar work of grace was accomplished. This visitation of God caused a great revival among the saints and gave the work a fresh start. During that fall, winter, and spring, more than 60 persons professed to be saved. Some time after the

assembly was regathered, Oswald MacLeod's father purchased the old school building for the assembly. A lot at the location of the present hall was procured and the building was moved onto it. The assembly at the Pugwash Junction Gospel Hall continues to this day.

Among the leaders in the assembly over the span of years, we mention Hiram MacLeod, Ainsley Goodwin, Frank Elliott, Mac MacLeod, and Harold Elliott.

An outstanding feature of the work was the yearly Conference at Pugwash Junction. It began in Pugwash in 1903, but in 1912 moved to Pugwash Junction, five miles away. A new hall for the Conference was soon built. The Conference was the event of the year. Believers gathered from New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton, and Nova Scotia. At the first Conference in 1903, James Campbell and William Matthews ministered the Word for three days.

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W.N. Brennan came to the small city of Truro in 1893. An assembly began in the Brennan home. This work continued only a short time, but in 1923 a Gospel tent was taken to Truro and a few professed salvation. An assembly was begun again at that time. The Christians built their own hall, probably called the Truro Gospel Hall but later changed to Good News Bible Chapel. The assembly ceased to function, perhaps in the 1980s, and the building was sold to the believers at Debert Gospel Hall. The Truro assembly now meets at the Young Street Gospel Hall.

* * *

James McCullough arrived in Nova Scotia from Ireland just before the Conference of July 1924. In 1927, he and Tom McKelvie took a Gospel tent to Debert, a small town west of Truro. A number were saved and baptized. William Brennan dates the establishment of the Debert assembly after 1937, with erection of the Debert Gospel Hall following soon after. The Debert assembly goes on today.

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In about 1900, two families of Christians came from an assembly in Scotland to New Glasgow. As there was no assembly there, they began Remembering the Lord in one of their homes. Though these later moved to western Canada, God has maintained a testimony in the city. William Brennan arrived soon after the beginning of the assembly at New Glasgow Gospel Hall, which still carries on. In 1907, Mr. Brennan left his business in Truro to devote all his time to the Lord's work; he went on to become an itinerant preacher and helped establish several assemblies.

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Lenoon K. McIlwaine came from Ireland to Truro in April 1930 to preach the Gospel and spent the rest of his long life in fruitful pioneer work. He was largely responsible for opening up the southern part of the Province to the Gospel, as far as assembly testimony is concerned. Through his and others' efforts, two assemblies were planted in Lunenburg County – the West Clifford Assembly and the Nineveh Assembly. Mr. McIlwaine moved after a time to Clementsvale, Annapolis County, in the western part of Nova Scotia, where an assembly was established and the

Clementsvale Gospel Hall was erected. The assembly carries on today.

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In the mid 1930s, the McCracken brothers, John and Robert, came to the Atlantic Provinces, John to Nova Scotia and Robert to New Brunswick. In 1942 the McCrackens saw a good number saved at Pugwash Junction. Robert, gifted above many in both the Gospel and ministry, was well accepted and deeply appreciated throughout the region. John McCracken in his early days spent some time with Mr. Brennan, but after his marriage he settled in the southern part of the Province where he labored quite extensively with Mr. McIlwaine and others. The Weymouth Assembly on the western side of the Province was largely the result of his faithful and patient labors.

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In about 1950, Isaac McMullen began meetings in the village of Cambridge in Haunts County, west of Truro. The Cambridge Gospel Hall was built for the assembly. For the size of the community there has been a good number in fellowship. This assembly continues today.

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Oxford is a small town a few miles southwest of Pugwash. During the 1950s, Hiel Patterson held weekly Gospel meetings and children’s meetings in the area. Some of the new believers joined the fellowship at Pugwash Junction Gospel Hall and others came into fellowship at Port Howe Gospel Hall where Hiel Patterson and his wife Marg were in fellowship. In

January 1960, with the assistance of those two assemblies, the Oxford Gospel Hall was established.

Hiel Patterson and Douglas Howard are credited with starting the assembly at Oxford. In active leadership over the years have been Arthur Murray, John Purdy, T. Floyd Stewart, Hiel Patterson, W.L.R. Johnson, Ralph Hunt, Clifford Budd, David P. Cole, and R. Richard Cameron. Oxford Gospel Hall has commended workers to the Lord's field in Venezuela and to local work. About 25 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

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After a Gospel thrust and teaching for Christians in the Tatamagouche area north of Truro, the Tatamagouche Assembly was formed in March 1974, a hive-off from Oxford Gospel Hall. Fred Holder and Douglas Howard were the principals involved in establishing the assembly, with follow-up work by Hiel Patterson and T. Floyd Stewart.

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River Hebert is a small town on the northwestern side of Nova Scotia, across the Chignecto Bay from New Brunswick. It was to that town that Robert Darling and his family came from Scotland to work in the then-booming coal mining industry. Having been in assembly fellowship in Scotland, he desired to establish an assembly testimony in the town. Thus River Hebert Gospel Hall was born in 1921, located outside the village. A new hall was built later another mile out, and is still in use.

Elders over the years in River Hebert Gospel Hall include Harry Dow, Robert Darling, John Seamon,

Gordon Forscenor, Howard Rector, Wally McCheron, Kenneth Ripley, and Percy Ripley. Russel Harris, commended from Ontario, was a main stay in the assembly for many years. Cecil Morton and his wife moved to the area in 1991 to help out in the assembly. River Hebert Gospel Hall held annual Bible Conferences for many years, until the mines closed down and the population declined. Eight adults are now in the fellowship, but a large young people's work adds over 50 youth.

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Ken Ripley from River Hebert Gospel Hall, and T. Floyd Stewart of the Oxford Gospel Hall, being supported by Oxford Gospel Hall, conducted children's meetings and presented the Gospel in the area of Amherst, northwest of Oxford. As a result, the Amherst Assembly came into being in April 1981.

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The River Denys Gospel Hall, also known as Blues Mills Gospel Hall on Cape Breton Island, resulted from Gospel meetings conducted by Isaac McMullen in 1955. Four families were involved in the formation of the assembly, those of Don MacLennan, John MacLennerl, Gordon Cummings, and David MacDonald. Elders have been Don MacLennan, David MacDonald, Dave MacDonald Jr., John Bain, Fred Bartlette, and Don MacNeil. Several workers have been commended by Blues Mills Gospel Hall to the field in Venezuela and to local work. About 60 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

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In 1909, a number of brethren from Scotland had come out to work in the coal mines around Sydney Mines on Cape Breton Island, the eastern portion of Nova Scotia. They began an assembly and arranged to hold their first Conference at Christmas, 1910. The Sydney Mines Gospel Hall was erected, but the little assembly was only nicely under way when a split occurred and only a small number remained to carry on. The assembly continues today.

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Early in the 1900s, Breaking of Bread was begun in the home of John H. Archibald at Manganese Mines. Gospel meetings were held in the schoolhouse. But it was a dying community, and the Manganese Mines Assembly ceased when the place was practically deserted.

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Tent meetings and street meetings in the city of Sydney on Cape Breton were conducted from about 1913 to 1917 by preachers such as Messrs. Brennan, J.T. Dickson, Robert Milnes, McClure, and A. Goodwin, with many professing salvation. As a result, an assembly was formed there in February 1927, which continues today, meeting in the Sydney Gospel Hall.

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As a result of the work in Sydney, the Gospel was carried to the fishing village of Port Bickerton on the eastern shore in the early 1920s. This resulted in the start of a meeting in a home and the Port Bickerton assembly was formed. Later a building was obtained for the Port Bickerton Gospel Hall in which the assembly still carries on.

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In the early 1930s, a new brethren testimony was established in Halifax after some ‘Grant exclusive’ meetings disbanded. The Halifax Gospel Hall was erected in one of the newer districts.

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In 1955, seventeen people in fellowship at the Halifax Gospel Hall decided to form a new assembly in the capital city of Halifax. These were the Cleveland, Leadbeater, Havill, Miller, King, Thompson, Harvie, Lennox, and Laidlaw families. They met at first at the YMCA on South Park Street, but soon purchased the former Bethany United Church building near the Armdale Rotary and renamed it Armdale Bible Chapel. Svend Christensen was the first full-time resident worker at the new assembly.

The work grew, and in 1959 these Christians purchased a lot at the corner of Frederick and Willett Streets in Halifax for the erection of a new chapel. Fairview Bible Chapel was opened in 1960, having a seating capacity of 150. In 1975, the assembly first recognized elders; these were Ron Harris, Harry Thompson, and Allan Adamson. Fairview called Hal Threadcraft in 1985 to be a full-time pastor, and Bruce Boyce in 1986 to be the youth pastor.

Fairview Bible Chapel continued to grow, and in the early 1980s, two ‘sister’ assemblies were begun in the adjacent city of Dartmouth and in Fall River, a town a little further north. With the blessings of Fairview, 40 adults with their 33 children left to form Colby Drive Bible Chapel in Dartmouth. When Fairview filled up once more, believers living in Fall River area decided to form

the Fall River Assembly; 22 adults and 20 children left to form the new church.

The Fairview assembly continued to grow, and two acres were purchased at Rockingham Ridge. Grace Chapel was erected and opened in 1986. John Munro became the full-time pastor in 1992.

Grace Chapel and its predecessors have commended numerous people to the Lord's work. Attendance grew to 400 adults and children at one time.

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The roots of Northbrook Bible Chapel in Dartmouth lie in an independent church that formed in the early 1950s. That work started in 1953 through children's meetings and a Sunday School at Tuft's Cove School. A lot was purchased in 1956 and a building was completed in 1959. A church was formed and called the People's Church until it was incorporated in 1961 when it took the name Northbrook Bible Chapel. Open-air meetings were common and Bible studies were held in the home of Paul and Carrie Hatt. Ted White was the pastor of the People's Church until 1961, when he left to become Director of Canadian Sunday School Mission in New Brunswick. The church seems to have had no full-time pastor after that.

In 1968, Ray and Helen Fox came to Nova Scotia from Ontario as self-supporting workers. Mr. Fox sold his business and went full-time into holding open-air Gospel meetings and distributing Gospel literature. He attended Fairview Bible Chapel when in the area. He was invited to speak at Northbrook. His ministry was so helpful that the Board of Trustees asked him to continue and give as much ministry as possible. He agreed, and suggested

they that he begin with a series on the New Testament church and the priesthood of all believers. The Christians were in agreement with what he taught, and soon were linked with the brethren.

Mr. and Mrs. Fox moved to Dartmouth in 1970, and Mr. Fox became a full-time worker for Northbrook Bible Chapel. Elders were chosen, and over the years these have been Ray Fox, Ralph Dillman, Don Salmans, and Hubert Hebb. Deacons were also selected. About 130 adults and children are in the assembly.

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Greenland Bible Chapel, known initially as Christian Assembly of Greenland, began in 1968 in the town of Greenland, Annapolis County, toward the west end of the peninsula. Lewis Peck, Harold Smith, George Heidman, and Clark McClelland were those involved in the start-up. Lewis Peck and Willard Peck have shared the leadership of the assembly, which numbers about 60 attending on Sundays.

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Lower Argyle Gospel Hall, near Yarmouth at the southwestern tip of Nova Scotia, began in 1961 with four people in fellowship, and 10 added soon after. The assembly started mainly as a result of efforts by Harold Smith. George Heidman also was involved in the start-up. Harold Smith, Phillip Nickerson, and others have shared leadership. At one point, the assembly had 65 to 70 in fellowship, but many hived-off to start a Christian school, and today about 20 attend the assembly.

The Bible chapels in Nova Scotia actively support Emmanuel Bible Camp on Prince Edward Island, and Malagash Bible Camp on Nova Scotia.

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Questionnaire Responses

## New Brunswick

New Brunswick is situated on the east coast of Canada. It is bordered on the west by Maine, on the south by Nova Scotia and the Bay of Fundy, on the east by the Northumberland Strait and on the north by Quebec. Approximately 40% of the population is French-speaking, and most of its young people are bilingual.

Brethren pioneers from Ireland and Scotland reached New Brunswick in the mid 1880s. John Knox McEwen was perhaps the first. John Grimason, in a report written from Baie Verte, New Brunswick in 1886 to the Barley Cake magazine stated: “A whole province here to myself,

all strangers to me, but they are the kind God saves – the poor."

Mr. and Mrs. John Martin (not John M. Martin from Ontario) came to New Brunswick from Kilmarnock, Scotland in the mid 1880s and settled on a farm near New Scotland, a community northeast of Moncton. Mr. Martin had previously preached in the Boston area, Maine, and California. He reported the following in the Barley Cake in 1887: "...Brother Mitchell and I left Nova Scotia on July 1st for Tidnish, New Brunswick where Brother Grimason had labored a year ago and a few souls got saved and gathered out according to Matthew 18:20. We had two weeks meetings in Timber River 8 miles north of Tidnish. Before we left, we had the pleasure of baptizing two brethren. Then we went to Buctouche, 62 miles north on the coast (quite a French settlement) with several Scotch settlements in that neighbourhood... The people came out well, some from far distances. We had a schoolhouse at Mill Creek (6 miles from Buctouche)..." Mr. Martin describes many other preaching experiences in the Maritimes in subsequent letters.

Ansley Goodwin, a native of Timber River, was saved in 1886 when Mr. Grimason and Mr. McEwen visited there. The Tidnish Bridge Assembly was started at that time, and is the one referred to by Mr. Martin. This was apparently the first brethren assembly in New Brunswick. An assembly was also planted shortly at Bayside. Ada King wrote that she had been at the opening of the Bayside Gospel Hall in January 1889.

David Scott was born in Ireland in 1867, according to his grandson Gaius Goff. At the age of 18, he emigrated

to the USA. While in fellowship in the Cliff Street Gospel Hall in Boston, he became interested in taking the Gospel to the Maritimes. He came in the summer of 1891 to New Brunswick on his vacation and preached in Coates Mills, Kent County, where several were saved. He was then commended by the Cliff Street Assembly, left his employment in Boston, and came to the Coates Mills area the next year, accompanied by John Blair. Many were saved in the Coates Mills/Dundas/New Scotland area while Mr. Scott was preaching there.

Many people from Scotland emigrated to Canada in the 1890s and obtained land grants in New Brunswick. One of these families were the Donald Macdonalds. Mr. and Mrs. J. Harris Bears and their family moved to New Brunswick in 1897 and joined with the assembly in New Scotland.

The New Scotland Assembly was formed around 1896. After the Donald Macdonalds arrived, the Christians met in their home for the morning meetings; other meetings were held in the local schoolhouse. Later, after the Macdonalds moved to Moncton, the assembly met in John Martin's house. J. Harris Bears and Donald Macdonald were Sunday School teachers in the New Scotland Assembly and also preached the Gospel along with John Martin.

Others in the New Scotland Assembly were Mrs. Gourley, Mr. and Mrs. Cary Brown, and Mr. and Mrs. Hugh MacLean of MacLean Settlement. As the older Christians died and the younger ones left the area, the meeting in New Scotland slowly diminished, and discontinued after the death of John Martin in 1924.

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When Ansley Goodwin of Timber River became exercised about the Lord's work, he left his employment and joined David Scott in preaching the Gospel. He subsequently preached with Robert Milnes, William Brennan, and Isaac McMullen in Kent County and also in Moncton.

Isaac McMullen came to Moncton in 1921, having been commended from the Central Gospel Hall in Toronto. When he was in Boston, he was told of the need for workers in New Brunswick to preach the Gospel, so he went there in 1921 and had Gospel meetings with Robert Milnes. In July 1922, he married Miss MacNeil in Moncton, and they established a home there.

Robert McCracken was commended to the work in the Maritimes by the Bloomfield Assembly in Belfast and arrived in Moncton in the spring of 1938. That fall, his brother John joined Robert in meetings in Scotch Settlement. When they couldn't use the school, they held the Gospel meetings in the Gospel Hall, then on St. George Street in Moncton. Many were saved at these meetings.

Reginald Jordan from Ireland lived and preached in New Brunswick from 1948 to 1951; he was one of the full-time workers in Moncton and also preached with Isaac McMullen at Dorn Ridge, Dundas, and other places.. Others among the many who preached the Gospel in New Brunswick were George Heidman, Wade LeBlanc, David Kember, Murray McCandless, Gerard Roy, Leslie Wells, and Jonathan Procoppio.

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Moncton is the second largest city in New Brunswick. In the early years it was known for ship building, and for

many years was the home of the Canadian National Railway.

J. Harris Bears moved into Moncton from New Scotland in 1916 and was instrumental in seeing the Moncton assembly formed. It was through him that the preachers came to preach the Gospel in Moncton. The preachers often held meetings in the open air and in the shops of the Canadian National Railroad. In 1919 a tent was pitched in Moncton, and all summer William Brennan and Robert Milnes labored, going from door to door with tracts and preaching in the open air and in the tent. A number were saved. In November 1919, seven met to Remember the Lord, the beginning of the Moncton Assembly. These were Mr. and Mrs. J. Harris Bears, Mr. Norman MacNeil, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Nichols, Kate MacLeod, and Mrs. Carr.

The Christians met first in a little room above a grocery store on St. George Street in Moncton. They later moved across the street and again were upstairs over a grocery store located between Highfield and Weldon Streets. Some of the men who preached there called it a ‘sweat box’ as the room was so small and contained so many cooking odors. The assembly was using Moncton Gospel Hall as the name of their meeting place by that time.

In 1938 Robert McCracken moved to Moncton from Ireland to preach the Gospel. So many were saved when John and Robert McCracken preached in 1938 and 1939 that the assembly had to move to larger quarters, which was a room on the third floor of the Orange Hall at 124 Archibald Street. Mr. MacNeil had started an Assembly Roll Book in the 1920s and listed 21 adults as being in

the assembly. He added 109 more names in the Roll Book for the 1930s and 1940s.

When the Christians moved into the Orange Hall on Archibald Street, they found it was possible to hold Bible Conferences. The first one was held on New Year's day, 1938. Usually, the men of the assembly were the teachers for this Conference and they were held on New Year's day for many years.

As the number of people in the assembly in Moncton increased in the 1940s, a building fund was started and land was purchased at the corner of Mountain Road and Lutz Street in 1946. Plans for a new hall were drawn up, and construction began in 1950. The new hall was made of tile and brick. Over 100 were in fellowship then.

Seating was purchased from a local theater and consisted of row seats with wooden seats and backs. These were anchored to the hardwood floors on iron legs in the main auditorium and in the balcony. Moveable chairs were used at the front of the hall on Sunday mornings for the Remembrance meeting. Some years later, the row seats in the auditorium were replaced by more comfortable chrome chairs, and the hardwood floors were all carpeted.

When the adjoining lot on Lutz Street was up for sale in 1955, the assembly bought it for an addition to the building and space for parking. In 1997, a new addition was constructed to the front of the building.

After the move to 195 Mountain Road, a Conference was held in October of 1950 to mark the opening of the building. The Gospel was preached each evening of the Conference; the balcony was filled as well as the

auditorium necessitating that chairs be placed in the aisles on the main floor to accommodate all who came.

About 50 students were in the Sunday Schools in 1950. The attendance seemed to peak during the late 1960s and early 1970s when classes were held in every available space in the Moncton Gospel Hall. Fred Ward was a Sunday School Superintendent for many years and was dearly loved by all the children. When he died, money was given in his memory for the building of six Sunday School classrooms in the basement.

Special Sunday School programs have been held in December or January for many years. Children's Meetings were held on Friday nights from September to April, attracting about 50 children. Meetings for the children of the Lewis Street area on Victoria Street were also conducted under the leadership of Eric Adsett and Harold Horseman. Forty to fifty children attended these meetings each night.

The Tract Band in Moncton had its start in the early days of the assembly, when some of the younger sisters met in homes to address envelopes. They obtained lists from the Post Office and mailed the envelopes with tracts. Later, they met in the Orange Hall for this work, and then in the basement of the Gospel Hall on Mountain Road. They now send out the Seed Sower's package, which contains a bilingual text as well as tracts and offers of a New Testament to anyone who writes in to request one.

In the early 1950s, some of the sisters were exercised to help assembly missionaries. This effort began in homes but soon moved into the Hall where they could store their supplies. They made quilts, bandages, children's

clothing, and stuffed animals. Calendars were made and sent out Spanish-speaking countries. At Christmas time, many boxes were made up for needy families of Sunday School children.

Street meetings were held in Moncton for many years. On Saturday nights, Christians would preach on the corner of Oak and Main Streets. On Sunday evenings, the open-air meetings were held in the Lewis Street area and in Bore Park and Victoria Park.

In 1962, the elders of the Moncton assembly applied to the Government of Canada for Incorporation, as 'Christians gathered in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.' The name given by the government was 'Christian Brethren.'

Elders in the Moncton assembly over the years include Donald Macdonald, Ernest Morton, Fred Ward, Eric Adsett, Lawrence Adsett, Fred Nichols, and Norman MacNeil. The latter was one of the founders of the Moncton assembly. His spiritual influence was not limited to just his home assembly but was felt throughout the assemblies of the Maritimes. A bilingualist who spoke fluent French, he worked almost singlehandedly in bringing the Gospel to the French community.

Another stalwart in the assembly later was Raj Manuel, a Christian who had immigrated with his family to the area. When he learned of Gospel meetings at the Moncton Gospel Hall, he went and was so impressed with the Gospel message being preached so plainly that he and his wife Patrima joined the fellowship. Mr. Manuel was a great personal worker.

Rick Pardy was saved through Mr. Manuel's testimony. He and his wife Pauline joined the fellowship at the Gospel Hall, and through them, others were saved and joined with the assembly. Rick Pardy, with the help of Mark MacPherson, held home Bible readings. Later the Bible studies moved to another home, with Bill Swan and Bob Budd as the leaders. Among those who accepted Christ at these studies were Frank LeBlanc, Alton Stevenson, Jim Harper, and David McQuinn.

In 1988, the general offices and repair shops of the Canadian National Railway were closed and 1300 jobs were lost, the work being transferred to Montreal and Winnipeg. Two of the leading families in the Moncton assembly had to leave because of the closure – those of Raj and Patrima Manuel, and Rick and Pauline Pardy. By the early 1990s, the hall was renamed to Mountain Road Gospel Hall. The Moncton assembly is the largest in New Brunswick, with about 95 in fellowship at this time.

Of the travelling preachers who have come to Moncton, J. Boyd Nicholson and Douglas Howard have had the longest continuing association with the Moncton assembly, continuing more than 50 years in both cases.

* * *

In 1914, Miss Margaret Betts from Kent County was nursing in Boston and was concerned that no Gospel preachers had come to the area of her home. She made her concern known to the Christians in Boston. They contacted W. N. Brennan and Robert Milnes, then working in Nova Scotia, and a short time later these preachers came to Main River. The preachers traveled the dusty country roads on their bicycles inquiring if any Christians lived nearby. They were told to go and see

Mrs. Charity MacPherson in Smiths Corner, which they did and invited the family to Gospel meetings in the tent in Main River. During 1914 and 1915, several were saved, including four of the MacPherson family. At intervals from 1917 to 1921, Messrs. Brennan, Milnes, and Goodwin preached in the Main River area.

Early in the spring of 1921, Isaac McMullen arrived in Bryants Corner near Moncton and got permission to preach the Gospel in the schoolhouse even though there was some opposition. He labored alone for weeks with the schoolhouse filled to capacity each night, and still no one got saved. He wondered at times if God had really called him to this work as there seemed no strength to bring forth new birth. He went to the meeting on Easter Sunday, and had the thought in his mind that if no one got saved that night, he would go back to Toronto to the shoemaking business. But that night, a number were saved, and at the close of the series of meetings, 26 souls had been saved.

During the summer of 1921, others preached the Gospel in the area and more souls were saved. Through their preaching, the Bryants Corner Assembly was planted that summer, with 22 being gathered to His name. The new Christians started a Sunday School and a prayer meeting. Later that year, Mr. McMullen and co-workers baptized twenty at one time in the river, with 500 people observing.

The Christians were exercised about buying land on which a building was to be erected for the preaching of the Gospel and for a burying ground. The land was purchased but a building was not erected. The Christians met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ward

for their Rembrance Meetings. The deed for the land was registered in August 1921. The trustees were Joseph Ward, Sylvanus Chapman, Wilkinson Ward, and Robert Lynds.

Several of the younger Christians saved during the early years left the area around Bryants Corner to work in Moncton and joined the fellowship in the Moncton assembly. Mr. Fred Ward, Mrs. Angus MacPherson and Robert and Ella Lynds all moved to Moncton and were in the assembly there for many years.

In 1935, only seven persons were left. The assembly in Bryants Corner continued until shortly before Joseph Ward died in November 1937.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. Norman Kion of Ontario were missionaries in the West Indies before they moved to Campbellton on the northern edge of New Brunswick in the 1940s. An assembly in Campbellton was going on in the 1940s and 1950s, which was in fellowship with the English assemblies on the Gaspé coast of Quebec, the nearest assemblies to them.

In 1949, Mr. Kion started a radio program called ‘Echoes of Grace’ that reached out 300 miles around Campbellton. Over a period of time the program was broadcast on many other stations, starting with Quito, Equador and then to many other countries.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Chard lived in Campbellton at that time and helped in the Gospel work. Alice (Johnson) Harvie was a school teacher there and helped Mr. Kion prepare the radio messages. A small assembly occupies the Campbellton Gospel Hall today.

* * *

Fredericton is the capital city of New Brunswick, situated on the Saint John River. The University of New Brunswick and St. Thomas University are both located in Fredericton.

In 1938, Isaac McMullen moved his family to Fredericton. For several years, he preached on street corners in the city. William Glasgow from New Jersey came to Fredericton to work with Mr. McMullen. He and others also worked in nearby Williamsburg, Lincoln, and Dorne Ridge. Although some were saved at that time, no assemblies were formed at that time. In 1944, the McMullens moved back to Moncton.

In 1948, at the invitation of the Fredericton Christians, Mr. and Mrs. A. Christie moved to the Fredericton area from the U.S. Eight Fredericton believers commenced that year to Break Bread on Sunday mornings, the beginning of the Fredericton Gospel Hall. Their first meeting was held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Christie.

That same year, the Christians bought a property that had been a garage and gas station, and renovated it for their Gospel Hall. The assembly occupied that building on Gibson Street until 1963, when they purchased land on McAdam Avenue and sold their old building. While they were building the new Gospel Hall, they met in a room in the County Municipal Home.

George Heidman moved his family to Fredericton in 1963 and ministered at the assembly. Hiel and Margaret Patterson of Oxford then moved to Fredericton. They helped at the small assembly and also kept a Christian book store called Seaside Scripture Supplies. This business was carried on later by Gordon Swan when the

Pattersons moved back to Oxford in 1965. Others in the assembly are Annie Haines, Mr. and Mrs. Reg Brewer, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Stairs, and Mr. and Mrs. Irving Brooks.

* * *

In 1982, a group from the Fredericton Gospel Hall on McAdam Avenue started to meet in Keswick Ridge where they gathered together as the Fredericton Assembly of Christians. After meeting for three years, they bought land on the MacLeod Hill Road and constructed a hall for the assembly. During this time of building, several brethren from the Moncton assembly helped them in their work. The Fredericton Assembly of Christians have a good testimony in the neighborhood and have seen some saved and added to the assembly. They have good outreach to the children in the neighborhood with their children's programs. Ernest Adsett is an elder in this assembly.

* * *

In the 1950s, Tom Wilkie and James Blackwood held meetings in the city of Sussex, which lies about midway between Moncton and Saint Johns. Later, Sam Cairns and Bill Swan of Moncton preached the Gospel at Sussex. These also held Gospel meetings in a building in nearby Waterford, going there on Sunday afternoons to make a fire in an old oil barrel which served as a stove to warm the building before the evening meetings.

In the 1960s, Grace Craig, later Mrs. Allison Morton, Jr. led a classmate to the Lord. This led to the Lord working in her family's lives and some were saved. As a consequence of this, Murray McCandless came from Ontario to preach the Gospel in the St. Martins and

Sussex areas of New Brunswick. Murray and Shirley McCandless then made their home in Sussex.

David Kember of Ontario moved to Sussex for about two years to assist in the work there. When he returned to Ontario, he left his trailer, so Sam Cairns and Bill Swan carried on Bible readings in the trailer one night a week for some who had professed salvation. Ken and Doris Taylor also lived in Sussex and helped in this new work.

At that time, these Sussex-area Christians were driving to Moncton to Remember the Lord on Sundays. An assembly was started near the town of St. Martins in a rented hall in April 1978. The Christians later moved to the Fire Hall in St. Martins. Then a new Sussex Gospel Hall was built near Sussex and opened in July 1980, with 15 in fellowship.

Christians from the Atlantic Provinces, Ontario, and the United States helped in the building of the new hall. Gaius Goff and Albert Ramsay held Gospel meetings there soon after its opening.

* * *

In 1979, George Hicks was holding Bible studies in the home of John and Grace Vanderlaans in Mercer Settlement, three miles east of Avonmore, about 50 miles west of Moncton. Several local people attended these meetings, among whom were Eric Huggard and David and Connie Cripps.

In June 1980, John M. Martin of Tavistock, Ontario, came to this community and held Gospel meetings in the Community Church in Mercer Settlement. That fall, the Bible studies continued on Sunday evenings at the

Vanderlaans' home. In October, George Hicks held more Bible studies in the home of Doug and Sandy Hall.

When the Hicks and Cripps heard of meetings in Riverview with J. B. Nicholson, Jr., they attended several meetings in the series. During this week, Eric Huggard, the Hicks, and the Cripps met with Mr. Nicholson regarding establishing a New Testament Church in Avonmore. After that, they studied the Emmaus Course Christ Loved The Church by William MacDonald.

John Martin and his wife came to the area again in the spring. The Christians then commenced a regular Remembrance Meeting on Sunday mornings. Those attending the first meeting of the Avonmore Christian Fellowship were John and Melissa Martin, Gerald and Lois MacLellan, Eric Huggard, Connie and David Cripps and George and Amy Hicks. Evening Bible studies were held at the Cripps' home. The new assembly acquired a portable building and placed it on land made available by David Cripps.

After much prayer and discussion, it was decided that the time was right for a new building. Construction started in the fall of 1993 with the men of the assembly helping out with their individual expertise. Faithful servants of God proclaiming the Gospel and building the saints up have been John Martin, Harold Smith, George Heidman, Wade LeBlanc, Alex Stevenson, Joe Sherlock, J. B. Nicholson, Jr., and Bruce Toye. About 20 adults and children regularly attend the meetings of the assembly.

* * *

Dundas is a small rural community 15 miles north of Moncton. Many preachers have visited this area and

many meetings have been held in tents and schoolhouses dating back to the late 1800s.

In the late 1940s, some Christians purchased a lot from Mary (Bears) Graves for the construction of the Dundas Gospel Hall. Those on the deed as trustees in 1949, the date of the construction, were Russell Morton, Harry Hannah, Arthur Bears and Wilfred Budd.

A Conference was held at the opening of the Hall in October 1949 and Douglas Howard, Isaac McMullen and Reg Jordan all spoke at that time. After the opening of the Dundas Hall, Reg Jordan and Isaac McMullen held Gospel meetings.

A Sunday School was started in about 1950; Ralph and Austin Morton taught on Sunday afternoons until Ralph left for British Columbia. Austin Morton carried on with Cecil Budd until he too left for British Columbia. This work continued in the Dundas Gospel Hall for many years by Cecil Budd with help from the brethren from Moncton. More land was obtained later from Mrs. Graves when the hall was enlarged. The assembly seems to have discontinued in the 1980s.

Some in the Dundas area were going to the Moncton assembly meetings and decided to reform the assembly in Dundas. The first meeting to Remember the Lord was held at Robert and Linda Budd’s house in February 1983. Eighteen were present, plus children. These were Cecil Budd, Bob and Linda Budd, Wendell and Suzanne Budd, Wallace and Anita Coates, Clarence and Eleanor Budd, Jim and Dora Melanson, Mary Graves, Ida Budd, Don and Sharon Cormier, Daryll Budd, and Brian and Debbie Budd.

The old Gospel Hall, which was over 30 years old, was raised and a basement put under it; an addition was constructed at the front of the building, and other improvements were made.

Many series of Gospel meetings were held through the years mostly with Harold Smith and Wade LeBlanc who visited faithfully in the area surrounding the Hall. In 1969, Albert Ramsay and David Oliver had Gospel meetings at the Dundas Gospel Hall. David Hunt, Floyd Stewart, and Alec Stephenson were others involved in Gospel work in Dundas.

* * *

In November 1968, several young couples from the Mountain Road Gospel Hall in Moncton left and commenced to meet in the Riverview High School. In February 1970, the building formerly occupied by the Gunningsville Baptist Church, situated on Coverdale Road in Gunningsville/Riverview, was purchased by these believers for their meetings. Repairs were made and the main auditorium redecorated in preparation for the official opening of Faith Bible Chapel in March 1970. The trustees at the time of the purchase of the building were Jack Briggins, Reginald Burge, Allison Morton and David Tipper.

The believers carried on an active Sunday School, and many children had the opportunity of hearing the Gospel as did their parents when they attended special programs of the Sunday School. However, after about a dozen years of meeting, many of the couples originating this work moved from the metropolitan area of Moncton to different parts of Canada and the United States. Some of the Christians returned once again into fellowship at

the Mountain Road Gospel Hall in Moncton, and the meeting disbanded in the mid 1980s.

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Saint John is the largest of the four cities in New Brunswick. It is situated at the mouth of the Saint John River.

George Heidman was commended from Dominion Gospel Hall in Orillia, Ontario in August 1950 and moved to New Brunswick in 1952. In May 1953, he felt led to preach the Gospel in Saint John. He and his wife Frances moved there, renting an apartment from Mrs. Murray, the sister of Mrs. Russell Morton of Moncton.

Mr. Heidman immediately began preaching in King Square. Soon he was leading a well-attended Bible study in the home of James O'Neil, the brother of Mrs. Murray. Later, Don Murray, son of Mrs. Murray, offered the use of their home two nights a week for meetings. Mr. Heidman borrowed chairs from the YMCA and took them to the Murray's home each week and then carted them back again. A good number of people attended these meetings each week.

On Sunday mornings, the Heidmans would travel to Moncton or Fredericton for the Remembrance Meeting. After a time, they felt they should stay in Saint John and start a Sunday School and a Bible class on Sunday mornings. Frances taught Sunday School in the kitchen while George had Bible studies in the living room. Gospel meetings began on Sunday nights in the large living room of the McCavours. Tract distribution was done regularly at both the City Hospital and sanatorium.

In 1954, the first Remembrance Meeting of the Saint John assembly was held in the Heidman's living room, with Mr. and Mrs. Donovan, Mr. McCavour, Fred Comley and the Heidmans meeting together to Remember the Lord.

In June 1954, Joe Donovan gave the assembly two lots of land next to his home on Courtenay Avenue on which to construct a building for meetings. The men of the Moncton assembly were very faithful; Burton McMullen and Fred Ward would bring a carload down on Saturdays and they would work all day on the building. Others from Moncton and other assemblies came to work on the hall. The Brock Avenue Gospel Hall in Toronto donated light fixtures. Another assembly donated all the chairs that were needed and shipped them to Saint John. Thus the Saint John Gospel Hall was finished.

The Gospel Hall was opened in February 1955. George Heidman's father, August Heidman, preached the first message. Mr. Henry Fletcher of Toronto was at the opening and held Gospel meetings afterwards; a number professed to be saved. Mr. McNeil came often from Moncton and was a valuable mentor for George Heidman. Eric Adsett and Fred Ward as well as Burton McMullen and Lawrence Adsett came many times for the weekend to support the work and offer their assistance in the preaching. Clark McClelland often came to conduct series of meetings at the hall.

People from the Mispec area made up a great part of the Saint John meeting. Men in the assembly would drive to Mispec to pick up children for Sunday School. Members of the large Harold Eastwood family were always eager

to come. The assembly grew as Christians from assemblies in Scotland came over to work in the Drydock. They were a help in the assembly both preaching the Gospel and ministering the word of God. Two of these men were Ian Adair and Duncan Maxwell.

In 1980, Wade LeBlanc heard the Gospel and trusted the Lord as his Saviour. He soon began preaching at Kings Square and became exercised about going out full-time preaching the Word of God. The Saint John assembly was happy to give him a commendation.

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In the early part of 1979, the first French-speaking assembly in New Brunswick was planted in the small village of Green River, near Edmundston, the Green River chrétienne reunis.

Larry Buote, who had been commended to the Lord's work in Quebec, attended the Moncton Conference in 1978 and visited some new converts on the Acadian Peninsula on the northeast tip of New Brunswick. A man from Tracadie, Leon Comeau, had been saved through reading a New Testament received in the mail, and his wife soon followed. Larry Buote found out about him and soon Leon came in contact with others who shared the same salvation he had found.

The work progressed and meetings were held in Leon's basement. Several more professed. These new converts met regularly for Bible study. Then the tent went up for public declaration of the Gospel. Much opposition developed, and the town council, who had given them permission to erect the tent, advised them to take it down. Another tentative effort to erect the tent somewhere else also failed, so the meetings were held in

different homes in Tracadie. God was working and five souls more were saved. Soon sixteen believers were gathered for the first time in local capacity to Remember their Lord, and called their assembly Tracadie chrétienne reunis.

Mr. Vincent Davey who spent most of his life in the work of God in Quebec, made many trips to the area. Leslie Wells, a French language professor from Northern Ireland, came to New Brunswick for a short visit in 1981 and returned to help in the Gospel in the summer of 1983. He was later commended to the French work in New Brunswick in 1985. He settled in Tracadie and has endeavored to help in the Gospel and in the teaching of God's Word. He proved to be a great help in translating hymns from the Believer's Hymn Book to add to the new hymn book for the French speaking assemblies. He has been a source of encouragement in writing different articles in La Banni re de la V rit, published four times a year.

A few souls have been saved in the village of Neguac and received in the assembly in Tracadie. A weekly Gospel meeting has been held in the home of one of the believers. 'Kember texts' are assembled there. This great work has been used of God to spread the message through many parts of the world, and the brethren in Neguac had the privilege to be part of that work which began with Walter Kember from Sarnia, Ontario.

* * *

Pigeon Hill is a small coastal village situated on Ile Lamčque, northeast of Tracadie. The Gospel came to this area through a young man, Serge, who was studying at the university in Moncton in 1981. He heard the way

of salvation through other students who were having meetings on the campus connected with the French Baptists. Serge was eager to bring this message to his parents. They, his sister, and other relatives came to know Christ as Savior. In the spring of 1984, Serge came in contact with the assembly in Tracadie. He was received in the assembly in December of that year.

There were several other villages to reach in those parts of the Acadian peninsula. With the encouragement of the brethren, weekly meetings were held. In June 1992 a new testimony was planted in the area with 15 in fellowship. More than 30 now meet in their new Pigeon Hill Gospel Hall which was built in 1996.

The assembly in Tracadie holds a monthly meeting for the ministry of God's Word through the winter months in conjunction with Pigeon Hill, alternating between assemblies from November through March.

* * *

Shediac is on the coast of Northumberland Strait, 15 miles northeast of Moncton. The assembly in Shediac – Shediac chrétienne reunis – has its roots at the Canadian National Railway shops in Moncton in May 1982 when Luc Bergeron heard the Gospel and was saved through Raj Manuel, a fellow worker. Another young man, Denis Bourgeois, was saved in September of that year, followed by others. A group started meeting in Luc Bergeron's home in Robichaud, near Shediac for Bible studies.

Raj Manuel invited them to attend a series of Gospel meetings with Albert Hull and Doug Howard. Luc Bergeron had already seen the way of gathering according to the Scriptures and the truth of the Lord's

supper, and wanted to know more because those things were not practiced where he was going since the time he had been saved.

That summer of 1982, Clarence and Robert Budd had a few Bible studies with these new Christians, but seeing that their interest was to have something in French, Clarence Budd contacted Larry Buote who was labouring in Quebec. With his teaching, they were soon in fellowship with the believers in Moncton.

In the fall of 1982, Larry Buote came to the community of Robichaud, near Shediac, for Gospel meetings in the basement of Maurice Gaudet's home. Bible readings were held on Saturday evenings because the men were working at the shops on week nights. Gerard Roy and Larry Buote had several meetings on a weekend on assembly truths. Mr. Berney from Quebec was also invited by the Moncton brethren to come for ministry. Mr. Davey made several trips to Shediac and the other French assemblies to encourage the young assemblies. In January 1983, Gospel meetings were held to reach others in these parts.

The new believers developed a desire to meet as an assembly in Robichaud. In April 1983, the brethren sought the fellowship of their brethren from Moncton. Soon, 16 believers met for the first time as Shediac chrétienne reunis to Remember the Lord.

A year later, the hall was built and the first series of Gospel meetings were held that summer. Gerard Roy, who had just been commended to the work, joined Mr. Grainger from Ontario for these meetings. Fourteen people professed salvation in those meetings.

The assembly has sought to continue to spread the Gospel in other areas. There are now 50 believers in fellowship. An annual Conference is held in the fall in the Shediac High School; the monthly ministry meetings throughout the winter months have been a blessing for the assembly.

Visitation is done on a regular basis to surrounding communities near Shediac. An outreach through the province is also made regularly with the help of the other assemblies who help distribute Seed Sowers texts to villages beyond. A weekly Gospel meeting is held in a portable hall in the village of St-Louis, an hour's drive north. Two families from St-Louis drive to Shediac for the regular assembly meetings.

Brethren from the Shediac assembly have labored faithfully to spread the Gospel to students at the University of Moncton. They visit weekly and distribute over 100 texts each Monday night, inviting students to come and hear the truth about eternal matters. Each Saturday night, the Gospel message is proclaimed.

There are now four French speaking assemblies in New Brunswick and two commended workers – Mr. Leslie Wells from Northern Ireland and Gerard Roy of Green River. Larry Buote continues to labor there and in Quebec.

Sources:

Remember the Days of Old, by Betty McMullen, Gospel Folio Press, 2000

Letters of Interest, February 1944, p. 24; March 1944, p. 38; December 1955, p. 15

## Prince Edward Island

Prince Edward Island is the smallest of the Canadian Provinces. Assembly history on Prince Edward Island actually has its beginning far from there in Brandon, Manitoba, where a Presbyterian minister, Mr. Rae, left his position and joined with the assembly in that city. In 1890, he held Gospel meetings in a schoolhouse in North Dakota. Among those attending were Mr. and Mrs. Henry Keyes, and through Mr. Rae's preaching, both were saved in that year.

In 1914, the Keyes moved to Edmonton, Alberta, where they were neighbors of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Ramsay. Through the witness of the Keyes, both Ramsays were brought to the Lord. Later, three other couples who lived in the same block as the Ramsays were also saved through Mrs. Keyes' testimony, and all gathered with the assembly in Edmonton.

Gordon Ramsay was a native of Prince Edward Island, and each summer he returned there with his family to help on the farm near Mill River. The Gordon Ramsays later moved to Boston, Massachusetts, and joined with the Christians in the Cliff Street Gospel Hall, but continued to visit Prince Edward Island regularly. On one of Mr. Ramsay's visits, his interest in seeing a Gospel work established there was aroused, and in 1932 he and Joe Pearson of Massachusetts held two weeks of open-air meetings in the Square in Charlottetown, the capital of the Province.

Mr. Pearson wrote to American Pioneer, an assembly magazine, that "...The door is open for the gospel, and there is not an assembly on the entire Island 150 miles long and 30 miles wide, sometimes called the 'Million

Acre Farm,' and not a scriptural assembly on it! ... The woman with whom we are staying is over 70 and got saved at a Pugwash Junction conference."

When in Ontario, Mr. Pearson had met Russell Harris, who had worked with John Spreeman in Quebec. In November 1933, the two men went to Prince Edward Island for Gospel work. Their first meeting was in the Lady Fane schoolhouse near Gambles Corner, where Gordon Ramsay and Hugh Thorpe had previously held meetings. On June 1934, a tent was pitched across from the Lady Fane school, and nightly meetings began.

Albert Joyce moved his family to the Island to help in tent meetings with Herbert Harris. As the crowds at the meeting grew, so did the opposition. Mr. Harris said things in his preaching that stirred the anger of the audience, and Mr. Joyce followed with a touching Gospel message while they were aroused. The whole countryside was stirred and many were saved.

The preachers commenced open-air meetings in the Square in Charlottetown every Saturday night. The Gospel meetings continued until the beginning of September 1934. Then a date was set for the baptism of about thirty who had been saved that summer. Eight hundred onlookers came to watch. Mr. Joyce and the two Harris brothers, Herb and Russell, stood on an upturned fishing boat and preached the Gospel.

The Lord opened the way for an assembly to meet, and the Public Hall was rented in the town of Crapaud, a dozen miles west of Charlottetown. On October 7, 1934, the Lord's Supper was observed for the first time. Thus the first assembly on Prince Edward Island came into being, the origin of the Crapaud Gospel Hall.

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Commended by the assemblies at Regina and Moose Jaw in Saskatchewan, Stanley Wells went to Prince Edward Island in 1943. Arriving in Summerside, about 40 miles west of Charlottetown, where there was neither assembly nor aggressive Gospel work, he began a weekly radio broadcast to reach young people. About 100 children responded to the offer of a New Testament. He then arranged Bible schools in various places and rented a room in Summerside for children's meetings. Several souls were saved in this work. In 1945 the Christians purchased an old hatchery building and had it moved to Arcona Street. They converted it into a meeting place, soon to be known as Glad Tidings Chapel.

In 1946 William Rae of Portland came to the Island for tent meetings. During his visit the believers at Summerside first met as an assembly. Stanley Wells was assisted by Gordon Warnholtz and Allan Weber in initiating the assembly.

Others in leadership over the years have been Joseph Sherlock, who was a full-time worker, and Spurgeon Robbins, a leading brother. In 1960, the assembly moved to a new building on Arcona Street and changed the name to Summerside Bible Chapel. In 1987 a new building was erected at Granville Street North and Sherbrooke Road, its present location. The assembly has about 90 adults and children in attendance.

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Svend Christensen was a native of Prince Edward Island and lived at Dundas Centre. The St. Peters/Upton/Dundas area is 40 miles east of Charlottetown. In 1948,

the Upton Gospel Chapel was established by Svend Christensen and Allan Weber. Meetings had been held in different schools prior to then, but in that year, the assembly occupied the building constructed in the late 1800s by the Church of Scotland. The chapel was enlarged in 1983. Elders over the years include Henry MacDougall, Tim Christensen, George Knox, Wesley Stead, and in earlier days Allan Weber. The assembly, which has about 50 adults and children, has commended workers to Africa.

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Stanley and Marjorie Streight began laboring on Prince Edward Island in about 1945. They lived at Cardigan, near Montague, and were resident workers at the Montague Bible Chapel assembly. In the late 1980s, a second assembly was formed in Montague and called Emmanuel Bible Chapel under the leadership of Robert MacGregor.

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Charlottetown Bible Chapel has its roots in a few meetings held in 1954 and 1955 in the Sons of England Hall. In 1954, Emmanuel Bible Camp, a summer Bible camp for boys and girls, was opened. The Prince Edward Island Evangelical Association was formed for ownership and operation of the camp and for other activities.

Svend Christensen was concerned about the development of an aggressive testimony in Charlottetown, and so in 1955, through the Prince Edward Island Evangelical Association, purchased a property at 235 Cumberland Street, Charlottetown, and the chapel was constructed. The first official meeting of the assembly was in January 1956. The assembly

presently occupies its own chapel at 35 Lincolnwood Drive.

Among the very many people (37) identified as starting the assembly and leading it subsequently, we mention Svend Christensen, Joe Wootton, Art Small, and Ron Harris up to 1958. James and Betty Stahr moved to Charlottetown in 1958, remaining until 1971, making it possible for Mr. Christensen to move to Halifax. Harold Ellis, Claude Lewis, Ron Jones, and John Phillips among others served as elders after 1958. Charlottetown Bible Chapel has commended three full-time workers over the years. Today, about 200 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

* * *

Lou Harris and Svend Christensen worked among the fishing villages on the Island in the 1950s, which led to the formation of the Beach Point Assembly.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Sowing and Reaping in the Garden of the Gulf, by G. Albert Ramsay, 1983

Letters of Interest, February 1944, p. 24; March 1944, p. 38; December 1955, p. 15

## Newfoundland and Labrador

Newfoundland is a large island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. To it belongs Labrador, which lies on the eastern side of Quebec. The Province now has the name ‘Newfoundland and Labrador.’ It is the eastern most Province of Canada.

Prior to 1947, there were no assemblies in Newfoundland. In 1955 there were five, and 22 are listed for the Province at this writing.

In the 1920s, William Brennan of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, and Isaac McMullen of Moncton, New Brunswick, spent a number of weeks each summer working around Carbonear, Fresh Water, and Harbour Grace. Some professions of salvation were made, but these did not establish an assembly testimony. Among the converts was “Aunt Jessie Snow,” a poor laboring woman, a prayer warrior, and an outstanding witness for Christ, with whom Messrs. Brennan and McMullen kept contact.

Herbert Harris came to Newfoundland in 1942 for tent meetings. Not finding a suitable place in the capital city of St. John’s, he went to Carbonear, across Conception Bay from St. John’s, and pitched the tent close to where Aunt Jessie Snow lived. Douglas Howard joined him there. Many souls were saved in those tent meetings, and soon they needed to find a building in which to hold the meetings. A Mr. Frampton, a Christian man, helped them build such a hall amid much opposition. A Sunday School was started there, with Gospel meetings. However, the local people got up a petition which forced the leading workers in this effort out of the area.

Christians from St. John’s then drove to Carbonear to keep the work going. In 1947, an assembly was finally formed, meeting at the Carbonear Gospel Hall. Opposition continued and many were afraid to join with the assembly for fear of losing their jobs. The assembly has remained small. G. Albert Ramsey and Wallace

Cudmore were among those who have ministered at Carbonear.

* * *

The work of Messrs. Harris, Howard, and Ramsey also resulted in the planting of an assembly in St. John's soon after, meeting at St. John's Gospel Hall.

* * *

Also in St. John's is Faith Bible Chapel. The beginnings of the assembly can be traced to a Gospel work among children begun by Jack and Allegra McBirney, who came to Newfoundland from California in 1964. In association with the Canadian Sunday School Mission, children's Bible Clubs, Day Camps, Sunday School, and teen activities were started. Some evening Gospel Services were held in a hall on Casey Street and a number of adults began to meet weekly. The work increased with the coming of James and Alice Campbell and Robert and Sharon Johnston in 1968. The Johnstons were commended workers from Laurel Bible Chapel in San Diego, California. Encouragement and support were provided by Marie Thomson, an assembly children's worker from California, and by Charlottetown Bible Chapel on Prince Edward Island. Various Home Bible Studies for men and women were started and regular Sunday Services were carried on. The name by which the fellowship was initially known was The Bible Chapel.

Increasing numbers trusted the Lord and were added to the church. In the early part of 1969 a camp was purchased in Paradise; week-long camps for boys and girls and teens were held there for some years. Also in 1969, a house on Kenmount Road was purchased and permission was given from St. John's City Council to

renovate and rebuild it for a suitable meeting place. Services at Faith Bible Chapel in St. John's were begun in 1970. The congregation continued to grow and many church-related activities were markedly increased. The assembly has always had an effective outreach to nearby Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Those who had been active in the early days gradually left; the McBirneys in 1970, the Campbells in 1972 and the Johnstons in 1975; but the work was carried on well by local elders, of which there are five at present. In 1980 the Campbells returned for several years. A new addition, the present main chapel, was completed in 1983. The original goals are still paramount – the preaching of the Gospel and the building up of believers.

* * *

Stanley Beasley labored along the eastern shore about 120 miles north of St. John's. He had done evangelistic work there while in the Navy from 1942 to 1946, and when he left the Navy he returned to the area to labor. Mr. Beasley was joined by others at various times. Bob and Helen McLaren worked in the area from 1950 to 1952. James Booker from Ontario and his wife worked from 1952 to 1954. James and Betty Stahr, commended from New Jersey, joined forces with Mr. Beasley from about 1954 to 1958. Bob and Sharon Johnson came from 1966 to 1968, and Alex and Jean Stephenson, commended from Ontario, worked from 1969 to 1979. Jim and Elizabeth Paul came from Scotland to work from 1980 to 1981.

By 1955, three assemblies were functioning about 18 miles apart. They met in the Burnt Point Gospel Hall, Old Perlican Gospel Hall, and Western Bay Gospel Hall.

Each hall could seat about 100 and had self-contained apartments for workers. In each village the assemblies had their own cemetery. Through giving out tons of clothing and helping in all possible ways, including suturing up people, horses, and cows, the brethren broke down much of the violence and bitterness against the Gospel.

In the 1980s, the three assemblies merged, meeting in Burnt Point and led by Andrew Pottle. The Burnt Point Gospel Hall continues today. The building in Western Bay was sold, and the building in Old Perlican was closed.

* * *

Alex and Jean Stephenson moved to Bloomfield, midway between St. John's and Gander, in 1979. Mr. Stephenson had come the previous summer and held tent meetings from July to September, not knowing anyone in the area. Thus began a work that resulted in the Bloomfield Gospel Hall. By 1983, nine sat down to Remember the Lord for the first time as an assembly. Only one of these – a nine year old girl – had ever witnessed the Lord's Supper before that.

Lack of employment in the area has kept the assembly small, the young men moving away to find work. About 20 adults and youngsters are in the assembly at this time.

* * *

In about 1970, Brian Funston and Carl Payne were spreading the Gospel on Fogo Island, 18 miles off the coast from Carmanville. These men had built a portable hall in which to have meetings. G. Albert Ramsey came

there in 1972 and ministered the Word, with fruit, and a year later assembly was planted at the Fogo Island Gospel Hall, which continues today.

* * *

Main Point Gospel Hall in the small town of Main Point near Gander Bay and Carmanville began in 1974, founded by George Campbell and Gaius Goff. Leadership has been shared by Alvin Blake, Robert Harbin, Herbert Harris, Ernest Harris, and Frank Simms. About 50 adults and youngsters attend Main Point Gospel Hall, which is one of the larger assemblies on the Island.

* * *

Brian and Elizabeth Funston rented a small cottage in Sandy Cove in 1976, near Sandringham and Eastport, and were instrumental in the salvation of their neighbors, Jim and Angela Matchem. G. Albert Ramsey came for Gospel meetings, with souls saved, and this led to the establishment of the Eastport Gospel Hall in 1977, which continues today.

* * *

An assembly at Corner Brook near the west shore of Newfoundland was established where Albert Joyce and George Campbell labored. It meets at the Corner Brook Gospel Hall. These brethren and others also built small halls for Gospel work in two other places near Carbonear in the east. They met with much church opposition and saw numbers in one hall dwindle from 200 in Sunday School and Gospel meetings to a handful through pressure by the established church, which controlled not only the educational system, but also the social and political life.

* * *

Cox's Cove Gospel Hall near Corner Brook, began in 1982, the result of efforts by Jim Jarvis, Melvin Flynn, and Frank Loder. The assembly hived off from Corner Brook Gospel Hall. Since about 1987, it has been known as McIvers Gospel Hall. Jim Jarvis, Frank Loder, and Floyd Park have been the elders. About 25 adults and youngsters attend the assembly. Dale Gallagher in association with the Canadian Sunday School Mission was active in the beginning of the work at McIvers.

* * *

The boat "M.G.M." (Missionary Gospel Messenger) stopped at the harbor town of Parsons Pond on the Gulf of St. Lawrence in the early summer of 1961. Its crew consisted of Herbert Harris, George Campbell, J. Albert Joyce, Gaius Goff, T. Hilton, and Wallace Buckle. Open-air meetings and visitations by these men resulted in the formation of Parsons Pond Gospel Hall in 1961. Those in leadership in the assembly over the years include Robbert Goosney, Harvey Parsons, Oscar House, Sam Payne, and Harley Payne. Parsons Pond Gospel Hall has commended a worker to the Lord's service. It has a weekly attendance of about 100.

* * *

While the boat "M.G.M." was in Parsons Pond, the men were invited to visit Rocky Harbour, some 40 miles down the coast. This they did in the late summer of 1961. The boat entered the harbor with hymns playing from the loudspeaker mounted on the mast, and a crowd soon gathered on the wharf. The crew held an open-air meeting and visited afterward among the crowd. The interest shown encouraged them to stay and hold more

meetings. An unused garage was found; the grease pit was floored over, the walls were painted, and benches were made for seating.

As fall came, the boat had to move on, but most of the crew stayed on in Rocky Harbour, living in a rented house. When cold weather moved in, a more suitable building for the meetings was found in the lane then called Parson's Parlour. Interest and attendance increased and the building was usually filled. By springtime of 1962, some 70 people had professed salvation. At the first baptism held that summer in Rocky Harbour Pond, 25 were baptized before a large crowd that had gathered.

Later that summer, construction was begun on a permanent hall – Rocky Harbour Gospel Hall – which was officially opened in October with meetings by Doug Howard and George Campbell. The assembly was formed in January 1963 with 17 in fellowship. Wallace Buckle, Cliff Nicholle, and Steve Joyce have been in active leadership over the years. Peter Mathews has been a resident worker for the assembly. The assembly conducts a monthly meeting at the Senior's Home in Norris Point. It has an average Sunday attendance of a little over 20, with 15 in fellowship.

* * *

On the south shore of Labrador, L'anse Au Loup Gospel Hall began in 1958. Initiated by Herbert Harris, Albert Joyce, and George Campbell, the assembly is the first of five now in Labrador. The traveling preachers provided the initial leadership, but now elders have been raised up. L'anse Au Loup Gospel Hall has commended full-time workers, and has about 200 adults and youngsters in

attendance. The assembly holds a three-day Conference each October.

* * *

Two other assemblies are in area of L'anse Au Loup, and all started at about the same time. Red Bay is about 25 miles up the coast, and is the location of the Red Bay Gospel Hall. In the opposite direction is Forteau, the location of English Point Gospel Hall. These three assemblies have monthly interactions.

* * *

Charlottetown Gospel Hall in the town of Charlottetown, about 125 miles north of L'anse Au Loup, and not to be confused with the capital city of Prince Edward Island, began in 1968. The assembly was started by Albert Joyce and George Campbell. Elders have been John Kippenhuck, Lewis Powell, Carl Kippenhuck, and Roy Freaul. About 25 are in the assembly. Typical transportation from the L'anse Au Loup area is by plane, although boat trips can be made in the summer, and people have been known to make the trip by ski in the winter.

* * *

The Goose Bay Assembly in the town of Goose Bay about 200 miles northwest of L'anse Au Loup in Labrador, was begun in the late 1980s. Wallace Buckle and Save Swan were commended workers who lived there. The New Harbour Gospel Hall was started in the late 1970s following tent work with George Campbell and Gaius Goff.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

John Knox McEwen and Pioneer Work in the Maritimes, by John T. Dickson, Good News Publishers, Westchester, IL (1968)

Sowing and Reaping In the Garden of the Gulf, G. Albert Ramsay, 1983

Remember the Days of Old, by Betty McMullen, New Brunswick, 1999

Letters of Interest, February 1944, p. 24; March 1944, p. 38; December 1955, p. 15

## Ethnic Assemblies

It seemed desirable to separate the ethnic assemblies from the main body of this work, even though the assembly histories listed by states and provinces are thereby shortened.

By ‘Ethnic Assemblies’ I mean assemblies for which the language used is not English, or was not English initially, or those assemblies which use both English and another language in their services. The French-speaking assemblies in Quebec and nearby areas are not included in this section. Most of the assemblies described in this section are also referred to briefly in the states and provinces in which they are or were located.

The number of currently existing ethnic assemblies on the continent is considerably greater than those discussed here because the majority of them did not respond to the requests for information. Judging from assembly names alone as given in recent Walterick Address Books and other knowledge, I can identify about 50 ethnic assemblies, not including the many French-speaking assemblies in Canada. There are undoubtedly many more, and so 60 to 70 is not an unreasonable guess for the number of ethnic assemblies currently the United States and Canada.

For brethren involvement with the American Indians, I expand the discussion beyond assembly histories to describe briefly the extensive assembly missionary work with these Native Americans.

## Spanish

Spanish-speaking people coming to the United States usually locate in the larger cities. New York, Los Angeles, San Antonio, Chicago, Miami, and Houston have the largest Spanish-speaking populations, though many other cities and towns have large Spanish-speaking communities. The largest concentrations are found in the southwestern states – Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, and Colorado.

The earliest Spanish work connected with the assemblies seems to be in Texas, and we begin the discussion there. Ervin D. Dresch was an early pioneer in this work. Mr. Dresch's printed Gospel ministry, hymns, and Vacation Bible School material went to all Spanish countries. For many years he cooperated with Carl Ostertag in getting out his annual Gospel paper Palabras Fieles, whose circulation reached well over a million copies each issue.

In 1917, Mr. Dresch joined R. H. Hall, who had been a missionary in Honduras, in evangelizing Spanish-speaking people in rural communities from Michigan to New Mexico and Texas.

In San Antonio, Texas, the reading of the Scriptures in Spanish by Dresch and Hall attracted crowds of Spanish-speaking people to the Plaza, so these brothers began a mission work in that city in 1918. Soon a small Sunday school and assembly were started in a Mexican community, at 629 South San Jacinto Street. In 1945, attendance at the San Jacinto Gospel Hall was 55 in the Sunday School, with 14 Breaking Bread, representing eleven families. A weekly Gospel meeting was held at the County Jail. Open air meetings were held in the

market place. Attendance at the San Jacinto Gospel Hall averaged about 65 in Sunday school and 20 at the Lord's Supper in 1967.

Visits to another area of the city resulted in souls saved. A Sunday school was conducted in a garage. Then the Mexican Gospel Hall, also called Mayfield Hall, was built at 1118 West Mayfield Boulevard. The testimony was carried on there by V. M. Rivera for many years. N.D. Short was also involved in the work among Spanish-speaking peoples in the city. In much the same way, other Sunday Schools were started in other areas both inside and outside of San Antonio.

V. M. Rivera was reared in the Roman Catholic church. On a Sunday afternoon in January 1921, near the market place in San Antonio, he heard a group of Mexican people singing a Gospel hymn, which led to his salvation.

In 1922, he moved with his family to Carrollville, Wisconsin, 12 miles south of Milwaukee, and began to do personal work among the Mexicans. The Lord honored his effort with the salvation of 17 souls. With these and some denominational believers he began a Bible study in his home. When Mr. Rivera suggested that meetings be without any denominational affiliations, some with denominational interest opposed this and separated from the group.

J. Hagelgren and John R. Hale learned of the stand the little group took and began visiting them and conducting Bible readings. They also brought Dan Dunnett who conducted meetings for several weeks, which established them in the faith. The group meeting with Mr. Rivera began to Break Bread in his home, and later

met with the English-speaking assembly in Milwaukee. In November 1939, Mr. Rivera was commended to full-time ministry, and moved with his large family to South San Antonio, where he took many responsibilities at the Mexican Gospel Hall; he preached for many years in the city and nearby towns and also had a weekly program over a local radio station.

* * *

A Spanish-speaking assembly, now called Iglesia Cristiana Evangelica in Houston began in 1958 when Alberto Martin came to the United States from Argentina to find employment. He came with David Cook, one of the sons of William and Marie Cook, missionaries to Argentina. Soon another man and his family arrived in Houston from Argentina to join Alberto. Then two others followed. The small group gathered with the Pineview Bible Chapel assembly for a short while. Then they went to the South Houston Gospel Chapel meeting where one of the brethren provided them with a garage with chairs and a piano. Here they held a Sunday School for Mexican children from the vicinity and also began Breaking Bread.

As the group grew numerically, they bought a house and remodeled it for their meetings. In this house the work took form and continued its growth. Shortly thereafter, a local Christian foundation offered them the former MacGregor Bible Chapel in Houston on Milart Street; the Argentineans bought it, calling it the MacGregor Spanish Bible Chapel.

The assembly had some fifty in fellowship in 1971, the majority of which were young couples with families. There were over 150 children in the Sunday School.

Several of their youngsters took part in the Gospel meetings with instrumental ensembles.

In January 1971, just over twelve years after its humble beginning, the Argentinean assembly of Houston held its Second General Conference. Representatives from New Orleans, St. Louis, and Chicago, as well as Weslaco and Pearland in Texas gathered with the Spanish-speaking Christians of Houston to share in the conference. Brethren from the Argentine, Italy, Dominican Republic, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, and United States Remembered the Lord on Sunday. Three traveling commended workers from the homeland, don Angel Bonatti, don Carmelo Racciatti and wife, and don Francisco Zinna and wife, ministered the Word during the conference, besides Mariano Gonzalez from Chicago and Stan Hanna from Honduras.

The assembly had a radio program in Spanish over KLVL, a commercial station, and a half-hour program over KHCB, a Christian station. Many were reached through the radio and became part of their fellowship. For quite some time they also sponsored a five-minute program over XCSH, which is heard in Mexico. Another outreach to Mexico was literature. Houston Christians distributed it from house to house in the town of Salinas-Hidalgo, south of the border.

This assembly disbanded in the mid 1980s, to be replaced by another, called the Spanish Bible Chapel in South Houston at 716 Avenue I. This in turn disbanded and Iglesia Cristiana Evangelica is now the Spanish-speaking assembly in the Sugarland area of Houston.

* * *

David and Virginia Metler came to Clovis, NM in 1960 to work among the Spanish there. By 1967, they had established an assembly with seven families in fellowship The work was started in a Spanish-American home with a small children's class that grew to 250 boys and girls. Parents were reached through this class, and a Sunday school was formed from it.

Most of the families in that area are quite poor; farm work is from June to November, and the winter months are very hard for them. Clothing received from supporting assemblies has been the means of keeping Sunday School teenagers in school. All the meetings are now in English since this helps them to adjust to conditions at work and school.

When the Spanish-American families are saved they clean up their homes and there is a real change in their lives. Just knowing that someone cares for them gives them a new lease on life and they seek to be testimonies to friends and relatives. Some have been active in the assembly in driving buses and teaching. Stewards Foundation helped the assembly purchase the Clovis Gospel Chapel.

The use of Emmaus Bible courses after the Wednesday night prayer meeting was helpful. A Bible study with the believers on Tuesday night usually lasted two to three hours, for the Christians were eager to know the Word of God. Brethren from Albuquerque have helped the assembly at Clovis. Mr. Gross came from Socorro, 300 miles west of Clovis, once a month. Mrs. Metler has had a major role in maintaining the work since Mr. Metler died. The work is ongoing, though small, in 1998.

* * *

Leslie and Winifred Sandberg had been serving the Lord among the Spanish-speaking people in Arizona for many years when John Walden invited them to come and help in the Christian Home for Children in Colorado Springs, probably in about 1950, with the idea of starting a branch of the Home for Mexican children. It soon became apparent that the Lord's purpose for them was not to do this but to go to Pueblo, a sizeable city about 40 miles south of Colorado Springs, where there was a large Spanish-speaking population, and begin a Gospel work there.

Children's Bible classes were started in many neighborhoods; these were followed by Gospel meetings to which the parents were invited. The Sandberg's adopted son, Jerardo Reyes, who had been saved in the work in Arizona, came to Pueblo and helped in the children's work. As people were saved, they were taught further in the Word, and the group of Christians began to Break Bread and function as an assembly, called Salo Bíblico.

Some time later, Miss Esther Hubbard, a public school teacher, came and was active in the work at Salo Bíblico. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Luna came after that from Albuquerque and entered into fellowship in the assembly. Mr. Luna has been serving as an elder since then. Jerardo Reyes' widow Nellie was one of the first converts in the Pueblo work; she and other members of the Reyes families continue active in the assembly. Helpers from other assemblies through the years have been Miss Grace Watson from Colorado Springs, and Miss Carla Brown (Mrs. Jim Cocking).

Today, Salo Bíblico is small but continues with regular meetings, Sunday School, ladies' Bible Classes, weekly neighborhood Bible classes for children and young folks, and a summer Vacation Bible School.

* * *

In 1950, the John Ruddocks, on furlough from Honduras, the Gordon Webberleys from Mexico, and Irene Gallagher of Los Angeles started having cottage meetings for the Spanish-speaking people of East Los Angeles. Miss Gallagher had been holding Bible classes for children for five years. These workers, together with the Thropays who had been having meetings for children, started the Arizona Avenue Gospel Hall in East Los Angeles, with a Sunday school having 40 to 60 children coming each week. The Ruddocks and Webberleys worked with the adults before returning to their missionary work. In the late 1950s, Mr. L. Ferguson came to help Adam Thropay and Miss Gallagher with the children.

In the Arizona Avenue Gospel Hall were Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Chileans, Bolivians, Cubans, and some from the U.S.A. All the services for the adults were in Spanish. The work with the children and young people was conducted almost entirely in English. Some of the children professed faith in Christ. Helpers from other assemblies made it possible to invite a large number of children to Vacation Bible School, where one year the average daily attendance was 192. The assembly had an annual Christmas program in a community hall, at which time the Gospel was presented to parents.

* * *

Iglesia Evangelica de Highland Park in Los Angeles began in the late 1970s as a neighborhood Bible study, conducted by Stan Hanna and then Irene Gallagher. Mr. Sequeida was also involved in the early days of the assembly. Richard and Nancye Yarrall, who had been commended by assemblies in New Zealand to the Lord's work in Colombia, South America, came to the Los Angeles area in 1989 to work among the Latinos there, having received a new commendation from their assemblies, and from Avenue 54 Bible Chapel and Westminster Bible Chapel in Los Angeles.

The Spanish-speaking assembly now occupies facilities at Avenue 54 Bible Chapel. Its leaders are Jesus Robles, Alister Andrew, Richard Yarrall, and Mr. Sequeida. About 60 adults and youngsters attend Iglesia Evangelica de Highland Park.

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The Yarralls commenced door-to-door visitation in the Westminster area of greater Los Angeles while still helping at Highland Park. A Saturday night Bible study and children's classes were started in the home of an interested family. Contacts were made and some were saved. The group slowly built up and in January 1994, they began Sunday meetings as an assembly under the name Iglesia Cristiana de Westminster, closely associated with the Westminster Bible Chapel, which is English-speaking. The work has continued to grow and today some 25 families are associated with the assembly, with about 50 in attendance on Sundays.

The Yarralls maintain the Emmaus Correspondence office in Spanish, for the U.S.A. Richard has a half-hour Monday evening radio program of Bible teaching in

Spanish, called “La Biblia Abierta.” The local ladies also have a 4-minute radio time called “De amiga a amiga” (From Friend to Friend), prepared by sisters from Argentina.

* * *

There are Spanish areas in nearby El Monte also. In the early 1960s, a large number of Mexican children were attending Sunday School at the English-speaking El Monte Assembly. When the El Monte Assembly later moved to Temple City, Bob Garcia, L. Ferguson, Irene Gallagher, the Tinneys, and others continued to work with the Spanish youth in the Teen Center in El Monte and elsewhere. Students from Culver City Bible School gave much assistance in this work.

* * *

The large number of Hispanics in the southern part of California led to the formation of a Spanish-speaking congregation at Laurel Bible Chapel in San Diego in about 1990. George Mora began the work among the Hispanics by means of a Spanish Bible Class at Laurel involving an unsaved neighbor family whose children were attending the Sunday School. This work is ongoing.

* * *

Iglesia Cristiana Evangelica in Glendale, CA has existed for many years and now is associated with the Glendale Gospel Chapel. It was known for its strong young people’s group, who visited and distributed literature; they were the major force behind the growth of their assembly.

* * *

Asamblea Evangelica in Grand Rapids, MI began in 1995 in the home of Ricardo and Diana Tavarez. The Christians moved after that to 635 South Division, where they currently meet. The Gerena, Torres, and Garcia families, as well as the Tavarez family, were involved in the start. Jose Garcia and Ricardo Tavarez Sr. have been the leaders. Ricardo and Diana Tavarez are self-supporting, and work among Mexican, Guatemalan, and other emigrants from Central America. The Spanish-speaking assembly has Christians from Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico, as well as the U.S.

* * *

The city of Chicago had over half a million Spanish-speaking people and two Spanish-speaking assemblies in 1992. Forty-seven miles north of Chicago is Waukegan, IL with an active Spanish assembly, called Local Cristiano. Francisco and Alveolus Eyes from the Dominican Republic started and have nurtured this work since 1973. The meetings are held in an old building, since remodeled, in downtown Waukegan. The Spanish assembly is an inner city gathering and a melting pot of Colombians, Dominicans, Hondurans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Salvadorans. They carry on an aggressive evangelistic thrust.

Eladio Colon, Miguel Morales, and Miguel Calderon, besides the Eyes and others, carry the burden of the ministry to the Spanish community. Francisco Eyes, besides devoting most of his time to the Lord’s work, teaches English as a second language at the College of Lake County.

The group had its early meetings in the apartment of Alberto Obregon, and moved several times before

settling into the present facilities located at 146 S. Genesee Road. Their Gospel service is well attended by the unsaved. Many have found the Lord over the years through this ministry, including two medical doctors.

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In 1943, Capilla Evangelica in Manhattan, also called the 116th Street Assembly, became the first Spanish-speaking assembly in New York City. Through the years a few came to trust in Christ as Savior, but the meeting remained small. Some 35 believers Broke Bread there in 1967. About a third of this number were widows or sisters whose husbands did not share their faith. Neighborhood crime affected attendance at evening meetings.

Paul Bitler and his wife Margaret labored with Jose Hernandez in this field. Speakers at the 116th Street Assembly included Mr. C. McKinnie, who served the Lord in Chile, and Mr. Paul Clark who served the Lord in Mexico. The assembly is still active.

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Norfolk Street Chapel in downtown Manhattan started in 1963. Difficulties accompanied the work but also rich spiritual blessings, and people were saved and baptized. The area is predominantly Spanish and is an area of drug addiction and very poor surroundings, spiritually and materially. The chapel was robbed five times before 1967. Emilio Ramos worked faithfully in the assembly, visiting the sick in addition to participating in all the activities of the assembly. On his vacation he preached in Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo. Cruz Rodriguez was among the leaders in the assembly, which disbanded many years ago.

* * *

Asamblea Evanglica in Brooklyn began in 1961 through the efforts of Agustin Lopez, Manuel Perez, Juan R. Cordova, Emilio Campos, and Miguel Colon. It was a hive-off from Evergreen Gospel Chapel in Brooklyn and has stayed at the same location – 219 Lee Avenue – and has kept the same name. Many leaders have served over the years; Hilario C. Lantigua and Juan R. Cordova, Jr. are the currently recognized elders. Rafael Fraden works at this and other Spanish-speaking assemblies in the area. Asamblea Evanglica has commended two workers to the foreign field, and has always had a large youth work. About 35 were in fellowship in 1967, and over 90 adults and young people attend Asamblea Evanglica now.

* * *

The Spanish Gospel Hall in Brooklyn had a gymnasium in its building, where full-time worker Henry Sanchez worked with street youths. He and Paul Bitler in the Bronx brought scores of inner-city children to Pinebush Bible Camp each summer. Paul Bitler and Louis Montalvo also held meetings in a Spanish-speaking section of the Bronx.

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In the 1940s, Louis Montalvo of the Bronx, NY often traveled to a Spanish-American assembly in Lancaster, PA for ministry. The Mexican brethren there brought others from the labor camps to hear the preaching of the Gospel. Many believed before returning to Mexico.

* * *

George and Betty Walker arrived in Miami in 1961, having been expelled from Castro's Cuba. The brethren in the 29th Street Gospel Hall in Miami offered their building for Spanish work at times it was not in use. Their neighborhood was already 75% Spanish. The offered was accepted and the new Spanish work was begun. Many were saved and an assembly was formed – Sala Evangelica.

Later, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Carter came from Santo Domingo for health reasons and the doors of the Bible Truth Chapel in Miami, on S. W. 7th Street, were opened to Spanish-speaking people. Asamblea Christiana of Miami was formed at that place as a result. James Cochrane of the Dominican Republic, David Adams from Cuba, and J. T. Halliday, among many others, ministered at Asamblea Christiana.

Still later a third assembly was begun in the northwest part of the city, meeting at Central Gospel Chapel. Thus, in the 1970s, three Miami assemblies had both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking assemblies meeting on their premises.

Questionnaire Responses

Colorado Assemblies on Mountain and Plain, by Robert L. Peterson, 1992

Letters of Interest, December 1945, p. 14; March 1946, p. 21; September 1967, p. 4; July/August 1971, p. 13; June 1976, p.12; November 1976, p.16; March 1978, p. 10; February 1982, p. 6; January 1985, p. 12

Uplook, November 1992, p. 6

## Portuguese

The east-central edge of Rhode Island and parts of adjacent Massachusetts saw a tremendous influx of Portuguese-speaking immigrants in the 1970s. The majority of these were from the Azores, and the rest from Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, and some from Portugal itself. In 1982, one in seven of Rhode Island's population, and about 40% of Pawtucket's 80,000 people, were Portuguese. About 800,000 Portuguese-speaking people lived then in southeastern New England.

In January 1976, Carlos and Margarida Cerqueira came from Angola by way of Portugal to evangelize these people and if possible to plant a Christian testimony in their midst. Cravo Branco was another who came about then. These people had been leaders in Gospel work in Luanda and Benguela in Angola. At the changeover of government in Angola they were obliged to leave, and went to Portugal for a short time. They came to Rhode Island at the suggestion of T. Ernest Wilson, a former missionary to Angola, and with the invitation of John Farrell and the Buttonwoods Gospel Chapel in Warwick, RI.

As soon as Mr. Cerqueira was settled, he began knocking on doors. He poured himself into Gospel meetings, home Bible studies, and door-to-door evangelism, all the while supporting his wife and three sons with a full-time factory job. Others came along to help as well. Mr. Cerqueira worked in secular jobs prior to the 1980s, at which time he went into full-time ministry.

At that time, the English-speaking Pawtucket Gospel Hall at 400 Lonsdale Avenue, Pawtucket, RI had dwindled down to just a few. These believers graciously allowed Mr. Cerqueira to use their building for the work among the Portuguese-speaking people.

In 1977, the Portuguese assemblies in New England and New Jersey held a joint conference for ministry and the preaching of the Gospel, with all meetings in the Portuguese language. Albert Horton and T. Ernest Wilson, both former missionaries in Angola, preached at that conference, held in Pawtucket. The English-speaking assemblies at Buttonwoods, Pawtucket, and Groton, CT helped in practical ways.

In 1980, after a few had been saved and a baptism held, a Portuguese-speaking assembly was started in Pawtucket with two converts plus the Cerqueira family of five. It is now known as the Christian Brethren of Pawtucket, or in the Portuguese-speaking community as Igreja Evangelica de Pawtucket.

Within a year the growing assembly was in desperate need of a building of its own. Many Christians had a concern for the Igreja Evangelica de Pawtucket Christians, including John Farrell of Buttonwoods, John McCallum of Stewards Foundation, and Robert and Barbara Campbell of the Groton Bible Chapel in Connecticut. The brethren of several English-speaking assemblies met with the Portuguese Christians to see if a building could be obtained in Pawtucket.

Meetings were being held on Sunday afternoons at the Pawtucket Gospel Hall, but that building was about to be sold. The remaining Christians from the Pawtucket Gospel Hall intended to disburse the proceeds of the

sale in various aspects of missionary work. The Hall was 65 years old and needed some remodeling, but it was well constructed, and located in the area where Portuguese immigrants were concentrated. Recognizing the opportunity for assisting this ethnic group, the Gospel Hall Christians made a major reduction in the asking price, and also made a large contribution toward the purchase. Three assemblies donated funds toward the purchase. In this way, the Portuguese believers were able to purchase the building, which they occupy at the present time. Other assemblies helped with the remodeling costs. In 1994, an English-speaking ministry was initiated in the assembly, in addition to meetings in the Portugese language.

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For a time, the work among Portugese-speaking people extended also to the town of Bristol, RI as an inner-city type of ministry with preaching to the down-and-outs and supplying clothing. This work was carried on by Francisco Pontes, Antonio Costa, and Wesley Gardner, as well as Mr. Cerqueira. Mr. Gardner later started another assembly on the east side of Narragansett Bay, which lasted only a few years, although they had built a chapel.

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Another Portuguese-language assembly functioned for a time in Harrison, NJ with Candido de Sousa devoting much of his time and energy to building up this testimony. Mr. de Sousa had been a full-time evangelist in Portugal, and was commended to the New Jersey ministry by Bethany Chapel in Yonkers, NY.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Letters of Interest, March 1978, p. 10; February 1982, p. 6

## Arabic

The Middle Eastern Bible Fellowship in Detroit began in March 1991, when a group of men and women of Arabic descent, including Ata and Salwa Mikhael, Raphael and Renee Haddad, and Philipe Yacoub, gathered unto the Lord's name.

Mr. Mikhael, a native Lebanese in association with the brethren in Beirut, and a writer of Christian books, had to leave when the Syrians invaded Lebanon. With his family, he came to Lansing, MI and lived there for three years, during which time he translated Our Daily Bread and The Believer's Bible Commentary into Arabic. Then he received a call from Arabic believers in Detroit to start a fundamental Arabic ministry in the area.

The Mikhael family began commuting from Lansing to Detroit each Sunday, and then moved to Detroit. Soon a nucleus of seven believers were meeting to Remember the Lord. The group first rented a Baptist facility, sharing the building with the existing church. God blessed the work. In 1998, it had grown to as many as 140 adults attending the Sunday morning Gospel service and 85 Breaking Bread. Leaders of the assembly have included Ata G. Mikhael, Raphael Y. Haddad, Philipe Yacoub, and Emad M. Mansoor. All services are in Arabic.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

## Indian (Asia)

In 1970, A. K. Varghese came to the United States and to Southwest Bible Chapel in Denver from Karela, India, and was the first of many to follow. Thus began a long relationship between the English-speaking members of Southwest Bible Chapel and brothers and sisters from India. The Abraham George family was welcomed in 1974, then the Thomas', Daniels', Matthews', Kapp's and others. The Indian believers had some of their own meetings in an Indian language while at Southwest Bible Chapel. In about 1994, some of these families began the Believers Assembly in Denver, meeting in rented quarters and having a special outreach to other Indian families, some of which have been added to their fellowship.

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The Indian Brethren Assembly in the Bronx, NY began in November 1972, meeting in different homes. After May 1973, it shared the facilities of the English-speaking Bronx Gospel Hall at 8909 Teller Avenue for several years. The Indian meeting used the facilities on Sunday afternoons. The assembly moved through several locations in the Bronx and is now at 3241 White Plains Road. Evangelist M.K. Thomas was instrumental in establishing this assembly; others in leadership have included Thomas George, M. Samuel Mathews, Samuel Varghese, and M.S. Mathew. The Malayalam language is used.

* * *

The India Gospel Assembly in Elmont, NY began in 1972, deriving from the Indian Brethren Assembly in the Bronx, NY. Those involved in the start-up were C.V.

Simon, Samuel Varghese, and P.T. Mathew. Samuel Varghese, P.T. Mathew, Baby Mathew, and P.T. Johm are in leadership. About 150 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

* * *

C.V. Baby, with John M.Chacko and a few other believers, started meeting for Bible studies in 1978 in the Chacko's home in Warren, MI. This led to the formation of the India Believers Gathering. The new assembly met in the Chacko's home initially, then met in several rented buildings over the years, and in 1997 bought a building at 549 East Marshall, Ferndale. The assembly commended Mr. Baby to the Lord's work in Agra, India in 1979. Elders have included James Mathew, James Johnson, K.C. Johnson, and K.K. George. The assembly is now known as India Brethren Assembly and uses both English and Malayalam (an Indian language) in its worship.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Letters of Interest, February 1975, p. 31

## American Indian

Arizona is home to more than a half-dozen major Indian tribes and a number of lesser ones. It was to the eastern half of Arizona's Mohave Country, with its large Indian population, that Mr. and Mrs. James P. Anderson were called to labor. In fellowship with the assembly at the Gospel Auditorium in Oakland, CA, they were commended to work among the Hualapai (formerly spelled 'Walapai') Indians of Arizona. These had no missionary working among them, and the

superintendent of the reservation had asked that someone come and take charge of the religious work at the Truxton Canyon Indian school, as well as work with the older Indians.

The Andersons arrived in October 1916 and lived in Valentine, AZ. From their first Sunday there until the school closed in 1937, the Andersons were given a free hand in teaching the Word to many hundreds of young people who would, in turn, carry the Gospel back to the many tribes they represented. Two meetings in the school on Sundays were supplemented by two more during the week. Various smaller classes were held afternoons. All children were required to attend, and most of the government employees came voluntarily. Saturday afternoons saw the Anderson home overflowing with boys who came together for singing and a Bible lesson. On Sunday afternoons the older girls, many of them promising Christians, gathered for a helpful time with Mrs. Anderson.

Seven different tribes were represented at the school, many coming from several hundred miles distant. Some 60 people living in the vicinity of Valentine attended many of the meetings. The Andersons had the joy of hearing a good number confess the Lord each year.

The school work was only one phase of the Andersons' missionary activity. Many hours were spent out in the Indian camps. The Hualapai at that time numbered 600 and during the first year every member of the tribe was personally visited. One tribe, the Havasupai, live at the bottom of the Grand Canyon and to visit them required a horseback ride down a steep 15-mile trail. Not only were the Indians visited in their own camps, but hundreds of

them were guests in the Anderson home. In this way the Andersons won the confidence of the Indians.

The first conversion occurred about nine months after they came to the reservation – Mrs. Dennis Butler, who with her husband became a faithful helper at Peach Springs Chapel, AZ .

Kingman is some 30 miles southwest of Valentine. The Kingman Gospel Chapel was started by the Andersons. Their first meetings were out in the Indian camps, but in 1919 James Anderson was able to build a small chapel on the outskirts of Kingman, where they held the meetings for the Indians for a couple of years. They then purchased an old house in Kingman, and rebuilt it for use as a Gospel Chapel. But non-Indians who were hungry for the real Gospel started coming to the meetings, and gradually it turned into white work almost altogether. Mr. Anderson ministered the Word there once a week while able to do so. Many others worked at the Chapel; George Baxter and Harold Kesler both preached and worked there when not elsewhere preaching. Tom Carroll also ministered the Word at Kingman, Valentine, and Peach Springs. None of the missionaries working on the reservations received any pay from the Government.

Mrs. Baxter had an Indian women’s meeting on Wednesday afternoons at the Kingman Gospel Chapel. Several missionary women also spent some time working among Indians and Mexicans in connection with the Chapel. Miss Rose Olson spent several years in Kingman, living at the Chapel part of the time, and working with Mexicans and whites. Minnie Armerding also spent her first eight months as an Indian missionary

at Valentine and at Kingman. Another fruitful field was the Sherman Institute at Riverside, a training school for Indians, which Mr. Anderson would frequently visit.

In 1929 it was necessary to erect an Indian chapel at Peach Springs, 18 miles east of Valentine and the only town on the Hualapai Reservation, due to the fact that the Hualapai had been told to get out of Kingman where they were only squatters, and move up on the Reservation. In 1937 the believers began meeting as an assembly at Peach Springs.

In 1937, the Government abandoned the boarding school at Valentine, as it did almost all other Indian boarding schools, and built day schools on the different reservations; two were built on the Hualapai Reservation. During the school year the Andersons had the same privilege of having the students for Christian instruction one hour during their school time. One school was 50 miles from Valentine; the other was at Peach Springs,. The Andersons traveled 1500 to 2000 miles each month before gasoline and tire rationing came into effect because of World War II.

In 1941, Mr. Anderson became ill, and 14 months later the Lord took him home. When he became too ill to work on the reservation, Mr. and Mrs. George Baxter took full charge of the work for almost a year. The burden of the work then fell on the shoulders of Mrs. Lillian Anderson. All in the area heard the Gospel, and told representatives of cults who came through that “we know the only way of salvation, and we will accept it when we die.” Before the chief – Old Spoonhead – of the Havasupai tribe died in about 1950, he told an artist visiting down in the canyon that he had met “the God

above” 25 years before, when Mr. Anderson first came down to the canyon.

In 1943, about 16 were in fellowship at the Kingman Gospel Chapel and the assembly at Peach Springs was all Indian, except for Mrs. Anderson and her daughter, with 10 Indians in fellowship.

The Hualapai Indian tribe consisted of approximately 500 Indians on the reservations in 1947, a decrease in population from the Anderson’s first arrival if the census was correct. At that time, A. LeRoy Livingston worked among the Hualapai and lived at Peach Springs. The U.S. had a good schooling program, so the Livingstons were able to reach them in English, albeit in a very simple form. The older people of the tribe were quite reluctant to let the children go to school, so it was a problem to try to keep them from their primitive methods or nature. The Livingstons were conscientious to keep the assembly geared to the Indians, and just one white school teacher met with them to Remember the Lord at the Peach Springs Chapel.

In 1952, the assembly at Peach Springs still remained but was small. During World War II and the Korean war, many Hualapai boys from Peach Springs went overseas and their chaplains wrote Mrs. Anderson commenting on their Christian testimony and knowledge of the Word. In 1957, Mrs. Anderson was still carrying on the work started by herself and her husband.

Faithful Indian converts included Rupert and Rachel Parker, both Sunday school teachers; Grant Tapiaga, the Hualapai preacher, and his Apache wife, Fanny; and the Tomanatas, a four-generation Christian family.

* * *

In 1951, Mr. and Mrs. George Baxter, commended by Midland Assembly in Detroit (later Pembroke), started the Arizona Indian Mission of Flagstaff, Arizona. They labored alone for several years; then the Eldon Miners came to help them. Later Joseph Paulick, commended from Norwood Gospel Chapel in Chicago, and Miss Betty Hollman, commended from New Haven Gospel Hall of Hamden, CT, came to help.

In June 1952, George Baxter conducted two youth camps with boys and girls in attendance from Hopi, Navajo, Hualapai, and Supi tribes. The Navajo adult camp which followed was well attended, with several people saved.

The Baxters and co-workers were urged by the new Indian believers in Flagstaff to go to their tribal relatives on the reservation with the Gospel message. At Shonto the Indians asked for a meeting place for their services. This was accomplished in July 1958, and in August 1960, the Navajo tribe gave a permit for a grant of land at Shonto.

Messrs. Baxter and Paulick erected the Third Avenue Gospel Chapel in Flagstaff, AZ. The workers and native believers meet regularly for the Breaking of Bread, preaching of the Word, Bible study and Sunday School. The meeting continues today.

* * *

For a time, there were three missions in Arizona that went by the name of Immanuel Mission. The work at Valentine was called the Immanuel Mission to the Hualapais. The work at Winslow, 200 miles east of Valentine, also went by the name Immanuel Mission. This work was initiated principally by Carl Armerding

and his daughter Minnie. They labored among the Indians at Winslow and vicinity for more than 25 years. Mr. Armerding built a chapel at Winslow in 1934, which had Gospel meetings, Bible studies, and Sunday schools, attended largely by Indians of the Laguna, Hopi, and Navajo tribes. Mr. Armerding was still active in the work in his 91st year in 1952.

Those two 'Immanuel Missions' have evolved into other works. Still going strong is the Immanuel Mission to the Navajos, near Teec Nos Pos in the northeast corner of Arizona. Though these three missions were separated each from the other by about 200 miles, their aims and interests were the same: the winning of precious souls from among the Indian tribes of the Southwest.

* * *

The rapid growth of the Navajo peoples in the early 1900s caught the attention of Anglo merchants who responded by building a series of Trading Posts across Navajoland. By 1932, the population of the Navajo tribe had grown to over 60,000 people, and the tribe had over 1.5 million sheep. The Federal Government encouraged mission societies to establish mission stations in order to help educate and introduce change into the culture. Nevertheless, the Navajos were poor and unhealthy. One half of all Navajo children died by the age of five.

The early story of Immanuel Mission at Teec Nos Pos is the story of a remarkable family – the Holcombs. Horace A. Holcomb was born in 1852, and in 1889 entered Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. He was ordained in the Congregational Church and spent several years as a pastor in Minnesota. Clara Elizabeth Holcomb was born to Horace and his wife Mary in Lansing, MI in 1883.

Marie Holcomb, the seventh child, was born in Kearney, Nebraska in 1900 where Horace was then serving with the Gospel Missionary Union (GMU).

The 26 year old Clara and another young woman spent three years on the Navajo reservation from 1909 to 1911 near Tuba City, AZ, probably serving with GMU. They lived with a Navajo family, where Clara learned to speak Navajo. From 1912 to 1915, Horace and Mary also served in the same area at a small mission called Kin Ligai near Moenkopi, AZ. Flagstaff, the nearest Anglo settlement, was three days away by horseback.

In 1915, Horace, Mary, and Clara went to serve with Harry Ironside at his Indian School in Oakland, CA. Four students are remembered at the school during this period – a Navajo, two Hopis, and a Hualapai.

Horace and Clara continued to have a burden for the Navajo people and worked and prayed about establishing a mission. Finally in 1920 the Holcombs felt the Lord's timing had arrived and they traveled to Oakcreek Canyon to visit their daughter Marie, who had lived with the Girdner family to attend school and now was teaching there.

Mary Holcomb was ill and stayed with the Girdners while Horace and Clara returned to Flagstaff. There they bought a wagon and team and supplies and headed out across the uncharted desert for Chinle, AZ, 200 miles away. In July 1921, they met up with Carl Armerding at Ganado and traveled on together towards Chinle. There the Holcombs and Carl stayed with a Christian Navajo family – the Gormans – for a time.

Mr. Armerding returned to Albuquerque while the Holcombs stayed on at Chinle throughout the fall. They

heard of an abandoned trading post – Peter Martin's Trading Store – sixty miles or so to the North. Clara and her father drove the wagon up to take a look. The abandoned trading post was situated on a small rise in a wide treeless valley. The building was solidly built of sandstone and adobe, approximately 10' x 30' with two rooms and with a flat roof. It did have one important amenity: Upper Saltbush Spring was located about 200 hundred feet to the north. In December 1921, Horace sought help from the Department of the Interior for petitioning for the property.

The Holcomb family then returned to Flagstaff to outfit an expedition back to Peter Martin's store. Sometime in the late spring of 1922, Horace, Mary, and Clara Holcomb set off in a covered wagon from Flagstaff for Peter Martin's store, the future site of Immanuel Mission. Horace had just turned 70. Their privations were many, including some days without water.

Soon after arriving at Peter Martin's store, Horace attempted to get a land petition signed by the local Navajos. Carl Armerding came to help, and he and Horace built a shade house and invited the community over for a 'big feed.' After the meal, they brought up the idea of starting a mission. Things seemed to go well until 'Brown Hat,' a local Headman, refused to give his permission. The meeting soon broke up – a failure – much to the disappointment of the Holcombs. Thus in 1922, the local Navajos had not given the missionaries permission to establish a misison on the reservation, though the missionaries were able to live there.

However, in January 1924, the Government superintendent and his wife, with a Presbyterian

missionary from Shiprock, and Mr. Deshney, an Indian interpreter, and several Indians came to the missionaries' home. Brown Hat and a friend then arrived. After much persuasion and silent prayer, the old man acquiesced, and the old Peter Martin's Trading Store near Teec Nos Pos became Immanuel Mission.

The early years were filled with hardship and discouragement. A devastating fire broke out in June 1923 in the midst of a terrible sandstorm. The living quarters were nearly destroyed. Wagon, saddles, bridles, harness, tent and everything in it, grain, wood pile, chickens and chicken house, scales, and alfalfa were gone. The group rebuilt the house in seven weeks while staying at a trader's store.

In December 1924, another disaster struck the mission. A mighty wind blew the roof off, letting in sand and snow. Temperatures were below zero. The workers stayed in the cow shed for six days and nights, seven in one little room with no chance to undress and go to bed decently, while some Navajos repaired the roof.

Florence Barker came to help in the fall of 1922, and since then a steady stream of workers have come to the Mission. Howard Montgomery and his wife came in 1942. After the Holcombs had gone to be with the Lord, Clara Holcomb passing on in 1947, Howard Montgomery assumed full responsibility for the work. He at once began the study of the Navajo language, realizing the absolute need of doing so.

For years the program consisted mainly of work with the adult Navajos. This took the form of visitation, Gospel meetings, simple medical aid, letter writing, distributing used clothing to needy families, and helping with

problems connected with finding off-reservation work. This work that was carried on by Mrs. Helen Montgomery, Ben and Virginia Staley, and by an elderly Navajo couple, Eugene and Martha Natatches.

The Navajos did not get the New Testament in their own language until 1957, and a modern school system on the reservation was not started until 1956. The Navajo people numbered nearly 130,000 in 1970. While some of the Navajo people reside in towns, by far the great majority still are in small family groups scattered over the reservation. And while there are some public schools and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools that are able to make use of buses, most of the children must live in dormitories away from home in order to get an education. The school at Immanuel Mission is in the latter class.

The school that the workers had prayed much about starting, was begun in the fall of 1948. It took children from broken homes. Several stayed there all the time, while others came daily from nearby homes. Miss Evelyn Varder from Chicago had the main responsibility for the school. She had the help of Ruth Valentine of Chicago. Howard Montgomery gave a Bible lesson and Gospel message in Navajo each morning except Saturday. Sunday school was held for the children each Lord’s Day afternoon. A number of children have taken the Lord Jesus into their lives, and some continue as adults to Remember the Lord on Sunday mornings with the staff and Christian Navajo neighbors.

In 1957, the laborers included Mr. and Mrs. Howard Montgomery, Miss Evelyn Varder, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Perrault, Miss Alice Huff, and Miss Lois Jean Delaney.

Robert Staley has served as principal of the school. In 1971, Don and Nona Perrault cared for over thirty girls. Delbert and June Dyck looked after nearly the same number of boys in the large, two-winged dormitory building. These children live at the mission for the nine-month school term and are under the complete care of the dormitory parents, so the responsibility is great not only for their spiritual well being, but also for their physical needs.

Navajo Immanuel Chapel at Immanuel Mission began as a regularly meeting assembly in the early 1970s. The principal people involved in starting the assembly were Eugene Nataches and James Nataches, Navajo brothers. Leadership has been shared by these and Willy Howe, Wesley Begay, Donald Perrault, and Greg Staley. About 90 adults and children attend Navajo Immanuel Chapel, which is now usually called Immanuel Navajo Chapel.

The physical facilities of the mission have grown to several major buildings, a power plant, a shop building, and two house trailers. The compound is located fourteen miles from the nearest hard-surfaced road and twenty miles from the nearest power lines, so all electricity is generated on the grounds. The nearest town of any business importance is Farmington, NM, ninety miles away, and it is from there that practically all supplies must be brought in.

Sources:

A Brief History of Immanuel Mission, by Greg Staley; Issue 7, Winter 1995; Issue 8, Spring 1995; Issue 10, Spring 1996; Issue 11, Fall 1996; Issue 12, Spring 1997; Issue 13, Fall 1997

Letters of Interest, August 1943, p. 23; March 1946, p. 21; December 1947 p. 26; December 1948, p. 10; May 1952, p. 19; August 1952, p. 8; September 1952, p. 4; February 1957, p. 11; February 1962, p. 11; March 1971 p. 4?

## Italian

The majority of the following information about the Italian-speaking assemblies comes from the final issue of La Voce Nel Deserto and from personal correspondence with Mr. Michael Rannelli, the co-editor of that magazine. In some of what follows, I use Mr. Rannelli's own words. Others have also supplied information about the Italian work.

In the days of significant immigration of Italians to North America, Gospel work in Italian was carried on in many places. Many of the immigrant Italians were in happy fellowship in English-speaking assemblies. Although small Italian assemblies in the U.S. existed before 1900, the real expansion of the Italian work in the United States and Canada began in about 1918.

The work among Italians in the United States seems to have started in 1893 in Hoboken, NJ, when a few Italian immigrants met for the first time to Remember the Lord in the Breaking of Bread and to preach the Gospel. One of the first saved was Michael Lisa. A few Italian believers met in his home and were taught by Geremia di Georgio, who had emigrated from Alexandria, Egypt and met with an 'exclusive' English-speaking assembly in Jersey City, NJ.

Through the testimony of Mr. Lisa and Mr. di Georgio, P. Conforte of Brooklyn, NY was converted and soon a

small assembly met in his home. Some members of a Baptist Church who became dissatisfied with their association joined with them. Thus, the two first known Italian assemblies were established in Hoboken and Brooklyn, and were ‘exclusive.’ Mr. Lisa and Mr. di Georgio helped both assemblies while laboring daily to meet their own temporal needs.

In 1908 the Lord saved another Italian immigrant named Cesare Patrizio in Philadelphia, PA while he read the Bible. He associated with an assembly in the city, and requested of the elders that he be baptized, but they hesitated. He said, “If you do not baptize me, I’m going to go home and fill my bathtub and I’ll baptize myself.” The elders then agreed to baptize him. Mr. Patrizio became one of the most gifted teachers and evangelists in the U.S. Italian-speaking assemblies; he labored among them all. In 1918, he was commended for full-time service in the Lord’s work by the brethren of the Bryn Mawr Assembly in Philadelphia. His first Gospel effort was jointly with H.A. Cameron in Waterbury, CT where for 13 weeks in the summer of 1918 they preached in a Gospel tent.

In that same year, 1918, Mr. Patrizio went to the Loizeaux Brothers Publishing House in New York City to meet Timothy Loizeaux. After questioning, Mr. Loizeaux offered him all the tracts he wanted, free, and gave him the address of the Italian assembly in Hoboken. Until this time, Mr. Patrizio was not aware of any Italian-speaking assemblies.

He soon met the Italian believers at Hoboken, but when he learned that they had ‘exclusive’ views, did not join with them. However, in the fall of 1919, Mr. Patrizio

received a postal card inviting him to a Columbus Day Conference to be held in Hoboken. When he arrived he realized that he was among the same group he had visited the year previously. E. Fiorella recognized Cesare Patrizio and asked him to come to the platform to give them a word of exhortation, which he did. Some whom he met at this first Italian-speaking conference, and who later were to play an important part in the work of the Lord among the Italians in North America, were Joseph De Carlo, Frank P. Diorio, J. Compitello, and Constantino Giordano.

F. P. Diorio had been a nominal member of a Presbyterian church. When he heard a servant of the Lord minister on the Church and other Biblical truths, he severed his connections with his church, together with a few others like minded, and they started to meet in his home. In 1903 they rented a store on Mott Street in the Italian section of New York City and started to Remember the Lord each first day of the week. In the afternoons they would go to a park near Mulberry St. and preach the Gospel. The believers carried on this testimony for several years. It was not until July 1919 that Mr. Diorio heard of the Italian believers in Hoboken and Brooklyn. Then he visited the Brooklyn assembly and because he lived in Brooklyn he united with them. F. Diorio suggested that they hold a conference on Columbus Day; it was to this conference that Mr. Patrizio was invited.

Mr. Diorio recognized the scarcity of sound Italian literature and decided to print a magazine called Il Seminatore, later named La Voce Nel Deserto. The first issue was printed in July 1919. The magazine served well to bind the Italian believers together.

He next organized a three-day conference over the Memorial Day weekend of 1920, which was held in the Mariner's Temple in New York City. Those who took part were C. Patrizio, F. P. Diorio, J. Compitello, E. Fiorella, and P. Bartolomeo. Ralph West, who took the Sunday School, was the only English speaker. It was at the last day of this conference that Nunzio Pizzulli was saved.

Louis (Luigi) Rosania was born in Calitri, Italy in 1895 and emigrated to the United States when fifteen years old. In 1916 he was living in Newark, NJ where he met a young man who invited him to the English-speaking Newark Gospel Hall and it was there that he was saved. Later he moved to Waterbury, CT where he opened a tailor shop. The Italian believers in Waterbury were meeting then with the English-speaking assembly at the Waterbury Gospel Hall. But Mr. Rosania was exercised as to full time service among Italians and sold his tailor shop. In February 1921 he was commended to the work of the Lord and became a co-worker with Cesare Patrizio. Though he continued to live in Waterbury, like Patrizio his ministry extended to the Italians wherever they were.

In 1919, a young man named Rocco Cappiello was invited to some Gospel meetings in Waterbury, CT. The first time Mr. Cappiello went, he was so impressed with what he heard from the Bible that he told others there that he was going to get himself a Bible even if he had to steal one. After the meeting the believers gave him a Bible which he embraced as if someone had given him a bag of gold. He was soon saved.

In 1924 the Italian believers in Waterbury rented a hall to have meetings in Italian but continued to Remember

the Lord with the English-speaking assembly. In December 1928 they started to Remember the Lord for the first time in Italian. In August 1944 they purchased their own Gospel Hall. The assembly had a two-day conference every Labor Day. Annual conferences were also held in the Italian assemblies in Boston and Methuen, MA, and Hartford, CT.

In August 1921, Messrs. Patrizio and Rosania pitched a tent in an Italian section of Philadelphia. This section had a bad reputation, and they had to sleep in the tent at night to keep the tent from being destroyed or burned, but the Lord protected them. Matthew Brescia was saved then and led his brother George to the Lord. This was the year that the Italian-speaking assembly in Philadelphia began. Matt Brescia invited a friend, Cesare Illuminati, to the tent meetings. Illuminati was a staunch socialist and agnostic. Mr. Illuminati came on the night that Mr. Patrizio preached on the Prodigal Son, and Mr. Illuminati wondered who had told the preacher all about him. A few days later, he confessed salvation, and a little later his wife also was saved.

In Orange, NJ, an English-speaking assembly had rented a store in the Italian section to get an Italian work started. The work was extremely difficult and they were able to get only a few out to the meetings. In 1921, Rocco Cappiello moved to Orange and found a room in the home of the in-laws of Salvatore Iatesta. Mr. Iatesta saw the new boarder reading a book and asked what he was reading. Mr. Cappiello told him it was the Bible, God’s Word. Mr. Iatesta was gloriously saved.

Mr. Cappiello called for two of his brothers from Italy, and the Lord saved them. He met Joseph Rannelli who

soon accepted Christ. Others were saved and started witnessing. Mr. Cappiello recruited Vito Soccurto of Waterbury, CT to help at Orange, and asked Louis Rosania to come over. As souls were saved they joined with the English-speaking assembly at Orange until 1922, when they met together to Remember the Lord in Italian for the first time.

Five local pastors visited their rented store front building during a prayer meeting. Afterward, one of them said they were happy to see how the Lord was working and blessing the work and suggested that the Italians might like to join with one or another of their churches. Joseph Rannelli thanked them and said that because they were saved recently through reading God's Word, they would continue to study God's Word, and if it led them to join any of these churches they would do so. But God's Word led them to continue to meet in the Name of the Lord alone. Two years later they held their annual conference on Memorial Day weekend, which continued yearly until World War II forced them to discontinue it.

The assembly at Orange prospered and in June 1955 purchased its own building, called the Clinton Street East Orange Assembly. In 1984, the Orange assembly purchased eight acres of land in Livingston, NJ and built the Livingston Gospel Hall. By that time, the assembly was using English as its language for the meetings.

Nunzio Pizzulli at first fellowshipped with the Italian assembly in Brooklyn. Later he moved his family to Long Branch and became identified with the Asbury Park English-speaking assembly. Joseph De Carlo of Brooklyn visited the Pizzulli family to encourage them and help

Nunzio Pizzulli in the personal work he was doing for the Lord in Long Branch. In 1925, four believers started to meet in the home of Mr. Pizzulli to Break Bread. In 1927 the assembly had grown to about 30 believers so they rented an upper room at Branchport Avenue. In 1928, C. Patrizio and L. Rosania erected their tent in the town and others were saved. The assembly erected the Long Branch Gospel Hall on Art Street and formally opened it in August 1932.

After the Italian assembly in Long Branch was started, Frank Pizzulli, the son of Nunzio, became active in children's and young people's work and started a large Sunday School. In June 1938, he was commended by the Long Branch assembly for full-time service.

Another servant of the Lord who played an important part in the formation of Italian assemblies was Francis Carboni. He heard the Gospel preached for the first time by Frank Diorio and Mr. Compitello in a little store that these brethren had rented for meetings in Dumont, NJ. Mr. Carboni was commended to the Lord's work by the assembly at Tenafly Hall in New Jersey and by the Italian-speaking assemblies.

Francis Carboni labored much in the Hackensack and Lodi, NJ areas and saw an assembly established in Hackensack. He encouraged Frank Pizzulli of Long Branch to go into full time service and they joined hands in East Boston, MA and also in Mechanicville, NY and were helpful in forming assemblies in these two cities. Mr. Carboni and G.G. Johnston pitched their Gospel tent in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario in the summer of 1945, and visited other cities in Canada. But Mr. Carboni had developed a burden for Italy and prayed for an open

door for the Gospel there. In 1946, the Lord granted his desire, and Francis Carboni visited Italy and spent nine months preaching the Gospel there with much fruit and encouragement.

He later labored in Sicily, with the full blessing of the Italian brethren in the U.S. The Orange assembly sent a bounty of gifts for the furbishing of a home for missionaries that he had established there. Blessings were evident immediately, many souls being saved and some assemblies established in Sicily.

The Gospel tents were the means of spreading the Gospel among the Italians and were very successful. Gospel tents were set up in Italian districts every year. They were set up after Memorial Day and were taken down by Labor Day. A store would then be rented, which would become the beginning of an Italian assembly. This happened almost every year.

The Lord blessed the Italian work with the diversity of gifts needed to sustain such a work. Rocco Cappiello was one who could endure the hardness necessary in breaking up new ground. He was not a platform man but a great personal worker and tract distributor. It was most natural for Louis Rosania to follow him. Mr. Rosania was the exceptionally gifted personal worker and evangelist. Cesare Patrizio challenged the believers by emphasizing their new position in Christ; he had a very practical ministry. Francis Carboni and Frank Pizzulli were the biblical expositors of the Italian assemblies; they unfolded the scriptures as to the person of Christ and other doctrinal truths.

Some of the most gifted Italian teachers were called home in the prime of their usefulness. Constantino

Giordano of Hoboken, one of the early leaders in the work, died at age 39. Romeo Torrone of Philadelphia and Joseph De Carlo of Brooklyn had exceptional teaching gifts; Mr. Torrone was called home in December 1941 at age 50, and Mr. De Carlo died in July 1950 at age 54. George Brescia was called home in October 1951 when 46 years old. Frank Pizzulli was taken home in November 1960 at the age of 51. In May 1959, the Lord took Louis Rosania to be with Himself at age 64.

By 1952, the following cities had Italian-speaking assemblies, some having over 100 in fellowship and some with less than 25:

New Jersey: Orange, Long Branch, Hoboken, Jersey City, Hackensack

New York: South Brooklyn, Greenpoint Brooklyn, New Rochelle, Mechanicville, Poughkeepsie Connecticut: Hartford, Waterbury, Bristol, Danbury, New Haven

Massachusetts: East Boston, Methuen, Worcester, Springfield

Pennsylvania: Philadelphia

Michigan: Detroit

Ontario, Canada: Toronto and Sault Ste Marie.

Thus in 1952, there were Italian-speaking assemblies in 23 cities on the continent. Today there are no assemblies on the continent which use Italian for their services, though there are many assemblies composed primarily of people of Italian descent.

Now we turn to the history of specific Italian-speaking assemblies, many of which have already been mentioned.

Hoboken, NJ This was the first Italian assembly established in the United States. In 1941, the Hoboken Assembly purchased their own hall on Bloomfield and Seventh St.

Jersey City, NJ The assembly was started here in March 1942 by families that belonged to the Hoboken assembly. Most of the believers in that assembly lived in Jersey City and wanted a testimony in their neighborhood. They purchased their own Jersey City Gospel Hall on Paterson Plank Road in 1946.

Red Bank, NJ Frank Pizzulli had tent meetings in Red Bank, but no Italian-speaking assembly was established. The few believers went to the Long Branch Assembly.

Danbury, CT When R. Cappiello was commended to full time service for the work of the Lord he moved to Danbury in November 1926. He started visitation work with encouraging results. In 1927, L. Rosania came to help and in 1928 a small store was rented and the Danbury Assembly met for the first time. The assembly moved into larger quarters later, but was still called small in 1946 when F. Pizzuli labored there.

Hartford, CT Through Anthony Barbati, the seed of the Gospel was carried to Hartford. Several Italians were interested, so Messrs. Patrizio and Rosania pitched their tent in the summer of 1927. In August six believers were baptized. In 1931 the Hartford Italian Assembly met for the first time in the home of Joseph De Luca. When George and Matthew Brescia moved to this city there was a revival. After meeting in rented quarters for many years they purchased their own building, which was opened June 1946.

Bristol, CT In 1928 Anthony Barbati moved from Hartford to Bristol and through his testimony many became interested and were saved. Mr. Patrizio visited Bristol for Gospel meetings and others were saved. In April 1929, the assembly gathered for the first time to Remember the Lord. The assembly continued to prosper and built their own Bristol Gospel Hall, which was opened in September 1944. About 30 were in fellowship in 1946.

New Haven, CT R. Cappiello began the Italian work in New Haven in about 1940. In 1945, some 13 were in fellowship in the Italian New Haven Assembly.

Poughkeepsie, NY A. Correnti moved to this city and started to sow the good seed of the Gospel. R. Cappiello and others helped and interest was aroused. In June 1933 the Italian Assembly of Poughkeepsie was opened.

New Rochelle, NY The work in this city was started by two Italian brethren who were in fellowship with the Yonkers, NY assembly. With the cooperation of brethren from the Brooklyn assembly, they started having open-air meetings. In July 1933 the Gospel tent was pitched by Messrs. Patrizio and Rosania, and in September 1933 the Italian New Rochelle Assembly started.

South Brooklyn, NY Frank Diorio started meetings once a week in the home of V. De Filippis in South Brooklyn. Soon other believers joined with them, and several others were saved and baptized. In March 1934 an assembly was started at 565 5th Avenue. The assembly later purchased their own building at 17 E. 7th Street, Brooklyn. L. Montalvo of Puerto Rico learned to speak the Italian language acceptably and helped various assemblies when he came to the U.S. He was later

commended to the Lord's work among the Spanish speaking population of New York City and Brooklyn by the South Brooklyn Italian Assembly.

Mechanicville, NY The work here started as a result of some servicemen returning from World War II, who had found Christ and were dissatisfied with their former association with the Pentecostal Church. One of the servicemen, Andy Marinello, began a Bible study in his parent's home. At the same time, an invitation was given to Louis Capeci to come to a series of Gospel meetings led by the Canadian evangelist Mun Hope at the English-speaking Albany Gospel Hall in March of 1945. Louis Capeci was the first of many Italians who would come to know Christ through Mun Hope's efforts.

Once saved, Mr. Capeci took carloads of his extended family and friends to the Gospel meetings. These new believers then began to attend the Bible study started by Andy Marinello, which was moved to the home of Giuseppe Laurenzo. A number of Mr. Laurenzo's adult children came to Christ as a result of Mr. Hope's work that March.

Mun Hope was asked to return to Mechanicville late in the summer of 1945, which he did, staying for six to eight weeks, helping with the Bible study of 30 to 40 believers, most of whom were newly saved. In these early months, Mechanicville's Italian believers attended Albany Gospel Hall on Sundays. Seeing so many believers of Italian descent, Mun Hope wrote to Frank Pizzulli and Louis Rosania, asking them to come and take his place in the work at Mechanicville. Before he left, Mun Hope gave F. Pizzulli and L. Rosania all the

money he had received from the Italian believers in Mechanicville.

Messrs. Pizzulli and Rosania pitched their tent in Mechanicville in the summer of 1946 and blessings were seen. At first the adversary raged. The Chief of Police together with the local priest ordered the property owner to have the tent removed from his property. When the Lord opened another location for the tent, the Chief of Police ordered that no tracts or leaflets could be distributed. The brethren were not discouraged and patiently went to the State Capital in Albany, and the Attorney General had the decision reversed. Mr. Pizzulli rented the Masonic Temple every Lord's Day evening for Gospel meetings, and the believers met in homes for Bible study during the week. Some Broke Bread in Albany and some in Schenectady. In 1946, some 20 Italian believers were in fellowship in the Albany Gospel Hall. The believers met in assembly capacity for the first time in Mechanicville the first Sunday of December 1946. By January of 1947, there was a group of about 36 in fellowship. The believers started building their own hall in the summer of 1948, and the Mechanicville Gospel Hall was opened in February 1949.

Bronx, NY Louis Rosania preached twice a week in Italian at the English-speaking Bronx Gospel Hall on 162nd St. and Teller Avenue in 1945. Frank Pizzulli did door-to-door visitation there in 1946. Mr. Rosania had a baptismal service for some Italian believers in fellowship with the English brethren in the Bronx, but no Italian-speaking assembly was established in the Bronx.

Methuen, MA While gospeling in this city, R. Cappiello came in contact with the Carlo Cavallero family, who had

been in the assemblies of Italy but were now associated with a denominational church. After some visitation ground work by Mr. Cappiello, the Cavalleros requested Messrs. Patrizio and Rosania to pitch their Gospel tent in the summer of 1935. In August 1936 the tent was erected by F. Carboni and G. Johnston. The Italian Methuen Assembly was opened in January 1937, and a hall was built and opened in March 1942.

East Boston, MA While R. Cappiello was visiting villages in the vicinity of Boston he met Frank Procopio Sr. who was interested in seeing a work develop among the Italians of East Boston. Some from the Methuen assembly assisted. In the early part of 1939, they started to have meetings in a home. In July, F. Pizzulli and F. Carboni visited East Boston and pitched their Gospel tent, and did so again the next summer. An Italian assembly was established in May 1941. They built their own East Boston Gospel Hall, which was opened in December 1945; an addition was built in 1964.

Worcester, MA R. Cappiello moved to this city so that he could better reach the people and started his usual house-to-house visitation. In July 1938, the Italian Worcester Assembly was opened.

Springfield, MA Various brethren had visited Springfield since 1937. In the summer of 1939, C. Patrizio and L. Rosania pitched their tent there. In November 1942, the Italian Springfield Assembly was established.

Detroit, MI H.A. Cameron moved to Detroit after laboring among the Italians with Cesare Patrizio in Waterbury. A few Italians were in fellowship at Central Gospel Hall in Detroit. Mr. Cameron invited Messrs. Patrizio and Rosania to come, and they pitched their tent

on Grandy Avenue in 1931. A store was rented nearby and in November an Italian-speaking assembly was formed. The store became inadequate and in 1938 the assembly purchased a cottage which was converted into a hall into which they moved in September 1938. The assembly continued at that location until 1949, when they purchased the old East Side Gospel Hall in Detroit. After that another building was built at Pinewood Avenue and Schoenherr Road. Most of the Italian believers later scattered to various English-speaking assemblies throughout the city.

Toronto, Ontario, Canada Many Italian immigrants came to Toronto, necessitating a more definite work among them. In 1937 F. Carboni and G. G. Johnston pitched a tent there. C. Patrizio labored there from house to house for several years. The Italian Toronto Assembly eventually purchased their own hall. Mr. Johnston learned the Italian language and labored acceptably for many years among the Italians with blessings.

Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, Canada Some Italians were received into the English assembly as early as 1927. In 1934, L. Rosania had special gospel meetings for two months. Carboni also visited in 1937 for special meetings. The Italian believers continued to fellowship with the English assembly.

Vancouver, BC, Canada A British businessman, William S. Hall, arrived from Italy at the close of 1912. Being fluent in Italian, he contacted Italians in Vancouver and various places in the Fraser Valley. In 1917, two Zarelli brothers were converted in Vancouver. In 1919 the witness spread to Victoria, BC where there was a group of about 20 Italian Victoria Assembly believers by 1925.

The Italian Vancouver Assembly met for the first time in Vancouver in 1933. In 1952, the assembly there consisted of about 30 members. The assembly sent many thousands of dollars to Italy for the Lord's work and supplied hundreds of thousands of tracts, hundreds of Bibles, New Testaments, and various booklets. Supplied with an old press, an Italian brother in Vancouver ran off tracts in Italian after his day's work, many of them written by Hall.

Hall commenced an aggressive itinerating witness in 1925, covering Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and part of Northern California. A partial coverage was also made of Ontario and Quebec. In a few places the number of Italian converts was large. As Italians were saved, cottage meetings were begun in homes.

By 1932, through the visits by Hall, many in the Portland area had been saved, including three families at Linnton, a suburb. The Corkums devoted their efforts to shepherding the little Italian assembly begun that summer. Cheered by Will Hall's steadfast example, the Linnton Gospel Hall stubbornly weathered difficult years. It became for the most part an English-speaking assembly with a flourishing Sunday school. Linnton well demonstrated the feasibility of a gradual development of an Italian assembly into an English-speaking assembly where there is little new immigration of those speaking only Italian.

Monterey, CA A few Italian believers met together in Monterey in 1933. The next year the group became established as an assembly, and in the following year three of the members built the Monterey Gospel Hall. In

the 1930s the salvation message was broadcast in Italian from radio stations at Monterey and Oakland in California; Portland, Oregon; Tacoma, and Seattle in Washington; Vancouver and Trail in British Columbia; Lethbridge, Calgary, and Edmonton in Alberta; and Winnipeg, Manitoba.

A work so evidently of the Lord is the special target of Satan. The end of the Italian work as a united effort came in 1958 when some of the leaders of the Italian work, along with some of the assemblies, broke fellowship with one another.

In 1968, the Albany Gospel Hall, Mechanicville Gospel Hall, and Becker Street Gospel Chapel in Schenectady, all in the same general area, joined to become the English-speaking Northway Bible Chapel in Clifton Park, NY.

Sources:

La Voce Nel Deserto (The Voice in the Wilderness), October 1965, p. 10, by M. Rannelli

Letters of Interest, November 1945, p. 15; March 1946, p. 20; November 1946, p. 19; July 1952, p.18

## A Few Statistics

The following table shows the number of assemblies listed in the Walterick Address Books for several different years.

Number of Assemblies Listed

*Year* | *U.S.* | *Canada* | *Total*

*1941* | *529* | *274* | *803*

*1962* | *683* | *354* | *1037*

*1973* | *716* | *392* | *1108*

*1977* | *744* | *395* | *1139*

*1987* | *820* | *431* | *1251*

*1991* | *831* | *422* | *1253*

*1995* | *847* | *426* | *1273*

*1998* | *848* | *428* | *1276*

*1999* | *845* | *418* | *1263*

The Walterick Address Books do not claim to have a complete listing of assemblies. Some assemblies do not respond to their requests for information and are eventually removed from the listing. It is often difficult to know of the existence of a new assembly. Thus, some new as well as existing assemblies are not included. For the same reason, some assemblies which have disbanded continue to appear in the listings. However, the year-by-year reporting to Walterick should be fairly consistent, and the results show a steady, if not large, growth in the number of assemblies from 1941 to the 1990s, with an apparent leveling in the past decade.

The booklet entitled African-American and Caribbean-American Assemblies in the United States, 1999 edition, compiled by International Christian Ministries, lists 83 assemblies, of which 18 are not found in the 1999 Walterick Address Book. All of these were contacted by me for information to be used in this book.

A comparison of the Walterick numbers with numbers from the booklet Canadian Links, Local Churches, October 1995, published by MSC Canada, numbers obtained from various issues of Letters of Interest, along with the above-mentioned African-American and Caribbean-American Assemblies in the United States, 1999 edition, suggests that the Walterick lists may be under-reporting the number of assemblies by about 5% to 10%.

From the responses received in producing this book, the number of assemblies started in the past two decades is shown in the following table.

New Assemblies Begun in:

| *Decade* | *U.S.* | *Canada* |
|---|---|---|
| *1980s* | *64* | *39* |
| *1990s* | *52* | *14* |

The actual number of new assemblies will be higher than these numbers show. The numbers given in the table do not include the merging of existing assemblies or the moving of an assembly into a new building.