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# The History of the Southern Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church

Richard H. Roth

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THE HISTORY OF THE SOUTHERN MICHIGAN CONFERENCE  
OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
Western Evangelical Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Bachelor of Divinity

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by  
Richard H. Roth  
May 1967

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## CHAPTER I

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Religion has played a very important part in the historical growth of the State of Michigan. This picturesque state was first settled by the Roman Catholic Missionaries and fur traders as early as 1610. Father Jacques Marquette founded the first mission at Sault Ste. Marie in 1668. It was at the turn of the Eighteenth Century that Michigan became established with the founding of Detroit as the center of fur trading and a place for peace talks between traders and Indian tribes.

Two days after the explorer Antoine Cadillac discovered Detroit in 1703, St. Anne's, the first church, was located. St. Anne's is next to the oldest parish that has been maintained continuously in the United States.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was the first Protestant church which came in 1818. The Dutch Calvinists came to Michigan in 1846-47 and settled in Kent, Ottawa, Kalamazoo, and Muskegon Counties. At Battle Creek, the Seventh-day Adventists established their headquarters in 1855. Other groups have migrated to Michigan at various times, such as the Presbyterians, Baptists, Lutherans, Amish, and Mennonites.

Free Methodism was carried into Michigan by T. S. LaDue in 1862. Others who helped in this cause were: The Reverend E. P. Hart and his wife, Mr. John Ellison and his wife, Mr. H. L. Jones, and Joseph Jones. The first convert that greatly helped in the establishing of the Free



Methodist Church in Michigan was Mr. John Plues.

The spreading of Free Methodism continued and on June 22, 1966 the Michigan Conference was organized in a brick schoolhouse near the camp grounds in the county of Monroe. There was no stopping this movement for it spread throughout the entire state of Michigan and into other states of the union.

## I. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Problem of the Study. It was the problem of this study to investigate the historical development of the Southern Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church from its beginning to the present time in order to discover the reasons for its existence and the factors that determined its growth.

Justification of the Study. Wilson T. Hogue in his two volumes of the History of the Free Methodist Church gave a brief account of the history and development of the Free Methodist Church in Michigan until 1884. Not including the Minutes and Yearbooks, which gives statistics and factual information about the church, and the conference periodical the Vision, some information has been gathered on the progress of the conference, but no complete history has ever been published of the development of the Southern Michigan Conference.

The Conference Superintendent of the Southern Michigan Conference has urged that a history be written on the Southern Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church (see Appendix A). 1966 was the centennial year of the conference's existence which gives an added incentive for

this written history.

Limitations of the Study. This study investigated the history of the Southern Michigan Conference. A history of the North Michigan and East Michigan Conference will be studied only to the extent that they are related to the development of the Southern Michigan Conference.

## II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

General Conference. The General Conference is the largest administrative body of the Free Methodist Church. This body is composed of all the ministerial and lay delegates elected by the annual conferences, with authority over all areas of the life of the church.

Annual Conference. The Annual Conference is composed of the ministers of that conference and delegates from the various Free Methodist churches. The business of the conference is carried on when they meet once a year.

Southern Michigan Conference. The Southern Michigan Conference, formerly known as the Michigan Conference, embraces the two southern tiers of counties; the part of Eaton County south of a line running east and west five miles north of Charlotte; and the parts of Oakland and Macomb counties east of Novi Road and south of a line running east and west one mile north of Twelve Mile Road.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Book of Discipline. Free Methodist Church (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1964), pp. 197-98.

North Michigan Conference. The North Michigan Conference embraces those counties lying north of the Southern Michigan Conference and west of a line running north and south parallel with the eastern boundary of Eaton County, except the towns of Grayling, Frederick, Gaylord and Vanderbilt in Crawford and Otsego Counties. It also includes the Upper Peninsula and Drummond's Island.<sup>2</sup>

East Michigan Conference. The East Michigan Conference embraces that part of Michigan lying north of the Southern Michigan Conference and east of a line running north and south parallel with the eastern boundary of Eaton County. It includes the towns of Grayling, Frederick, Gaylord and Vanderbilt in Crawford and Otsego Counties.<sup>3</sup>

General Superintendent. The General Superintendent has the responsibility of the administration of the affairs of the church. The title was changed to Bishop in 1907.

District Elder. The District Elder was in charge of all the churches in a district. In the Southern Michigan Conference this name was changed to Conference Superintendent in 1943.

District. The District is a given area inside the conference that contains the churches found therein.

Circuit. The Circuit contains more than one society or preaching points.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 199

Society. The Society is an organized local congregation.

Total Membership. The combined numbers of membership from Adult, Adult Preparatory, and, Junior Members of a Local Church.

### III. ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

Chapter two contained a brief historical survey of (1) the events leading to the establishment of the Free Methodist Church, (2) the introduction of Free Methodism into Michigan, and (3) the establishing of Free Methodism in North and East Michigan into conferences.

Chapter three contained a history of the Michigan Conference which later became the Southern Michigan Conference. This history has included its program of social concern, its Christian educational program, its missionary program and its building projects.

Chapter four contained a historical review of each of the thirty-one churches in the Southern Michigan Conference.

The concluding chapter included the summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

The appendix contained additional documentary information.

### IV. MAJOR SOURCES FOR THE THESIS

For the most part, the information contained in this study was from primary sources.

Minutes. The Minutes is a compilation of transactions that have taken place at the annual conference of each conference in the Free

Methodist Church. In 1956 the name of Minutes was changed to that of Yearbooks.

Vision. The Vision is the name of the conference paper published monthly except August by the Southern Michigan Conference.

Personal Correspondence. This pertained to the study either in a personal manner or to any further information that might be needed from the local church to complete this study.

Personal Interview. Wherever practicable personal interviews with ministers and layman were held.

## CHAPTER II

## CHAPTER II

### THE BEGINNING OF FREE METHODISM

This chapter was concerned with giving a better understanding of the history of the Free Methodist Church. This chapter reviewed the history of the Free Methodist Church and the development of said church in the State of Michigan.

#### I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

A history of the Free Methodist Church must include a brief survey of the Methodist Church. The Methodist movement, started by John and Charles Wesley in 1739, was characterized by the love of God that was shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit. This was what John had to say about his conversion experience:

In the evening of May 24, 1738, I went very unwilling to a society in Aldersgate Street where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for Salvation; and as assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly thereafter, John, and Charles who had been converted three days before, started preaching about this heart warming experience. They preached in whatever pulpits were opened to them. When pulpit after pulpit was closed to their preaching, they turned elsewhere to preach

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<sup>1</sup>Leslie Ray Marston, From Age to Age A Living Witness (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1960), p. 41.

their new-found experience.

It was this new message of Christian experience which the Wesley's now proclaimed with such effectiveness that started the movement known later as the Wesleyan Movement. This movement was rapidly spread by two institutions - the class meeting and lay preaching. All members of the society were placed in classes of about twelve each, and over each class a leader was appointed. Lay preaching started in London about the same time as the class meeting started in Bristol. It consisted of unordained men preaching wherever there was opportunity to preach. These laymen were preaching for conversions and they were getting them. These two institutions, the class meeting and lay preaching, accounted for the rapid growth and spread of Methodism throughout Great Britain and later America.<sup>2</sup>

John Wesley preached that the basis of the Christian faith was the Bible as the Word of God, repentance from sin and the assurance of salvation for every believer, and, Christian perfection, which later became the great doctrinal focal point of Methodism. John, writing to Charles said, "I find that our preachers believe in Christian perfection, but they never preach it, What shall we do? Should we make an issue of it or should we forget it?"<sup>3</sup> It is evident that the emphasis upon Christian perfection was not forgotten, because it continued as one of

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<sup>2</sup>William Warren Sweet, Methodism in America History (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1933), pp. 42-44.

<sup>3</sup>Marston, op. cit., pp. 133-134.



the basic characteristics of Methodism and later of Free Methodism. John Wesley emphasized the importance of the doctrine of Christian perfection to the new church in America and the leaders of the church heartily accepted it.

Through the efforts of John Wesley, Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, Francis Asbury, Thomas Coke, Robert Strawbridge, Phillip Embury, Captain Thomas Webb, Barbara Heck, Nathan Bangs and others, the Methodist Episcopal Church was started in America about 1770. Their efforts were rewarded. Many people became Methodists. In order to strengthen Methodism in America, they conducted camp-meetings and built colleges of which the Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut is still the oldest surviving Methodist educational institution today.<sup>4</sup>

The main thrust of the American Methodist movement was its emphasis on the doctrine and preaching of Christian perfection. However, gradually the emphasis upon this message decreased and its significance was not maintained.

There were several reasons why there was a decline in the spiritual emphasis of this message. The first was a change in attitude toward entire sanctification. The second was the Zinzendorffian view of holiness. The third was the drift toward worldliness. These positions will now be explained.

Three church historians have recently made an investigation of

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<sup>4</sup>Vergilius Fern, Pictorial History of Protestantism (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1957), p. 222.

the doctrine of Christian perfection in the Methodist Church from the latter part of the eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century. They are: (1), Merrill E. Gaddis, "Christian Perfectionism in America" (1929); John L. Peters, Christian Perfection and America Methodism (1956); and, Timothy L. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform (1957). The work of Merrill E. Gaddis investigated and traced various spiritual movements. The work of John L. Peters was limited closely to the course of the doctrine of perfection in American Methodism. The work of Timothy L. Smith included the broader field of evangelism, perfectionism, and social reform in all denominations, but restricted his account largely to the period of 1840-1865.<sup>5</sup>

Both Peters and Smith agreed that during the early period of the Methodist movement the doctrine of entire sanctification was not the dominant theme of preaching. The message of frontier preaching was normally directed to sinners so that they would be able to flee the wrath to come, rather than urging believers toward perfection.<sup>6</sup>

Peters stated that the decline of the Methodist emphasis on heart holiness was due to the fact that in 1812 the section on heart holiness was removed from the Methodist Discipline. The plan was to publish in doctrinal tracts the doctrine of perfection, but for some unaccountable reason this publication was delayed until 1832. This delay helped to further the decline of the doctrine during the interval of twenty years.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Marston, op. cit., p. 135.      <sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

Gaddis stated that during the period of the eighteen forties and fifties, there was a general decline in the thinking of the Methodists as to the importance of the doctrine of Christian perfection. This has been supported by William Warren Sweet, an authority on American church history and Methodist history in particular. He says, "In the two decades previous to the Civil War . . . Wesley's doctrine of Christian Perfection was largely neglected and had become little more than a creedal matter among Methodist bodies."<sup>8</sup>

Gaddis attributed the decline to several factors. These were:

- (1) The autocratic pressure of Episcopal Methodism which had the tendency to crowd out of the Church the more strongly perfectionistic, (2) the passing of the frontier itinerancy, (3) the decline of the camp meeting, (4) the decline of the class meeting, and, (5) the acceptance of slavery.<sup>9</sup>

According to Peters, Christian perfection was an acknowledged, but neglected standard of Methodism in the period of the eighteen twenties and thirties. In the late eighteen forties, there came a quickening of holiness teaching and promotion. With this quickening, there also came active disagreement with the traditional Wesleyan teaching on Christian perfection. This was expressed by Merritt Caldwell's Philosophy of Christian Perfection (1848) in which he sets forth the view that sanctification was a rectifying of tangled and conflicting tendencies of human nature in consequence of earlier sin, rather than a cleansing or eradication

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<sup>8</sup>Sweet, op. cit., p. 340.

<sup>9</sup>Marston, op. cit., p. 136

of an innate principle.<sup>10</sup>

The new emphasis upon Christian perfection was a renewal of the Zinzendorffian view of holiness which stated:

We are sanctified wholly the moment we are justified, and neither more or less holy to the day of our death; entire sanctification and justification, being in one and the same instant.<sup>11</sup>

This statement of the identifying of regeneration and sanctification was put forth by W. C. Hosmer in the Methodist Quarterly Review and summarized by Peters as follows:

All that is necessary to salvation is given in regeneration. If sanctification is necessary to salvation, as its proponents claim, then sanctification is given in regeneration. If sanctification is given in regeneration, then there is no essential difference between the two. Therefore sanctification and regeneration are for all real purposes identical.<sup>12</sup>

Along with this spiritual decline, there came a general laxness toward social issues that had been the mark of American Methodism. Slavery was no longer an issue, even though John Wesley had denounced it. The fact that the church compromised with the slavery issue had the tendency to weaken its witness.<sup>13</sup>

The American Methodist's witness was dulled in the sense that their worship services lacked a spiritual warmth and their personal lives revealed a spirit of self-satisfaction. When a United States census revealed that the Methodist church was the largest numerically in the

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>11</sup> Marston, loc. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Marston, loc. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Howard Sanders, History of the Oregon Conference of the Free Methodist Church (Portland, Oregon: Western Evangelical Seminary, 1965), p. 7.

country and owned the greatest amount of church property, the praises of the Methodist church were sung rather than the praises of God.<sup>14</sup>

Another problem that hurt the Methodist church and caused it to lose its distinctive message was the problem of secret societies. The General Conference of 1852 ruled that the church Discipline did not have a right to forbid a preacher from belonging to a secret society unless it was known that the society was in conflict with the church. Hogue, in his first volume says:

Not only in the Genesee Conference had Methodist ministers in considerable numbers identified themselves with Odd-fellowship and Masonry, but similar conditions prevailed quite generally throughout the country . . . especially was this true of the respected Genesee Conference; and there can be little doubt that the division in that body which finally spread through various parts of Methodism resulted in the formation of the Free Methodist Church had its real origin in these very circumstances.<sup>15</sup>

There were those who saw very clearly that "the evils of the day" were creeping into the church. Rapid spiritual decline was much in evidence. They were longing to see the church return to its former status of spiritual power and purity. These people were Methodists who from a deep and abiding conviction firmly believed that Methodism was raised up for the proclamation of the Gospel of Scriptural holiness.

The seed of conflict regarding the doctrine of holiness had been sown long before the middle of the nineteenth century, but in the year

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<sup>14</sup>John C. McGeary, The Free Methodist Church (Chicago: 14 N. May Street, 1908), pp. 15-16.

<sup>15</sup>Wilson T. Hogue, History of the Free Methodist Church of North America (Winona Lake: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1941), I, p. 25.

1857, this conflict came to a head with the expressed views of Benjamin Titus Roberts.<sup>16</sup> He was a person who believed that Scriptural holiness should be preached and practiced. When he was a student at Wesleyan University he experienced a deepening of his spiritual life. A Methodist revival had swept the campus with John Wesley Redfield as the evangelist. The profound effect of this revival stayed with Roberts through the intervening years.

Upon graduation, Mr. Roberts was faced with the decision of either going into Christian education or into the pastorate. After much prayer and faculty council, he decided to go into the pastorate. In Age to Age A Living Witness, Marston described this decision as follows:

Full of hope and in happy ignorance of what awaited him within a decade, B. T. Roberts decided to cast his lot with the Genesee Conference; and a month after his graduation from Wesleyan University in 1848, when he was twenty-six years of age, he was admitted to the Genesee Conference on trial.<sup>17</sup>

During this time, the controversy among the ministers and, to some extent, among the laity concerning moral, religious, and theological issues was greatly magnified. These issues became so important that it finally resulted in a division of the Methodist church. One of the groups involved in this controversy was known as the "Regency" which consisted of liberals; the other group was known as the "Nazarites" which consisted of the conservatives.<sup>18</sup> B. T. Roberts was a member of the

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<sup>16</sup>Donald N. Bastian, The Mature Church Member (Winona Lake: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1963), p. 17.

<sup>17</sup>Marston, op. cit., p. 175.

<sup>18</sup>Carl L. Howland, The Story of Our Church (Winona Lake: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1951, p. 25.

the conservatives. He wrote and published an article entitled "New School Methodism," in the Northern Independent published in Auburn, New York. In this article he defined the views of the liberal party as expressed in their public utterances and showed wherein the conservatives disagreed with them (see Appendix B).<sup>19</sup> This article aroused much interest and indignation in both the ministers and the laity.

On the basis of this article, at the next annual conference, a charge of unchristian and immoral conduct was placed against B. T. Roberts. The conference, now under the control of the "Regency," voted the charges sustained and sentenced him to be reprovved by the chair. However, he was appointed to a charge for the following year.

The charge of unchristian and immoral conduct against Mr. Roberts was renewed at the following annual conference. This was renewed because the article "New School Methodism" had been republished by a George W. Estes, who was a prominent member of the Methodist Church. Mr. Roberts denied the charge, declaring that he had never ordered the republication nor paid for it. Mr. Estes testified that he had arranged for the republication and had paid for it and he accepted the full responsibility of this charge. Nevertheless, Benjamin Titus Roberts was expelled from the Genesee Conference. In 1910 the Genesee Conference of the Methodist Church restored the parchments of the expelled ministers and acknowledged the wrong done to those described as "among the best men" in the conference.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>McGeary, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>20</sup>Mary Alice Tenney, Adventures in Christian Love (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1964), p. 25.

The expulsion of Roberts aroused much indignation, especially among the Methodist laymen of the Genesee Conference. S. K. J. Cheshbrough, fifty years a member of the Methodist Church, called for a convention of laymen to be held at Albion, New York on December 1, 1858. This convention of laymen condemned the expulsion of Roberts and supported the article "New School Methodism" because of its candor and truthfulness.<sup>21</sup>

During this time, many ministers, laymen and local congregations either were expelled from the Methodist Church or left on their own account. In the Chicago-St. Louis area of the Methodist Church, one of those expelled was the Reverend John Wesley Redfield's congregation at St. Louis, Missouri. When the door closed so that Redfield could no longer preach in the Methodist Church, he and his congregation withdrew from the Methodist Church and later became part of the Free Methodist Church. These people were at a loss because their appeals to the Methodist Church were rejected. Along with others being dismissed from the Methodist Church, they were not permitted to join any other Methodist group. For some time these people labored in small bands usually informal in manner. Realizing that they could not go on forever by meeting in small bands, interest was greatly enhanced in the possibility of forming a new denomination. Therefore, a call went out to any minister of laymen interested in considering the possibilities of organizing a new

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<sup>21</sup>Marston, op. cit., p. 211.



church. In the late summer of 1860, a convention met at Pekin, New York.

The call that went out read as follows:

A convention will be held at Pekin for the purpose of adopting a discipline for the Free Methodist church, to commence at the close of the camp meeting, August 23. All societies and bands that find it necessary, in order to promote the prosperity and permanency of the work of holiness, to organize a Free church on the following basis, are invited to send delegates . . . Doctrines and usages of primitive Methodism, such as the witness of the spirit, entire sanctification as a state of grace distinct from Justification, attainable instantaneously by faith; free seats and congregational singing, without instrumental music in all cases; plainness of dress . . . an equal representation of ministers and members in all the councils of the church . . . no slave-holding and no connection with secret oath-bound societies . . . Each society or band will be entitled to send one delegate at least, and an additional one for every forty members.<sup>22</sup>

At this convention on August 23, 1860 the delegates voted that a new church should be organized and they named it the Free Methodist Church.

The first society of the Free Methodist Church was formed at Pekin, New York on August 26, 1860. Many bands were coming into the Free Methodist Church by voting to adopt the Discipline put forth by the convention at Pekin. These societies needed spiritual guidance and pastoral oversight and the logical sequence was the organization of conferences to provide for this demand.<sup>23</sup>

The first session of the Eastern Convention, now known as the Genesee Conference, was held at Rushford, New York in 1860. The Western Convention, now known as the Illinois Conference, was organized at St. Charles, Illinois in June, 1861. The third convention, now known as the Susquehanna Conference, was organized on April 10, 1862 at Union, New York.

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<sup>22</sup>McGeary, op. cit., p. 57.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 62.

The fourth convention, now known as the Southern Michigan Conference, was organized on June 22, 1866 near Ida, Michigan.<sup>24</sup>

## II. FREE METHODISM DEVELOPED IN MICHIGAN

From the Illinois Conference Free Methodism came into Michigan. In 1862, General Superintendent B. T. Roberts decided that Mr. Thomas S. LaDue should go and organize a Free Methodist society in the South-western part of Michigan because there were those who desired a Free Methodist Church. At least, it appeared that there were some who wished to become Free Methodists. However, when he arrived:

. . . he soon found that those who had been calling for the organization of a Free Methodist work in their midst were chiefly a few disaffected members of another religious denomination, and nowise fit to be received into the Free Methodist connection.<sup>25</sup>

Hence, there seemed to be nothing left to do but to begin the preaching of Scriptural holiness and try to build a Free Methodist society on a sound basis.<sup>26</sup>

How long the LaDues preached in Michigan is uncertain. However, they probably worked there only a few months before they left. Yet they could not get away from the burden of preaching the Gospel of Christ to the people in this State. W. T. Hogue says in his second volume of Free Methodist History the following:

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 62, 65, 68, 78.

<sup>25</sup> Hogue, op. cit., II. p. 19.

<sup>26</sup> John LaDue, The Life of Reverend Thomas Scott LaDue (Chicago: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1898), p. 47.

He and Mrs. LaDue appear to have been deeply burdened for the work in Michigan while there. Mrs. LaDue says, "We often felt to pray that God would give us, as a people, the State of Michigan in its entire length and breadth. At that time but here and there one received the truth gladly; but since then, under the faithful and arduous labors of other servants of the Lord, that prayer has been remarkably fulfilled."<sup>27</sup>

There were two further developments that helped prepare the way for the Free Methodist Church to come into Michigan. The first of these was that a few years prior to the introduction of Free Methodism into Michigan, some members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, lamenting over the lack of spirituality, decided to organize a new denomination. They called it the Methodist Episcopal Conformist Church. The word "conformist" being expressive of their determination to conform to the doctrines of primitive Methodism. For a few years in the Southeastern part of Michigan they met with success with about three or four hundred people. However, within a short period of time, they encountered much opposition from the Methodist Church and the world. By 1863 their membership had greatly diminished and Henry Jones was the only remaining preacher.<sup>28</sup>

The second was that Mrs. Knoll, a member of the Conformist Church, was visited by her sister from Buffalo, New York. The sister brought with her a copy of the Earnest Christian, a periodical published by B. T. Roberts. This copy was handed to Henry Jones who read it carefully. Shortly thereafter, he wrote to Mr. Roberts for a copy of the Free Methodist. After having studied the Church Discipline, he wrote again

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<sup>27</sup>Hogue, loc. cit.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 20-21.

to Mr. Roberts requesting that a Free Methodist preacher come to that area. The Reverend E. P. Hart had been corresponding with Henry L. Jones and arrangements were made for Hart to hold a series of meetings at Ida, Michigan. This permission was granted E. P. Hart at the 1862 Annual Illinois Conference by General Superintendent Roberts.

Mr. and Mrs. Hart arrived by train, at Ida, Michigan, January 24, 1863. They were disappointed that no one was there to meet them. After inquiring, they were directed to the residence of Mr. Jones. The walk to this place was more than a mile in length. Once when walking through the snow, Mr. Hart sat down and said, "Mat, this looks rather dubious, doesn't it?" Immediately, his wife, picking up the gear started walking down the track, singing, "While there's a track I'll never go back, but go on at the risk of my all." With renewed courage, they resumed their trek. They were warmly received at the elder Jones' home and learned that Henry Jones was holding revival services at East Milan. The Harts' went to where the services were being held and became deeply and spiritually involved. At the conclusion of the protracted meeting the people were interested in forming a Free Methodist Society. They asked the Harts' to stay so that they could immediately organize a Free Methodist Society. It was shortly after this appeal that the Plues' school-house in the community of Ida was opened for some special services. It was here that deep conviction came upon the people and many sought for forgiveness. Among those who sought forgiveness were the wife, twin daughters, and, one or two younger children of Mr. John Plues. Mr. Plues was a man of strong personality. Mr. Jones had previously said to Mr. Hart, "If this

man should get saved, it would stir this whole community." Upon Mrs. Plues' conversion, she went and begged forgiveness of her husband and inquired if she might read the Bible and have prayer before retiring for the night. Mr. Plues was rebellious and would not accept her forgiveness. In strong words he said, "I'll never forgive you, and there shall be no reading from the Bible and praying in my house." Breathing a silent prayer, she retired for the night. Mr. Plues could not sleep. He rolled and turned in agony and finally called to his wife saying, "Do you think those preachers would come and pray for me?" She said, "Why yes, John, and I will pray for you, too." After holding on in earnest prayer, he was gloriously converted. John began to cry out, "O my neighbors! my neighbors! we must go and pray for my neighbors." Immediately he rose and went to one of his neighbors with whom he had so long been at variance and said, "O Timothy, how we have lived! how we have lived!" and shortly thereafter these two men were once again reconciled.<sup>29</sup>

This particular event was of tremendous significance in the establishment of the Free Methodist Church in Michigan. Mr. Plues became a leading Free Methodist layman and was a prominent person in the formation of the Michigan Conference.

Mr. Plues continued his earnest missionary activities, and within a short time many families were converted. A number of those who were converted advanced the cause of Free Methodism in Michigan. Ellsworth Leonardson was one such man who was converted during that time. He

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 21-25.

labored several years in Michigan, Ohio, Kansas before becoming a district elder in the Southern California Conference. Others converted included an elder brother of E. Leonardson and his brother-in-law who went to the Congregationalists.<sup>30</sup>

Through God's providence, Mr. Hart resigned his pastorate in Marengo, Illinois and, with his wife, was able to devote full time to this home missionary venture. The first society of the Free Methodist Church in Michigan was organized at the Plues' school-house with about fifty members (see Appendix C for picture). The Harts' continued to travel across the State preaching in schoolhouses, and wherever they could find other places to hold preaching services.

Besides the spiritual benefits that resulted from this mission, it was also a means of advertising Free Methodism in the State of Michigan.<sup>31</sup> A call came to the Harts' to go to Hillsdale, Michigan to organize a society. They went but deemed it unwise to form a society at that time because of the lack of response. This trip proved important, however, because they met John Ellison who was to become a prominent leader in the formation of the Michigan Conference.<sup>32</sup>

Two weeks after this experience Mr. Hart invited Mr. Ellison and some other friends, with whom he had become acquainted, to a grove meet-

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<sup>30</sup>Edward P. Hart, Reminiscences of Early Free Methodism (Chicago: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1913), p. 103.

<sup>31</sup>Richard Blews, Master Workmen (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1960), p. 64.

<sup>32</sup>Blews, Loc. cit.

ing at Mt. Ida, Michigan, near the Raisin River. On returning home, Mr. Ellison preached full salvation in his own church and a number received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Mr. Ellison was put out of his church by the higher officials because they did not like this type of preaching. Mr. Ellison, with some of his converts, then held their meetings in the Blunt schoolhouse in Branch County. They desired a church home so they called for Mr. Hart to come and organize a society.<sup>33</sup>

These are the main events that led to the formation of the Michigan District of the Illinois Conference. At the Illinois Conference in 1864, Joseph Jones went as a delegate from the Michigan field. Mr. Hart was elected district chairman and was sent to the Michigan District. The appointments for the Michigan District were: Michigan District, E. P. Hart, chairman and evangelist; Raisinville, W. D. Bishop and Henry Jones.<sup>34</sup> During this year, Mr. Hart went far and near opening up new areas for Free Methodism and holding revivals, which resulted in more organized circuits. At the next annual conference held at Marengo, Illinois L. T. Frink and John Ellison were the lay delegates from Michigan District. Mr. Hart reported that there were around two hundred people in full connection or on probation in the District. Since there were plans of opening a new work in Indiana the appointments read: Michigan and Indiana District, E. P. Hart, chairman; Huron, H. L. Jones; Raisinville, Lemuel Frink; Morenci, to be supplied; Van Buren, to be supplied; Ramson, W. D. Bishop;

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<sup>33</sup>Hart, op. cit., pp. 136-137.

<sup>34</sup>Blews, op. cit., p. 65.

Coldwater, John Ellison.<sup>35</sup>

The Michigan Conference. One of the resolutions made at the Sixth Annual Illinois Conference was: "That this conference recommend to the General Superintendent and Executive Committee to organize a Conference in Michigan as early as June, 1866."<sup>36</sup>

Following this conference, Mr. Hart kept busy preaching and witnessing to many individuals across Michigan, Indiana, and, Ohio. The first parsonage that the District owned was bought by the Raisinville circuit during this conference year. The parsonage was located at Raisinville. Fulfilling the previous resolution of organizing a Conference in Michigan and in connection with a camp-meeting, the Michigan Conference was organized, June 22, 1866. This organization took place in a little red brick schoolhouse at a country cross-roads town in Monroe County at Raisinville (see Appendix D). General Superintendent Roberts was the presiding officer. From this meeting it was resolved that the secretary be instructed to request that the Illinois Conference would transfer the preachers now laboring within the bounds of the Michigan work to the Michigan Conference.<sup>37</sup> This was done at the September 20-22, 1866 Illinois Conference.<sup>38</sup> At this first session of the Michigan Conference

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<sup>35</sup>Hart, op. cit., pp. 152-153

<sup>36</sup>Minutes of the Illinois Annual Conference (Marengo, Illinois: Conference Minutes, 1865), p. 4.

<sup>37</sup>Official Records, Free Methodist Church, Michigan Conference, p. 10., the official church records beginning 1866.

<sup>38</sup>Minutes of the Illinois Annual Conference (Aurora, Illinois: Conference Minutes, 1866), p. 24.



(see Appendix E) the ministers were stationed at the following circuits: Raisinville, Lambertville, Huron, Forrest, Ramson, Coldwater, Van Buren, Berry, and, the States of Ohio and Indiana.

Even though the conference year was short, during this time the first Free Methodist Church in Michigan was built at Sherwood, Branch County, under the labors of the Reverend John Ellison.

With a spirit of aggressiveness that many exemplified, the message of Scriptural holiness was spread across the State and many new circuits were opened to the gospel.

The North Michigan Conference. About 1868, Mr. A. W. Perry and Mr. Layman Parker, with their families, came from western New York and settled at Coopersville, Michigan. They were staunch Free Methodists and greatly desired that the Free Methodist Church should be established in that part of the State. They called an ordained deacon W. R. Cusick from the Genesee Conference in New York to come to their place with the purpose of starting a new Free Methodist society. W. R. Cusick had expected to secure the services of General Superintendent Roberts for the special services. Failing in this, and upon the advice of these two brethren, he called E. P. Hart to be the speaker. The services were greatly blessed and were very influential in establishing and enlarging the work of the conference in that section of the State.<sup>39</sup> It was through the work of Cusick, Perry, and, Parker that a church was built at Coopersville. From this place the work spread throughout Northern and Eastern

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<sup>39</sup>Hart, op. cit., pp. 182-186.

Michigan.

The growth of Free Methodism in Michigan was phenomenal (see Appendix F). The records showed that up to the time of the division the conference membership consisted of thirty-five ordained ministers, twenty probationers, and, a total Church membership of 2,790.<sup>40</sup> It was considered necessary by the conference leaders that the Michigan Conference be divided so that another conference could be organized with the State. The organization of this conference took place at St. Johns, Michigan, September 27, 1876. This conference was known as the North Michigan Conference and included the work of what is known as "the base line" running from East to West across the State and also included the Dominion of Canada (see Appendix D). The Michigan Conference retained its original name.

The East Michigan Conference. The following eight years in the North Michigan Conference showed large growth and it seemed advisable to form another conference within its confines. The organization was effected September 18, 1884 at Gaines, Michigan.<sup>41</sup> This conference embraced the territory from a line running due north from "the base line" to Lake Huron and from the southern point of the boundary line between Ingham and Eaton Counties. This conference was called the East Michigan Conference, while the Michigan and North Michigan Conferences retained their original names.

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<sup>40</sup> Hogue, op. cit., II. p. 39

<sup>41</sup> McGearry, op. cit., p. 81.

The Ohio Conference. The work in the State of Ohio had been increasing and spreading so that at the 1876 session of the Michigan Conference 535 people had become Free Methodists. There were a number of churches that had been erected and dedicated, which signified that the work of the Free Methodist Church was fairly established. Much of this work was remote from the central part of the conference and of the distance involved, it seemed advisable that the work in the State of Ohio be formed as a separate conference. At the Fourteenth Annual Session of the Michigan Conference held at Holland, Ohio, the resolution was made "that the General Conference be requested to organize a new conference out of the territory embraced in the State of Ohio."<sup>42</sup> General Conference action was given and on October 2, 1879, the Ohio Conference of the Free Methodist Church organized at West Windsor, Ohio.<sup>43</sup>

The Indiana Conference. At the very first session of the Michigan Conference in 1866, men had been appointed to take some circuits in the northern part of Indiana. The work of the Free Methodist Church continued to spread throughout the State and in 1886 the conference requested that the General Conference organize out of the territory another conference in the northern part of Indiana. Necessary action was taken and on October 27, 1887 the North Indiana Conference of the Free Methodist Church was organized at Knox, Indiana.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Minutes of the Michigan Conference (Holland, Ohio: Conference Minutes, 1878), p. 86.

<sup>43</sup>Hogue, op. cit., II. pp. 114-115.

<sup>44</sup>McGeary, op. cit., p. 133.

This conference had a hard time surviving and to an extent it was a failure. In 1913 the General Conference was petitioned to dissolve the North Indiana Conference. The Executive Committee from the General Conference granted this petition for dissolution of the conference with the desire that at some other time this conference could be reorganized.<sup>45</sup> They decided to annex the divided portions to the Illinois, Wabash, and, Michigan Conferences.

However, in the formation of these conferences the conference in the south part of the State retained its name of the Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church. The name remained the same until 1950, when by action of the conference the name was changed to that of the Southern Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church.

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<sup>45</sup>Hogue, op. cit., II. p. 118.

### CHAPTER III

## CHAPTER III

### HISTORY OF THE SOUTHERN MICHIGAN CONFERENCE

In a period of one hundred years, there are many historical events in the life of a church denomination or conference that are worthy of mention. This chapter reviewed those factual events which gave a broad overview of the progress of the conference.

This chapter was divided into the following areas: (1) The period of organization (1866-1887); the year 1887 was the last year the conference was divided; (2) the period of growth and stability (1888-1950); during this period the records showed a fluctuating increase in membership which revealed an overall increase; and, (3) the period of accelerated growth and outreach (1951-1966); in this period the conference membership showed the greatest increase since its conception.

#### I. THE PERIOD OF ORGANIZATION, 1866-1887

Organization and Work of Conference. The Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church was born on June 22, 1866 at the brick school-house in Raisinville, Monroe County, Michigan. In connection with this birth, a conference session was held with General Superintendent Roberts presiding. The meetings were opened by reading the Scriptures and with prayer by General Superintendent Roberts. E. P. Hart was chosen as secretary. This method of opening the conference session was a format which other conferences followed. For a complete list of all the sessions, presiding officers, and secretaries (see Appendix F).

The ministerial brethren who had a seat in this first conference were: Henry L. Jones, John Ellison, Edward P. Hart, C. S. Gitchell, William Bishop, and, L. T. Frink. The lay delegates of this session were: Joseph Jones, John Plues, Jacob Ask, Holloway Sawyer, Jacob Leisingring, Thomas Riley, and, P. Birkett.

E. T. Roberts, E. P. Hart, and, John Plues constituted the first stationing committee. William Riley, James Riley, Samuel Riley, William Baker, E. L. Ash, and, Russell Wilcox were preachers admitted to the conference on trial. John Ellison, and Samuel Frink remained on trial. Henry L. Jones, James Riley, E. S. Gitchell, William D. Bishop, and, Edward P. Hart were admitted into the conference in full connection. This action was the completion of a previous action of the Illinois Conference.

The Michigan Conference was just one District of the Illinois Conference of which E. P. Hart was the chairman. At this session of the first Michigan Conference, the ministers were stationed on the Michigan District at the following places: Raisinville, Lambertville, Huron, Forrest, Ramson, Coldwater, Van Euren, Barry, and, the States of Ohio and Indiana. The ministers that served these places were called upon to serve entire counties and some entire States.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the following information was limited because there was a lack of detailed historical information. However, the major decisions that were made and considered most important were included.

The second session of annual conference convened at Sherwood,

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes of the Michigan Conference (Raisinville, Michigan: Conference Minutes, 1866, pp. 38-39.

Michigan on September 25, 1866. This conference was opened by singing, the reading of God's Word, and, with prayer by Joseph Travis. At this session E. P. Hart and John Plues were elected delegates to the General Conference of October 10, 1866. Again the preachers were appointed to various churches within the Michigan District.<sup>2</sup>

At this conference, the State of Work Committee suggested that among the people there was a spirit of praise to Almighty God for the establishment and the rapid advancement of the work in the conference. They believed that the reason for this success was largely attributed to the faithfulness with which they adhered to their basic doctrinal position of Scriptural holiness and proclaiming this message as God's truth. They reaffirmed their reason for existing by re-stating that they were thrust out to hold up the Bible standard of religion expressed in the motto, "Holiness to the Lord." In their own words they said:

The faithful sustaining of this great doctrine, and the witnessing to the blood of Christ cleansing from all unrighteousness, distinguish us mainly from other churches. To maintain our position we must faithfully discountenance, and bear testimony against sin in all its form.<sup>3</sup>

This session, as other sessions, expressed the general tone of the conference. It was optimistic in nature. They looked forward to the next year of labor with much anticipation.

At the third session of conference in 1867 each pastor was re-

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<sup>2</sup>Official Records, Free Methodist Church, Michigan Conference, pp. 14-15, the official church records beginning June 22, 1866.

<sup>3</sup>Minutes, 1866, p. 43.



quested to submit a report of his pastoral visits made throughout the year. On motion the District Chairman was authorized to devote his full time to the District which he served. Again each minister was appointed to a circuit which embraced one District; the District Chairman was E. P. Hart.<sup>4</sup>

At the 1868 annual session, the preachers were stationed to the various circuits which embraced three Districts. The three Districts were: The Coldwater District with E. P. Hart as chairman; the Saginaw District with Russell Wilcox as chairman; and, the Indiana District with C. S. Gitchell as chairman. Also, at this session, William Bishop had gone to California for health reasons and it was moved and carried that he be permitted to act as a missionary while there.<sup>5</sup>

The fifth session of the Michigan Annual Conference in 1869 was held in connection with the Ridgeway camp meeting near Mooreville, Michigan. The conference commenced at 2:00 P.M., September 10, 1869 with General Superintendent Roberts in the chair. The resolution was made that those ministers who were deficient in their studies be required to bring them up to date in the coming year.<sup>6</sup>

The sixth session of conference held on September 29, 1870 was chaired by E. P. Hart until General Superintendent Roberts could arrive. At this session the following delegates were elected by ballot to re-

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<sup>4</sup>Minutes, 1867, pp. 32-27.    <sup>5</sup>Minutes, 1868, pp. 32-39.

<sup>6</sup>Minutes, 1869, p. 27.

present the conference at the coming General Conference: Ministerial delegates, E. P. Hart, John Ellison, and, C. S. Gitchell; lay delegates, Joseph Jones, John Plues, and, J. Leisenring. E. P. Hart remained the District chairman of the Toledo District while John Ellison was elected chairman of the Grand Rapids District.<sup>7</sup>

The seventh session in 1871 was presided over by E. T. Roberts. At this session, it was voted to be in favor of having two General Superintendents and at the next General Conference B. T. Roberts and E. P. Hart were elected to fill the office. Previous action taken at General Conference was ratified by the conference in regards to the question of tobacco. The change that was voted upon and passed would make it unlawful for any one using tobacco to join the Free Methodist Church. This year preachers were sent to four Districts which were the Toledo District, Coldwater District, Grand Rapids District, and, Cincinnati District.<sup>8</sup>

At the eighth session in 1872, the chairman of the Committee on Education reported that Spring Arbor was selected as the site for the establishment of a school.<sup>9</sup>

The twelfth session on September 20, 1876 was presided over by General Superintendent Roberts. With the formation of the North Michigan Conference, the number of Districts decreased. Burton R. Jones was the chairman of the Spring Arbor and Three Rivers Districts, J. W. Bell was

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<sup>7</sup>Minutes, 1870, pp. 30-37.      <sup>8</sup>Minutes, 1871, pp. 32-46.

<sup>9</sup>Minutes, 1872, p. 51.

the chairman of the Toledo and Cleveland Districts, A. V. Leonardson was the chairman of the North Indiana District, and, J. A. Wilson was the chairman of the Southern Indiana District.<sup>10</sup>

At the thirteenth session on October 3, 1877 for the first time, General Superintendent E. P. Hart presided. It was reported that the work in the State of Ohio was rapidly increasing.<sup>11</sup>

At the fourteenth session in 1878 the conference requested that the General Conference organize a new conference out of the State of Ohio. Also they recommended that each preacher collect ten cents per member to help pay off the indebtedness on the church at Jackson, Michigan.<sup>12</sup>

When the sixteenth session in 1880 was held, thirteen preachers and fourteen delegates presented their credentials. The conference made apology to B. T. Roberts because there was no one to meet him at the station and that he had to walk the six miles to the place where the conference was being held.<sup>13</sup>

The seventeenth session held in 1881 was presided over by General Superintendent E. P. Hart. The following resolutions were presented:

That we as members of the Michigan Annual Conference assembled, do ask the next General Conference to change the rule on tobacco by striking out the words, "for the gratification of a depraved appetite," and, that we as a conference believe it will be best as a church to use the old collection of Methodist hymns and ask the next General Conference to make it the hymn-book of our denomination.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Minutes, 1876, pp 64-72.      <sup>11</sup>Minutes, 1877, pp. 82-92.

<sup>12</sup>Minutes, 1878, pp. 79-88.      <sup>13</sup>Minutes, 1880, pp. 37-44.

<sup>14</sup>Minutes, 1881, pp. 35-40.

At the eighteenth session in 1882 a further recommendation was given with regards to the hymnal. They re-emphasized that the General Conference should take measures to publish a Free Methodist hymn-book. L. T. Frink, A. B. Mathewson, and, Edward Mathews were elected ministerial delegates and M. L. Hart, D. W. Abrams, and, Clark Jones were elected lay delegates to the General Conference of 1882.<sup>15</sup>

The nineteenth session in 1883 was held at Spring Arbor, Michigan with General Superintendent E. P. Hart presiding. These people felt a need for their own camp-grounds. They resolved that a committee be appointed by the President to wait upon a Mr. Wilcox, who had offered to bear half the expense, and with him select and purchase a suitable site for a camp-grounds.<sup>16</sup>

At the twenty-first session in 1885, it was voted to have two traveling chairmen or District chairmen in the persons of E. Mathews and A. Bradfield.<sup>17</sup>

This period was not only a time of spiritual growth but a time of physical growth. Beginning in 1866 with six preachers and a few laymen, the Michigan Conference grew to a total membership of 941 with 31 ministers. See Appendix F for a list of membership for this period. Even though the growth was not rapid it gave evidence of real stability.

Missions. The missions program of the conference has always been uppermost in the minds of the leaders. Various aspects, which showed

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<sup>15</sup>Minutes, 1882, pp. 96-103. <sup>16</sup>Minutes, 1883, pp. 101-110.

<sup>17</sup>Minutes, 1885, p. 143.

that these men were missionary minded, were taken from a few excerpts from the different conference sessions. Much of this information was duplicated from year to year, and revealed their interest in both home and foreign missions.

Missions were first mentioned at the third session held on August 23, 1867. It was reported that the extent of their labors consisted in a center from which stretching out in every direction there was a missionary field. They felt that as far as possible the calls from east and west and north and south that were coming to them should be met. To meet these needs the following resolutions were made:

"That we break no more ground than can be cared for, that we take special interest in those churches that are raised up, and, that we urge all our churches to take a collection for missionary purposes and press upon our members to contribute largely for this heaven-brought enterprise."<sup>18</sup>

At the seventh session a request was made to hold a missionary service on October 1, 1871, at four o'clock, P.M.<sup>19</sup>

The missionary program of the conference was centered mainly upon the conference itself until 1882 when foreign missions was first mentioned. It was recommended that a certain amount be apportioned to each circuit and that a missionary offering be taken during or on a special day. This was indicative of the missionary emphasis that was given at the conference during this period.

Missionary giving during this period increased from \$63.65 in

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<sup>18</sup>Official Records, p. 22, beginning 1866.

<sup>19</sup>Official Records, p. 69, beginning 1866.

1871 to \$112.99 in 1887. This missionary giving included both home and foreign missions.

Christian Education. The Christian Education program of the conference was considered of utmost importance. First reference was made to it at the second session in 1866 when the first mention of Sunday Schools was given. The Christian Education program of the conference was broadened with the mention of education in 1871 when the men felt a need for a school that was religious.

The Sunday School committee reported at the second session of conference as follows:

Whereas, the Sabbath school under divine direction being an element of great moral power toward moulding the minds of the young, and thereby preparing the way for the more successful preaching of the Word of God, and triumphs of the Redeemer's Kingdom on earth, therefore, resolved that we earnestly request our people to make a more zealous and persevering effort for the establishing and maintaining of Sabbath schools. Secondly, that we discontinue that chapter of literature of a fictitious character that is being introduced into Sabbath schools at the present day and recommend that no books be used that are not true in the facts related as well as in moral thought.<sup>20</sup>

In subsequent conference years the emphasis upon the Sunday School increased. It was thought to be one of the most effective agencies of the work of the local church. At the sixth session a resolution was passed that the minister preach at least one sermon about the importance of the work of the Sunday school during the coming year. It was their estimation that Sunday school conventions and frequent gatherings of

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<sup>20</sup> Official Records, p. 13, beginning 1866.

earnest Sunday school laborers was productive of much good.<sup>21</sup>

At the seventh session held in 1871 the Sunday school committee suggested that females be employed wherever practicable as superintendents, believing that they manifest a greater interest in children and are more strongly attached to them than men.<sup>22</sup>

The next few years of conference this committee continued to urge all connected with the Sunday school to put forth a more earnest zeal so that more could be converted. They said that the Sunday school should be geared to the children. They believed it was easier for children to be converted than older people. They also recommended that each society should conduct Sunday school sessions at such an hour when all of its members might attend. It was suggested that both old and young be present in the Sunday school hour and that some should take part as teachers and the others as scholars.<sup>23</sup>

Sunday school scholars in 1867 numbered 230 while in 1887 they numbered 1027 (see Appendix F).

At the Friday session of the seventh annual conference in 1871 a meeting was planned for Monday morning to consider the subject of education. A committee of L. T. Frink, E. P. Hart, Charles Mattice, J. T. Gates, and, D. W. Frinklane were appointed to work in the area of

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<sup>21</sup>Official Records, p. 48, beginning 1866.

<sup>22</sup>Official Records, pp. 66-67, beginning 1866.

<sup>23</sup>Official Records, p. 148, beginning 1866.

education.

The Michigan Annual Conference of the Free Methodist Church, with authority of said conference and that the citizens of Spring Arbor, Michigan, with authority of said citizens conferred at a public meeting held in the Methodist Episcopal Church at Spring Arbor on Monday, the 2nd of October, 1871 discussed the possibilities of establishing a school. The following remarks summarizes the conclusions that came from this meeting. First, there was agreement that a school or seminary should be established and maintained of a rank or grade not below an Academy of this State as occasion shall demand. Again, the school should be under the full control and management of the conference, and the conference shall have authority to adopt such rules and regulations for the government of the school as they shall judge to be necessary for its perfect order of discipline. The conference further agreed to raise and appropriate two thousand dollars for the purchase of furniture, books, apparatus, and, additional land for the school. In case the school should be discontinued, the conference was given full right to remove or dispose of any of its property.

They were in further agreement that the citizens of Spring Arbor purchase the property for this school which was formerly owned by the Free Will Baptists. If the people of Spring Arbor would not accept the articles of agreement as mentioned above, that this committee, with G. S. Gitchell and J. W. Vickery added to the committee, be then authorized to take measures to establish a school at some other point.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Official Records, pp. 71-74, beginning 1866.



At the eighth session of annual conference in 1872, the conference pledged its earnest, hearty and active cooperation to the committee on education to take measures of establishing a school within the bounds of the State of Michigan. By the tenth session, the school at Spring Arbor was purchased from the Free Will Baptists, and those buildings that were there were repaired and made usable.

The conference continued to take an active stand in helping the school in whatever manner they could be of assistance. This emphasis continued from year to year. The conference continued to support the school with moral and financial assistance.

Christian Literature. Christian literature was first mentioned in 1867 when it referred to denominational publications. At the third session in 1867 of annual conference a committee was established on publications. At this time the Earnest Christian was the denomination's only publication. It was a magazine of uncompromising deportment and one that scattered holiness truths, which aroused the desires of those who read it to a life of full commitment to Christ.

Therefore, the conference resolved to continue its reception and use every effort to advance its circulation so that its precepts could be followed.

These people felt a need to have a weekly paper. They resolved that as a conference they would agree to have a weekly paper if the following would be agreed upon: First, that it be strictly denominational, and second, that all necessary business be either under the jurisdiction of a committee appointed by the General Conference and carried on under

their intended design or left in the hands of the executive committee.<sup>25</sup>

The conference did not have to make this publication because the General Church published a paper which was later called, The Free Methodist. This became the official religious publication of the Free Methodist Church. This publication has continued to be the official publication of the church and is now published every two weeks.

At the seventh session, this committee said in its report:

We are fully persuaded that our publication The Free Methodist, and Earnest Christian supply a real want in the religious literature of the age, and should be in all our families and circulated as widely as possible outside our denomination.<sup>26</sup>

At the second session of conference, the tracts committee made the following report:

Because the present age needs to be led into the channel of truth and for the most part the printed material that is on the market today is unfit to read, we need to use tracts that will both convict of sin and will lead sinners to God. In this light, it is recommended that each preacher take up a collection on his circuit the coming year to procure such tracts as will tend to counteract the sins of the present day.<sup>27</sup>

Secret Societies. At the seventh session of conference in 1871, the committee on secret societies took a strong stand against all secret societies. They went on record by saying the following:

We condemn all secret, oath-bound societies, both in principle and and practice because these societies are antagonistic not only to our holy religion, but to our republican institutions. By their sham religious rites and ceremonies they belie and heap contempt upon our holy religion as they tend to discredit what real Christianity

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<sup>25</sup>Official Records, pp. 24-25, beginning 1866.

<sup>26</sup>Official Records, pp. 65-66, beginning 1866.

<sup>27</sup>Official Records, pp. 13-14, beginning 1866.

should reveal . . . As Christians, we hold to those doctrines of God's Holy Word to which these secret orders are opposed to in both principle and nature.<sup>28</sup>

Some of those on this committee used to belong to certain secret societies and they revealed some of the Order's practices when they said, "These secret societies lead their haltered and blinded candidates into their dark precincts, require them to kneel at their sacrilegious altars and enter into a covenant of death and make a league with hell."<sup>29</sup>

Therefore this committee resolved that:

as a conference of Christian ministers and laymen, we pledge ourselves to make use of all legitimate means in our power to oppose these treasonable and irreligious orders. Also, that we recognize and support the Christian Cynosure of Chicago, as the peoples exponent of the principles of civil and religious freedom to which we stand committed.<sup>30</sup>

At the tenth session of conference, this committee made the following report:

Free Masonry is the parent of all minor secret combinations, . . . Masonry is antirepublican and treasonable . . . its secrets are utterly worthless, and its ceremonies trifling, repulsive, and, blasphemous . . . the claims of Masonry being paramount, as often as they are, a lodgeman cannot be a loyal citizen, an impartial juror or truthful witness . . . Masonry claims to be ancient: yet as Grand Lodge Masonry or speculative Free-masonry, it had no existence earlier than 1717. It claims to be charitable and benevolent, but it is exclusive and selfish in nature.<sup>31</sup>

In the following sessions, the committee of the conference on secret societies continued to voice their objections. The general thought

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<sup>28</sup>Minutes, 1871, p. 42.

<sup>29</sup>Minutes, 1871, pp. 42-43.

<sup>30</sup>Minutes, 1871, p. 43.

<sup>31</sup>Official Records, p. 150, beginning 1866.

concerning the lodges was that the lodge is opposed to the work of the church. This seemed to be the main emphasis against the lodges and was brought to light at every conference session during this period. The twentieth session declared the thought that all secret societies were an assault on God's claim as set forth in the Bible.<sup>32</sup>

Temperance. At the fourth session in 1868, the temperance committee gave the following report:

We believe intemperance to be an evil which is annually sweeping off thousands of both sexes and all ages into a drunkard's grave and we believe it to be the duty of every friend of his country and the race, and especially of every gospel minister, to exert all the moral power he can possibly command against the prevailing evil.<sup>33</sup>

The members of the conference resolved that they as ministers and members of the Free Methodist Church, must denounce the growing of grain for distilling purposes and the cultivation of hops for beer making. It also denounced the growing, selling, and, using of tobacco. Furthermore, it believed that each of them should cooperate with every effort that is put forth to stay the infectious influence of intemperance and that it should consider to remedy the situation with a stringent prohibitory law to which they would give their hearty support.<sup>34</sup>

During this time the liquor industry was powerful. The various reports which came from the conference from year to year revealed this

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<sup>32</sup>Minutes, 1884, p. 142.

<sup>33</sup>Official Records, p. 32, beginning 1866.

<sup>34</sup>Minutes, 1885, p. 146.

fact. Their resolutions were usually in some form of either not using or adhering to it or to denounce it in all of life. They suggested that all the ministers preach against it whenever possible and to promote prohibition.<sup>35</sup>

Memoirs. It is impossible to recognize everyone who has had a part in the forming and the continuation of the conference. Without a doubt there were those who served faithfully in the conference, but because of lost records, and maybe no records at all, there is no way at this time to evaluate their work.

Robert D. Howe. On November 29, 1870, Mr. Howe passed to his eternal reward. He was born in Westmoreland, Pennsylvania and at the age of twenty-nine was converted. He married Mary Marman on September 10, 1829 and four years later they moved to Washtenaw County, in Michigan where he and his wife labored quite extensively. He was in the Wesleyan Methodist Church for a while, but later he joined with the Free Methodist Church because he felt that they held the nearest approach to Old Methodism.

His preaching was uncompromising. He was a warm supporter of reform movements. His religious experience was clear and thorough and he loved to preach upon the theme of entire sanctification.<sup>36</sup>

Henry L. Jones. Henry L. Jones departed from this life April 1, 1874 at the age of 42 at his residence in Ida, Michigan. He died in the Lord and with full victory in his heart. It was said, "truelly a good man

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<sup>35</sup>Minutes, 1871, pp. 44-45. <sup>36</sup>Minutes, 1874, p. 49.

has fallen, the cross has gotten the victory, and, he has laid down the armor and has taken the crown."

As a local elder, he joined the Free Methodist Church on July 24, 1864 under the efforts of E. P. Hart. He entered into traveling connection and, three years before he passed away, he had taken a superannuated relations with the Michigan Conference. Even though he was not styled as an eloquent speaker, he possessed those qualities of love which endeared him to many.<sup>37</sup>

Marion D. Baldwin. Marion D. Baldwin went to be with the Lord on March 27, 1887 at his sisters home in Decatur, Michigan. He was eighteen when he became converted and at 23 he felt called to the ministry. In 1880, he joined the Michigan Conference to which he belonged until his death.

While serving on the Wayne Circuit in 1885, his health failed and with hopes of regaining it, he went to the Dakotas. Being prevailed upon to take a circuit, he took charge of the work at Olivet and did an acceptable job. His health did not get better so he returned to Spring Arbor and then shortly thereafter he went to his sisters home. After he had passed away, it was written of him:

He was a good man. He truly gave his body a living sacrifice to God. His convictions of right and wrong were clear, and nothing could move him from the course he considered to be right. He dared to stand alone. We lose in him a true brother, a faithful laborer, and, a devoted minister of Jesus Christ.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Minutes, 1887, p. 126.

<sup>38</sup>Minutes, 1887, pp. 125-126.

## II. THE PERIOD OF GROWTH (1838-1949)

State of Work. During the sixty-third annual session of the Michigan Conference in 1927, the State of Work committee suggested that the conference was in a general need for a real revival.

This committee emphasized the all-important fact that increased spirituality must go along with any real prosperity. The conference should pray for a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They also said that this revival must begin with the minister. It was urged of each pastor to try and outdo, if possible, their most spiritual member in genuine piety. The ideal standard of revival will only be brought forth by prayer, faith, and, perseverance and the exercise of these will carry to a real revival.

Externally the people maintained a wholesome standard of separation from the world. Ties worn by the ministers were plain ones. The members were united in the exclusion of instrumental music from public worship and in every way to hold to the principles of genuine Free Methodism.

Organically the conference had twenty-five circuits with many fine first-class preachers. However, some of these circuits were in poor condition. With so many fine preachers it was difficult for the stationing committee to decide who would go to which place. The Conference recommended that the District Elders be authorized to raise money on the stronger circuits to help extend revival campaigns at those points where such campaigns were most likely to be fruitful.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Minutes, 1927, p. 64.

Conference at Work. The twenty-fourth annual session in 1888, was held in the Methodist Episcopal Church in Hartford, Michigan, October 3-6, 1888 with E. P. Hart presiding. This Conference resolved that it was not consistent with its position as a church on the matter of dress that preachers and members wear the beard trimmed in the form of mustaches, goatees, and, sideburns.

Preachers were assigned to the Spring Arbor and Detroit District with Burton R. Jones as District Chairman and the Coldwater and Kalamazoo District with A. Bradfield as District Chairman.<sup>40</sup>

George W. Coleman served as President in 1892 of the twenty-eighth session of conference held in the Seminary chapel at Spring Arbor, Michigan. It was ordered that each minister preach upon the subject of Christian Education near Thanksgiving Day and at that time take up an offering for the Spring Arbor Seminary. Because the Free Methodist Discipline was explicit in regard to instrumental music in all public services, it was the opinion of the conference that the introduction of organs and choirs into the churches for funerals or other occasions was an infraction of our Discipline and was not to be permitted.

Being opposed to all secret societies and their unchristian conduct, it would be inconsistent to allow a secret society to hold a funeral in any of the churches. The Spring Arbor and Detroit Districts were to be chaired by P. E. Vincent and the Coldwater and Kalamazoo Districts were chaired by S. A. McGee.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Minutes, 1888, pp. 88-93.      <sup>41</sup>Minutes, 1892, pp. 17-24.



The thirtieth annual session was held at Milan, Michigan, August 29 through September 1, 1894. Because of the good transportation and postal service by the government, it was the mind of the conference that the Publishing House should remain in the city of Chicago, Illinois.<sup>42</sup>

The thirty-first session in 1895 was held at Adrian, Michigan with George Coleman presiding. In this conference, the name of the one in charge of a district was changed from that of District Chairman to District Elder.<sup>43</sup>

The thirty-sixth session was held near Montgomery, Michigan on August 29 to September 3, 1900, in connection with a camp meeting. J. Craig was appointed to cooperate with J. A. Watson of the North Michigan Conference in obtaining from the Michigan Legislature the passing of a law which would incorporate the Free Methodist Church in Michigan.<sup>44</sup>

In 1901 at the thirty-seventh session James Craig reported that the Legislature had passed an act incorporating the Free Methodist Church in the State of Michigan.<sup>45</sup>

At the thirty-eighth session in 1902, most of the ministers united with the Minister's Mutual Aid Society consisting of the Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa and Michigan Conferences.<sup>46</sup>

Sessions of the forty-first annual conference were held at Battle Creek, Michigan in 1905 with General Superintendent E. P. Mart presiding.

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<sup>42</sup>Minutes, 1894, pp. 83-89. <sup>43</sup>Minutes, 1895, pp. 40-45.

<sup>44</sup>Minutes, 1900, pp. 123-129. <sup>45</sup>Minutes, 1901, pp. 53-59.

<sup>46</sup>Minutes, 1902, pp. 107-114.

The following resolution was unanimously passed:

Whereas, it has been intimated that our beloved senior General Superintendent, Edward P. Hart, may not preside at our conference again, therefore, resolved, that we, The Michigan Conference, now in session at Battle Creek, Michigan, and the visitors in attendance, do hereby express our appreciation of the uniform kindness, ability and impartiality displayed by our president during the many sessions in which he has taken part; and we assure him and his helpmeet that they will always have a large place in our hearts as they have had in the past; and our prayer is, that our heavenly Father will continue to comfort and deal kindly with them during their remaining years, which we hope will be many.<sup>47</sup>

At the forty-sixth session of conference in 1910, the delegates for the General Conference were instructed by the conference to cast their vote for the reelection of Burton R. Jones as Bishop of the Church.<sup>48</sup>

The Michigan Conference met at Hillsdale, Michigan for the forty-seventh session in 1911. On motion it was ordered that each congregation take up an offering to help pay those preachers' car fare who come a distance, who did not receive sufficient amount of money on their circuits to afford such expense in traveling.<sup>49</sup>

In 1914 the fiftieth session was held at Jackson, Michigan with Bishop Wilson T. Hogue presiding. Of the first preachers that were there in the forming of the Michigan Conference, only Edward P. Hart was alive at that time. It was ordered that this conference request the General Conference to change the boundary of the Ohio Conference to include Fort Wayne, Columbia City, and, Robert's Chapel circuits, which are now a part of the Michigan Conference, in view of the geographical location. Mini-

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<sup>47</sup>Minutes, 1905, pp. 53-64.

<sup>48</sup>Minutes, 1910, p. 216.

<sup>49</sup>Minutes, 1911, pp. 84-94.

sterial delegates to the next General Conference were D. S. Warner and W. H. Wilson. Lay delegates were Otis Hoadley and C. L. Osgood.<sup>50</sup>

At the fifty-fifth session in 1919, the conference resolved that it would endorse the "Mission of Redeeming Love Association" as represented by M. Simpson Allen, and it approved the opening of a "Mission of Redeeming Love" in Detroit in the near future and pledged to support it.<sup>51</sup>

The fifty-ninth session in 1923 was presided over by Bishop Walter A. Sellow. H. Montgomery was elected as a member of the executive committee. He was placed on the committee so that he would be in a position to request that the territory embracing Ferndale, a suburb of Detroit, be included within the boundary of the Michigan Conference. This request was granted so that the boundary reached north to Twelve Mile Road. This included the Ferndale area.

The conference took action that an Easter offering be raised on each circuit for the Woodstock Children's Home. The secretary was also instructed to write the management of the Homes and request that no further canvass be made of the conference for the coming year.<sup>52</sup>

At the sixtieth session in 1924, David S. Warner was nominated to succeed himself as a trustee of Spring Arbor Seminary and Junior College. His term had expired.<sup>53</sup>

At the sixty-second session in 1926, the conference ordered the

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<sup>50</sup>Minutes, 1912, pp. 173-183. <sup>51</sup>Minutes, 1919, pp. 85-94.

<sup>52</sup>Minutes, 1923, pp. 104-113. <sup>53</sup>Minutes, 1924, pp. 47-55.

following resolution be sent to the 1927 General Conference:

In view of the quadrennial disturbance concerning our Disciplinary regulations on instrumental music in church worship and that there is an ever-increasing disturbance which is produced by a minority that seems determined to agitate, and because our senior bishop W. A. Sellew has warned us that the introduction of instruments into public worship in any part of our work by official sanction would cause an immediate division of our denomination into two separate organizations, and whereas our denomination's unity is an indispensable requisite to success, therefore, We, the members of the Michigan Annual Conference, hereby petition the coming General Conference to submit the matter of the use of instruments in worship to the annual conferences with a view of placing this regulation among our restrictive rules.<sup>54</sup>

At the sixty-sixth session, 1930 E. A. Andrews and Frank L. Baker were elected as ministerial delegates and E. H. Clark and Sidney Cook were elected lay delegates for the 1931 General Conference.<sup>55</sup>

At the seventy-sixth session of annual conference in 1940, the following resolution was passed:

Whereas the problem of entertaining the Michigan Conference is becoming increasingly difficult . . . be it resolved that the preachers, their wives and children under fourteen years, delegates and their wives or husbands, and, any having official relation with the conference, be housed in the dormitory rooms to be furnished by the school. That all young people fourteen years and over who will register for YPMS activities be provided special entertainment in dormitory barracks at nominal rates. That we approve a plan whereby visitors may rent rooms in the village under the direction of an entertainment committee which shall have power to fix rates and be authorized to take care of any unforeseen problems connected with entertaining the conference.<sup>56</sup>

The eighty-third session of annual conference in 1947 was held on the conference campgrounds at Jackson, Michigan. This was the first

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<sup>54</sup> Minutes, 1926, pp. 83-92.

<sup>55</sup> Minutes, 1930, pp. 136-144.

<sup>56</sup> Minutes, 1940, p. 46.

session there.<sup>57</sup>

In 1888 church membership was 1216 and in 1949 it was 1752 which was an increase of about 8 per year (see Appendix F).

Christian Education. The Sunday school continued to be an important influence in the training and shaping of people's lives. The committee on Sunday schools urged from year to year that the ministers preach upon the importance of the Sunday school and urge their people to support it to their fullest extent.

In 1890, this committee issued the following thoughts connected with the Sunday school program:

The Sunday school as it is, yields valuable fruit, and we are confident that with careful cultivation it might be made to yield much more fruit, if the right agencies could be employed; and that some of these agencies are: A careful presentation of the needs of the school to the society by the pastor or superintendent, preaching expressively to the scholars . . . selecting the right teachers for the various classes, conducting prayer-meetings in the interest of the Sunday school, holding teachers' meetings whenever practicable, conducted by the preacher, if possible. We believe it to be the duty of the preacher to set before his people their responsibility to God, to church and to children . . . We recommend the practice of self-denial especially with regards to Sunday dinners and Sunday morning naps. We regard love as the best motive power and urge those of our people who do not possess sufficient love to impel them to work in the Sunday school to examine themselves with regard to their love to God and his cause.<sup>58</sup>

Subsequent years gave evidence of the fact that the emphasis placed upon the place of the Sunday school in the life of the church was not wasted effort. As the local pastors promoted the Sunday school, encouraging results were forthcoming.

The beginning of this period (1888-1950) showed Sunday school

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<sup>57</sup>Minutes, 1947, pp. 120-130. <sup>58</sup>Minutes, 1890, pp. 108-109.

scholars numbering 1076 and at the close of this period they numbered 5056.

The emphasis upon religious education was centered at the Seminary in Spring Arbor. The conference continued to give financial assistance to the school and it continued to urge the people within the conference to give as much as they could possibly afford. The conference recommended that the people should send their children to Spring Arbor. However, if they wanted a higher education than they could receive at Spring Arbor, they were admonished to go to the Free Methodist College at Greenville, Illinois. The conference leaders felt that by going to these Christian schools the students would be able to secure a good Christian education and at the same time they would become grounded in spiritual things.

Spring Arbor Seminary later extended its course of study to include the level of a Junior College. The reader is referred to Dr. Mead Killion's thesis for a detailed history of the school at Spring Arbor. Dr. Killion's thesis is located in the Spring Arbor College library.

Missions. Missions continued to be a major emphasis of the conference. The emphasis upon missions included a renewed interest in foreign missions along with a continued interest in home missions. However, the annual reports of the committee for this period were of such a nature that only the financial information was put into the conference Minutes.

Total missionary giving from all agencies in the church for both home and foreign missions totaled \$154,94 in 1888, while the total giving for missions in 1950 was \$17,485.66.

Campground. Information concerning the Michigan Campgrounds was scarce, which limited the details on this section.

For a period of time the conference did not have a conference campground. The Kalamazoo District had its own campgrounds at Vicksburg, Michigan. The Detroit District had its grounds near the Willow Run Bomber Plant. Both of these sites were sold and the conference purchased forty-four acres near Jackson, Michigan which later became the conference campgrounds. Both districts made the "New campgrounds" a special project. It was the result of both districts giving their support to the project that the grounds were developed. E. A. Cutler gave leadership concerning the purchase of the present campgrounds.

In 1945 the first Board of Directors of the Camp Meeting Association were elected. Those elected were: "E. A. Cutler, R. B. Cox, L. D. Gordon, L. H. Knox, Nellie Culter, 1946; W. L. Stephenson, J. B. Cunningham, 1948; L. A. Ruble, A. F. Smith, 1949; A. W. Crandall, B. R. Williams, 1947."<sup>59</sup>

Within the year, the first construction was begun on the grounds. Much of the original work about the grounds was done by the ministers of the conference. At the writing of this thesis, the grounds are nearly half developed. However, there is no indebtedness on them.

In a letter to Conference Superintendent W. Dale Cryderman, R. B. Cox said:

The spirit of the Southern Michigan Conference was born during the years when many ministers worked beyond their actual strength with no thought of remuneration, so that future generations might have

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<sup>59</sup>Minutes, 1945, p. 147.

a place for collective worship within the bounds of our conference.<sup>60</sup>

Whereas both original campgrounds performed the function for the people of the conference yet from a certain point of view they tended to divide the conference. When these two original campgrounds were sold a new one at Jackson was purchased. It had the affect of uniting the conference. This drew all people young and old to a central place where conference in connection with camp meeting and camps could be held.

Points of Interest. In 1911 charities were mentioned in connection with the work in Woodstock, Illinois. Because the spirit of the Christian is that of self-denial and benevolence, it would be right to give as much as possible to the orphanage and old people's home at Woodstock. Each church now takes an Easter offering for the work at Woodstock each year.

Reforms during this period concerned itself with the questions of liquor, tobacco, secret societies, evil speaking, dress, Christian giving, reading materials, and, Sunday desecration. In general the conference spoke out against those things which they believed were contrary to the Bible. They also pledged their support to any just movement that would cause the final destruction of any evil.

The question of instrumental music in the worship services received a lot of discussion during this time. In 1926, the conference recommended that the General Conference submit this matter to the annual conferences with the view that each conference decide the question for itself.<sup>61</sup> In

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<sup>60</sup> Personal correspondence of Raymond B. Cox, Temperance, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, August 31, 1946.

<sup>61</sup> Minutes, 1926, p. 86.



the twenty years to follow, the cause for instrumental music in Church services continued to be discussed throughout the church until 1943 when the General Conference voted 88 to 84 to approve instrumental music on a two-thirds vote of the local church, if the local church in the conference had approved music by a majority vote. In 1947, the General Conference removed the requirement that an annual conference must first approve instrumental music before a church within its confines could vote to have an instrument. Now that the General Church had lifted the ban on instrumental music, they issued the following principle for the guidance of music selected:

The purpose of music in divine service is to inspire and to sustain worship. Therefore participation in musical exercises, vocal and instrumental, shall seek to contribute to reverent and exalted worship and not to the display of talent, however excellent. The primary purpose of musical instruments in divine service to support and guide the human voice, whether in congregational or special singing. Only man of all earthly creatures can worship, and those responsible for planning the church's program of music and those directing the same will therefore subordinate the instrument to the human voice as a means to the worship of God in the congregation.<sup>62</sup>

In 1948, the conference voted that each pastor be granted a suitable amount for car expense and that they be granted two weeks vacation with pay provided for by the local church.<sup>63</sup>

In 1950, the conference superintendent was granted a two weeks paid vacation.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Leslie Ray Marston, From Age to Age a Living Witness (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1960), pp. 343-344.

<sup>63</sup>Official Records, p. 302, beginning 1866.

<sup>64</sup>Official Records, p. 316, beginning 1866.

The conference has had the distinction of having a three generation family of ministers within its bounds. William Cryderman pastored some years before he passed away. His son W. Dale Cryderman was a pastor before his election as conference superintendent in 1956. His son Bill presently is pastoring the Free Methodist Church in Jackson, Michigan.

Memoirs. Charles Parker Tiffany. He was born in Oswego, New York on April 3, 1854 and passed away at Spring Arbor, Michigan, February 13, 1890. He was graduated from Chile Seminary in 1877 and from Rochester University in 1881. He united with the Free Methodist Church and continued to be a faithful laborer as a Christian, minister, and, teacher. At the time of his death, he was associate principal of Spring Arbor Seminary. It was said of him that he was faithful as a man of God and a competent school teacher.<sup>65</sup>

Holloway Sawyer. He was born in Harvard, Massachusetts on April 19, 1827 and passed away at his home near Milan, Michigan on May 20, 1910. After he joined the Michigan Conference, he spent eighteen years of faithful service in the conference. Shortly before his death while speaking about his life to his wife, he said, "God has been letting me look over my record, and with all the opposition and persecution that I have endured, I can say, it has paid. A glorious dawning awaits me. I shall soon be there."<sup>66</sup>

Augustus Bradfield. He was born in the State of New York, July, 1838 and passed away at his home in Decatur, Michigan on March 2, 1917.

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<sup>65</sup>Minutes, 1890, p. 110.

<sup>66</sup>Minutes, 1910, p. 217.

For twenty-seven years he labored with much efficiency in the Michigan Conference, as both a pastor and District Elder.<sup>67</sup>

J. Baker. He was born in Schroon, New York in 1845 and passed away at Spring Arbor on September 25, 1916. His thirty-three years of service in the conference saw many saved and sanctified and brought into the church. He was also instrumental in the erection of many new church buildings. His true spiritual condition was revealed in his last words, "Amen. Precious Jesus."<sup>68</sup>

B. H. Alberts. He was born January 25, 1870 and passed away on July 19, 1927. At the age of twenty-three he united with the North Michigan Conference. He served in the Columbia River and Washington Conferences before coming to the Michigan Conference.<sup>69</sup>

Hiram Montgomery. He was born at Tyrone, Ontario on April 17, 1863 and passed away at Detroit, Michigan on May 31, 1929. His ministry lasted over forty years and during that time he never missed a district meeting or roll call at the time of annual conference. His work included the pastorate, district elder, a member of the Executive Committee, and, vice-president of the Board of Directors of the Free Methodist Publishing House.<sup>70</sup>

R. L. Schamehorn. He was born April 1, 1861 and passed away in Spring Arbor, Michigan on November 29, 1936. For the most part his ministry was laboring in the Michigan Conference. His funeral was largely

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<sup>67</sup>Minutes, 1917, p. 56.

<sup>68</sup>Minutes, 1917, pp. 56-57.

<sup>69</sup>Minutes, 1927, pp. 62-63.

<sup>70</sup>Minutes, 1929, p. 67.

attended.<sup>71</sup>

Parmenas Vincent. He was born in Hillsdale County in Michigan on October 3, 1851 and passed away at his home in Spring Arbor on January 16, 1937. His thirty-three years were spent in serving the Michigan Conference. He was held in high esteem by all who knew him.<sup>72</sup>

E. N. Foulk. He was born at Holland, Ohio on October 11, 1855 and passed away at Detroit, Michigan on May 29, 1937. He travelled the circuits of the Michigan Conference for a number of years. Many were saved and sanctified during his ministry.<sup>73</sup>

Selah A. McGee. He was born July 8, 1849 and passed away at Spring Arbor on July 18, 1937. He served for four years in the Civil War. Soon thereafter he was converted and joined the Free Methodist Church. His entire ministry was within the Michigan Conference. Someone said of him, "He was one of the most faithful ministers of the gospel and a devoted Christian for many years."<sup>74</sup>

### III. THE PERIOD OF OUTREACH AND GROWTH (1950-1966)

State of Work. The work of the conference continued to show physical and spiritual growth. This growth was the result of much hard work and a large volume of prayer. The longing for a revival was manifested by both layman and preacher.

It believed that the ministry should continue to hold the high

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<sup>71</sup>Minutes, 1937, p. 58.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

standard of justification and holiness as set forth in the Bible and as the church's fore-fathers had held to it in the beginning of the organizing of the Free Methodist Church.

Conference at Work. During this period, there were two Conference Superintendents. E. A. Cutler held the Superintendency until 1956 when W. Dale Cryderman was elected to that office.

W. Dale Cryderman, Verdon R. Dunckel, Virgil L. Raley, and Earl L. Habecker, Sr. were the ministerial delegates elected for the General Conference of 1960. Hugh A. White, D. D. Gibbons, Carroll E. Fortress, and, E. H. Munn, Sr. were the lay delegates elected to represent the conference at the one-hundredth quadrennial session of General Conference which convened in Winona Lake, Indiana in 1960.<sup>75</sup>

Much work was done in the development of the physical equipment of the campgrounds. Camp-meeting and conference have been held following one another in the same two week period. The grounds have been made into lots and many buildings have been built on the lots. The ground has been equipped for tents, cottages, and, trailers which make for a better camp.

A beautiful parsonage was built in Spring Arbor as a home for the Conference Superintendent. The conference office is located there.

The auxiliary departments of the conference have contributed to the outreach of the conference. The Women's Missionary Society has given a new thrust to missions by its active interest and conference wide pro-

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<sup>75</sup>Minutes, 1959, p. 189.

gram. The Light and Life Men's Fellowship has re-emphasized the man's place in the total outreach of the church. The Free Methodist Youth has made its contribution in the area of Bible Youth Quizzing and special projects. The Christian Youth Crusaders Organization has sponsored a program for boys and girls. This program has done much to keep boys and girls interested in the church. It has great promise of projecting the Christian witness from the conference level around the world.

Christian Education. The Sunday school has continued to be of major importance to the work of the conference. It continues as an effective means whereby people can hear the truths of the Bible. With an ever increasing emphasis on Bible knowledge and teacher training, the Sunday school has promise of a continued outreach. In fact this has happened in the conference. Sunday school attendance in 1950 was 3468 while in 1966 the attendance had increased to 5570 (see Appendix F).

In the area of education, giving to the college at Spring Arbor continued to increase so that in 1965 money that was given to the school totaled more than \$5.00 per conference member.

Finances. The finance committee continued to give strong leadership in the area of financial matters. Pastors' salaries rose to a minimum of \$75.00 per week.

In the area of missions, the conference gave much support to the mission work of the church. Money that was given for this purpose reached an all time high. This was primarily due to the fact that many local churches placed a stronger emphasis upon missions. This was seen in some of the local churches that were reviewed (See Chapter Four).

Points of interest. Total church membership continued to grow so that in 1966 the membership was 3690 (see Appendix F).

During this time the conference paper was called The Vision and the editorship was taken from the pastors and placed in the hands of the conference superintendent.

Reforms. The conference continued to stand firm for those reforms which were in keeping with the Bible. In 1965 at the annual conference a Social Action Committee was organized. Its function was to concern itself with the economic, political, and, social problems of the day as they relate to the work of the church and to the lives of the people. Its attention was to be given to the problems arising from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and, other narcotic drugs, to race relations, economic and social affairs, and, related problems which concern Christian people.

Memoirs. J. B. Cunningham. He passed away during the year 1950-1951. He was a faithful pastor and district superintendent of the Michigan Conference before moving to the Georgia-Florida Conference where he held the same office of superintendent. He was sent as delegate to the General Conference several times and was nominated to serve on the Board of Administration and also served on the Commission on Mission. His works will follow him because he was a real Christian gentleman, an earnest preacher, and, a real friend.<sup>76</sup>

A. R. Hamilton. He passed away during 1952-1953. He was a faith-

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<sup>76</sup>Minutes, 1951, p. 179.

ful member of the Michigan Conference for many years. He was a man of prayer and of zealous work for the Lord.<sup>77</sup>

W. F. Abbott. He was a faithful member of the Michigan Conference before his death in 1953-1954. He was an excellent preacher of the Word of God and his pastoral concern was appreciated by every congregation which he served.<sup>78</sup>

C. E. Furguson. He passed away to his reward in 1954-1955. He transferred to the Michigan Conference in 1920 and served it very capably as pastor and District Superintendent. He was a man of personal convictions and he approached his calling in an urgency that revealed he did not like to waste time.<sup>79</sup>

E. S. Jennings. He was characterized as a man after God's own heart. He died while holding membership in the Michigan Conference in 1955. He was a good and faithful pastor and was an inspiration to many of the younger ministers of the conference.<sup>80</sup>

Frank L. Baker. He passed away in the year 1955-1956. He labored as a pastor and district superintendent for over twenty years. The remaining twenty years of his life was spent in the interest of missions. It may just be that the one statement that he made to the ministers of the conference will be remembered more than any other. He said, "I saw you when I was praying this morning."<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Minutes, 1953, p. 190.

<sup>78</sup>Minutes, 1954, p. 194.

<sup>79</sup>Minutes, 1955, p. 145.

<sup>80</sup>Minutes, 1956, p. 150.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.



E. J. Moran. He passed away during the year 1955-1956 while pastoring the Battle Creek Free Methodist Church. Even though young at death, it was said of him that in a few years of his ministry there was more accomplished than some would accomplish in a full life time. His clear preaching of holiness, his sincere advice to those with spiritual problems, and, his gentle loving spirit are qualities that endeared him to many.<sup>82</sup>

L. L. Kelly. He passed away in 1958-1959 while in retirement after giving forty years of service in the Michigan Conference. He was called a saintly man and his loyalty never wavered to the church or conference.<sup>83</sup>

O. H. Kenney. He went to be with the Lord in the conference year 1959-1960. His inistry in the conference was short but full of victory. He led many to a saving knowledge of the Lord and consequently was known as a winner of souls.<sup>84</sup>

Henry Steel. He passed away in 1963 while serving with the Oriental Missionary Society. He served two pastorates in the Michigan Conference and knowing that he did not have long to live, he left the pastoral ministry to pursue the challenge of his heart in missions.<sup>85</sup>

David M. Wells. He went to be with the Lord during the conference year 1965-1966. His first charge was at Tecumseh, Michigan in 1911 and thus a long and distinguished career of pastoral service was started in the Michigan Conference. He had personal evangelism upon his heart and

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<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>Yearbook, 1959, p. 196.

<sup>84</sup>Yearbook, 1965, p. 382.

<sup>85</sup>Yearbook, 1963, p. 368.

everywhere he went he sought to teach Christians the art of soul-winning. He was a clear preacher and enjoyed preaching about the Second Coming of Christ.<sup>86</sup>

Church Extension. The last sixteen years has revealed that advancement has come in the area of church expansion. Every church within the conference has made some improvement during these years. Most of the churches in the conference have entered into a building program with many of these building programs completed. Within this period of time all but two churches have either undergone a building program or they are now in one. Some of these societies have undergone more than one building program to accommodate the increase in numbers.

Through relocating some churches and the establishing of others, the conference has seen its greatest growth. The Portage work was the relocating of the old Vicksburg society. The people from Vicksburg and some Free Methodist people from the Kalamazoo Free Methodist Church that lived near Portage united their efforts and built a new church in Portage.

The work at Pulaski was started in this period by two Free Methodist men. W. Dale Cryderman and Charles Kingsley were the two men who started a Sunday school in Pulaski. Pulaski, being not too far from Spring Arbor, made it a good area where ministerial students at Spring Arbor could go on Sundays for some practical experience in in-service training. After a few years of this arrangement, the conference took over this work and the Pulaski Church became part of the conference.

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<sup>86</sup>Yearbook, 1965, p. 382.

The Deerfield society was a relocation of the Petersburg and Townline society in 1961. By relocating the church, this society has strengthened itself and efforts are gratifying.

Niles was the newest church in the conference. Some people from Niles wishing that an Evangelical Church be started at Niles, Michigan, called upon the Free Methodists for assistance. Through the efforts of the conference superintendent and other individuals, a society was born in Niles, Michigan. Plans were being finalized on the building program.

The Conference's Board of Evangelism has been making a study of Saline, Livonis, and, Taylor Township as possible sites for further outreach of Free Methodism in the Southern Michigan Conference.

#### CHAPTER IV

## CHAPTER IV

### THE HISTORY OF THE LOCAL CHURCHES

A comprehensive review of the history of each local church suggests the accomplishment of that particular church. This chapter gave a broad review of each local church that is now in existence as to its date of beginning, reasons for early young leaders, and other data that is significant in the progress of each congregation. The following questions were asked in each personal interview: What building programs have been started and completed? What are the plans for church building in the future? In what special projects has your church been involved? What unusual or unique experiences have happened in your church? And, who are the people that have been called from your group to full time Christian service?

One of the difficulties in such a writing was to make a distinction between a circuit and a local church. Those churches that might have been included in a circuit have not been mentioned because of the lack of information and many churches were not established churches but only preaching points. Therefore, the churches discussed in this chapter were listed in the order of their appearance as they became local churches that eventually made what is now known as the Southern Michigan Conference. Many relocations and merging of churches on the various circuits accounted for a smaller number of churches in the conference. Because of the scarcity and variety of information, the following historical reviews of each church was varied as to its content.

The churches discussed in this chapter were listed in the order of their appearance.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF CHURCHES

Sherwood. The organization of a Free Methodist Society at Sherwood, Michigan was the result of a series of evangelistic meetings held by Ellison and Forbes early in 1866. A church was built which was the first Free Methodist building ever erected in Michigan. At the second session of annual conference, Joseph Travis using Haggai 2:9 for his text, preached the dedication message, and then led in the dedication of the church. The indebtedness of the building was cleared when two hundred dollars was raised during the conference session. In the middle of this church a partition ran through the center the same height as the back of the seats. This divided the men from the women during worship. The men worshipped on one side while the women sat on the other side as they listened to the same speaker.

Peter Rumsey, Christian O. Hagenbaugh, and, one other person were the first trustees of the church. Mrs. Sanderson, grandmother of Bishop Emeritus Leslie R. Marston, was an early member of this church.

At the fourth annual conference, Burton R. Jones was appointed pastor of this church. After a successful ministry in the conference as pastor and district chairman, he was elected General Superintendent of the Free Methodist Church in 1894.

Jeremiah Baker was pastor when the church was moved from the center of the lot to the corner of the same lot. Later a parsonage was

built adjacent to the church. Frank L. Baker, the son of Jeremiah Baker, was converted in this church. Frank became a minister and served the church as pastor, district chairman, and, secretary for the General Board of Missions of the denomination.

In 1890, the first foreign missionary offering was taken, which amounted to \$7.50 and it was given to Harry Agnew who was a pioneer missionary of the Free Methodist Church in Africa.

William Wertz was the first Sunday school superintendent of the church. The Sunday school is first mentioned in 1891 in the official Minutes of the church.

Spencer Mulholland was born to the Reverend and Mrs. W. S. Mulholland in 1906 while they were serving this circuit. Spencer was a pastor in the East Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church, taught in both Spring Arbor and Greenville Colleges, and, at present is the Conference Superintendent of the Georgia-Carolina Conference of the Free Methodist Church.

Carroll Fortress was born to the Reverend J. G. Fortress' while they were serving this circuit. Carroll has been a faithful member of the Free Methodist Church and presently is a member of the Free Methodist Church in Spring Arbor, Michigan.

In 1917, Leon Voorheis began his long-time ministry in the conference. He is the father-in-law of Dr. David McKenna who is the President of Spring Arbor College.

In 1945 when Luella Heltzel was in charge of the circuit, ground was excavated for a basement to take care of the expanding Sunday school.

The old round oak heating stove was exchanged for a furnace, a Sunday school bus was purchased, and it was voted to have instrumental music in the church.

Under the leadership of Henry Steel, the Methodist Church that was across the street was purchased and with the help of many people the church was remodeled. The dedication of the church was on May 16, 1954 by the late Bishop Mark D. Ornston.

The present parsonage was built under the pastoral leadership of Merlin C. Baker in 1963.

In 1965 the church was given a Lowery organ in memory of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Stanton. The church purchased the Leslie speakers that were needed to go with the organ.<sup>1</sup>

Coldwater. The ministry in Coldwater, Michigan was started in 1866, a city located 30 miles south of Battle Creek, Michigan. John Ellison was the first pastor of this Free Methodist Society. This society was part of the Coldwater Circuit that also included North and South Quincy, Dorance, Sherwood, and Eekford. Due to a lack of facilities, the people worshipped in the Wesleyan Church until 1896 when a small building was purchased.

During the ministry of M. H. Cannon, parents of two of the present members of the church were converted; Mr. and Mrs. William Phelps parents of Mrs. Edna Voorheis whom with her husband Leon D. Voorheis pastored for 39 years and Mr. and Mrs. John Knecht, parents of Mrs. Lura Shumway who

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<sup>1</sup>Personal correspondence of Kathryn Ladyman, Sherwood, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, May, 1966.



has been a faithful member of the church.

The Reverend C. W. Miller was pastor in 1897 and during this year a small building on Perkins Street was purchased and used for worship.

In 1906 under the pastoral leadership of J. R. Poet, a new church building was completed. This circuit was divided into the Algansee and Dorrance Circuit, and, Coldwater and Bethel Circuit. Mr. Ralph Voorhees, a member of the church, started his active service in the Free Methodist Church by acting as the assistant Sunday school superintendent during this time.

It was interesting to note that while the Reverend Hiram Voorhees was pastor in 1920 that the entire church program operated on a budget less than one hundred dollars for the entire year.

D. J. VanAntwerp made a most outstanding impression upon the community and the life of the church. His pastorate lasted from 1927-1930 and was graced with much success. Attendance increased beyond the capacity of the building.

Leon D. Voorheis had a successful ministry while serving this circuit from 1931-1934. A strange incident occurred during the ministry of Rev. Voorheis. A stranger came into one of the services and asked for the floor. Pastor Voorheis felt it unwise to grant this request. As the gentleman left, he stomped the floor and directed this quotation against the church: "And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them."

A basement addition for greater Sunday school facilities was added during the three years of service rendered by J. Moran from 1950-1953.

Under the pastoral leadership of the Reverend Gerald Hartman there was continual growth in the Sunday school. It was during this time that the decision was made to sell the church and to build a new one. The lot at the corner of Fremont and Parkhurst was purchased and many decisions relative to the building of the church were made.

In 195 M. Clement Parr was appointed to this society. It was during this time that the decision was made to have the Free Methodist people in Dorrance, Michigan sell their property and merge with the Coldwater society. Both church properties were sold and a new church was built. This church was ready for worship in 1961. It was located near the high school on Fremont.<sup>2</sup>

In 1965, a new parsonage was completed next to the church. It was a four bedroom ranch styled home with full basement and a two-car garage.<sup>3</sup>

Milan. In 1870, the Milan Society of the Michigan Conference was organized under the leadership of Burton R. Jones. Many of those who were converted at this time remained true to God and the church in the years that followed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Personal correspondence of Barbara Parr and others, Coldwater, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, March 30, 1960.

<sup>3</sup>Personal correspondence of Wayne E. Meadows, Coldwater, Michigan, to the author, July 9, 1966.

<sup>4</sup>Burton Rensselaer Jones, Incidents, Life and Labors of Burton R. Jones (Chicago: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1909), p. 155.

Records were lost for the most part concerning the history of this congregation. In 1898, J. N. Boyer was appointed to this circuit as pastor. A few years later, the appointments read: Milan and Raisinville, G. Laubach. The following towns have been connected with this circuit: East Milan, Azalia, Raisinville, Oakville, and, other places in this general area.

A new church was completed in 1958 and during this building program, a building across the street was purchased. In 1965 a new four bedroom parsonage was completed which was valued at \$48,000.00 by the insurance adjustor.<sup>5</sup>

Spring Arbor. Mr. Hart conducted a protracted meeting during the winter of 1870-1871 near Concord, Michigan, which resulted in regular meetings in an old stone schoolhouse about a mile west of Spring Arbor.

The history of Spring Arbor College and church at Spring Arbor have paralleled each other and needs to be discussed in relationship to each other.

A movement was started in 1871 to establish a denominational school within the conference. Two old buildings, formerly used by the Free Will Baptists, and ten acres of property at Spring Arbor spelled the beginning of this denominational school. In the summer of 1873, a short term school was held. The fall term opened with about 60 boarding students. Within ten years the enrollment was a little over one hundred.

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<sup>5</sup>Personal interview of Mildred Miller, Milan, Michigan, to the author, July 28, 1966.

In 1922, the first church was built in Spring Arbor. Continued growth necessitated the enlarging of the stone structure in 1948. Within a short period of time this building was not large enough and the services were transferred to the chapel on the college campus. The present church was completed under the pastoral leadership of H. T. Sebree in October, 1963.<sup>6</sup>

In 1965 the total membership of the church was 478. The Sunday school enrollment was 701.

An educational unit was being planned for the near future. The land has been secured and the plans have been adopted by the society.

One of the strong aspects of the Spring Arbor church is their emphasis upon missions. In 1965 the missionary goal of \$30,000 dollars was surpassed. This was the largest amount ever given by one church within the conference in a one week period.<sup>7</sup>

Jackson. The Free Methodist Church was started in 1873 in Jackson, Michigan. Lost records make the beginning history of the church limited. The church that was formerly used for worship was sold to the colored people and before they could pay for it, the building burned. The insurance from the building yielded \$2,000.00, which was used in the building of the new church.

While they were waiting for the new church to be built, the con-

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<sup>6</sup>Personal correspondence of David M. Wells, Spring Arbor, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, nd.

<sup>7</sup>Personal interview of Herbert T. Sebree, Spring Arbor, Michigan, to the author, July 13, 1966.

gregation held their church services in a room at the YMCA. There was a lot of opposition to building a church for fear that the proper finances could not be raised.

A nucleus of five families carried this burden and soon plans were started for a church building in 1949. Through a lot of hard work and some amusing incidents, the Lord helped these people. A church was erected in May of 1950. The church was useable, but not finished. Since that time, with the help of special projects, they have added to the church and property, a steeple, P. A. system, loud speakers and chimes, a piano, some Sunday school buses, three more lots, a different parsonage, nursery furnished, a pastor's study, an addition built for an enclosed exit, and, a retaining wall built on the back edge of the property. More recently some redecorating and other improvements have been made on the church property. Plans concerning the building of a larger church were finalized and the building will start soon.<sup>8</sup>

Temperance. The first Free Methodist work in this area was in the vicinity of Ida, Michigan, near the Raisin River. In 1879 several Free Methodist families began to hold services in the Center School on what is now called the Temperance Road. These people felt their need of having their own permanent building for worship. Construction began in 1880 on some land that had been given by Joseph and Elizabeth McClanathan. After \$600.00 had been raised, the church's trustees voted that the

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<sup>8</sup>Personal interview of Bill Cryderman, Jackson Michigan, to the author, July 14, 1966.

church building be constructed. It was completed in 1882 at the cost of \$1,000.00. The Reverend C. A. Olmstead was appointed pastor in 1883. During the year Mrs. Clara Weathereld was the evangelist for the revival services. During these services, Mrs. Katie Fisher was converted, making her the first convert of this church. The first parsonage was built in 1892. A north wing was added to the church in 1897 while L. H. Mulholland was pastor.

In 1943, the furnace and furnace room were added to the church. In 1947 plans were completed to raise the church and put a basement underneath it. Other improvements included: The installation of rest rooms, kitchen, balcony, and, an automatic oil furnace.<sup>9</sup>

In 1954, another unit was added to the church. While Larry Burr was pastor, the church's ministry of Christian Education and Worship was enlarged. In 1959, a six-acre relocation site was providentially secured and plans were made for the building of a new church. It is generally agreed by the people of the locality that this building site is one of the best in town. The new church is nearing completion and should be completed by the 1966 conference year. The sanctuary will hold approximately 362. There will be a full basement, which will provide for adequate room for educational and fellowship facilities. The congregation is also planning to have a balcony and a baptistry. One unique observation about this building program is that from the start, when the Shell Oil Company came to buy the old church property, all of the decisions pertaining to

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<sup>9</sup>Personal correspondence of Lawrence E. Burr, Temperence, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, nd.

this project have passed unanimously.

A new parsonage was completed in 1966 which was located near the church on the church's property.

In 1921, Clara Hayden answered the call to the Mission field and gave seven years of service in the Dominican Republic. Other workers who went out from this circuit included: Sidney McClanathan who pastored at Hudson and Owosso, Michigan; Dempster VanAntwerp who pastored many circuits in Michigan; Harry B. Ansted who was the former President of Korea University; and, Eugene Stevenson pastoring the Clinton Church in Washington. The prospects are that three more young men answered the call to the Christian ministry.<sup>10</sup>

Battle Creek. General Superintendent Burton R. Jones came to Battle Creek, Michigan and organized the first Free Methodist society in the winter of 1877. Meetings were held for a number of years in an old Quaker Church.

Mr. Albert Benton, one of the charter members of the Free Methodist Church at Pekin, New York, and his wife were two of the earliest members of the Battle Creek church.

When the Reverend D. J. VanAntwerp was sent to the church in 1901 as pastor, there were only seven members. Within three years the membership increased to 26.

This Free Methodist society was incorporated as a church on

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<sup>10</sup>Personal interview of Raymond B. Cox, Temperance, Michigan, to the author, July 13, 1966.

October 31, 1903 under the name "First Free Methodist Church of Battle Creek, Michigan." At this time a board of trustees was elected. This board consisted of the following: W. H. Hall, chairman; E. H. Clark, secretary; and, D. J. VanAntwerp, treasurer.

A lot was purchased on River Street known as the Hickman property. In July of 1904 work was immediately begun and with a short period of time the property was ready for building. The size of the church was 32' x 50' and the height was 17' above grade mark. The full basement was divided into class rooms and a furnace room. The building was of wood, veneered with cement blocks and bricks. The cost of the building was around \$4,000.00. The Reverends Frank Baker of Kalamazoo and J. N. Boyer of New Boston volunteered one week's work each, while most of the other work was done by members of the society and friends of the city.

The church was dedicated on March 5, 1905 with the Bishop B. R. Jones preaching the dedicatory sermon.

In 1940, the Lord put a burden upon the heart of Pastor R. B. Cox to move out of the River Street location. With the challenge from one of his sermons entitled: "Let Us Arise and Build," a building fund was started.

Land was purchased for this project at 285 Capital Avenue, and on October 5, 1947, the ground breaking ceremony was held with pastor Earl Habecker, Sr. turning the first shovel of dirt.

Much of the labor on the building was donated and on April 3, 1949, the first worship service was held in the new \$60,000.00 church. On May 15, 1949, the church was dedicated with Bishop L. R. Marston



preaching the dedicatory sermon. At that time, \$4,500.00 was raised for the building fund.

In 1960 the Moran Memorial Annex was completed which serves adequately as a three level Christian Educational Unit.

In 1965, a meditation telephone ministry was started by pastor Robert V. Marston, son of Bishop Emeritus L. R. Marston. This ministry has been very effective.

In 1965-1966 the parsonage family-dining room was completed.<sup>11</sup>

Kalamazoo. Mr. Marion Baldwin organized the first Free Methodist society in 1883 at Kalamazoo, Michigan made up of five charter members.

The following year a number of Free Methodist families moved to Kalamazoo, which increased their membership to sixteen. Meetings were at first held at Portage Street, but soon thereafter they moved to a chapel on Jackson Street. The first church was a 26' x 40' building that was located on East Walnut Street. This property was paid for in 1903 while James Craig was pastor. In 1904 a lot was purchased on the corner of Jasper and Jane Streets. The East Walnut Street building was moved to this location to serve as one of the rooms in the new church that was being built. The congregation continued to worship in this church until 1957, when this site was sold to the Wpjohn Company for \$72,000.00.

In July, 1955, under pastor R. C. Morel, a plot of ground was

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<sup>11</sup>Personal correspondence of Robert V. Marston, Battle Creek, Michigan, to the author, July 20, 1966.

purchased on Maple Street and work started on a new sanctuary. This church building was completed in a few years when Henry Steel was the pastor.

A new parsonage was built in 1960 under the pastoral leadership of G. H. Bonney.

Peirl Mercer Leise served as a missionary to China from 1923-1927.<sup>12</sup>

Adrian. Mrs. Clara Wetherald held the first Free Methodist service in Adrian, Michigan in 1883. These services were held in an upstairs room near what is now 128 South Main Street. The 1883 conference appointed G. D. Mark as pastor to this circuit.

The church which was used for worship was located on the east side of Ann Street, between Frank and Church Streets. This church was dedicated in 1887 by Burton R. Jones.

In 1894, the original church was torn down and a more substantial building was erected. This church was completed in six weeks while Frank Baker was pastor. This church was dedicated by the late Bishop George Coleman. This building still stands and is now used by the Adrian City Friends.

Rachael Nash, a faithful member of the Free Methodist Church for many years, willed the church enough money to build a new church. The lot was purchased at the corner of South Locust and Frank Streets where in 1918 the church was built. This church, known as the Rachael Nash Memorial Free Methodist Church, was dedicated by J. T. Logan. This

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<sup>12</sup>Personal interview of G. H. Bonney, Kalamazoo, Michigan, to the author, July 12, 1966.

church is where the people are worshipping today.

The society owns three houses near the church. The first house was purchased during the pastorate of W. L. Stephenson and is used as the parsonage. The second house was acquired during the pastorate of R. B. Cox for parking and expansion.

In 1965-66 a seven acre plot was purchased outside the city limits in a fast growing area for the building of a new church. Pastor Earl Habecker, Jr. and his people expect to be in a building program in the near future.<sup>13</sup>

South Haven. The Free Methodist Church in South Haven, Michigan had its beginning in 1887 under Daniel Feathers when a tent meeting was held in South Haven on a spot where the First Baptist Church now stands.

In 1888 the church was organized into a Free Methodist Society. Among the charter members were: Mr. and Mrs. William Cleveland, Willard Andrus, the George Worboys, the Parkers, the George Seeleys, the William Linesmeyers, the W. Crawfords, the M. C. Motts, the John Harts, and, Mrs. Lucy Buckman.

In the following months meetings were held in the Hurlbert Hall over Wright's store located on the corner of Pearl and Phoenix Streets.

During the pastorate of R. L. Schamehorn, the old Congregational chapel was purchased. This brick structure was moved from the west side of Pearl to its present location on Broadway. After much work on the

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<sup>13</sup>Personal interview of Earl Habecker, Jr., Adrian, Michigan, to the author, July 12, 1966.

building, the church was dedicated in March, 1898 by the late Bishop Burton R. Jones.

One name that was long remembered was that of Charles W. Miller. Someone said of him, "He worked until his fingers nearly bled, handling brick. He was a hustler, nothing satisfied him like work, and then some more work after that."

A parsonage-chapel was completed in 1961-1962 which was the first unit of a long range program made possible by the direction of the Conference Board of Aggressive Evangelism. Lloyd Knox officiated at the dedication service of this building project.

The Young People's Group in 1964-1965 sponsored a banquet honoring the town's basketball team which had won the State Basketball Championship.<sup>14</sup>

Watervliet. In 1888 the Watervliet Free Methodist Church was built. Many citizens from the community made the building possible by their gifts and labors. Mrs. Primer was holding special revival services and the result was the formation of this society. The society was made up of thirteen charter members. The first pastor of the church was the Reverend G. A. Olmstead.

In 1936 with William Clark as pastor the church was remodeled. In 1937 while Elsworth Moran was pastor the church was moved back from the street and the basement was improved.

When William Cusick was pastor in 1944 the Coloma Society was

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<sup>14</sup>Personal interview of James Sims, South Haven, Michigan, to the author, July 15, 1966.

merged with the Watervliet Society. A parsonage was purchased with the money that came from the sale of the Coloma property.

In 1947 when Marion Andrews was pastor, the church was remodeled and two rooms were added to the back of the building.

In 1957 an Activities Building was constructed on the ground behind the parsonage.

In 1965 a new church was dedicated by Bishop Edward C. John.<sup>15</sup>

Hillsdale. In 1891 the Free Methodist Church of Hillsdale, Michigan held services across the street from the Post Office. During the period from 1920-1925, the church experienced a continued crisis. In 1924 the conference debated whether a pastor should be sent there for the coming year because of the interest of the people. Three ladies met for prayer and prayed that the church would not be discontinued and that a pastor would be sent. The conference sent David Wells and his wife to the Hillsdale church as supply pastor.

Verdon Dunckel was at Hillsdale for seven years commencing in 1944. During his pastorate there was a steady growth in membership. The twin brother of the pastor, Mr. Vernon Dunckel, was the assistant for the last three years of the pastorate. Mr. Dee Helmick and Mr. Elmer Pearson were worked efficiently as Sunday school superintendents, during this period. They served for nine and eight years respectively. Much of the credit for growth must be attributed to them.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Conference Office.

<sup>16</sup>Personal correspondence of Frank L. Baker, Battle Creek, Michigan, to Mrs. Edith Redman, Hillsdale, Michigan, September 4, 1953.

In 1941 the Sunday school attendance was 76. By 1950 it had increased to 244. A new church was built in 1950 at 150 Union Street. It was valued at \$50,000.00, and had facilities for twelve Sunday school class rooms.

D. A. Parrott was pastor when the following improvements were made: A Sunday school unit was attached to the church, the church bought a church house annex, and a parsonage.

This church completed an interesting project. They, with some of the town people, furnished the Holy Light Seminary in memory of Mr. Elmer Pearson a leading layman in the church.<sup>17</sup> The church house annex which is presently being rented may some day be used for the associate pastor.<sup>18</sup>

Ypsilanti. The Ypsilanti society was organized in 1904 by a Mr. Anderson, who pastored this charge for five years. The first group of members met in a store building on North Huron Street in the city. In 1907 they were able by the help of some donated labor to build a church on St. Johns Street. The 1907 church was replaced in 1954 by a new church. It was during the pastorate of Marion E. Andrews that the present church was completed in 1954. When the church was dedicated in February, 1954 by Bishop Emeritus Leslie R. Marston, many congratulations were bestowed

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<sup>17</sup> Personal interview of Mrs. Edith Redman and Mrs. Ruth Pearson, Hillsdale, Michigan, to the author, July 15, 1966.

<sup>18</sup> Delegates report of E. H. Munn, Sr., Hillsdale, Michigan, to the 1966 Michigan Annual Conference, June 27, 1966.

upon the congregation from the town officials for a good job well done.<sup>19</sup>

In 1956 a parsonage was built near the church.

The Ypsilanti church has helped to start both the Ann Arbor and the Wayne Free Methodist Churches.

Two pastors died while serving this circuit. W. W. Cryderman, father of W. Dale Cryderman, and W. L. Stephenson.

Mr. Wayne Thompson teaching near Temperance, Michigan and Mr. Clarence G. Chambers teaching near Ypsilanti, Michigan were former ministers in the conference. They were former members of this church.

On February 28, 1965 the church had a homecoming to honor the various ministers and friends who had belonged to the church through the years. At this time, the mortgage on the church was burned.<sup>20</sup>

Three Oaks. As the result of revival services in 1907 by C. S. Huston, who was at that time pastor of the Springville, Indiana Free Methodist Church, a church was started at Three Oaks, Michigan. There were five charter members. They held their services in a one room schoolhouse on West Linden Street. This schoolhouse served as the church until 1959 when a new church was built.

Mr. O. F. Pace, who was the pastor, gave direction and guidance when the society purchased a house and two adjoining lots. The house was used as the parsonage. A church was constructed on the adjoining lots

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<sup>19</sup>News item in the Ypsilanti Press, February 22, 1954.

<sup>20</sup>Personal interview of Mrs. Ivan Disbrow, Ypsilanti, Michigan, to the author, July 5, 1966.

with the help of pastor Joseph Graybill. This society has built a lovely new church. Presently they are in the process of enlarging the present building to meet a growing constituency.

The Three Oaks Society was in the North Indiana Conference until 1961, when by action of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church, and a favorable vote by the local society, conference boundaries were changed and the Three Oaks Society became a part of the Southern Michigan Conference.<sup>21</sup>

Wayne. In 1910 seven charter members of the Wayne Society purchased a building on Main and Clark for a sum reported to be \$1,800.00. This was used as the church. In one year this building was completely paid for. Some years later the church was moved so that it could face Main Street. At this time a basement was put underneath it. A parsonage was built in 1935.

In separate years the old church parsonage was sold and the money was put into a program for the building of a new church and parsonage. A plot of land was purchased in a fast growing subdivision where the church and parsonage were built. In March of 1959 the church was ready for services. The church was dedicated the following November. It was fully equipped and was valued over \$200,000.00. In 1962 a parsonage was built.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Personal correspondence of Mearl Bradley, Three Oaks, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, May, 1966.

<sup>22</sup>Personal interview of Robert Maxwell, Wayne, Michigan, to the author, July 12, 1966.



Parkway Heights. The Parkway Heights Free Methodist Church was formerly the Second Free Methodist Church of Detroit, Michigan. This church was organized in 1912 under the pastoral leadership of W. G. Worboy. When this church was in the planning stages there were those who opposed such a venture. It was then that District Elder H. Montgomery made this statement, "there never was a child born into the world without pain, and even though there will be pain, there is going to be born on the west side of the city of Detroit a Free Methodist Church." Shortly thereafter, a church building was constructed on the west side at the corner of 15th and Buchanan. In 1916 this building was dedicated with the late Bishop Walter A. Sellew officiating.

In 1949 the society voted to sell the property and relocate the church. A building site was purchased at the corner of Oalman Boulevard and Meyers Road. Meanwhile, the Sunday services were held in the McFarlane School. Other activities were held in the basement of the parsonage. In 1951 they discovered that there were building restrictions in the subdivision deed which gave any minority community group legal basis for threatened litigation. Therefore, they felt that the best thing to do would be to find another place to locate. A thorough investigation was made in the fall of 1951 by pastor Marvin L. Galbreath and Conference Superintendent E. A. Cutler. The decision was to relocate. A study was made and after a sampling of several communities it was decided to purchase the property at the corner of Plymouth Road and Appleton Avenue. At this time, it was decided to change the name of the church from the Detroit Second Church to the Parkway Heights Free Methodist Church, in

keeping with the subdivision area where the new church would be located.

Mr. Lucian Bouttelgier was engaged as building superintendent, and on March 12, 1952 construction began on the building. While the church was being constructed services were held in the George Fisher School and in the parsonage basement. The new church was sufficiently completed so that on Christmas Sunday in 1952 services were held in it. On May 24, 1953 the church was dedicated by the late Bishop Emeritus Mark E. Ormston.

In 1954 the parsonage was sold and a new one built near the church. In the spring of 1957, a 40' x 70' wing was added to the church. This was dedicated in 1958 by Bishop Emeritus Leslie R. Marston. This wing provided recreational facilities for the young people, and, it gave more space for Sunday school rooms.<sup>23</sup>

This church was given a large boost a short time ago when 36 Methodists joined the Parkway Heights Church.

The heavy debt which was incurred at the time of the building of the new church has been greatly reduced in the past few years.

There is a strong missionary emphasis in this church. Florence Carter went from this church to Seattle Pacific College, then to Portuguese East Africa as a missionary. Melvin and Betty Pasterious served one term as missionaries. Henry and Dorthay Orrin went to the mission field under the VISA program. Dr. Lionel and Phyllis Hurd are under appointment to Africa. Larry Orrin is spending 1966 in Turkey with "Operation Mobilization"

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<sup>23</sup>Personal correspondence of Mrs. Gladys Harvie, Detroit, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, nd.

distributing Christian Literature. Both Dale and Dorthay Cryderman, Conference Superintendent of the Southern Michigan Conference, were converted in this church.<sup>24</sup>

Benton Harbor. Under the leadership of Ellen Burns and Alice Barbar, the Free Methodist Church was started in 1913 as a mission in a store on Pipestone Street.

The present church was purchased in 1915 from the Church of God. The present parsonage was built in 1922 while W. L. Stephenson was pastor.

Between 1924-1926, the church was remodeled inside with the pulpit being changed to the other end of the church and a room built on the far end, making more room for the platform. During this time, the Michigan Annual Conference was held here, in the Grace United Brethren Church, with the late Bishop Pierce presiding.

L. D. Gordon served the church in 1942 for four years and during that time rooms were added to the parsonage.

Mr. Harold Veiman served the church in 1952 for three years. It was during his ministry that the present addition was built, new seats were installed, and, the church made its greatest numerical growth.

Marion E. Andrews has served the church since 1959. During his ministry the church purchased two Sunday School buses. A weekly, twenty-five minute radio broadcast was started entitled "Pastoral Counseling."

The architects' drawing for the building of a new Semi-Colonial

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<sup>24</sup>Personal interview of John M. Baker, Detroit, Michigan to the author, July 15, 1966.

Church was approved by the society this past year. The church will have a seating capacity of 500 with two 50' x 100' wings on each end or side of the church when completed.

Jean Cleaveland went out from this society as a missionary to Urundi, Africa.<sup>25</sup>

Robert and Dora Wesche's membership was here when they went to Kenya as missionaries in 1967.

Ann Arbor. The Ann Arbor Free Methodist Church was started in 1917. The first revival service was held in the William Snider's home by District Superintendent Frank Baker. Meetings continued in this home until Mr. Snider offered to clear out the upstairs storeroom over his plumbing shop. This was made into a chapel.

The Free Methodist Church on Huron Street was built about 1926. This church served the society until 1963 when a new church was completed. The diamond-shaped church is located on Newport Road. It received a Merit Award in the 1961 Annual Church Design Contest. A tunnel under the carport which provides entrance to the church, will eventually provide access to an educational building.<sup>26</sup>

Ferndale. In 1920 five or six families moved from the Detroit First Church area to the Ferndale area and immediately felt the need of

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<sup>25</sup>Personal interview of Marion E. Andrews, Benton Harbor, Michigan, to the author, July 13, 1966.

<sup>26</sup>Personal interview of David Jeffords, Ann Arbor, Michigan, to the author, March 23, 1967.

having a Free Methodist Church closer to where they lived. Cottage prayer-meetings were started and the pastor from the Detroit First Church was invited to preach to them on Sunday afternoons.

In 1923 a Sunday school was organized and services were held in the Martin Road School. On April 4, 1924 pastor H. Voorheis of Detroit First organized a society and a charter was drawn up with eleven members.

In 1925 the Michigan Conference sent E. W. Faulk to the Ferndale and Redford Circuit. During the next several years the church grew, which demanded a larger place for worship. Among those who joined the society during this time were the Hugh Whites. Mr. White has been a leading layman in the conference and denomination.

A lot was secured at the corner of Marshall Street and Hilton Road. The new church was dedicated on April 21, 1929 by the late Bishop A. D. Zahnizer.

It was while William Cryderman was pastor 1929-1931, that the property at 486 East Marshall was purchased for a parsonage.

In 1931 C. E. Ferguson was appointed pastor and during his four years of ministry the mortgage on the church was paid. These were depression years and many were out of work. When the banks closed their life savings appeared to be lost. This proved to be a blessing for the church. Even though deposits were not payable in cash, anyone who wished could sign over his account to the church and receive full credit to apply on the church's mortgage. By this manner the mortgage was paid. On December 18, 1933 the late Bishop A. D. Zahnizer burned the mortgage.

The first broadcast of "The Light and Life Hour" was made on the

first Sunday afternoon in October, 1944 under the direction of Dr. LeRoy M. Lowell in this church.

Continued growth of the church and Sunday school made it necessary to enlarge the facilities. This was done under the pastoral leadership of Virgil L. Raley. The old church was sold and a plot of ground was purchased at 1950 Woodward Heights Blvd. in Ferndale, Michigan. A new church was erected and on March 9, 1958 Bishop Emeritus L. R. Marston dedicated it.

The church and Sunday school have made significant progress under the pastoral leadership of Ralph V. Cleveland. The youth activities building, parsonage, and, an addition to the youth building for more Sunday school rooms were major building programs within the past seven years. During this time the membership has doubled and there has been an increase in lay and pastoral calling. This church was the first one in the conference to double its membership in one decade beginning in 1960 when the General Conference established a goal that every church double its membership in a decade.<sup>27</sup>

Ronald and Marion Robert answered the call to the Christian ministry while attending the Ferndale Church. Ron and Grace Goodrich are planning on foreign missionary service. Elaine Innes is at the present time under the VISA program and is working with the Saskatchewan Indians.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Byron S. Lamson, ed. "Our World Mission," The Free Methodist, (October 25, 1966), p. 16.

<sup>28</sup> Personal interview of Ralph V. Cleveland, Ferndale, Michigan, to the author, July 14, 1966.

Albion. On August 18, 1921 the Free Methodist Church was organized in the Albion G.A.R. Hall. It was through the efforts of C. E. Ferguson, the assigned pastor, that this class was made part of the conference.

The first Sunday school was established on September 14, 1921 in the Kirkbride home at 1212 Adams Street. Those who were elected to fill offices in the church were: Mr. F. J. Weaton, Sunday school superintendent; Mr. Doolittle, assistant Sunday school superintendent; Mrs. Carrie Kirkbride, children's class teacher; Mr. John Kirkbride, teacher of the adult class; and, Mrs. Ada Logan, secretary and treasurer of the Sunday school.

The pastors from Battle Creek and Spring Arbor preached regularly in Albion for the next five years.

The first permanent place of worship for the people was in the house on the corner of Chestnut and Ionia. This also served as the parsonage. In 1939 the Official Board approved the construction of a new church at 214 East Chestnut. Mr. Edwin Logan was the construction foreman. This building 28' x 42' was to be built on the lot which cost \$150.00. Under the pastoral leadership of L. D. Gordon, construction began on the church. The society borrowed \$800.00 and with some volunteer labor the church was soon completed. This was the first pastorate of Conference Superintendent W. Dale Cryderman and it was during this time the mortgage on the church was burnt.

Rev. O. H. Kenney and wife pastored when two Sunday school buses were purchased in 1952 for \$575.00.

Under the pastoral leadership of Charles Williams and his wife a

large house was purchased for a church annex. This building cost \$6,750.00 of which \$5,200.00 was borrowed. By 1958 it was cleared of all indebtedness.

In 1964 the Rice Creek Free Methodist Church was merged with the Albion church. The building of a new church is in the planning stages. When the loan money has been secured for the building then construction will start.<sup>29</sup>

Hazel Park. This church was the result of a vision that Mr. J. W. Salton had one day as he was looking at a corner lot in a swampy area of a little Detroit suburb. He believed that soon God would raise up a Free Methodist class at this place. Shortly thereafter, doors were opened and Sunday school was held in two different homes in the next three years.

One day the Lord told Mr. Salton that it was time to build a church. His eyes rested upon a lot at the corner of Pearl and Stevens in United Oaks, Michigan. This property was a choice piece of land and it appeared doubtful if he could secure this tract of land. Mr. Salton went to the owners and was told that if he wanted some land for a church he could have it. Because of free land and a good nucleus of people to work with, a new church was born.

On November 23, 1925 the people met before Anna E. Jordon, a local Notary Public, and drew up the by-laws to govern this newly organized First Union Free Methodist Church of United Oaks.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Personal interview of David Webb, Albion, Michigan, to the author, July 13, 1966.

<sup>30</sup>Personal correspondence of Larry Wingate, Hazel Park, Michigan, to the author, November 8, 1966.



In 1953, this church became part of the Michigan Conference. Because of poorly kept records, history concerning this church was limited since 1925. Church growth has been slow as was shown in Appendix G.

Redford. While Redford was only a village outside of Detroit, a group led by Mr. and Mrs. Kuipers met for Sunday evening meetings in the home of W. G. Snedecor. There was no other place of worship in the area. This little group was organized in August, 1924 as a society under the leadership of District Elder W. C. Muffitt.

The first pastor was the Reverend E. N. Faulk and his wife, who at that time had both the Ferndale and Redford Churches. The following year the circuit was reorganized into two local societies and each had their own separate pastor.

They held their worship services in a small building that was erected on the Snedecor property until 1927 when a 20' x 46' building was constructed on an adjoining lot.

Under the pastoral leadership of E. S. Jennings and his wife a larger lot at 17377 Westbrook was purchased. His successor R. D. Van Der Roet gave the leadership in the construction of the brick church which included a basement. Much of the work was done by the pastor and laymen of the church. This church was dedicated in October 1941 by the late Bishop Emeritus Mark D. Ormston.

In 1950 pastor E. L. Habecker, Sr. and congregation built an educational annex to the church. This educational unit was a brick structure which harmonized with the original church building. It was 30' x 50' with a full 10' basement, which had space for the primary department, kitchen,

and, two rest rooms. The entire upstairs was used for the Junior and Junior High Departments of the Sunday school. It gave added room so that the F.M.Y., C.Y.C. classes, and, other church functions could have room for their respective meetings and gatherings. These facilities were also used by some of the organizations in the community.

Some of the activities of the church that have made it a growing church were: (1) Two community surveys have been made in one year with good results, (2) publication of current events reach a large number of people through the mailing list, (3) careful followup of absentees and new prospects, by cards, literature and calls, (4) each year there is a well-conducted Daily Vacation Bible School held for the children of all faiths, and, (5) a regular cottage prayer meeting was held each week.

Within the past few years the sanctuary has been newly redecorated, a new suspended ceiling with florescent lighting has been added, a public address system was installed, and, every Sunday school room has been improved.<sup>31</sup>

Mrs. Bessie Clark is the only surviving charter member of the church.<sup>32</sup>

Lincoln Park. In the summer of 1925 three families came from the Detroit Second Church and held cottage prayer meetings in Lincoln Park. There were some Mennonites who attended these meetings and they contri-

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<sup>31</sup>Personal interview of Vincent C. Meyers, Detroit, Michigan, to the author, July 14, 1966.

<sup>32</sup>Personal interview of Charlie Holsted, Detroit, Michigan, to the author, July 13, 1966.

buted spiritual encouragement to them.

During these years Mr. Otto Saterbak attended the Detroit Second Church and felt lead to come to the Lincoln Park area to begin a Sunday school. In good weather this Sunday school was held in a tent next to the Pearce's home, and in bad weather they were held inside the home. It was here that the Lincoln Park Free Methodist Church was organized with seven charter members.

A store building was rented which was located on Fort Street near Cicotto. Shortly thereafter, another store building was rented for services on the corner of Southfield and Austin.

In 1928 a lot was purchased and a basement church was built only two blocks from the store where the services had been held, under the direction of Mr. Saterbak.

In 1929 David M. Wells and his wife were appointed to the Redford and Lincoln Park area as pastor. The following year the Lincoln Park area was separated from the Redford area and made into a circuit.

In 1932 the first house was rented for the parsonage. In 1933 the circuit was left "to be supplied" and during this year a house was purchased in Detroit and moved to Lincoln Park. This house was used as the center of worship.

Under the pastoral leadership of J. B. Harris the upper structure of the new church was begun. It was completed under pastor W. F. Abbott and in July, 1943 the church was dedicated.

The educational unit was built during the time that Ralph Cleveland and his wife was the pastor.

In 1959 D. A. Parrott and his wife were appointed to the church. In 1960 the house next to the church was purchased. Later two lots were purchased near the church and a parsonage was built.<sup>33</sup>

Garden City. In 1928 while A. W. Downer was pastor of the Redford Free Methodist Church, cottage prayer meetings were started in Garden City.

In 1933 the society was incorporated. One hundred feet of frontage on Inkster Road and Beechwood, were purchased from the State of Michigan and it was here that they moved a frame sanctuary at the cost of \$775.00. An additional forty feet of frontage was purchased for a parsonage, which was completed in 1951 while Luella Heltzer was pastor.

In one decade this farming community grew to 40,000 with literally 100,000 within easy reach of the church. The Michigan Conference looked upon this location as a vital area ripe for church extension. In 1957 the Men's Fellowship of the conference and the Board of Agressive Evangelism raised \$20,000.00 for the purpose of relocating this church and the building of a new one. Under the pastoral direction of Robert Marston, this project was completed.

The Sunday school attendance increased, the number of church members grew, and, dozens of families were won to Christ and the church. The church facilities were not large enough, so a new church house-parsonage was begun in 1960 and completed in 1961. This building has seven classrooms. In the back of it there was a medical clinic. Other improvements

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<sup>33</sup>Personal interview of D. A. Parrott, Lincoln Park, Michigan, to the author, July 13, 1966.

included paved parking for 100 cars, padded pews, landscaping, and, a new Wurlitzer Organ with chimes.

This conference project proved to be a wise venture. It has continued to yield significant spiritual dividends.<sup>34</sup>

Charlotte. About sixty years ago, a Mr. Joe Hawkins of Vermontville, Michigan prayed that there might be a Free Methodist Church built in Charlotte, Michigan. His faith assured him that shortly there would be a Free Methodist Church. Shortly thereafter a Mr. Boice Lovett of Battle Creek drove to Charlotte to hold cottage prayer meetings in the home of the William Cains.

In 1935 Lawrence W. Gibbs was appointed pastor at Grand Ledge and Charlotte by the North Michigan Conference. Services were held on Sunday afternoons in what was the Harris Avenue Baptist Church. The Free Methodist Church was organized at Charlotte July 26, 1936 by pastor Gibbs.

At the fall wing conference Harold Fleck was appointed pastor. Under his leadership a new church was built and it was dedicated on June 30, 1940 by the late Bishop Emeritus Mark D. Ormston.

The first parsonage was built in 1941 under the leadership of pastor Walker N. Jordon.

Through the generosity of a layman Mr. Bert Post, ground was made available for the building of a new church. Soon after the church was built, an addition was added onto it, which gave added auditorium space

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<sup>34</sup> Personal interview of Clement Parr, Garden City, Michigan, to the author, July 13, 1966.

and Sunday school rooms.

The General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of 1951 was held at Hillsdale, Michigan and at that time Charlotte was admitted as a member of the Michigan Conference.

Vincent Meyers served this society for six years. During his pastorate a building was purchased next to the parsonage and remodeled for an activity building. At that time there was a marked interest in the young people. This group of young people developed into one of the most outstanding youth groups in the conference. Many of these young people accepted responsibilities in the church and community and others have gone into full time Christian service.<sup>35</sup>

In 1964 pledges were signed for a proposed church. The land was secured in two sections across from the Junior High School on the Battle Creek Highway. This past year pastor Byron J. Hurd and congregation broke ground for the building of a new church. The building cost nearly \$121,000.00. While in this building program, they have rented the basement of the Federal Savings and Loan Building for the Junior High Department of the Sunday school. In the midst of these building programs the church has continued to maintain a full schedule of activities for all church departments.<sup>36</sup>

Dearborn. Mrs. Ethel Allen was converted in January 1928 in a

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<sup>35</sup>Personal correspondence of Elizabeth Myers, Charlotte, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, 1958.

<sup>36</sup>Personal interview of Byron J. Hurd, Charlotte, Michigan, to the author, July 16, 1966.

holiness-believing Methodist Church. Shortly thereafter, she and her family moved to Dearborn, Michigan. She found that the churches in the area were not holiness centered. Her soul longed for this type of preaching and she prayed that in God's Providence, He would give to Dearborn a holiness centered church. God was already answering her prayer, and in 1936 a man, who had started a mission on Michigan Avenue, approached pastor L. L. Kelly of the Wayne Free Methodist Church and asked him if he would be interested in continuing the mission work. The pastor and his congregation, realizing the opportunities for such a work in the city made famous by Henry Ford's motor empire, agreed to hold services on Sunday afternoons and prayer services on Friday nights. These people were assisted by the other Free Methodist Churches in the area.

Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Kilgrove, who were members at the Wayne Free Methodist Church, living in Dearborn, had begun to invite a number of neighborhood children into their home each Sunday for a Bible lesson. These children became part of the Sunday school after the Dearborn Church was built.

In 1938 at the Annual Michigan Conference it was decided to start a church in the Dearborn area, and that would be sponsored by the conference. A family gave some land for the purpose of beginning a new church. Eventually this was sold and three lots in a more suitable area were purchased on Outer Drive. A portable schoolhouse was purchased in Ann Arbor and moved to Dearborn.

After this building was remodeled Lloyd Knox held a week of special services in it. The conference appointed Herbert Parks as its first pastor.

On October 2, 1938 the society became a reality with ten charter members. Within a half year at least a dozen other people joined the church or transferred from some other society. W. Dale Cryderman was one person who had worked on the building project from the beginning. Although his membership had not yet been transferred, he was elected their first Sunday school superintendent.

In March 1942 a basement was dug for the parsonage just in time to avoid wartime restrictions. When the house was completed it was debt free. This was achieved because much of the labor was donated and the professional laborers charged only a token wage for their services.

A new church was begun in 1951 and was styled along Colonial lines. In 1951 the church was dedicated.

Under the pastoral leadership of Frank VanValin, a \$250,000.00 building project was completed in 1965, which included a new sanctuary that holds 600. The space of the educational plant was doubled. The old parsonage was removed and four additional properties were purchased. A new parsonage was included in the previous building project.

An assistant pastor was hired in 1964. This has enabled the church to perform an effective ministry in community outreach.

There are plans now being finalized to begin a new congregation and church in Taylor Township about five miles away. This church will be the product of the Dearborn congregation.

A distinctive emphasis of this church was their cultivation of the entire family. Wednesday evening was family night. Everyone in the family had a place to go and had something to do. The church's emphasis upon the



entire family has become the model for the Free Methodist Church around the world. Apart from a Free Methodist Church related College, this church is the largest Free Methodist Church in North America.<sup>37</sup>

Bangor. The Noack family along with others had been praying that a Free Methodist Church would be raised up in Bangor, Michigan. At the Michigan Annual Conference in 1946 Mr. Leonard Soldan was appointed supply pastor for the Bangor Circuit. The Conference Board of Evangelism had surveyed this field and had laid the ground work for a new church.

The Free Methodist Church in Bangor was officially on December 5, 1946 organized by Conference Superintendent E. A. Cutler.

The present parsonage served as the church and parsonage until August 1949 when a new church was completed. The church is a cinder block type of building. This church was dedicated on November 13, 1949 by Dr. W. C. Mavis.

The major part of the construction of a new sanctuary was completed during the pastorate of Herbert L. Newland.

In 1960 Earl W. McDonald came to this society and under his leadership the following was completed: (1) Considerable remodeling of the foyer, (2) a Wurlitzer Organ was purchased, (3) a floor covering was installed in the church, (4) the new church and the old chapel in 1963 were bricked, (5) new folding chairs were bought, (6) a forty foot light spire was built, (7) a brick bulletin board was put up, and, (8) the ground

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<sup>37</sup>Personal interview of Frank VanValin, Dearborn, Michigan, to the author, July 13, 1966.

around the church was landscaped.

One of the unique projects of this church has been their "pew project." A local land-owner and a friend of the church donated to the church a stand of red oak trees for the purpose of supplying enough lumber for the pews of the church. A local custom cabinet maker pledged to build the pews out of this wood. These pews were heavy, laminated, and, padded. They saved the church over \$3,000.00. In 1966 these pews were dedicated.<sup>38</sup>

Pulaski. Through the vision of W. Dale Cryderman and Charles Kingsley a Sunday school was started at Pulaski, Michigan. This was a place where ministerial students from Spring Arbor could come and receive some practical experience.

The nucleus of the church was made up of the Ed Logan's and the Stanford Densmore's who lived in the community. Soon thereafter other Free Methodist families moved into the community, and with the help given by the Spring Arbor students and a few laymen from Spring Arbor, a church was built.

In 1953 the Michigan Conference assumed responsibility for this work. Up to this time, this work had been in charge of the Spring Arbor students. John W. Myndman was appointed pastor in 1954 and in 1955 the society was organized with 14 charter members. In 1955, a lot and basement were purchased. In 1957 work was started on the upper structure. The basement was enlarged and the upper part of the church was finished

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<sup>38</sup>Personal correspondence of Earl W. McDonald, Bangor, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, April, 1966.

enough so that by 1958 services could be held. In 1960 the church was dedicated by Bishop Emeritus Leslie R. Marston.

A parsonage plan has been accepted by the society and will be completed before 1967.<sup>39</sup>

Deerfield. In the spring of 1888 a group of Christian people met in the home of Henry Thompson for a time of protracted meetings. This meeting lasted seven weeks; Frank Jay was the first convert.

The people continued to meet in different homes in the area for prayer meetings for one year. In the summer they would meet in Thompson's grove every other Sunday for preaching. Soon thereafter it was voted to build a church at Townline. Having done this, they wished to join with the Free Methodist Denomination. After they had joined, Burton R. Jones, the District Elder, dedicated the church.

The church growth was slow, but it continued for many years. Later this church united with Petersburg in 1941 which they called the Petersburg and Townline Free Methodist Church. Then in 1961 the church voted unanimously to accept an offer of property in Deerfield by the Deerfield Gospel Temple. The offer consisted of the Free Methodist taking the Deerfield Church and making it a Free Methodist Church. Also the parsonage was given to the Free Methodist for the sum of \$3,000.00 providing that the former pastor Earl Fraker be granted to live there until his death.

In 1965, 2.1 acres of land was purchased next to the church. The

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<sup>39</sup>Personal correspondence of Edith Densmore, Hanover, Michigan, to W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, n.d.

church will be expanding their facilities in the near future.<sup>40</sup>

Portage. The Portage Free Methodist Church was made up of those individuals that belonged to the Vicksburg Free Methodist Church and the Free Methodists who already lived in Portage.

The Vicksburg Society was an outgrowth of a tent meeting in 1912 held by several laymen from Kalamazoo and Spring Arbor. The church was organized in 1912 at Vicksburg, Michigan with 24 charter members.

Church services were held someplace in town and, in 1915 a building was purchased from the Pace Printing Company and converted into a church. In 1941 a youth building was built. Progress had been very slow in the church at Vicksburg and these people started thinking about relocating in some other area.

There were several families that belonged to the Kalamazoo Free Methodist Church who lived in Portage. These people were challenged with the prospect of having a Free Methodist Church in the community where they lived. Working with Conference Superintendent Cryderman, the old Vicksburg property was sold and these people went to Portage and with the Free Methodist families already there, a new church was built.

A local school building was rented. The gymnasium was used for the worship service and the class rooms used for the Sunday school. In August of 1962, a three bedroom ranch type home was purchased at the cost of \$19,000.00.

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<sup>40</sup>Personal correspondence of Joseph B. Graybill, Deerfield, Michigan, to the author, December 17, 1966.

In May of 1963 a three acre church site was purchased. In 1964 the church was dedicated by Bishop Emeritus J. Paul Taylor. The seating capacity of the church was two hundred thirty-five. The church was carpeted from wall to wall and the platform area was made more attractive by a brick planter enclosing the choir area. It was equipped with a nursery near rest room facilities. The pastor's study was located near the front of the church and is easily found and available to other areas of the church. In the basement, there are eleven class rooms, a youth chapel, and space for three Sunday school departments. Total cost of the building was in the neighborhood of \$60,000.00.<sup>41</sup>

Niles. The Niles Free Methodist Church was the result of the foresight of the Southern Michigan Conference when it was presented with the possibilities of building a Free Methodist work in Niles, Michigan. On January 2, 1966 the Niles Free Methodist was organized. This project was under the guidance of the Conference Board of Aggressive Evangelism and the Conference Superintendent.

This congregation called upon the Free Methodist Church for leadership in the building of the Kingdom of God in Niles, Michigan. This group of people was dedicated, and within a few months their dedication was revealed in their attendance in all of the church's services.

The conference provided a portable Sunday school unit for its immediate needs. This stood along side a little chapel which was formerly

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<sup>41</sup>Personal interview of Merlin C. Baker, Portage, Michigan, to the author, July 13, 1966.

used by the Friends. Recently the church purchased five acres of land on the Niles-Buchanan Road west of Niles. Plans are now being finalized to start the construction of the Niles Free Methodist Church.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Personal interview of B. G. Hartman, Niles, Michigan, to the author, July 12, 1966.

## CHAPTER V

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was the purpose of this study to investigate the historical development of the Southern Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church from its beginning to the present time, for the purpose of discovering the reasons for its existence and the factors that determined its growth.

#### I. SUMMARY

Religion has played a very important part in the historical development and growth in the State of Michigan. Both Catholic and Protestant missionaries came to Michigan and established their religious movements.

Two of these missionaries were the T. S. LaDues who were representatives of the Free Methodist Church. They came to Michigan preaching the Gospel message of biblical holiness, which reflected the spirit of the Free Methodist Church. Two other missionaries were the Reverend Edward P. Hart and his wife who were instrumental in helping the Free Methodist Church become established in the State.

Chapter Two contained the beginning of both the Methodist and Free Methodist Churches. A brief summary was given about the beginning and development of the Methodist Church. It was started by John and Charles Wesley with their distinctive message of perfect love. The Wesleyan Movement was assisted in its growth through the class meeting and through lay



preaching. Because of a deviation within the Methodist Church from its original Wesleyan emphasis with respect to Christian doctrine, worship, and, experience, it made it imperative that a new church structure be created in order to perpetuate the distinctiveness of the Wesleyan Movement. This found its expression in the formation of the Free Methodist Church.

Through the effective ministry of Hart and others many people were converted to Christ. Within one year the group had multiplied to such proportions that a separate district was formed and was called the Michigan District of the Illinois Conference of the Free Methodist Church.

The growth of the Michigan Conference was phenomenal so that by 1887 it had helped to start the North Michigan, Ohio, and, Indiana Conferences.

Chapter Three emphasized the period of organization, growth, stability, and, accelerated growth and outreach of the Southern Michigan Conference. Because of its accelerated growth the Michigan Conference was divided into the North Michigan Conference and Michigan Conference. Then the North Michigan Conference was divided into the North and East Michigan Conferences while the conference to the south still retained the name of the Michigan Conference. However, in 1950 the Michigan Conference changed its name to the Southern Michigan Conference.

Emphasis was placed upon the importance of the Sunday school. They were first mentioned in 1866. Continued promotion of the Sunday school was revealed in the Sunday school statistical numbering.

Throughout its history, special emphasis was made on both home

and foreign missions. In some of the local churches it was disclosed that their emphasis on missions resulted in some people going out as missionaries. In other churches distinctive emphasis resulted in a larger missionary budget.

During the Friday session of the seventh annual conference in 1871 a meeting was planned for Monday morning to consider the subject of education. A committee was set up to investigate this area. The result of this organization was the founding of a school at Spring Arbor, Michigan. Major emphasis has been placed upon this school throughout the history of the conference and continued emphasis still is given.

The area of Christian Literature was not overlooked by the conference. A committee was formed which functioned in the area of sanctioning good Christian literature.

At the seventh session of conference in 1871, the committee on secret societies took a strong stand against all secret societies. This stand on the secret societies still stands today.

The fourth session of annual conference in 1868 denounced all types of intemperance. The denouncing of intemperance was preached from the pulpits from that time to the present. Tobacco and liquor were the two main evils that were discussed the most. A social action committee was formed in 1965 and its function was to concern itself with the economic, political, and, social problems of the day as they relate to the work of the church and to the lives of the people.

The last sixteen years of the conference revealed a renewal of church expansion. Every church within the bounds of the conference made

some improvement during these years. Most of the churches either built or bought new churches, parsonages or both. Plans are now being finalized in many churches for the enlarging, remodeling, or, the construction of new buildings.

The campground located near Jackson, Michigan have greatly enhanced the unity of the conference. These grounds are located near the middle of the conference which make it accessible for everyone.

Chapter four contained a review of each of the thirty-one churches of the conference. The emphasis upon relocating and merging of societies accounts for the number of churches. With very few exceptions, there is a Free Methodist Church in most all of the larger cities in Michigan.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

Through the research completed, the conclusions that have been drawn from this investigation are:

1. The Methodist Church expelled several of their leaders. The reasons given for expulsion were moral. However, the real issue was theological. The accused leaders were convinced that they must preach the doctrine of scriptural holiness. Because they insisted that this emphasis was basic to their Christian faith, they were exiled from the Methodist Church. It is therefore concluded that under certain conditions it is sometimes necessary to allow oneself to be separated from a parent church body in order that the integrity of the Christian message be preserved. This conclusion is drawn in spite of the overwhelming trend to sacrifice doctrinal convictions in favor of organic union.

2. It was observed that the Free Methodist Church in Michigan had a rapid growth due to the efforts of both clergy and laity. Therefore it is concluded that the secret to church growth is an active aggressive cooperative witness of both the clergy and laity.

3. It was further observed that the Southern Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church was consistently missionary minded throughout its history. Because of this emphasis young people felt the call to missionary service and the membership expressed its missionary compassion through intercessory prayer and generous financial contributions to missionary causes. Therefore it is concluded that a missionary minded church will produce missionaries.

4. It was also observed that the Southern Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church had a deep interest in Christian Education. This interest resulted not only in active Sunday schools but also in the establishment of an accredited liberal arts college at Spring Arbor, Michigan. This college has helped provide an educated leadership for many of the local churches, both ministerial and lay. Therefore it is concluded that an active interest in and support of Christian Education at all levels is imperative if the Christian church is to enjoy adequate and qualified leadership.

5. It was observed that one of the secrets of the growth of the Southern Michigan Conference in the last 16 years was the strategic relocation of some local congregations, and the merging of others. It is therefore concluded that in this day of extreme mobility and centralization of population in urban centers it is imperative that the church be on the

alert continually to shifts of its membership and movements of population to insure continued growth in the future.

6. It was observed that the purchase of a conference campground at Jackson, Michigan had a unifying effect on the whole Southern Michigan Conference. It is therefore concluded that a common campground for a unit of church organization can be a unifying agency if it is used to draw people from all sections from its constituency to a central location for camps and conferences.

7. It was observed that in some instances local congregations grew to capacity in present church buildings, but made no plans for building expansion until they were over-crowded. By the time an adequate building program got under way, some of the people were lost to the church. It is therefore concluded that local churches should constantly be alert to the necessity for expansion especially when they enjoy periods of gradual or unusual growth and activate plans for expansion before a saturation point is reached.

### III. AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The recommendations which follow are suggestions for further study.

1. A further investigation could be made of the auxiliary arms of the conference such as the Women's Missionary Society, the Free Methodist Youth, the Christian Youth Crusaders, and, the Light and Life Men's Fellowship.

2. A specialized and more comprehensive study of each local church, including historical aspects which had to be omitted in this study because

of limitations of time and space.

3. A study of the history of the very successful denominational radio program "The Light and Life Hour."

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## APPENDIX

## APPENDIX A

October 29, 1965

Mr. Richard Roth  
4200 S. E. Jennings Ave.  
Portland 22, Oregon

Dear Richard:

.....

Whatever happened with your idea about writing a history of the Southern Michigan Conference? We would like to work with you on this if it seemed practical in your school year.

.....

Sincerely yours,

Dale Cryderman, Supt.

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<sup>1</sup>Personal correspondence of W. Dale Cryderman, Spring Arbor, Michigan, to the author, October 29, 1965.

## APPENDIX B

The following is the article, "New School Methodism," published in the Northern Independent which gave the basis for the Free Methodist Church.

## NEW-SCHOOL METHODISM

The best seed, sown from year to year on poor soil, gradually degenerates. The acorn, from the stately oak, planted upon the arid plain, becomes a stunted shrub. Ever since the fall, the human heart has proved a soil unfavorable to the growth of truth.

Noxious weeds flourish everywhere spontaneously, while the useful grains require diligent cultivation.

Correct principles implanted in the mind need constant attention, or monstrous errors will overtop them and root them out. Every old nation tells the tale of her own degeneracy, and points to the golden age when truth and justice reigned among men.

Religious truth is not exempt from this liability to corruption. "God will take care of his own cause," is a maxim often quoted by the cowardly and the compromising, as an apology for their base defection. When His servants are faithful to the trusts reposed in them, it is gloriously true; when they waver, His cause suffers. The churches planted by the Apostles, and watered by the blood of martyrs, now outvie heathenism itself in their corruptions. No other parts of the world are so inaccessible to gospel truth as those countries where the Romish and Greek Churches hold dominion.



As a denomination, we are just as liable to fall by corrupting influences, as any were that have flourished before us. We enjoy no immunity from danger. Already there is springing up among us a class of preachers whose teaching is very different from that of the fathers of Methodism. They may be found here and there throughout our Zion; but in the Genesee Conference they act as an associate body. They number about thirty. During the last session of this Conference, they held several secret meetings, in which they concerted a plan to carry their measures and spread their doctrines. They have openly made the issue in the Conference. It is divided. Two distinct parties exist. With the one or the other every preacher is in sympathy. This difference is fundamental. It does not relate to things indifferent, but to those of the most vital importance. It involves nothing less than the nature itself of Christianity.

In showing the doctrines of the New-School Methodists, we shall quote from The Advocate of the sect, published at Buffalo. This is the organ of the party. It is sustained by them. They act as its agents. Where their influence prevails, it is circulated to the exclusion of other religious papers. Its former title was "The Buffalo Christian Advocate." But since its open avowal of the new doctrines, it has significantly dropped from its caption the expressive word, "Christian." This omission is full of meaning. It is, however, highly proper, as we shall see when we examine its new theory of religion. We commend the editor for this instance of honesty. It is now simply "The Advocate;" that is, the only Advocate of the tenets it defends.

The New-School Methodists affect as great a degree of liberalism

as do Theodore Parker and Mrs. Newman. They profess "charity" for everybody except their brethren of the Old School. In an article on "Creeds," published in The Advocate of April 16th, under the signature of W., the Rev. writer - a prominent New-school minister - lays it on to "the sects whose watchword is a creed," in a manner not unworthy of Alexander Campbell himself. He says, "No matter how holy and blameless a man's life may be, if he has the temerity to question any tenet of 'orthodoxy,' he is at once, in due ecclesiastical form, consigned to the Devil, as a heretic and infidel. Thus are fetters of a spiritual despotism thrown around the human reason. . . . And so it has come to pass, that in the estimation of multitudes, the teachings of Paul are eclipsed by the theories of Calvin, and the writings of John Wesley are held in higher veneration than the inspired words of St. John." Is not that a modest charge?

But their theory of religion is more fully set forth in the leading editorial of The Advocate for May 14th, under the title, "Christianity a Religion of Beneficence rather than of Devotion." Though it appears as editorial, we have good reason to believe that it was written by a leading New-School member of the Genesee Conference. It has not been disavowed by that party. Though it has been before the public for months, no one has expressed a dissent from its positions. It is fair to presume that it represents the views of the leaders of this new movement.

It says, "Christianity is not characteristically a system of devotion. It has none of those features which must distinguish a religion

grounded on the idea, that to adore the Divine character is the most imperative obligation resting upon human beings. It enjoins the observance of but very few sacred rites; nor does it prescribe any particular mode for paying homage to the Deity. It eschews all exterior forms, and teaches that they who worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

The Old-School Methodists hold, that "to adore the Divine character" is the most imperative obligation resting upon human beings; that Christianity has all of those features that must distinguish a religion grounded on this idea. That he who worships God rightly, will, as a necessary consequence, possess all social and moral virtues; that the gospel does not leave its votaries to choose, if they please, the degrading rites of heathenism, or the superstitious abominations of Popery; but prescribes prayer and praise, and the observance of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, "as particular modes of paying homage to the Deity." That there is no necessity for antagonism, as Infidels and Universalists are wont to affirm, between spiritual worship and the forms of worship instituted by Christ.

The following sneer is not unworthy of Thomas Paine himself. It falls below the dignity of Voltaire. "Christianity in nowise gives countenance to the supposition, that the Great Jehovah is so affected with the infirmity of vanity, as to receive, with peculiarly grateful emotions, the attention and offerings which poor human creatures may pay directly to Him in worship."

The above may be sufficient to show what Christianity is not, in the opinion of these New-School Divines. Let us now see what it is. "The

characteristic idea of this system is benevolence; and its practical realization is achieved in beneficence. It consecrates the principle of Charity, and instructs its votaries to regard good works as the holiest sacrifice, and the most acceptable which they can bring to the Almighty."

"Whatever graces may be necessary to constitute the inner Christian life, the chief and principal one of these, is love to man. . . . The great condition upon which one becomes a participant of the gospel salvation, is some practical exhibition of self-abnegation, of self-sacrifice for the good of others. Go sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, were the only terms of salvation which Christ proposed to the young man who, otherwise, was not far from the kingdom of heaven."

The Old-School Methodists hold that benevolence is only one of the fruits of true religion, but by no means the thing itself. In their view, "the principal grace of the inner Christian life" is love to God; and "the most acceptable sacrifice" we can render Him, is a broken and contrite heart. They teach that the great condition upon which one becomes "a participant of the gospel salvation" is faith in Christ-preceded by repentance. They read in the gospel that the young man referred to, was commanded by Christ to "Come, take up the cross and follow me." The giving of his goods to the poor was only preparatory to this.

The New-School Methodists hold that justification and entire sanctification, or holiness, are the same; that when a sinner is pardoned, he is at the same time made holy; that all the spiritual change he may henceforth expect, is simply a growth in grace. When they speak of "Holiness," they mean by it the same as do evangelical ministers of those

denominations which do not receive the doctrines taught by Wesley and Fletcher on this subject.

According to the Old-School Methodist, merely justified persons, while they do not outwardly commit sin, are conscious of sin still remaining in the heart--such as pride, self-will, and unbelief. They continually feel a heart bent to backsliding; a natural tendency to evil; a proneness to depart from God, and cling to the things of earth.--Those that are sanctified wholly are saved from all inward sin, from evil thoughts, and evil tempers. No wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul. All the thoughts, words and actions, are governed by pure love.

The New-School ministers have the frankness to acknowledge that their doctrines are not the doctrines of the Church. They have undertaken to correct the teachings of her standard authors. In the same editorial of The Advocate, from which we have quoted so largely, we read: "So in the exercises and means of grace instituted by the Church, it is clearly apparent that respect is had, rather to the excitation of the religious sensibilities, and the culture of emotional piety, than the development of genial and humane dispositions, and the formation of habits of active, vigorous goodness."

Here the evils complained of are charged upon "the exercises and means of grace, instituted by the Church."--They do not result from a perversion of the means of grace, but are the effects intended to be produced in their institution. It is the Church, then, that is wrong--and so far wrong that she does not even aim at the development of proper

Christian character. "The means of grace," in the use of which as Asbury, an Olin, a Hedding, and a host of worthies departed and living, were nurtured to spiritual manhood, must be abolished; and others, adapted to the development of genial and humane dispositions," established in their place. The lodge must supersede the class and the love-feast; and the old-fashioned prayer-meeting must give way to the social party! Those who adopted or founded "the exercises and means of grace instituted by the Church" --Paul and Peter, the Martyrs, and Reformers, Luther and Wesley, Calvin and Edwards---all have failed to comprehend the true idea of Christianity; for these all held that the sinner was justified by Faith in Christ, and not by "some practical exhibition of self-abnegation." The honor of distinctly apprehending and clearly stating the true genius of Christianity, was reserved for a few divines of the nineteenth century!

In our next we shall show the usages and results, so far as developed, of New-School Methodism.

#### USAGES\*RESULTS

Differing thus in their views of religion, the Old and New-School Methodists necessarily differ in their measures for its promotion. The latter build stock churches, and furnish them with pews to accommodate a select congregation; and with organs, melodeons, violins, and professional singers, to execute difficult pieces of music for a fashionable audience. The former favor free churches, congregational singing, and spirituality, simplicity and fervency in worship. They endeavor to promote revivals, deep and thorough; such as were common under the labors of

the Fathers; such as have made Methodism the leading denomination of the land. The leaders of the New Divinity movement are not remarkable for promoting revivals; and those which do, occasionally, occur among them, may generally be characterized as the editor of The Advocate designated one which fell under his notice, as "splendid revivals." Preachers of the old stamp urge upon all who would gain heaven, the necessity of self-denial--non-conformity to the world--purity of heart and holiness of life; while the others ridicule singularity, encourage by their silence--and in some cases by their own example, and that of their wives and daughters--"the putting on of god and costly apparel," and treat with distrust all professions of deep Christian experience. When these desire to raise money for the benefit of the Church, they have recourse to the selling of pews to the highest bidder; to parties of pleasure, oyster suppers, fairs, grab-bags, festivals and lotteries. The others, for this purpose, appeal to the love the people bear to Christ. In short, the Old-School Methodists rely for the spread of the gospel upon the agency of the Holy Ghost and the purity of the Church. The New-School Methodist appear to depend upon the patronage of the worldly, the favor of the proud and the aspiring, and the various artifices of worldly policy.

If this diversity of opinion and of practice among the ministers of our denomination was confined to one Conference, it would be comparatively unimportant. But unmistakable indications, show that prosperity is producing upon us, as a denomination, the same intoxicating effect that it too often does upon individuals and societies. The change, by the General Conference of 1852, in the rule of Discipline requiring that all

our houses of worship should be built plain, and with free seats; and that of the last General Conference, in the section respecting dress, show that there are already too many among us, who would take down the barriers that have hitherto separated us from the world. The fact that the removal is gradual, so as not to excite too much attention and commotion, renders it none the less alarming.

Every lover of the Church must feel a deep anxiety to know what is to be the result of this new order of things. If we may judge by its effects in the Genesee Conference, since it has held sway there, it will prove disastrous to us as a denomination. It so happened, either by accident or by management, at the division of the Genesee Conference, eight years ago, that most of the unmanageable veterans, who could neither be induced to depart from the heaven-honored usages of Methodism, by the specious cry of "progress," nor to wink at such departures by the mild expostulations of Eli, "Why do you thus, my son?" had their destination upon the east side of Genesee River. The first year after the division, the East Genesee Conference had twenty superannuated preachers; the Genesee Conference but five. "Men of progress," in the prime of life, went west of the river and took possession of the Conference. For the most part, they have borne sway there ever since. Of late, the young men of the Conference, uniting with the father--and thus united, comprising a majority of the Conference--have endeavored to stop this "progress" away from the old paths of Methodism. But the "progressives" make up in management what they lack in numbers. Having free access at all times to the ears of the Episcopacy, they have succeeded, for the most part, in



controlling the appointments to the districts and most important stations. If, by reason of his obvious fitness, any impracticable adherent of primitive Methodism has been appointed to a district or first-class station, he has usually been pursued, with untiring diligence, and hunted from his position before his constitutional term expired.

In the bounds of the Genesee Conference, the people generally are prepossessed in favor of Methodism. During the past eight years, there have been no external causes operating there against our prosperity, that do not operate at all times and in all places. Within this period, the nominal increase of the Church in that Conference has been but seven hundred and eighty. The East Genesee Conference has had an increase, within the same time, of about two thousand five hundred. In order to have simply kept pace with the population, there should have been, within the bounds of the Genesee Conference, one thousand six hundred and forty-three more members than there are at present. That is, in eight years, under the reign of New Divinity, the Church has suffered, within the bounds of it is one Conference, a relative loss of fifteen percent in members.

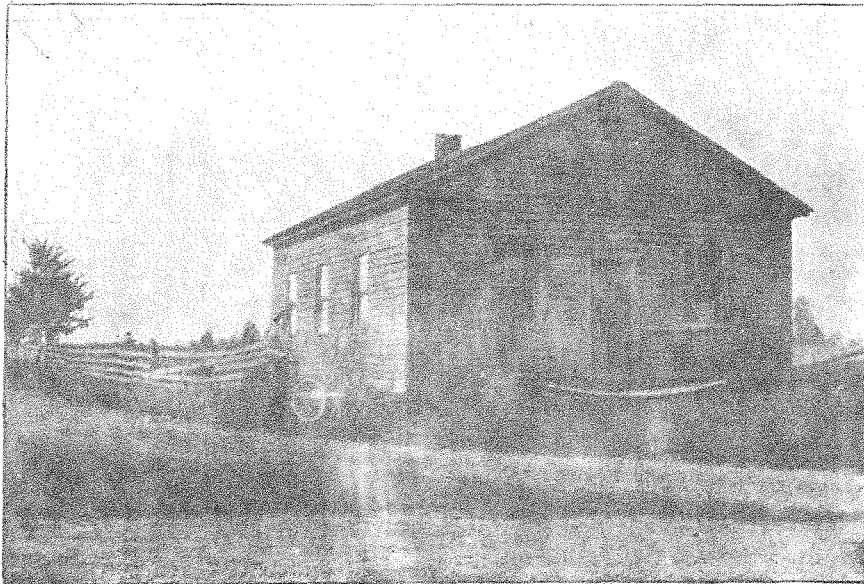
The Seminary at Lima, at the time of the division second to none in the land, has, by the same kind of management, been brought to the brink of financial ruin.

We have thus endeavored to give a fair and impartial representation of New-School Methodism. Its prevalence in one Conference has already, as we have seen, involved it in division and disaster. Let it generally prevail, and the glory will depart from Methodism. She has a special mission to accomplish. This is, not to gather into her fold the proud

and fashionable, the devotees of pleasure and ambition, but, "to spread scripture holiness over these lands." Her doctrines and her usages, her hymns, her history and her spirit, her noble achievements in the past and her bright prospects for the future, all forbid that she should adopt an accommodating, compromising policy, pandering to the vices of the times. Let her go on, as she has done, insisting that the great cardinal truths of the gospel shall receive a living embodiment in the hearts and lives of her members, and Methodism will continue to be the favored of Heaven, and the joy of the earth. But let her come down from her position, and receive to her communion all those lovers of pleasure, and lovers of the world, who are willing to pay for the privilege, and it needs no prophet's vision to foresee that Methodism will become a dead and corrupting body--endeavoring in vain to supply, but the erection of splendid churches, and the imposing performance of powerless ceremonies, the manifested glory of the Divine presence, which once shone brightly in all her sanctuaries.

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

## APPENDIX C



THE PLUES SCHOOLHOUSE.

## APPENDIX D

A map that shows the important places mentioned in the thesis.



## APPENDIX E

## MICHIGAN CONFERENCE RECORDS, 1866-1966

<u>Session</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>Secretary</u>
1	Raisinville, Michigan	June 22, 1866	B. T. Roberts	E. P. Hart
2	Sherwood, Michigan	September 25, 1866	Joseph Travis	E. P. Hart
3	Coldwater, Michigan	August 23, 1867	B. T. Roberts	E. P. Hart
4	Raisinville, Michigan	September 10, 1868	B. T. Roberts	C. S. Gitchell
5	Ridgeway, Michigan	September 10, 1869	B. T. Roberts	B. R. Jones
6	Springfield, Ohio	September 29, 1870	B. T. Roberts	B. R. Jones
7	Spring Arbor, Michigan	September 28, 1871	B. T. Roberts	B. R. Jones
8	Delta, Ohio	September 25, 1872	B. T. Roberts	L. J. Francisco
9	St. Johns, Michigan	September 25, 1873	B. T. Roberts	B. R. Jones
10	Coopersville, Michigan	September 23, 1874	B. T. Roberts	B. R. Jones
11	Spring Arbor, Michigan	September 1, 1875	E. P. Hart	A. H. Springstein
12	Delta, Ohio	September 20, 1876	B. T. Roberts	W. H. James
13	Ridgeville, Ohio	October 3, 1877	E. P. Hart	W. H. James
14	Holland, Ohio	September 25, 1878	B. T. Roberts	W. H. James
15	South Quincy, Michigan	October 8, 1879	E. P. Hart	W. H. James
16	Oakville, Michigan	October 6, 1880	B. T. Roberts	W. H. James
17	Spring Arbor, Michigan	October 5, 1881	E. P. Hart	W. H. James
18	Lawrence, Michigan	October 4, 1882	B. T. Roberts	A. Bradfield
19	Spring Arbor, Michigan	October 3, 1883	E. P. Hart	A. Bradfield
20	Coldwater, Michigan	October 1, 1884	E. P. Hart	A. Bradfield
21	Milan, Michigan	September 9, 1885	B. T. Roberts	A. Bradfield

22	Decatur, Michigan	October 6, 1886	E. P. Hart	A. Bradfield
23	Spring Arbor, Michigan	October 5, 1887	B. T. Roberts	A. Bradfield
24	Hartford, Michigan	October 3, 1888	E. P. Hart	A. Bradfield
25	Kalamazoo, Michigan	September 4, 1889	Geo. W. Coleman	A. Bradfield
26	Holloway, Michigan	September 10, 1890	B. T. Roberts	A. Bradfield
27	Sherwood, Michigan	August 26, 1891	E. P. Hart	A. Bradfield
28	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 24, 1892	Geo. W. Coleman	A. Bradfield
29	South Quincy, Michigan	August 23, 1893	W. T. Hogue	A. Bradfield
30	Milan, Michigan	August 29, 1894	E. P. Hart	A. Bradfield
31	Adrian, Michigan	August 28, 1895	Geo. W. Coleman	A. Bradfield
32	Jackson, Michigan	August 19, 1896	B. R. Jones	A. Bradfield
33	Kalamazoo, Michigan	August 18, 1897	E. P. Hart	A. Bradfield
34	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 10, 1898	Geo. W. Coleman	A. Bradfield
35	Addison, Michigan	August 30, 1899	W. A. Sellew	A. Bradfield
36	Montgomery, Michigan	August 29, 1900	B. R. Jones	A. Bradfield
37	Adrian, Michigan	August 21, 1901	E. P. Hart	A. Bradfield
38	South Haven, Michigan	September 10, 1902	Geo. W. Coleman	A. Bradfield
39	Battle Creek, Michigan	August 26, 1903	W. A. Sellew	A. Bradfield
40	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 17, 1904	B. R. Jones	A. Bradfield
41	Battle Creek, Michigan	August 23, 1905	E. P. Hart	A. Bradfield
42	Coldwater, Michigan	September 1, 1906	W. T. Hogue	L. H. Mulholland
43	Kalamazoo, Michigan	August 28, 1907	W. A. Sellew	F. L. Baker
44	Ypsilanti, Michigan	August 19, 1908	B. R. Jones	F. L. Baker
45	Adrian, Michigan	August 25, 1909	William Pearce	F. L. Baker

46	Coldwater, Michigan	August 24, 1910	B. R. Jones	F. L. Baker
47	Hillsdale, Michigan	August 23, 1911	W. A. Sellew	F. L. Baker
48	Ypsilanti, Michigan	August 21, 1912	B. R. Jones	F. L. Baker
49	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 20, 1913	William Pearce	F. L. Baker
50	Jackson, Michigan	August 19, 1914	W. T. Hogue	F. L. Baker
51	Battle Creek, Michigan	August 18, 1915	W. A. Sellew	F. L. Baker
52	Mishawaka, Indiana	August 9, 1916	J. S. McGeary	F. L. Baker
53	Detroit, Michigan	August 15, 1917	William Pearce	F. L. Baker
54	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 28, 1918	W. T. Hogue	F. L. Baker
55	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 27, 1919	W. A. Sellew	F. L. Baker
56	Ann Arbor, Michigan	August 25, 1920	W. H. Clark	F. L. Baker
57	Fort Wayne, Indiana	August 24, 1921	William Pearce	F. L. Baker
58	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 30, 1922	D. S. Warner	F. L. Baker
59	Ann Arbor, Michigan	August 15, 1923	W. A. Sellew	F. L. Baker
60	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 20, 1924	W. H. Clark	F. L. Baker
61	Benton Harbor, Michigan	August 19, 1925	William Pearce	F. L. Baker
62	Ann Arbor, Michigan	August 18, 1926	D. S. Warner	F. L. Baker
63	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 17, 1927	W. A. Sellew	F. L. Baker
64	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 15, 1928	William Pearce	F. L. Baker
65	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 14, 1929	G. W. Griffith	F. L. Baker
66	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 20, 1930	A. D. Zahnizer	F. L. Baker
67	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 19, 1931	B. J. Vincent	F. L. Baker
68	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 17, 1932	William Pearce	F. L. Baker
69	Spring Arbor, Michigan	August 16, 1933	G. W. Griffith	F. L. Baker



70	Spring Arbor, August 15, 1934 Michigan	A. D. Zahnizer	F. L. Baker
71	Spring Arbor, August 21, 1935 Michigan	M. D. Ormston	F. L. Baker
72	Spring Arbor, August 19, 1936 Michigan	M. D. Ormston	F. L. Baker
73	Spring Arbor, August 15, 1937 Michigan	R. H. Warren	F. L. Baker
74	Spring Arbor, August 18, 1938 Michigan	L. R. Marston	F. L. Baker
75	Spring Arbor, August 16, 1939 Michigan	William Pearce	F. L. Baker
76	Spring Arbor, August 21, 1940 Michigan	M. D. Ormston	F. L. Baker
77	Spring Arbor, August 20, 1941 Michigan	L. R. Marston	F. L. Baker
78	Spring Arbor, August 19, 1942 Michigan	C. V. Fairbairn	F. L. Baker
79	Spring Arbor, August 18, 1943 Michigan	William Pearce	E. J. Moran
80	Spring Arbor, August 16, 1944 Michigan	M. D. Ormston	E. J. Moran
81	Spring Arbor, August 15, 1945 Michigan	L. R. Marston	E. J. Moran
82	Spring Arbor, August 21, 1946 Michigan	C. Hoyt Watson	E. J. Moran
83	Jackson, August 13, 1947 Michigan	J. Paul Taylor	E. J. Moran
84	Jackson, August 18, 1948 Michigan	R. B. Campbell	E. J. Moran
85	Jackson, August 10, 1949 Michigan	L. R. Marston	E. J. Moran
86	Jackson, August 3, 1950 Michigan	A. S. Hill	E. J. Moran
87	Jackson, August 15, 1951 Michigan	Byron S. Lamson	E. J. Moran
88	Jackson, August 13, 1952 Michigan	M. D. Ormston	E. J. Moran
89	Jackson, August 12, 1953 Michigan	L. R. Marston	E. J. Moran
90	Jackson, August 4, 1954 Michigan	C. V. Fairbairn	E. J. Moran
91	Jackson, August 10, 1955 Michigan	J. Paul Taylor	W. J. Terman
92	Jackson, August 15, 1956 Michigan	Edward C. John	W. J. Terman
93	Jackson, August 21, 1957 Michigan	L. R. Marston	W. J. Terman

94	Jackson, Michigan	August 13, 1958	James F. Gregory	W. J. Terman
95	Jackson, Michigan	August 12, 1959	Royal S. Nelson	W. J. Terman
96	Jackson, Michigan	August 17, 1960	W. S. Kendall	W. J. Terman
97	Jackson, Michigan	July 19, 1961	W. S. Kendall	W. J. Terman
98	Jackson, Michigan	July 18, 1962	L. R. Marston	W. J. Terman
99	Jackson, Michigan	July 17, 1963	L. R. Marston	Earl Habecker, Jr.
100	Jackson, Michigan	July 15, 1964	Edward C. John	E. L. Habecker, Jr.
101	Jackson, Michigan	July 14, 1965	Edward C. John	E. L. Habecker, Jr.
102	Jackson, Michigan	July 13, 1966	Paul N. Ellis	E. L. Habecker, Jr.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, 1866-1955; Yearbook, 1956-1966.

## APPENDIX F

The following are the statistical records of membership and Sunday school scholars in the Michigan Conference, later renamed the Southern Michigan Conference from 1866 through 1966. The two heavy horizontal lines divide the years into the three periods 1866-1887, 1888-1949, and, 1950-1966.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Scholars</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Scholars</u>
1866-67	663	230	1899-1900	953	943
1867-68	769	534	1900-01	1009	1112
1868-69	1073	1008	1901-02	1002	1131
1869-70	1063	958	1902-03	1002	978
1870-71	1287	736	1903-04	1007	978
1871-72	1438	953	1904-05	995	1005
1872-73	1632	1211	1905-06	1076	994
1873-74	1873	1485	1906-07	1050	958
1874-75	2239	1768	1907-08	1127	1153
1875-76	1485	1095	1908-09	1174	1260
1876-77	1533	1191	1909-10	1156	1147
1877-78	1483	1513	1910-11	1106	1075
1878-79	879	962	1911-12	1094	1102
1879-80	921	871	1912-13	1119	1244
1880-81	918	888	1913-14	1384	1714
1881-82	958	881	1914-15	1421	1634
1882-83	1038	837	1915-16	1487	1882
1883-84	965	1065	1916-17	1412	1884
1884-85	1049	961	1917-18	1466	1981
1885-86	1173	947	1918-19	1448	1992
1886-87	1100	1027	1919-20	1405	1932
1887-88	1216	1076	1920-21	1408	1982
1888-89	1054	1162	1921-22	1230	2116
1889-90	1118	919	1922-23	1208	2355
1890-91	1001	1183	1923-24	1281	2651
1891-92	942	1001	1924-25	1267	2826
1892-93	919	1041	1925-26	1282	2957
1893-94	1047	1164	1926-27	1365	3472
1894-95	1044	1272	1927-28	1438	3870
1895-96	976	1059	1928-29	1456	4205
1896-97	979	1170	1929-30	1512	4255
1897-98	970	1077	1930-31	1608	4389
1898-99	957	1142	1931-32	1619	4686
			1932-33	1587	4496

<u>Year</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Scholars</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Scholars</u>
1933-34	1598	4568	1951-52	2096	5891
1934-35	1424	4093	1952-53	2256	6562
1935-36	1474	2975	1953-54	2383	7315
1936-37	1514	3993	1954-55	2477	8060
1937-38	1592	4319	1955-56	2528	7743
1938-39	1645	4705	1956-57	2590	8108
1939-40	1678	4703	1957-58	2681	8371
1940-41	1659	4941	1958-59	2758	8653
1941-42	1663	4366	1959-60	2771	8756
1942-43	1714	3444	1960-61	2899	9344
1943-44	1674	4071	1961-62	2897	9407
1944-45	1668	3476	1962-63	3163	9532
1945-46	1653	4127	1963-64	3321	9324
1946-47	1663	4565	1964-65	3477	9053
1947-48	1693	4649	1965-66	3690	8841
1948-49	1678	5055			
1949-50	1752	5056			
1950-51	1798	5406			

## APPENDIX G

STATISTICAL RECORDS OF MEMBERSHIP OF EACH LOCAL CHURCH IN THE  
CONFERENCE IN FIVE YEAR INTERVALS BEGINNING WITH 1951

	<u>1951</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1966</u>
Adrian	86	85	78	80
Albion	40	60	60	92
Ann Arbor	50	74	77	58
Bangor	22	49	57	68
Battle Creek	151	157	121	158
Benton Harbor	43	68	76	104
Charlotte	57	76	99	113
Coldwater	73	84	93	98
Dearborn	62	163	215	352
Deerfield	-	-	-	54
Parkway Heights	50	140	161	162
Redford	78	123	122	115
Ferndale	109	138	175	313
Garden City	35	31	56	69
Hazel Park	-	29	53	45
Hillsdale	108	119	149	184
Jackson	59	103	107	130
Kalamazoo	135	114	140	150
Lincoln Park	43	114	131	141

	<u>1951</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1966</u>
Milan	59	69	91	123
Miles	-	-	-	19
Portage	-	-	-	50
Pulaski	-	22	33	49
Sherwood	25	35	39	60
South Haven	20	11	10	24
Spring Arbor	199	284	327	477
Temperance	47	62	63	65
Three Oaks	43	41	52	52
Watervliet	66	51	78	53
Wayne	64	72	102	143
Ypsilanti	57	59	55	89

## APPENDIX H

The following men passed away while holding membership in the Conference.

R. O. Rowe	1870-71	R. L. Seamehorn	1936-37
H. L. Jones	1873-74	E. N. Faulk	1936-37
Nathan Greadeless	1881-82	W. E. Hosmer	1942-43
M. D. Baldwin	1886-87	E. L. Hibbard	1943-44
C. P. Tiffany	1889-90	Peter White	1943-44
A. B. Matthewson	1891-92	W. L. Stephenson	1946-47
*D. W. Abrams	1891-92	W. C. Muffitt	1949-50
John Ellison	1892-93	J. B. Cunningham	1950-51
Anson Omans	1899-1900	A. R. Hamilton	1952-53
Jacob Leisenring	1901-02	W. F. Abbott	1953-54
S. B. Smith	1906-07	C. E. Ferguson	1954-55
H. Sawyer	1909-10	F. L. Baker	1955-56
G. K. Thompson	1909-10	E. S. Jennings	1955-56
A. Bradfield	1916-17	E. J. Moran	1955-56
J. Baker	1916-17	L. L. Kelly	1958-59
A. V. Leonardson	1919-20	O. H. Kenney	1959-60
H. Montgomery	1928-29	H. C. Steel	1962-63
P. E. Vincent	1936-37	D. M. Wells	1964-65

\*On trial in the Conference