

## HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION

OCTOBER 7, 1956 marked the beginning of the then named SOUTHFIELD TOWNSHIP CHURCH OF CHRIST with Gerald Montgomery speaking for the opening day services which were held at Brooks School on Lahser Road. The membership of this new congregation consisted of former members of the Redford, Strathmoor, and Walled Lake congregations and numbered thirty-six. William Burke, Gerald Montgomery's son-in-law, served as the first minister for the congregation.

Two years after its formation, the congregation had grown to fifty-two and a building site on Lahser Road was purchased on June 30, 1958 for the amount of fourteen thousand dollars. Also, in 1958 the congregation changed its meeting place to the East Southfield Elementary School.

Doyle Earwood came to serve as minister of the congregation in June of 1960, and on May 10, 1971, the group relocated at 24180-10½ Mile Road in a little white building which had formerly belonged to the Methodist Church. That June the congregation held its first Vacation Bible School.

February 3, 1963, Gerald Montgomery became the regular minister at Southfield. The Lahser property was exchanged for the present property on Eleven Mile Road, and ground breaking for the present building was conducted on May 4, 1964. The dedication was held December 6, 1964, with the membership totalling seventy-five.

Gerald Montgomery preached for the congregation until 1972. He was followed by Lionel Burger; then Dave Graf preached regularly on Sundays from February of 1973 until July of 1975. Vernon Boyd, preacher for Strathmoor, continued to teach our Thursday evening class and also served as preacher temporarily. Larry Turner arrived at Southfield to work as youth minister in September of 1975, and is the present minister.

Many successful Vacation Bible Schools have been held, the best attendance being a total of five hundred and fifty-two for the week of June 13, 1965. Record attendance for a Sunday morning workshop service was one hundred and ninety-six on April 14, 1968.

The Southfield Church of Christ was begun under the oversight of elders with Claude French, Earl Rush, Wright Warten, and Chester Hernden being chosen to serve in this capacity. Others who have served as elders are Bob Howard, Roy Harmon, Gerald Montgomery, Jay Tanton, and Norval Scott.

A historical occasion for the congregation was the bond-burning ceremony at the home of Eloise and Norval Scott on November 27, 1974.

Though the numbers have decreased as people have come and gone and the last of the charter members have moved to other states, the congregation continues to be richly blessed with a loving fellowship reserved for those who love the Lord.