

HISTORY OF WALLED LAKE CHURCH OF CHRIST

In the summer of 1950 a small group of christians began meeting in a room near the old Walled Lake amusement park. (E. Lake Drive & Novi Road.) When the weather turned cold they disbanded with the promise of reuniting in the spring. In the early spring of 1951, brothers Cameron Sinclair and Gary Flippin met with brother Logan Sparks and several other of the Walled Lake brethren, with the intention of getting them to work with the Plymouth congregation. The Walled Lake brethren insisted that they intended to establish the Lord's church in Walled Lake. When the Plymouth brethren realized the sincerity of the Walled Lake group they offered to assist in any way possible. An organization meeting took place and the present congregation was established.

The first formal worship service took place on April 29, 1951, with brother Claude F. Witty of the Redford congregation doing the preaching. There were 73 present at the Stonecrest building which had been rented until a meeting house could be built. There were 23 charter members of the Walled Lake congregation among those 73. Of the 23, at least 6 are still active members.

The first regular preacher was brother Paul McAllister. He served the congregation a little over 5 years. Much credit for the early growth of the church must go to his drive and enthusiasm.

In April 1953 ground was broken for a new building on land donated by brother Charlie Fisher. The church began meeting in the auditorium basement of the new building in January 1954. The parking lot was purchased in July 1956 and a new auditorium was dedicated on June 1, 1958.

Brother Allen T. Parker served as minister from 1956-1958. This was a time when much building activity was taking place on the meeting house.

On February 8, 1959, brother Carson B. Spivey Jr. came to serve the church as a full time minister. He served the congregation for 9 years. In 1959 the floor of the basement underneath the original auditorium was poured and it was used as a fellowship hall. The congregation was rapidly expanding and around 1963 the fellowship hall had to be broken up into classrooms.

In 1960 the Spiveys moved out of the apartment in the church building to a house next door, 1403 N. Pontiac Trail, that had been purchased by the church.

Brother Spivey left in 1968 to become director of Mid-Western Childrens Home in Milford, Ohio and brother Gene Cook began to serve the congregation as minister. It was during this time that the basement floor under the apartment was raised to solve a longtime flooding problem.

On January 5, 1969 brother Jerrell J. Scott came to serve the congregation as minister. The house directly east of the preacher's house was purchased by the church in 1969. The congregation now owned an entire block on Pontiac Trail.

On October 18, 1970 the groundbreaking ceremony for a new auditorium was held. The first worship service was held in the new building on August 22, 1971. The congregation finally began to meet in the new auditorium on October 3, 1971. The dedication of the new auditorium was held June 10, 1972.

Brother Scott was one of the prime movers behind the building of the new building. He found a willing partner in brother John Sparks. Brother Sparks had just completed building church buildings for the Mio and Howell congregations. Together they inspired the rest of the congregation that a new building could and should be built. A bond issue

of \$200,000.00 was floated and after paying off existing liens against the church property, \$151,000.00 was left to build the building. Many said it couldn't be done, and it was very difficult, but the building was completed.

On March 14, 1976 Brother Scott left Walled Lake to serve as the minister for the church in Mattoon, Illinois. In Brother Scott's eight years with the congregation much had been accomplished.

On August 8, 1976 Brother Carl D. Whitelaw came to serve as the regular minister. Brother Whitelaw came from Harding college in Arkansas, where he had been enrolled in the preacher training program. Brother Whitelaw labored with the congregation until September 1977 when he left Walled Lake to go preach for the Milan, Michigan congregation.

On October 2, 1977 brother Sammy Flannery began to work with the congregation. Brother Flannery came from the Sharon Church in Sharon, Pennsylvania. He brought a missionary zeal to the pulpit. During the summer of 1978 brother Flannery terminated his ministry in Walled Lake to return to Pennsylvania.

On the first of September 1978 brother Arvid Rossell began his ministry at Walled Lake. He served in that capacity until November 19, 1979.

In 1980 brother Coy Roper agreed to come and work with the congregation. He filled the pulpit on Sundays and taught the Wednesday night class. Brother Roper worked full time at Michigan Christian College.

Brother Roper's ministry brought a large degree of stability and direction back to the congregation. In the spring of 1981 brother Roper felt he had accomplished his goals and decided to move to Allen Park, Michigan, which he did on May 31, 1981.

The elders decided that Walled Lake was ready for a full-time minister again and on June 1, 1981 brother John Qualls moved here from Hazel Park, Michigan. Brother Qualls found a congregation with a Sunday morning attendance of 120-130, and Sunday School averaging 75. Brother Qualls has labored ever since and Walled Lake is today a growing congregation averaging 150-160 on Sunday morning and Sunday School averaging 100. The Walled Lake congregation is dedicated to serving the Lord and spreading his gospel.

Compiled by Bernie Wagers, October, 1985

The following men have served as Elders of the Walled Lake congregation:

Charles Fisher, Logan Sparks, William Wyatt, Robert Parsley, John Sparks, Sr.,
Ralph Weaver, Deane Parker, Dean Sparks and Tom Fralick.

The following men are now serving as Elders:

Ralph Weaver, Deane Parker, Dean Sparks and Tom Fralick