

# REDEEMER'S HERITAGE

It was an Easter Sunday in 1944. Church services were held in the Hunt Clubhouse in the area now known as Grosse Pointe Woods. During the week the clubhouse served as a bar and gambling center, but on Sunday it was a place of worship. The minister would move the liquor and ice outside so that the bar could be used as a pulpit.

A few months later, a charter class of five members officially organized Redeemer United Methodist Church, with Reverend Ben Hollis as its pastor. They purchased the Hunt Clubhouse for \$2,000 in October of 1944. In February of the following year the newly founded church was consecrated by Bishop Wade. Finally, they didn't need to remove the spirits to make room for the Holy Ghost.

That was our humble beginnings.



## Then we grew

By the end of 1946, we had outgrown the Clubhouse and needed a larger church. We started by purchasing our current site on Vernier, and then purchased a church building from St. Paul's Lutheran Church in St. Clair Shores for \$6,000. We moved the church to our new site during the summer of 1947. That building became the official home of Redeemer United Methodist Church on February 8, 1948.

The church was filled to capacity for its formal opening. Bishop Wade, who was in attendance that day remarked, "What are you going to do now? You've already outgrown it!" Our little white church eventually became the Thrift Shop, serving Harper Woods and the neighboring communities, until it was destroyed by fire in October 2014.

## We continued to grow

In 1957 we grew even more by merging with Harper Avenue Methodist Church and adding new members from Bethany Methodist Church. To accommodate our growing family, we purchased a small "Annex" for Sunday School classes, added a choir loft, and remodeled the sanctuary. We also purchased our present parsonage building in 1957 – it was a very good year!

With more sustained growth in 1963, a vote passed to replace our too small, aged and worn church. We broke ground in April of 1964 and held our first service in the new church in February. On March 21, 1965 that new church – our current Church – was consecrated by Bishop Reed.

Over the next thirteen years we expanded and updated. The parsonage was remodeled, the mortgage on our new church was burned, and we even converted the old church building into the W.C.S.C. Thrift Shop.

**We were doing well.**







## Time to build again

In 1979 another merger took place with members of Faith United Methodist Church. It was now the late '80's and we needed to build out for more space. This time we built an addition which added new rest rooms, an office suite, library and our well used Friendship Room.

This is the current state of our facilities.

A merger with Messiah United Methodist Church was celebrated with our first joint service on Easter Sunday – April 11, 1993. We expanded in 1997 by incorporating a number of members from Zion United Methodist Church into the Redeemer family.

## A rich history to remember

In 2014 Redeemer merged with First United Methodist Church of Saint Clair Shores. Joint services began in January 2014, with both Churches voting to officially merge assets and membership beginning in July of 2014.

We have a rich history at Redeemer that we are proud to remember – from our humble beginnings in a neighborhood bar, to the warm and welcoming blended church we are today.

