

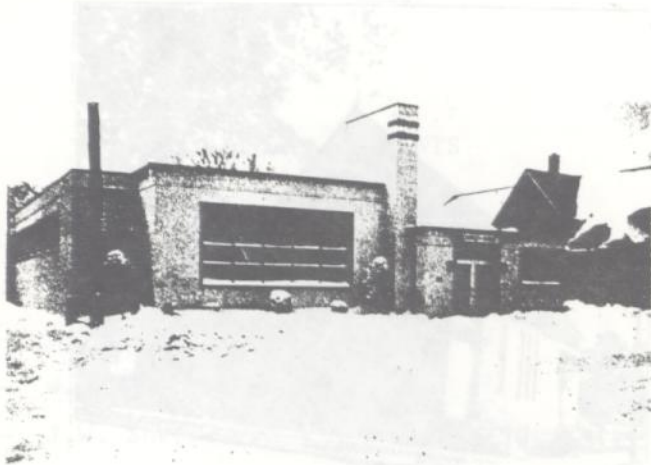
100th

Anniversary
of the

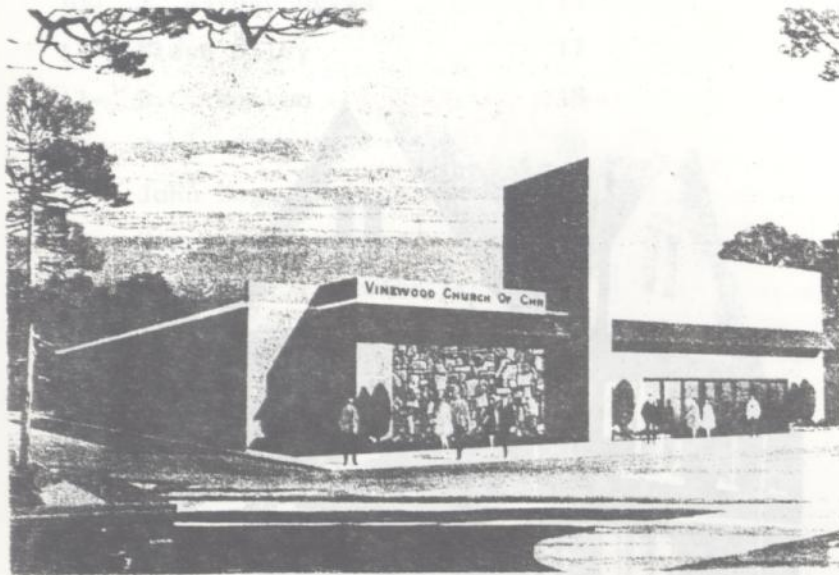
Vinewood Avenue

Church of Christ

1885 - 1985



1937 Vinewood



2 1081

History of the Vinewood Avenue Church of Christ 1885 - 1985

Before one attempts to write the Vinewood Avenue history we must first go back to the beginning of the first known Church of Christ in Detroit, Michigan.

Before 1841 we have no record of the Church of Christ in Detroit. In a way we owe credit to one of the leaders of the restoration movement, Alexander Campbell. Brother Campbell was preaching in Cleveland, Ohio in 1835 when Thomas Hawley heard the gospel, accepted Christ as his saviour and became a New Testament Christian. Brother Hawley moved from Ohio to Detroit and in the fall of 1841 began holding worship services in his home. A short time later the William Linn's, another christian family, moved from Scotland to Detroit, and joined them in worship. The six members of the Hawley family and six members of the Linn family constituted the charter members of the Lord's Church in Detroit. In the following years several meeting places for worship were used. The Old Detroit Institute of Arts building, the Court House east of the now Cadillac Square, a schoolhouse, and a firemans hall were early sites for them to meet.

In 1862 the church split over instrumental music, united temporarily, then parted permanently around 1868. The noninstrumental group (Church of Christ) built a new building at 4th and Plum and was known as the Plum Street Church of Christ.

There were many well known men in the Plum Street Church both by the brotherhood and in the community, such as William Linn, Thomas Hawley, A. Y. Malcomson, Alexander Linn, John S. Gray and his son Philip and many more.

The question could be asked; where would the young inventor Henry Ford be if it were not for the early members of Plum Street, such as: John S. Gray who provided financial backing of Ford Motor Company and was not only the first president of the company, but was president until his death. A. Y. Malcomson provided 25% of the financial backing for the company as well as others.

The Plum Street Congregation has always placed an emphasis on mission work. In 1885 a group from Plum Street, which included the William Linn family and others, were sent west from Plum Street to the Sand Hill region at the request of a lady in that area to begin Bible Study for the neighborhood children. The lady opened her home and approximately forty children assembled on Sundays for Bible Study for several weeks until she moved away. The children were taught by Sisters Ella F. Linn and Sarah Malcomson with assistance at times from other ladies from Plum Street. This simple beginning resulted in the birth of the Vinewood Avenue Church of Christ which is the oldest congregation in continuous operation in Detroit. Approximately six weeks after the beginning of the Bible School classes, about June 1, 1885, a vacant store room was obtained at Dix Rd. and McKinstry Avenue where the Sunday School with the children continued. Later this work was joined by several other members from Plum Street, W. F. Linn was placed in charge of this work. During an evangelistic meeting in this area, nine people were converted and a permanent meeting place was needed.

Wesley Chapel at the corner of Vinewood and Dix (now West Vernor) was purchased from the Methodist by Plum Street in August, 1887 for \$3,250.00. By 1892 there were about 60 members. In 1907 the building was remodeled with a basement added and brick veneer. In 1936 the 1901 building required extensive repair due to a fire on October 30th which did over

\$3,000.00 in damages. Vinewood continued to grow and was desperately in need of a larger building. A new Auditorium was built at 1937 Vinewood including an office, restrooms, and foyer, at a cost of \$60,000.00. The first service was held there on January 9, 1949, at 3:00 p.m. Within a few years this auditorium was filled to overflowing and in October, 1952 two worship services began on Sunday morning. One began at 8:30 a.m., Bible School was at 9:45 a.m., and another worship service began at 11:00 a.m. The attendance for both worship services averaged from 700 to 750, with the peak attendance of 800. The Bible School attendance increased until classes were being held in the 1901 building, the 1937 auditorium, and three houses the Church had purchased. On May 26, 1957, Vinewood had a record attendance of 501 in Bible School. Charles Detherage was the Bible School Director at this time.

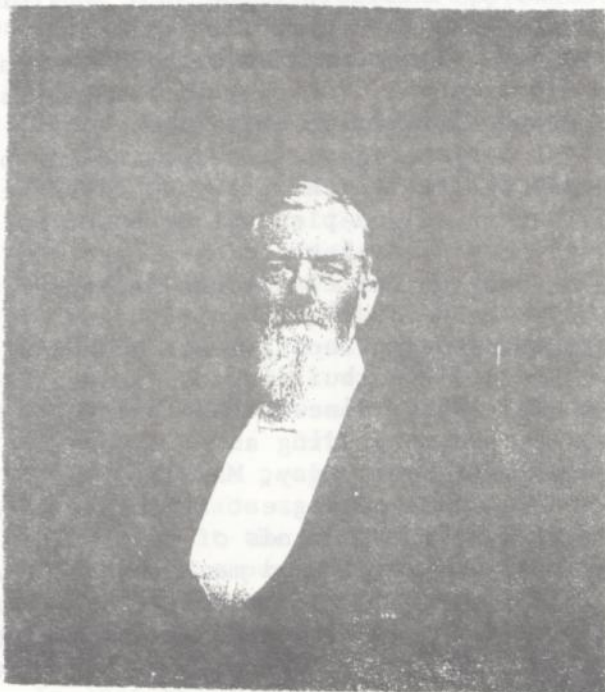
After many meetings and frustrations because Vinewood did not have the property to add classrooms on one level, a plan was drawn up to build a remodeled multilevel building at the 1937 building. An addition for classrooms was added on the North side of the Auditorium, including Offices, Nursery, and storage facilities. A bond program was floated and this building was dedicated on November 23, 1969. Vinewood has paid off their mortgage for this building and the mortgage burning will be held today, May 12, 1985. The Vinewood Church has had great influence locally and in the world. Thousands of people have poured through it. Leadership and members have been supplied to other Churches. Multitudes have passed on. Few Churches exist in the state of Michigan who does not have members who at one time attended at Vinewood.

Many have served in the leadership of Vinewood over the past 100 years. In our research it is

possible that we have not found a record of all the Elders who have served at Vinewood. Those known to have served are:

J. W. Shepherd, S. A. Davies, Hassell Oliver, W. E. Hipp, Hugh Hemingway, J. W. Worten, Tom Barry, Dave Hancock, Ben Tucker, Bro. Kenyon, Luther E. Breeland, Charles Detherage, L. Parks Stephens, Homer Wood, Haskell Chesney, Wayne Moody, James Ray, Johnie Patterson, and Robert Sparks.

The Deacons who have served the Vinewood Church are too numerous for us to be able to mention.



William Linn - one of Vinewood's early Members.

W. D. Campbell

Vinewood Minister 1904 - 1912

W. D. Campbell came to this area from Toronto, Ontario, Canada in the 1890's or early 1900's. His wife was Laura Campbell. He first worked at the Plum Street Congregation and began work in 1904 with the Vinewood Congregation. He was Vinewood's first full time minister.

He was a young man with a pleasing personality, also a forceful speaker who knew the truth and how to present it. He met the needs of the members and nonmembers alike at all times. Sister Campbell divided her work between Plum Street and Vinewood.

W. D. left Vinewood around September, 1912 to begin a series of meetings for two years in England. He and Sister Campbell had previously worked in the British Isles. He did evangelistic work throughout England and Scotland. In later years, after returning to Michigan, he resumed work at the Plum Street Congregation and moved with them into the building on Hamilton Avenue. He remained with this congregation until 1925 when he moved to Fort Worth, Texas. His work extended to distant parts of Michigan, Ontario and Connecticut. He held several meetings in Summit, Michigan. He had many converts.

Brother Campbell died around 1928. It is believed that he was buried in the Woodlawn Cemetery in Detroit by the side of his son, Graham. Later his wife joined him there, about 1939.

Thus closed a life and work of one of our great evangelists. He was highly esteemed and beloved by all with whom he came in contact.