

ONE HUNDRED FIFTY YEARS IN BROAD RIPPLE

CELEBRATING METHODISM'S OUTPOST
FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL IN BROAD RIPPLE

1852-2002

*Compiled, written, and edited by Donald E. Mattson, 150th Anniversary Celebration Committee
Broad Ripple United Methodist Church*

PREFACE

Our introduction to Broad Ripple remains etched in my memories. A serendipitous event brought us into this fellowship. Thirty-three years ago on the Sunday following Labor Day, Carol and I went “church shopping.” We had just moved to a home in Butler-Tarkington that week. While shopping at Kroger’s, Carol saw a Methodist church and suggested we visit it. I recall sitting near the front on the right side. After the organist finished playing the prelude, there was silence. Then, Jim Rodeheffer stood in a row behind us and began singing, *Come Christians, Join to Sing!* Other choir members joined with him and moved to the choir loft. Dr. Floyd Cook, the minister, sat at the other end of our pew and took his place. We both enjoyed our experience that morning and never visited another church. Carol joined the choir and we found in the choir an extended family embracing first us and then Erick and Erin.

In December 2001, Laura Eller, the Celebration Committee Chair, asked me to compile the congregation’s history. I knew I faced challenges. Previous histories revealed substantial gaps. I began my research with a dusty box of records in the stage storeroom plus others I found in the attic. Further research required visits to the library at Christian Theological Seminary, the microfilm room at the Central Library, the Indiana Historical Society, the Indiana State Library, and the Methodist Archives at DePauw University. The Internet allowed me to locate descendants of people and families from the earliest days in Broad Ripple. You will find value reading how our congregation evolved from a small group of Methodists. The value of history is discovering how we can learn from the past.

I received help from many persons in producing this booklet. Three from outside our congregation helped especially for understanding earlier days in the congregation, Washington Township, and Broad Ripple: Russell Kerr, John D. Hague, and Alice Roettger. Alice informally served as my editor, John and Alice read the nearly final draft, and Russell, ninety years old, a member of Union Chapel, a Dawson descendant, and Union Chapel Cemetery trustee, provided invaluable knowledge unavailable in published sources. I appreciated and lovingly thank Carol for her encouragement and support as I spent many evenings researching sources.

Donald E. Mattson

Celebration Sunday
November 3, 2002

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During the course of development in Broad Ripple from forested frontier to productive farmland to a suburban village to part of urban Indianapolis, its residents could find a congregation for hearing Christ's gospel.

Different modes of transportation influenced this development. Early settlers found crossing the White River easier at the ripples. The White River fed the Central Canal and for a brief time, canal boats carried goods and people. The railroad replaced the canals and benefited Broad Ripple by permitting farmers to ship grain and livestock to different markets. The railroad, streetcars, and the Interurban brought more people into Broad Ripple – some for recreation along the river and others to live in the village and work elsewhere. Finally, automobiles continually shape Broad Ripple whether they carry young singles to the bars or church members driving from Carmel. Each mode leaves a unique stamp on the development.

The congregation that became Broad Ripple United Methodist Church has served as a mirror not only to this development but also to events and activities for the past 150 years. Earlier members held up this mirror and wrote our history into the minds and hearts of their descendants. We become part of this history and share in its richness.

EARLY METHODISTS

Beginning in England, John Wesley intended to carry his missionary effort to every part of the Kingdom. One estimate for the last fifth-three years of his life, he traveled over 250,000 miles and preached 40,000 sermons. For John and his brother Charles, the success of their work created the need to effectively control these new local societies. The two brothers and a group of close friends perfected an organization. They grouped the societies into very large "circuits." As the movement grew, circuits gradually decreased in size. Only by uniting under one authority, a number of small churches or societies could gain the cohesion necessary for successful evangelism. This cohesion secured the development of a church organization. John maintained general control as "superintendent" but appointed "assistants" to control the local circuits. When growth overwhelmed the "assistants" or itinerant preachers, the Methodists developed a well-organized system of local preachers to carry the workload in these new "circuits."²

When Methodist movement arrived on the American frontier, it was in tune with a theme of anti-intellectualism pervading the frontier. It was fear of an intellectually top-heavy clergy that was the prime source of opposition of any kind of church-related school. Ordinary people generally looked with distaste on a formally trained minister. He looked and sounded too much like the Episcopal rector or the Presbyterian clergyman whom Methodists on the frontier had come to disdain for their fancy pretensions.³

American Methodists faced a lack of trained ministers in the West. As a circuit grew, they found a practical response in setting up "Class meetings." As expected, the church created a disciplined system for forming and operating a Methodist class. First, the circuit rider found a respected Methodist in the area where a class meeting was needed. This man served as the class leader. Then, the class leader drew together Methodist church members or interested and sincere Christians in the neighborhood to form the class. A *Western Christian Advocate*⁴ article "How to have a Class Meeting" suggested twelve as the best number of members for a class. The class leader appointed a time and place

1820¹

1822 Jesse McKay and John Calip purchase 147 acres from US government. Jonas Huffman purchases 60.05 acres. Washington Township organized.

1830

1836 Indiana General Assembly passes the “Mammoth Internal Improvements Bill,” which proposes a statewide network of improved roads, canals, and rivers. Jacob Coil and family purchase land from McKays and Calips, establishing a ford across the shallow part of White River. Surveying for the new Central Canal begins at the intersection of what is now Westfield Boulevard and the White River. John Wray builds a home, grocery, and saloon near the location of the river dam. Robert Earl operates a general store. John Burke heads canal project and hires Irish workmen to build a feeder dam and begin digging the canal

1837 Jacob Coil lays out 48 lots north of the canal and calls the community Broad Ripple. James A. and Adam R. Nelson plat Wellington—consisting of 32 lots—on the south side of the canal.

1839 Canal opens. Parades and celebration mark the opening. William Switzer opens a store in Wellington. The state of Indiana goes broke due to the Mammoth Internal Improvement Act of 1836. Only 8.79 miles of the Marion County portion of the Central Canal has been completed to date. Robert Earl begins a canal boat service between Indianapolis and Broad Ripple.

for the weekly meeting, and then conducted the hour-long meeting. The article instructs the leader to begin with a short hymn followed by a prayer of confession with class members kneeling around him. Class members responded to each petition with “Lord, have mercy.” Then the leader was to conclude with petitions of thanksgiving and the members responded with “Glory and thanks to God.” Class members spent the rest of the meeting with each person giving a personal faith testimonial and discussing faith weaknesses or needs. The group responded with words of prayer and encouragement.⁵

Camp meetings came early to the Indiana Territory. Borrowing the practice from the Primitive Methodists, Indiana Methodists successfully used camp meetings as an especially effective evangelistic tool to spur growth. Moses Ashworth completed his first year as circuit rider in the Salt River Circuit with a camp meeting outside of Charlestown. This was most probably the first such in the territory.⁶

Usually held in August or September, these camp meetings gathered together Christians of all denominations as well as unaffiliated “sight-seers.” The meetings lasted for several days with preaching, exhortations, prayer, bible study, and socializing. Optimistically, these meetings ended with converts, baptisms and a love feast for the newest Methodists. Families came from miles around to camp in tents and wagons in a shady grove with a central area reserved for the meetings. As

many as two-dozen ministers and circuit-riding preachers, with the help of deacons and exhorters, would lead the event. A typical day began at 5 a.m. The blowing of a trumpet signaled the time to rise, pray in family groups, and eat breakfast. By 8:30 a.m., the trumpet signaled participants to gather at the central area to begin prayer, exhortations, and testimonials. All of this lasted until the main service and sermon of the day at about 11 a.m. After dinner, hymn singing, small sermons, testimonials, pastoral counseling and prayer filled the afternoon. After supper, families gathered around bonfires. This lent an emotional and dramatic backdrop to spirited singing and testimonials. Organizers hoped to bring about awakening and conversions among the sinners present. The drama and emotional aspect of these gatherings could induce weeping, wailing and shouts of joy. By 10 p.m., visitors were asked to leave and participants retired to their tents and wagons for individual and family prayers. Another trumpet blast signaled day’s end. This schedule was repeated for a period of four or five days. At the end of the meeting, those who had come forward to join the church were gathered together for a special fellowship meal with the ministers, elders, exhorters and church members. This was called a “Love Feast” and was a special part of the local class meetings. At a camp meeting held in Indianapolis in August 1837, participants gathered in a grove at the west edge of the city for a five-day camp meeting. The *Indianapolis Democrat* reported at the meeting’s end “over 5,000 attended Dr. Tevis’ sermon on Sunday and 116 new members were added to the Methodist Episcopal Church.”⁷

During this period in Indiana as well as America, Methodists found dealing with the issue of slavery very difficult. Methodist founder John Wesley had a great distaste for the institution and preached its evils during his ministry. The church’s General Rule on Slavery (1789) forbade the buying and selling of slaves, although not slaveholding. Many southern Methodists moved north to distance themselves from the institution, but just as many felt that although distasteful, the question of slavery was a political and economic problem, not a religious or moral one. (Some even brought their slaves with them to Indiana freeing them after they crossed the Ohio River.)

The question of slavery tore deeply at Hoosier Methodists. In the 1840s, Methodists ardently opposed to slavery pulled away from the church because it would not take a stand against slavery. They called themselves Wesleyans,

recalling John Wesley's abhorrence of the institution. The Wesleyans thrived in east central Indiana, with the center of activity in the Newport (Fountain City) area. The group had both white and black members who worked together with the anti-slavery Friends, providing safe haven for runaway slaves who passed through the area. After the Civil War, this group worked tirelessly for prohibition and in 1892, a Wesleyan minister was a candidate for governor on the Prohibition ticket. By the late 19th century, the Wesleyans had joined in the Holiness movement and their services were filled with great emotional outpouring of music, dancing, and spiritual zeal.

BROAD RIPPLE SETTLED

The history of the Broad Ripple community along the White River can be traced to 1816, when Indiana achieved statehood. Delegates to the first constitutional convention included a permanent capital section within the Constitution. The state capital should be located in the central part of the state. In June 1820, ten commissioners appointed by the Indiana General Assembly assembled at the cabin of fur trader/landowner/entrepreneur William Conner in present-day Hamilton County. Then they traveled into the area where Fall Creek meets the White River, seven miles southwest of present day Broad Ripple. On June 7, 1820, the commissioners signed their recommendation to locate the capital at the confluence of these two waterways.

Settlers came quickly! Commissioner John Tipton witnessed several families traveling upriver on flatboats loaded with household goods. With the site of the new capital finally located, the federal government began selling land in what became Marion County. Among the first buyers in the northern regions of the county were Jacob McKay and John Calip, who acquired 147 acres and began farming their land in what would become the Broad Ripple area.⁸ Other buyers purchased large blocs of land, sometime 600 acres or more. Some liquidated farms in Virginia or elsewhere; others sold their slaves to finance the Indiana purchases. Knowledge of the latter infuriated some circuit riders.

The state commissioners selected the state capital site because of the White River and the great potential for connecting central Indiana to outside

markets. The White River, which meandered through the county, was shallow in spots. One such location was near the land acquired by McKay and Calip. Here, the land was very wide and broad and the river, when low, "rippled" over the stones in the riverbed. Because it was easy to determine the water's depth at this point, the ripples became a popular river crossing.

1840
1843 Washington Township Graded School #5 built.
1845 Peter W. Koontz becomes Burke's partner and builds a gristmill.

Beyond the potential of farmland, wildlife could feed and support families. One early Methodist wrote, "The Indians having received a large amount of money and grants from the United States, for their lands, had partially quit hunting . . . , game had become quite plenty. The fish had also increased astonishingly. I have seen thousands of them, in schools, swimming in White River, at one sight. The water at that time was so clear that a pin could be seen on the bottom where it was ten or fifteen feet deep.

"In the fall of 1821, a party of fishermen took with a seine at one haul, out of White River, just above Broad Ripple, eleven barrels of fish, of the first quality. I believe they had, at one time, lying on the bank, thirty wagon loads. A large portion of them were Buffalos, which would weigh from eight to fifteen pounds. . . . These men would have made money, as there was a market for their fish. They sent two wagonloads to Cincinnati, but they did not defray expenses. If our fish law had been in force, this large stock of fish might have been preserved, until there were people enough here to consume them. *What a pity!"*⁹

To promote economic development of Indiana, the General Assembly embarked upon a massive program of internal improvements in the 1830s. In 1836, the "Mammoth Internal Improvements Act" passed which proposed a statewide network of improved roads, canals, and cleared rivers. One component of the plan, the Central Canal, would link the state's central region to the Wabash River, running north and west of the capital, and ultimately to the canals in Ohio which would provide links to points further east. The segment of the canal located within Marion County was to begin at the ripple in the river and continue south to the center of Indianapolis and beyond. John Burke, involved in the earlier construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal in

1850

1850 Post office opens in Broad Ripple, soon moved to Wellington. William Earl is the first postmaster.

1851 The state sells the Central Canal to a private company for \$2,500. Local residents subscribe to build a Union Church. Dr. Harry Kerr is the first physician in Broad Ripple and practices until 1880.

1852 Broad Ripple Methodist Episcopal Church organized.

1854 Washington Township Grade School #14 opens (Broad Ripple and Evanston Avenues).

the north central part of the state, surveyed the area for the canal and began construction of the feeder dam on White River, just north of where the canal and river intersect. Burke hired many Irish immigrants to work on the canal and they lived nearby.¹⁰

With construction work begun on the Central Canal, the potential for growth appeared promising. In 1836, Jacob Coil moved his family into the area, purchased land from the McKay's and Calip's, and established a ford at the "ripples." At the same time, John Wray built a home, grocery, and saloon near the location of the dam; Robert Earl opened a general store. On April 20, 1837, Jacob Coil laid out forty-eight lots

north of the canal route calling his new community "Broad Ripple." Four weeks later on May 17, James A. and Adam R. Nelson platted a 32 lot-community on the south side of the canal and named their town Wellington. An intense rivalry arose between the two canal settlements.¹¹ Until the gas explosion of 1898 when several were killed and scores injured, Wellington was the more prosperous of the two communities.¹²

THE COIL FAMILY

Coil family researchers document their family well: *Jacob Coil, Sr. has not been recorded on any church records. His father Gabriel was recorded in attendance in 1762 on the German Evangelical Reformed church records. It is not clear if this was his religion of choice or if he just happened to be at a church meeting on that date and someone noted his name on a record.*¹³

According to local histories, Jacob Coil, Sr. was "a farmer, moral and industrious, in business he was upright and persevering. He took an interest in all matters to the public good. He followed the burning of lime for several years, obtaining rock from the bed of the White River. Most of the lime in the Old State House was burned by him."¹⁴ Drawing from later records on the Coil family, generally speaking, religion has played an important role regarding "gifting" land for use by churches, schools, and other important social and political events. In one Coil family line, two churches sit on land "gifted" by that family. One church is Baptist and the other non-denominational.

In Ohio, many revivals occurred at the Coil Campground. It figured prominently in the history of the Methodist Protestant Church. At its peak, ardent churchgoers reported as many as 4,000 traveled to the campground. It had an amphitheater and boarding houses. The tabernacle was situated on the higher portion of the grounds. Clouds of dust hung over the roads leading to and from the grounds because of the people coming by foot, carriages, wagons, and buggies.

Records place John Colip in Indiana as early as 1822. It is highly likely that Jacob Coil Sr. was in the area before this period, but certainly in this period. It is unlikely, that Jacob Coil, Sr. came from Virginia to Indiana. He is found in Virginia in 1810 and in Ohio in 1812. The family was in Ohio before 1800. Jacob's parents moved to Ohio in the late 1790's. Jacob traveled back and forth between Ohio and Virginia on a regular basis. He went back to Virginia in 1810 and married Barbara Colip there. He was present in Ohio in 1812 when he transferred his parents' land to his siblings. It is "assumed" both of his parents were deceased by 1812.

There is no doubt that the Coils were always in the thick of “cheap land.” They were movers and shakers when it came to turning a buck. Valentine Coil was a merchant of some sort. His estate settlement shows a large amount of money due him from the sale of goods. They tended to trade in commodities such as sugar, corn, wheat, beef, and mutton, etc. Several were distillers; it is possible that Jacob Coil, Sr. and his brother Joseph traded on the rivers. Joseph was a shipper. Records show he carried goods along the riverbanks for the farmers. They were mostly well-to-do, well-respected, and gave back to their immediate communities wherever possible.¹⁵

County had been divided into townships with Washington Township organized in 1822. Given their location at the center of the township, both Broad Ripple and Wellington seemed poised for expansion. Within a few short years, the area blossomed. John Burke, who managed construction of a section on the canal, opened a sawmill in 1843. Two years later Peter Koontz joined Burke and built a gristmill. That same year, a graded township school opened. In 1850, the U.S. Post Office Department established the Broad Ripple post office with William Earl as its first postmaster. Over the next thirty years, the post office shifted between the two communities. Finally, in 1884, the U.S. Post Office Department located the office in Wellington but retained the name Broad Ripple. Because of this action, the two rival communities merged and incorporated as Broad Ripple with some 150 residents.¹⁷

On June 27, 1839, local residents celebrated the opening of the canal, but their revelry was short-lived. The State of Indiana went bankrupt due to excessive expenses associated with the many internal improvement projects and bad investments. Bankruptcy halted all construction on the canal, leaving slightly more than eight miles of the canal completed between the villages of Broad Ripple and Wellington and the capital city of Indianapolis to the south. Although this effectively ended any hopes for a canal connector for central Indiana, the existing section of the canal linked the northern part of the county with the capital. In July 1839, Robert Earl advertised canal boat service between Indianapolis and Broad Ripple.¹⁶

While construction ceased, many residents of the area saw the intersection of the canal and river as a prime location for commercial interests and a focal point for a developing community. By this time, Marion

The failure of the canal project disappointed the citizens of Indianapolis. They had supported “the internal improvement system” that authorized building the canals. Indiana invested \$1.6 million on the Central Canal. Berry R. Sulgrove, the compiler of an early Indianapolis and Marion County history, maintained “comparatively little more” would have been required to put it into operation from Noblesville to Martinsville. The state assumed operations until 1850. Moss choked the channel. Maintenance plans called for turning off the water periodically to clean out the moss. The periodic shutdowns meant losses to the lessees of waterpower. In 1850, the General Assembly authorized the governor to settle the lawsuits and sell the whole property to the highest bidder. The Indianapolis Water Works Company assumed title by 1859 to the Central Canal.¹⁸

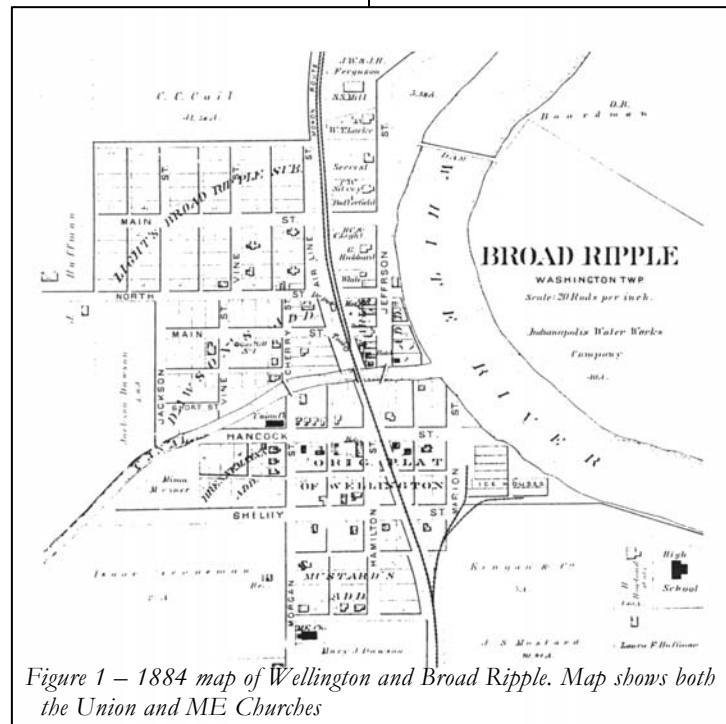


Figure 1 – 1884 map of Wellington and Broad Ripple. Map shows both the Union and ME Churches

1860

1867 The canal is sold to the Hydraulic Company, later the Indianapolis Water Company, and becomes the principal source of water for the growing city of Indianapolis.

In the years before the merger and incorporation, Wellington and Broad Ripple attracted a variety of professionals, merchants, businesses, institutions, and organizations, all of which contributed to the residential development of northern Marion County. The area's first physician, Dr. Harry Kerr, maintained an office from

1850 to 1880. Washington Township constructed a grade school near the present-day corner of Broad Ripple and Evanston Avenues in 1854. Local farmers organized a chapter of the Grange in 1873, while the International Order of Odd Fellows opened Broad Ripple Lodge No. 548 in 1877.¹⁹

CIRCUIT RIDERS

Religious activities were present during the formative years of Broad Ripple and Wellington. Local histories note Rev. James Havens, a Methodist, held a camp meeting in Broad Ripple in 1836 and that several canal workers tried to disrupt that first meeting.

One of the "giants" of Hoosier Methodism, Rev. William Cravens served the Indianapolis Circuit when he organized it in the fall of 1821. Rev. F. F. Holliday, the historian of these early circuit riders, gave a picture of Rev. Cravens. Cravens "continued his denunciations of slavery after his arrival in Indiana; for he found some here who had hired out their slaves, and had removed with their children free from the corrupting influences of slavery, but who were, nevertheless, drawing the wages of their slaves, and living by their unrequited toil. Others had sold their slaves, and with their prices, had purchased homes in a free state. These he was accustomed to denounce as blood-stained hypocrites, and worse than those who retained their slaves and treated them kindly. He rarely preached a sermon without making those who made, sold, or drank intoxicating drinks, feel uneasy."²⁰

Rev. James Havens From an 1895 account, we have an incredible window into the Rev. Havens' ministry. "The Methodist Episcopal Church of

New Castle, is the oldest church organization in the town and was organized in 1827 by Rev. James Havens, who traveled a circuit embracing six counties which necessitated a ride of over 200 miles to make one round of the preaching places.

Mr. Havens was the first minister to preach in the town and came into the town on horseback, backed up by the traditional saddlebags, with his feet and legs wrapped up in flannel legging to protect his clothing from the mud which on all roads was so deep that one party is said to have road into town on a section of rail fence strapped to the underside of his horse to keep him from sinking at some unlooked for moment in some unlooked for hole in the road. Rev. Havens is said to have been an exceedingly robust and sturdy specimen of manhood, with a shock of red hair. In disposition, he was an energetic, tireless, devoted, and fervent preacher. He said what he had to say regardless of how hard the devil might squeal at his strokes, and had his own way. At one meeting, four young men arrived, threatening to break up the meeting unless he stopped his tomfoolery, as they termed it. After urging them to be orderly and after their persistent swearing and continued threats he left the stand and advanced to meet them, and, picking up a club, he said that he believed he could whip the four of them, but if he could not, he had plenty of help. Before his firm demeanor, the rowdies backed down and slipped away.²¹

Holliday praises the efforts of local preachers and exhorters. Many of the latter had been traveling preachers but were compelled to seek support. They continued to labor with efficiency in carrying out revival efforts.²²

The Methodist formed the first societies, as a rule, in the country, and named the first circuits after rivers or creeks. The town sites were located either with reference to commercial advantages or as expected seats of justice for counties, in many cases yet to be organized. In many towns, the property-holders and the incumbents and seekers for office, were not only irreligious, but opposed even the forms of religion, and made no provision for Christian worship. In such cases, the "villages were unpromising fields for Christian

1870

1873 A local chapter of the Grange is established.

1875 A flood destroys the gristmill, the community's oldest house, and a grocery store on north side of White River.

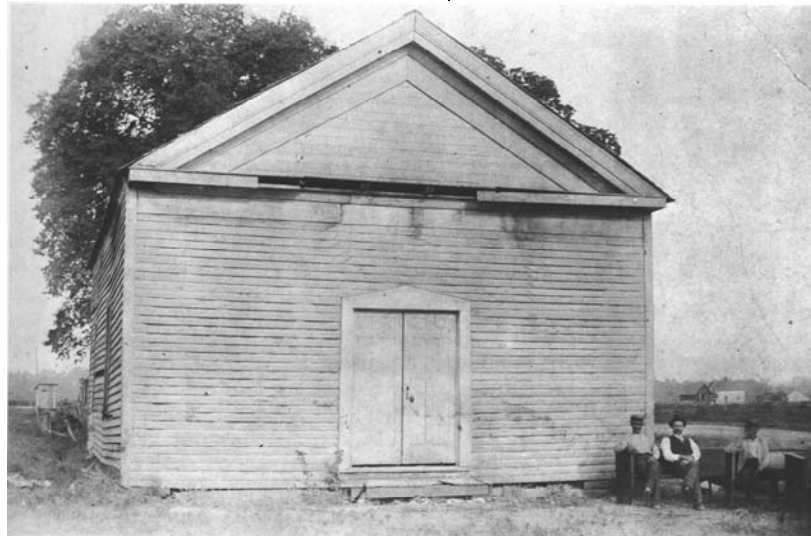
1877 International Order of Odd Fellows, Broad Ripple Lodge No. 548, is organized.

effort, while those who settled in the country were not only less exposed, but also less inclined to vice."²³

Holliday also repeats the opinion of Rev. A. Wood, DD, "whose opportunities for observation have

been unequalled." Rev. Wood gave the following sketch of the characteristics of the early settlers in Indiana:

The most liberal and hospitable were those from Virginia and Maryland; the most economical and tidy came from New Jersey, the most enterprising and commercial came from Pennsylvania and New York, with here and there a stray Yankee; the least enterprising and uneducated came from South Carolina and East Tennessee. Kentucky sent two characters: the one a lazy hunter, who had neither enterprise nor education; the other, industrious farmers, who moved away from slavery, or sought county offices. These last were educated and very hospitable.²⁴



Undated photograph of 1852 Community House and later Union Church. H. G. Thompson on left and Dr. J. W. Bates, center. Dr. Bates began his practice in 1883.

METHODIST CLASS FORMS IN WELLINGTON

In Broad Ripple and Wellington, permanent church buildings were not evident until at least mid-century. "The Methodists as an organized power did not have an even start with other denominations, among the first settlers. The Presbyterians, Baptists, and Quakers, all had their neighborhoods, houses, preachers, and schools in advance of us."²⁵ It was clear during the early years of community development that there were insufficient numbers of any one faith to support a single denominational church building.

In 1851, local residents gathered subscriptions to build the Union Church in Wellington (located on the present site of a fire station at 6330 Guilford). Jacob Coil, Jr., son of Broad Ripple's founder, donated the land for the building. Wilson Whitesell and Richard Miller, carpenters, built the structure. Canal supervisor and local businessman John Burke joined Coil as the church's first trustees and Henry Coe, a Presbyterian, served as the church's first minister.

Over the years, local Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists used the church facility. Madison Hume was an early preacher for the Baptists. The Reverend Frank Hardin served the newly established Methodist class in 1852, which became known as the Broad Ripple Methodist Episcopal Church. Washington Presbyterian Church²⁶ was organized in 1838 in present-day Malott Park. Over the years, other denominations established congregations elsewhere in Washington Township, though none located near Broad Ripple and Wellington.²⁷

**WELLINGTON PREACHING POINT
ON ALLISONVILLE CIRCUIT**

By 1852, Traveling within Indiana was improving when Wellington and Broad Ripple residents established their Methodist class. Roads from Indianapolis were still either dirt in the summer or mud during winters. Farmers would gravel parts and then erect a tollbooth and charge for passage. The railroad would not reach Broad Ripple for another thirty-two years. However, one senior Methodist minister wrote in 1853, “In Indiana we travel now mostly by railroad. Our preachers can not travel their circuits yet in this way, but some of the presiding elders do their districts. The projects now on foot for building roads are so numerous, that no one can tell what will be when our young folks get old. On our roads, we sometimes see sights, and meet with men or angels of marvelous dignity. We plain hoosiers have no conception of wandering celestials once when perchance we see one.”²⁸

The Wellington class became part of the Allisonville Circuit. The circuit did not have a parsonage in 1852. The circuit elders considered purchasing a lot in Castleton offered by Bro. Jones for \$20, an acre in Allisonville by Bro. Huff on the Winchester State Road for \$25, one acre in Allisonville by A. G. Ruddell²⁹ for \$75 with additional land for \$150 on the Allisonville State Road. They were also offered a lot valued at \$100 on the Bellefontaine Railroad with vouchers for additional subscriptions for \$51.³⁰ Perhaps the competing lots reflected the desire to have the preacher live in their community. The elders apparently postponed their decision as the parsonage remained unfinished business at their August 7-8, 1852, meeting. Wellington contributed \$1.00 to meet the Circuit expenses.

Castleton formed their first church in the decade prior to 1843. Rev. James T. Wright, then a circuit preacher, held meetings for twenty years in his farmhouse, and those of William Orpurd and Milford Vert, and later in a log schoolhouse in Vertland.³¹

In 1852, the Methodists held classes at Allisonville, Hopewell, Kimberlins, Concord, Bethel, Millersville, and Wellington. These classes were in the northeast quadrant of Marion County. Locations of several sites remain unclear but include Castleton, Vertland (Hopewell), Lawrence, possibly the

area near the Fort Harrison cemetery, Indian Lake (Wesley Chapel), and Malott Park (now located at Bellaire). Rev. Franklin A. Hardin began serving the circuit as the Preacher in Charge (annotated PC in the minute book). For the quarter, the circuit paid him \$39.18 of which 75 cents was for travel expenses (presumably tolls), \$25.00 for his horse (quarterage), and \$6.18 came from a public collection. His table expenses were \$5.75 or what he received for food.³²

Rev. Hardin increased the membership in these classes through revivals. He reported to the *Western Christian Advocate* on March 23, 1855, that, *During the quarter ending March 3d, we received one hundred and seventy on probation into the Methodist Episcopal Church; making in all, during the conference year, by letter and on trail, one hundred and ninety, the largest portion whom are happy in the enjoyment of a Savior's love.*³³ A month earlier, he wrote: *We have just closed a protracted meeting in Millersville, at which twenty-four professed religion, and sixteen applied for admission, on trial, into the Church.*³⁴

The circuit minutes followed the *Discipline's* formal language and answered questions about activities within the circuit. In the nearly thirty years covered by available minutes, there were few deviations from the questions. However, one deviation gives an insight into concerns about lotteries. During this period, different groups both in Indiana and other states sold lottery tickets to finance construction of colleges, schools, and other institutions. Even an Arkansas college advertised a lottery in the *Indianapolis Journal*. At their meeting on December 12, 1857, Augustus Eddy, the presiding elder, moved,

1880

1883 Indianapolis, Delphi, and Chicago Railroad comes through Broad Ripple.

1884 Broad Ripple and Wellington merge and incorporate as Broad Ripple with 150 residents. White River breaks through levee constructed in 1875 and floods the town. Broad Ripple school opens. The two-story school is located on the south bank of White River. Train bridge over White River collapses and several people die.

1886 Broad Ripple High School opens.

1887 Indianapolis, Delphi, and Chicago Railroad becomes the Chicago, Indianapolis, Louisville Railroad. Kingan Meat Packers Company establishes several icehouses. **Broad Ripple Methodist Episcopal Church established at 6145 Guilford.**

1889 Broad Ripple Hotel burns.

“Resolved, no bro. should engage in the lottery business that it is contrary to word of God and the Spirit of our Discipline. That if any members of our church engage in dealing lottery tickets, that the Pastor enters into a disciplinary course with such member and if they will not reform to bring to trial for immoral conduct.”

The resolution passed unanimously.

Uriah Day shows as the class leader attending the conference in 1857. Wellington contributed \$7.75 toward the circuit budget. In 1858, the circuit included Allisonville, Hopewell, Vertland, Castleton, Purcell’s School House, Wellington, and West Liberty. (Purcell’s School House was located near 91st and Westfield Boulevard.)

By the September 10, 1859, meeting, Wellington was contributing \$15.50 toward the quarterly budget. The circuit took in \$110.84 and paid the presiding elder \$12.50, Rev. Mr. McCarthy \$113.36, and Rev. Mr. Koontz \$13.84. By 1860, seven schools operated within the bounds of the charge. The pastor made sixty-three pastoral visits during the previous quarter and instructed 175-200 children. Winter took a toll on these schools’ operation. He complained that he had done little by way of catechetical instruction during the winter.

Earlier church histories identify John Henry Koontz as the first minister. Annual Conference minutes An “A. Koontz” is shown on the Missionary Committee in the June 19, 1858 minutes. In June 1859, he was employed at the sum of \$150 to preach on the Sabbath during the present conference year.

The elders examined each other during these meetings as to their adherence to the *Discipline*. The elders either passed or denied recognition. Brother David S. Cothran who was a preacher in good standing in the Baptist Church was recognized as a local preacher in the ME church. The circuit’s budget for the quarter in 1860 was \$174.55 and they paid the preacher \$129.50.

In March 1858, the elders met at Allisonville. Rev. John. B. Birt reported three Sabbath Schools successfully, one at Allisonville, one at Hopewell, and one at Vertland. He commented that the three “which had been kept up thus far during the winter convinces me that this is one good reason for starting during the winter.”³⁵

We can only guess about the behavior witnessed by the elders when they met on September 4-5, 1858. Leader W. B. Graham offered this resolution: *We as members of this quarterly conference deplore the consequences as to the young members of church by the frequent assemblages in our vicinity called Pick-nicks. Resolved, therefore that the Preacher and leaders of the circuit will be expected to enforce the rules of our discipline.*

Attending elders at the first quarterly conference in June 1858 engaged Bro. Koontz to preach on the Sabbath for “the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars” for the present conference year. Their budget was for table expenses, horse feed and fuel of \$178, the “Disciplinary Allowance of \$272, Bro. Koontz’ allowance as adopted of \$150, and A. Eddy (the presiding elder) of \$50 for a total of \$650 for the year. Rev. John S. McCarthy reported to the Circuit that seven schools were in operation; “some are advancing” and “others are not doing as well.” He had “catechized six scholars and instructed 3-4 hundred youth in Sunday Schools and at home.” He also made seventy-six pastoral calls during the previous quarter.³⁶ His pastoral calls nearly equals the number of days less Sundays in the quarter. Perhaps pastoral calls allowed him to stretch his “table expenses!”

1890

1891 Gas explosion damages the Broad Ripple Hotel, Christian Church, IOOF Hall, and several businesses.

1894 Electric street cars introduced. Dr. Robert C. Light and William Bosson establish the Indianapolis and Broad Ripple Transit Company. Three days of celebration mark the event.

1895 Indiana Department of Education commissions Broad Ripple High School.

1896 Broad Ripple High School is destroyed by fire. Natural gas and oil are discovered in the area. Local physician Dr. Robert C. Light forms the Broad Ripple Gas Company and joins the drilling operations in the area.

1897 Rebuilt high school opens. Indianapolis & Broad Ripple Transit Company becomes Broad Ripple Traction Company, which eventually becomes the Union Traction Company.

1898 Pentecost Church is established.

1899 Christian Church is established.

The circuit moved from the South-East Indiana Conference and became the Castleton Circuit of the North Indiana Conference in June 1861. They operated ten Sunday Schools with eight catechetical classes. Pastoral support increased to \$400.

The circuit certainly felt the impact of the Civil War. Men had volunteered from Broad Ripple farms for the Indiana regiments assembling in Indianapolis. In 1863, Morgan's Raid would occur that summer on July 8-13. At their meeting at Hopewell that spring, they adopted the following resolution offered by Rev. Mr. McCarter:

When as civil government is as much an institution of God as the family or church and as neither can exist in Perfection. Where the first is disregarded, and when as we are the midst of a fearful Rebellion against the civil government of the united states and even in our own state and neighborhood there are such manifestation and we believe many are combining themselves in oath. Bound Societies to resist the enforcement of the civil laws for the crushing of this most wicked rebellion. Therefore,

Resolved that we the members of the Quarterly Conference of Castleton Circuit do renew our allegiance to the united states government & hereby pledge our all to assist the Proper Authorities in Maintaining good order & enforcing the laws against the enemies our country be they who they may.

Resolved 2nd, That we highly approve of the Patriotic tone our Pulpit & religious press & affectionately recommend the Western Christian Advocate to the support of our Brethren & the public generally.

Resolved 3rd, That these resolutions be read by the Presiding Elder in our congregations and tomorrow at the close of the meeting by Presiding Elders and on motion this note of confidence.

Eight stewards voted aye; one did not vote; three withdrew without leave of absence; seven were absent.

Rev. Mr. R. D. Spellman reported in October 1863 that he had preached on the subject of Sunday Schools and religious living of children during the past quarter. "But from some causes, the seed has appeared to have fallen in stony plain."

The circuit apparently purchased a parsonage. At their September 4-5, 1858 meeting, they subscribed \$70 cash to build a stable at the parsonage. In October 1863, the Trustees reported they set out thirty apple, twenty peach, five pear, and five cherry trees plus four grapevines. They also had problems with neighbors running their cows on the property and eating vegetables from the preacher's gardens. An immediate problem was an overflowing ditch. They immediately cleaned out the ditch by digging it but Castleton, Millersville, and Wellington were to repay them for their expenses. The Conference reassigned preachers in the fall as this permitted harvesting gardens at their peak.

In the March and July 1864 meetings, Rev. Spellman reported eight Sunday School classes with thirty-five to fifty in each. "Most of the time is spent reading the scriptures 'without little or any questions asked or real religious instruction given.'" The preacher faulted lack of "faithful teachers." In these reports, there were 315 scholars and 900 volumes in the libraries. The combined budget for the Sunday Schools was \$10.

The circuit assessed each congregation the following amounts to meet expenses, primarily the preacher's and presiding elder's salaries. The minutes do not mention how they arrived at the amounts but the board probably based them on relative membership.

Congregation	Amount
Allisonville	\$112.00
West Liberty	75.00
Millersville	75.00
Wellington	76.50
Hopewell	100.00
Vertland	63.00
Perseverance	117.0
Zions Chapel	64.50

Rev. Franklin A. Hardin served the circuit a second time beginning in 1864. He complained to the board that on August 18, 1864, he arrived at the Perseverance Church and found it not only closed but also "strongly barricaded". This was his

regular day of preaching. At the following meeting, the minutes indicate the subject of his sermon was “The Bible and Slavery.” The investigating group reported to the next meeting that all but one family in the Perseverance Church were “democrats.” Even though the Perseverance congregation remained in the circuit, they threatened not to pay their portion of the preacher’s salary. The conference recorded this statement, “It is with deep regret that the Circuit record is shamed.”

The Castleton Circuit showed 272 members in 1869, plus forty-two Probationers and one local preacher. There were ten adult Sunday School classes and eight for children. The Conference set Rev. White’s salary at \$700 for the year.³⁷

Distances between the various churches on this circuit challenged preachers. The only mention of times came in the November 19, 1870, minutes. Rev. D. C. Benjamin reported: “Millersville [will] have preaching at 10½ a.m. and Wellington at 3 p.m. being a reverse of the present plan.” The circuit’s quarterly payments to Rev. Benjamin two years later were \$179.92.

Sunday School attendance improved during Rev. Benjamin’s term. He reported that average attendance was 300. He also had “Pastoral Labor Performed” of forty-nine sermons preached, ten exhortations, and ninety visits during the previous quarter. Financially, the circuit experienced tough times. At their First Quarterly meeting on November 9, 1872, they faced an \$800 “minister’s allowance” but “cannot promise more than \$500 owing to the present condition of the circuit.”

At their January 24, 1874, meeting at Wellington, Rev. J. H. Stallard reported: “Sunday Schools at Vertland, Hopewell and Allisonville. There is urgent need of revivals at every point. The class meetings are not well-attended but we are hoping for better days.”

Six months later, Rev. Stallard brought readers up to date with, “Nearly all are enjoying a good degree of prosperity, but some lack the cooperation of the church. The parents permit their children to attend Sunday School but fail to go themselves. A little more energy and a great deal more missionary religion on their part would add visibly to the utility and success of the schools. These remarks are especially applicable to the schools at Vertland and Allisonville.”

Preachers used revivals to bring in new members. In the era before movies and other entertainment, they were the major attraction in these communities. Sometimes, the circuit would use a revival preacher. An article in the *Western Christian Advocate* showed success in the area:

Rev. G. S. Conner, of Castleton, Ind., has been constantly engaged in protracted meetings for over nineteen weeks. His first meeting was at Allisonville, which resulted in 39 accessions by letter and on probation; the next at Castleton, with 48 additions; then at Malott Park, with 11 accessions and 3 since, making 14 additions. His fourth and last meeting of five weeks and five days closed at Broad Ripple with 78 accessions, making since conference, on probation and by letter, 179. He reports as many conversions as additions; and the revival spirit so prominent at Allisonville, Castleton, and Malott Park last Fall and Winter continues with unabating zeal, the several societies holding two prayer and praise meetings each week. Three weeks ago last Sunday, 34 persons spoke in fifteen minutes. The meeting at Broad Ripple was an old-fashioned revival, the house being crowded every evening for three weeks. Over one-half of all those who have united with the Church on this circuit are heads of families. Rev. Amos Hamway preached four sermons at the Broad Ripple revival, and is deservedly popular all over this circuit.³⁸

Methodists recognized that the circuit system carried the Gospel to many people that met in farmhouses and schoolhouses. Many preaching sites were small and the people were unwilling to consolidate with other locations at a nearby town, where a circuit could build up a stronger congregation. During this transition from the circuits to churches, Methodists lost many members. One authority wrote, “[It] is possible that, in some cases, circuits were needlessly reduced, and week-day preaching abandoned sooner than it should have been. But it is an unwise administration that allows churches in the country to be built nearer than four or five miles of each other. With the facilities for getting to church, possessed by our farming population, a mile or two, more or less, in the distance to church, is no object; while, if churches are built closer together, they can not, in the very nature of the case, command

congregations of sufficient size to sustain Sabbath preaching, without making church expenses burdensome, or failing to give the ministry an adequate support.”³⁹

The Quarterly Conference ordered the Millersville church sold in 1877. The Masonic Lodge purchased the property and the class consolidated with the Malott Park Church. These actions irked many members of the Millersville church. Some forty refused to take their membership to Malott Park. Some

went to Castleton, a few to Allisonville, and others to Broad Ripple.⁴⁰

CONGREGATION BUILDS FRAME CHURCH



In 1874, the congregation still is using the Wellington Union Church. The assessor valued the building and property at \$200.⁴¹ In 1884, Sulgrove described the population of Broad Ripple as thirty-five persons. About two-thirds of the original town as platted reverted to farmland. The town consisted of one water mill, one railroad depot, and a few homes. The population of the village of Wellington south of the canal stood at 108. Part of its platted land also

reverted to farmland. The town had one store – a blacksmith shop, the post office called Broad Ripple, the Odd Fellows’ Lodge, the Union Church, and the township graded school.⁴² Church membership is thirty. A Sabbath school is held during the summer months only with an average attendance of fifty. William M. Dawson is superintendent. Trustees are Jacob C. Wright, William M. Dawson, Hamilton Thompson, Swartz Mustard, and Isaac Morris.⁴³

The Louisville, New Albany & Chicago (or Chicago Airline later the Monon) Railroad extended their line through Washington Township in 1881 and 1882. On March 10, 1883, the first freight and passenger train passed through. Dr. Bates’ library was the first freight shipped to Broad Ripple, and Thomas Kirkpatrick was the first agent.⁴⁴

Broad Ripple entered a new stage of development with the railroad’s arrival. The railroad benefited the church and the Broad Ripple community. Four years later, the Kingan Meat Packers Company built the first of a number of icehouses along the railroad. Kingan was a major pork producer with a capacity of 6,000 hogs daily. They shipped one-third to one-half of their production abroad, primarily England.⁴⁵ The icehouses represented non-farming jobs created by Broad Ripple’s location by both the river and the railroad.

The convenience of the railroad probably increased the value of Mary Coil Dawson’s property.⁴⁶ This property platted by her grandfather years earlier had reverted to farmland. They now increased in value as home sites. Mary donated two lots to the congregation for a new church. These lots were on the southeast corner of Coil (now East 62nd) and Bellefontaine (now Guilford) Streets, the site of the current building.

With 115 members by 1886, the congregation decided to raise their own building to relieve crowded conditions at the Union Church. Rev. Conner’s report below described the new frame church. Many members joined in its construction and donated materials. The building had 10-foot sidewalls and ceilings on rafters up to sixteen feet where it leveled across. Two Burnside stoves provided heat and hanging oil lamps provided heat. Seats were planks with a six-inch board across the back that assured no one fell asleep easily! Dedication came in June 1887. Rev. Conner reported in the *Western Christian Advocate* on February 9, 1887:



Broad Ripple Methodist Episcopal Church c1898 when the congregation added an Epworth League (Young People’s) room with folding doors opening into the church building. Notice hitching rails along Coil Street (62nd).

1900

1902 Kingan icehouses burn and the company rebuilds.

1903 Floods overrun the town.

1904 Interurban introduced to Broad Ripple.

1906 White City Amusement Park opens. Broad Ripple residents seek annexation by Indianapolis. Extensive fire damages business area.

1907 Masonic Lodge built at Guilford and Broad Ripple Avenues. It becomes known as “Mustard Hall” when the Mustard family donates money to the Lodge. W. H. Tabb and Robert C. Light form the White City Company of Indianapolis and obtain a nine-year lease for the amusement park facility.

1908 Fire destroys White City Amusement Park.

1909 First organized school basketball squad in Marion County. Indianapolis City Council annexes Broad Ripple but Mayor Bookwalter vetoes annexation. The council fails to override the veto.

Castleton, Ind. – We are having spiritual and financial success on Castleton Circuit. We have had a grand revival at Lawrence, where 85 have united with the Church; making in all since conference 94 additions to Castleton Circuit. The Sabbath-school at Malott Park is prospering under the efficient superintendence of Elisha House. Castleton Church is undergoing repairs, the money to pay for which has been raised. The brethren at Broad Ripple commenced to build a frame church last Fall. It is Gothic in style, 34 by 50 feet in dimensions, with vestibule and tower, with spire 35 feet high, and will be ready to dedicate by May 15th. The members of this Church are under great obligations to Wm. Dawson, Sen., and his most estimable wife, and to Dr. Jos. Bates, for their assistance. The property will be worth at least \$2,500, and will establish Methodism in Broad Ripple, where it is so much needed. We have three Sunday-schools on Castleton Circuit, that are in as flourishing a condition

in the Winter as they are in the Summer, namely, Castleton, Malott Park, and Lawrence.

Geo. S. Conner⁴⁷

Mary Coil Dawson

Mary Coil Dawson descended from the Coil family tradition of building

communities. Her great uncle, Jacob Coil’s brother Andrew, laid out a town in Ohio called Coiltown. Unfortunately, the town lost the bid for the county seat and it did not grow as anticipated. Possibly, Jacob had the same idea for Broad Ripple. Coil women seemed to be as forbearing as the Coil men. A Coil family researcher concludes, “Coil women were ‘of good stock.’ They were influential in many circles. As the generations progressed forward, many Coil women worked in banks, married lawyers, became teachers, and several remained unmarried. The spinster life was not uncommon in the Coil lines. I am not sure if it was because they were headstrong or if they were unattractive! I think they had a good business head on their shoulders and often found themselves in conflict with some men who did not. Therefore, they chose to fend for themselves.”⁴⁸



Two sisters – Sara Coil Thompson on left and Mary Coil Dawson on right.

One estimate pegged the total cost at less than \$8,000. For the sixty-some family units in that membership of 115, this represented an average giving of \$133. The average non-farm employee then earned \$1.47 per day; the average minister’s salary was \$794. A typical non-farm family income was \$573 per year that they spent:

Food	\$219
Housing	\$80
Fuel and lights	\$32
Clothing	\$82
Miscellaneous	\$121
Savings	<u>\$39</u>
Total	\$573

In perspective, the congregation paid 60% of what they paid for food.⁴⁹

The South-East Indiana Conference posted Rev. Jeremiah. D. Current to the Castleton Circuit at the 1887 annual conference. Rev. Current came to the

Conference from the United Brethren Church. He reported revival results to the *Western Christian Advocate* that next spring. “Over an eight-week period on the circuit, three churches added 155 converts. Broad Ripple had 75 accessions; Malott Park 75; and Lawrence 21.”⁵⁰

Revivals continued to play an important role in reaching residents in other parts of Indianapolis in 1889: “The tides of grace has risen high in Indianapolis this winter. Almost every church in the city has been blessed with a revival. Over 600 have been added to the churches.”⁵¹



Undated photograph of children, perhaps at Easter, from a framed print found in church records.

Broad Ripple drew many Indianapolis residents for picnics, parties, swimming, and amusements. Vacation homes began to line the White River from Rocky Ripple to Noblesville. When the town jail was torn down in 1932, the *Indianapolis News* noted, “Wild weekend parties had something to do with the incorporation [of Broad Ripple]. Railroads ran “Sunday excursions to

Broad Ripple that became popular. One reason for incorporating was to prevent nude swimming parties which sounds strangely modern.”⁵²

“According to tradition, [the jail’s] only function was to quiet the exuberance of rowdies who come from Indianapolis with the idea of ‘painting the town red.’”⁵³ The shady reputation shadowed Broad Ripple residents. “Women shoppers who ‘went to the city’ would carry every possible package home rather than tell the clerks they lived in Broad Ripple.”⁵⁴

Fire destroyed the Broad Ripple High School building in 1896, leaving only the walls of the four-room building intact. School continued in session with grade school classes meeting in the church and the IOOF Hall. High School classes met in a 1½-story building just south of dam. Work progressed

on rebuilding to include an assembly hall and four additional new classrooms. Broad Ripple still lacked improved streets and sidewalks. Pupils plodded to school through mud, slush, and snow.⁵⁵

Broad Ripple was no longer isolated. First, the railroad and later streetcars and the Interurban permitted residents to work in Indianapolis or elsewhere. (One resident was a passenger conductor on the Terre Haute & Indiana Railroad.⁵⁶) The culture was transforming from rural village to suburb. Economic interests now drove development of farmland into housing additions. If the congregation could influence the morality in the town earlier, they were hard-pressed with more residents who did not share their values. A hundred later, drafters of the *Broad Ripple Village Plan Update* observed, “A tension is possibly created by varying expectations between the residents and commercial interests.”⁵⁷

1910

1911 The Union Traction Company buys White City Amusement Park.

1912 Broad Ripple High School basketball team wins the Marion County Basketball Tourney.

1913 New Broad Ripple High School constructed. Floods covers village for several days. Fifteen petitions for and against annexation filed.

1914 Part of Broad Ripple annexed by Indianapolis.

1915 Annexation loses in court decision.

1917 Two existing telephone exchanges merge. The Kingan meat packing company abandons icehouses along White River.

BROAD RIPPLE ME CHURCH – SEPARATE CHARGE

As the community grew made possible by streetcars and the Interurban, the congregation’s membership and attendance in Sunday School classes also grew. Membership for 1898 had increased to 202 taxing the little frame church. The congregation added an Epworth League (Young People’s) room with folding doors opening into the church building. This space would accommodate the overflowing crowds attending worship. Limited information documents the congregation for the next approximately fifty years. One membership register from 1902 to 1909 remains. A few financial records of

different years also survive. The Conference records give pastoral changes and statistics but no narratives.

In 1898, the Conference divided the Castleton Circuit. Broad Ripple and Mapleton (now North) were in one charge and Union Chapel and Castleton remained with the Castleton Charge (They remained a two-point charge until 1937.⁵⁸) Rev. Carl S. Risley served this two-point charge for two years before the Conference assigned him solely to Broad Ripple with the 1900 Annual Conference.

In 1910, a storm damaged the tower and west end of the building. The congregation decided to remove the tower and put in a large window where the entrance had been. They also built a tower entrance at the northwest corner of the building with double doors and cement steps. This made room for two more rows of seats in the sanctuary. They purchased new form-shaped oak pews and redecorated the whole interior. About 1910, Indianapolis area Sunday Schools attended a Sunday School assembly in the park-like setting surrounding the church.

By 1915, Sunday School attendance increased solidly. Rev Allison reported:

Five addresses have been made to the children of the S.S. The finest improvement in our school for the past quarter has been the increased enrollment in the young men's class. The average attendance in that class has been as good as the best although most of the members have not been in regular attendance for years. Roy Hudson is the effective teacher. Under his leadership, they are taking the truths of the lessons and applying them in the fullest manner to the problems that young men are beginning to face. A recent primary picnic held at the home of Dal Dawson had 68 in attendance. Autos for the transportation were furnished by the good brethren of the men's class. It was a very profitable occasion.

With the exception of a few Sundays and about half of them when it was pouring rain on Saturdays, your pastor has made from one to seven calls each afternoon of the quarter. No accurate account has been kept. Suffice it to say that these calls have been distributed over a territory six by four miles. There is a great deal more calling that should by all means be done than can be done by one pastor with other church duties. In addition your pastor has spent some eight or ten mornings in the city libraries, read six books at home, sent nineteen letters regarding the work of teacher training in the S.S. of the district, preached on two new themes each Sunday, and made an individual canvass for benevolences.⁵⁹

For the first quarterly conference meeting on November 30, 1915, Rev. Allison reported the congregation's thoughts were centered "in the new building. The work is progressing nicely and it seems now that we will be in new quarters near the first of the new year. It will take a great deal more hard work to insure the funds to finish out of debt. When the church is reopened it will be modern and fully equipped for the needs of the community. We are praying for a spiritual awakening that will be commensurate with outside improvements."⁶⁰ Sunday School attendance remained strong. In the few records that survive, the average was 141 in 1915 and 132 in 1917



Undated and unidentified photograph of mothers and children taken on steps of church after 1910 remodeling that added tower entrance on northwest corner.

1920

1920 Zivien's Department Store opens on Broad Ripple Avenue.

1922 Businessman James H. Makin purchases Broad Ripple Park. Indianapolis annexes Broad Ripple. National Swimming Meet held at Broad Ripple Park. Broad Ripple Chamber of Commerce established. *North Side Topics* begins publishing.

1923 Broad Ripple Park is dis-annexed from Indianapolis. Broad Ripple High School becomes a part of Indianapolis Public Schools.

1924 Broad Ripple Park hosts the Olympic try-outs where Johnny Weissmuller, the soon-to-be Hollywood Tarzan, wins the 100-meter freestyle qualification.

1927 Terre Haute brewery executives Oscar and Joseph Baur purchase Broad Ripple Park.

1929 School No. 80 built at 62nd and Guilford.

The “new building” Rev Allison described resulted from another major remodeling. By 1915, the growing Sunday School placed more pressure on the building. The Trustees decided the church must have a full basement. William Dawson, Jr. told about this expansion. The men opened a hole beneath the south sidewall and members using horses with slip-scrapers, excavated a basement under the old church. They removed the Burnside stoves and added a circulating furnace to heat the whole church.⁶¹ A committee overseeing the project divvied up the expenses and then told each member their share. George Kerr, a prominent member,⁶² was not present at this meeting and was later told his share. Within days, a livestock buyer made him an offer on two fattened calves and he paid off his debt. Later he learned the committee had doubled his share.⁶³

The war years must have been tight financially as the treasurer appealed to members in September 1918:

“While events have cast their shadows before us, and while the demands upon your time and talents have been unusual and pressing, still I am pleased to report that you have not been unmindful of your obligations to the Church, and submit the following figures as proof of the same:

Estimate of Pastor's Salary for the year,	\$1200.00
Pastor has received to date	<u>283.00</u>
Deficiency	217.00
Miscellaneous bills, now due and unpaid	35.25
Amount of benevolence as per apportionment	413.00
Amount paid and pledged	<u>299.50</u>
Deficiency	\$113.50
Total Deficiency	\$363.75

When these deficiencies have been provided for, the budget for the closing year will total \$2166.19⁶⁴

In the 1920s, urban growth from Indianapolis continued pushing toward the Broad Ripple area. The Forest Hills' developers platted seventy-five acres into 246 lots in this new subdivision in 1922. By the first weekend, they sold 146 lots.⁶⁵ The congregation's membership reflected this growth. Membership reached a high of over 700 in 1926 and 1927. The Official Board voted to build a new brick church. Wilbur Wright chaired the building committee. They had blueprints prepared. The architect sited the new sanctuary with basement north and south along Guilford. To create an education unit, they planned to move the old church back and rebuild it. The committee bought one set of the plans and debated on how to proceed. Wilbur and Louie Wright spent hours in trying to find a way to use the old church as part of the expansion plans. They finally advised against a building program. The Depression of 1929 hit and the congregation struggled for a number of

Special Evangelistic Services

Broad Ripple Methodist Episcopal Church

Beginning Sunday, March 18, 1928

“THE CHURCH HER OWN EVANGELIST”

What you take part in develops you, not what you look upon
COME, AND GET INTO THESE MEETINGS

Sunday, March 25th, Women and Girls Only, 2:30 P. M.

Sunday, April 1st, Men and Boys Only, 2:30 P. M.

EVERY NIGHT EXCEPT SATURDAY

years. Louie said, "It just seemed like we never got to the place where we could build."⁶⁶

The new northside suburbs attracted interest from other congregations during this period. In 1925, ten organizing families who attended Broadway Methodist founded the Fifty-first Street Methodist Church. Bishop Frederick D. Leete urged creating this congregation as families moved into the Meridian-Kessler neighborhood. Broad Ripple Methodist was the nearest church north but it was considered to be in a village.⁶⁷ Hall Place Methodist prevented Meridian Street relocating to the northwest corner of 16th and Meridian. When the City of Indianapolis took the Hall Place sanctuary for widening 16th Street, the Hall Place congregation merged into Fifty-first Street. This congregation then merged with Meridian Street in 1955. A group from Central Avenue used this building as interim location before forming the St. Luke's congregation.

During the early 1930s, the congregation continued to grow. Membership in 1932 was 297; 428 by September 1937; it would grow to 742 in 1942. Members sponsored numerous attempts to build a new church but the Depression dissipated funds and hopes.⁶⁸ In 1933, Rev. Talbott, the current ministry, reported to the Fourth Quarterly Conference of problems in the Church School "caused by lack of room and equipment, but we are trying to make the best use of what we have and are hoping for something better. The

Conference authorized a committee to study "material needs of our church building and equipment, and the possible ways of meeting those needs." Two years earlier, the church formed "The Calendar Club" for the purpose of furnishing fellowship and contributing to a remodeling or building fund. This group accumulated over \$1,000 in its treasury.⁶⁹



Broad Ripple Methodist Church in 1947.

As the congregation increased, the schools grew also. By 1938, Broad Ripple High School

enrollment was 500 percent over that in 1923. In 1939, Indianapolis Public Schools expanded the high school with another building unit including the gymnasium. The school board acquired four additional acres. The campus size grew to 15 acres. At this time, they the cafeteria into service, with a seating capacity of 300.

As the community began to climb out of the depths of the Depression, the Conference posted Rev. Gillett to Broad Ripple. Rev. Gillett would serve the congregation until 1947. Older members could recall anecdotes about Rev. Gillett's ministry and personality. His son described his father as, "a bit rough around the edges, apolitical to his detriment, outspoken with the hierarchy of the church, an excellent speaker, story teller, humorist and lover of people from all walks of life."⁷⁰

As increased Sunday School enrollment drove additions and remodeling of the frame church, Rev. Gillett took on the responsibility of another addition. Growth in Sunday School enrollment through the 1930s prompted the congregation to add an education unit on the east end of the building. Construction began in 1938 and was completed in 1939. Trustee financial records from July 1937 through August 1938 reflect how they financed construction. Collections totaled \$1,244.72 with two major gifts of \$513.26 and \$300. They also received proceeds of nine candy sales, one at Shampay Cleaners and another at the Grand Union Tea Co. The Matrons Club Chili Supper brought in \$24.15. For digging the basement under the new annex, they paid \$60 to Chas. Surber; Ralph Mayhew received \$92.61 for cement work. Other expenditures were for 25 sacks of cement at 65¢ each; \$5.00 for hauling; \$3.50 for doors; and \$30.00 for plumbing.

Maintaining the old frame church with its multiple additions probably challenged and frustrated members during World War 2. Rev. Gillett's report to the 1946 Fourth Quarterly Conference gives a hint as to the deferred maintenance.

1930

1930 Public library branch opens in Broad Ripple.

1932 Jail torn down.

1938 "Moonriver" steamship ends cruises on White River. The "new" Broad Ripple Park opens a new season, boasting the "world's largest concrete pool," mechanized rides, a new ballroom, and "20 acres of free parking." Vogue Theater opens.

During the year [1945-6], we had to repair the work done by termites. Screens were made for all the windows – plaster was patched and three rooms were painted. Plan are under way for the entire basement and the Kindergarten to be painted during the early Fall. Possibly the Auditorium as well. Ten percent of our envelope giving is now set aside for a New Church Building Fund. This is an increase of 5 percent over the past year. In June 1947, we celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the building of this church. Personally, I think we ought to begin to plan and get ready for that celebration right now. Therefore, I hereby move that we start at the very beginning of the Conference year to raise a New Church Building Fund of \$100 for every year the church has stood. That the New Building Committee nominated by the Nominating committee with the help and aid and in cooperation with the Finance Committee be herewith placed in charge of raising the sum of \$6000.00 for the 60th Anniversary.⁷¹



White Cross Guild members making bandages for use by Methodist Hospital. This photo was taken in the church basement of the in the 1940s. First row: Thelma Hastings, Nora Hague, Mrs. Henley, Okal White, Imo McKenzie. Second row: Rosy Smith Hudson, Alice Galt, Fannie Watts, Louie Wright Eller, Ruth Dodd, Lydia Walker, Helen Hoffman.

[His reference to a 60th Anniversary would mark the years in the frame church.]

References to World War 2 and its impact on the congregation cannot be found. The women in the congregation shouldered more work with sons and husbands on active duty. During the war, the women of the congregation served a lunch to School 80 children on Tuesday at noon. School lunches

lasted one hour and children typically went home for lunch. On these Tuesdays, they came across the street and bounded down to the church basement. Rev. Gillett rented a short movie and showed them on an 8mm projector. “Children” recall the noise and the opportunity to get away from school. They also recall Rev. Gillett climbing up on a table to gain order in a loud and noisy basement. The Official Board discontinued the “Children’s Luncheons” in 1947. There was also a Kindergarten meeting in the Sunday School rooms three days a week. Miss Bevins was the teacher. The Kindergarten also ended in 1947.

For nearly a hundred years, the Coil and Dawson families, related families, and their descendants supported the congregation with their presence, their leadership, and with financial resources. A 1906 membership register lists twelve Dawson family members in the membership; extended family members also belonged. By the 1940s as descendants scattered, the link broke between the congregation and the family.

DR. BLACKBURN BEGINS NEW ERA

In the spring of 1947, Rev. Gillette’s health deteriorated and he left active ministry to recover in Wisconsin. (After regaining his health, he later returned to the Iowa Conference).

In this same period, Rev. H. Otho Blackburn sought a pulpit nearer his recently married daughter, Jeanne Pearson. Rev. Blackburn began serving churches in the Dakota Conference in 1919 and had transferred to the Wisconsin Conference in 1936. He had served as pastor of the First Methodist Church of Oshkosh since 1941. The Oshkosh church benefited from his

1940

1940 New Broad Ripple Post Office built.

1945 City of Indianapolis purchases Broad Ripple Park. Broad Ripple Businessmen’s Association established.

1946 C.I.L. Railroad becomes the Monon Line.

1949 New Broad Ripple Library branch opens, the first library built in the county since 1914.

1950

1952 Broad Ripple Park hosts the Olympic swimming try-outs.

1953 Electric streetcar service ends.

1954 William H. Block Company, a local department store, opens a store in Broad Ripple.

1955 Nickel Plate Railroad donates Steam Engine #587 to the City of Indianapolis for display near the entrance to Broad Ripple Park.

1956 Local clothing retailer L. Strauss opens a branch store in Broad Ripple.

1957 Parking meters installed.

1958 Glendale Shopping Center opens at Keystone Avenue and 62nd Street.

1959 Monon Railroad Station is converted to a store.

leadership. This congregation owned a five-story church building with rental spaces located in the heart of the city. The congregation carried heavy mortgage debt resulting from a 1926 rebuilding program. The Depression affected their finances with the building sold but retained through a repurchase agreement. The agreement saved the building but debt remained. Through Dr. Blackburn's leadership and the success of the Unified Program, that congregation burned their mortgage in 1945.⁷²

The South Indiana Conference offered the congregation at Broad Ripple to Dr. Blackburn. After his arrival, he rudely discovered that the 900 members reported to the Conference and a building fund were only forty-seven members and minimal finances. Jeanne recalls the anguish felt by her mother. Dr. Blackburn chose to stay. He began by straightening out the membership records. Surveying the

neighborhood followed to determine potential members. Finally, he embarked on a building program.

In straightening out the records, Rev. Blackburn requested a comprehensive audit of the congregation's financial records. Emmet W. Green submitted his report on October 13, 1947. He pointed out the congregation had at least four funds and each were handled by a treasurer for that fund. The church did not maintain a consolidated record; each treasurer received and disbursed money. Mr. Green made five key recommendations: (1) the church keep one set of books but separate the funds; (2) each fund was on a different fiscal year; he found nothing in the Discipline required this; (3) the Board

needed to read or hear their duties in the Discipline as it related to financial matters; (4) he could not find payment of insurance or bonding premiums; and (5) there was no record of the assets and liabilities in a "concrete or coordinated manner;" the Discipline called for such a report as well a "periodic operations statement."⁷³ The Finance Committee responded the following March they were "concerned only in building up the financial structure of the church" "to a point where our income will take care of all our obligations." The chairman also found two "business men to consult with me to form a financial, business policy . . ."⁷⁴ The audit showed \$175 estimated cash and not in the bank and \$3300 in endowment, building funds, and investments; the congregation owned \$2561 for the parsonage and \$50 in accounts payable. The church building and parsonage were the major assets.

Opportunities to grow came from outside the neighborhood. Certain events at Central Avenue Methodist Church precipitated a special session of the Official Board on October 24, 1948. The Board met to consider one special problem, namely, to determine if the Broad Ripple Methodist Official Board members would like to invite the members of Central Avenue Church to unite with Broad Ripple Methodist Church. After some discussion, the board voted unanimously to extend a sincere invitation. Members indicated they did not to intercede in any problem confronting the Central Avenue membership. The spirit of brotherly love and the Kingdom of God in our own community was their only interest."⁷⁵ A letter was sent to Central Avenue's Official Board Chairman with copies to the Bishop Raines, District Superintendent Sumner Martin, and Rev. Edwin W. Stricker. Parker P. Jordan from Central Avenue responded for their trustees. They expressed their appreciation "for this invitation and to say that our church has taken no action about moving."⁷⁶

As church attendance grew in the late 1940s, people were driving to the church. Parking became a problem in 1949. Concerns about the police enforcing a parking ordinance prohibiting parking on both sides of Guilford. The Official Board instructed the Trustees to investigate providing parking on the vacant lot south of the church.⁷⁷



Miniature shovels were given to those at the ground-breaking in 1951.

1960

1961 City constructs parking deck constructed over Broad Ripple canal.

1967 First African-American students arrive at Broad Ripple High School. Monon Line ends passenger service in Broad Ripple.

1969 Broad Ripple Village Association founded.

A few numbers from Fourth Quarterly Conference, May 11, 1949, give some insights into the growing congregation. Active membership as of May 11, 1949: 497, a growth of ninety-two over the last conference year. The pastor's salary was set at \$4,000. There were seventy-seven active members in the WSCS and the congregation received \$1,166.25 through their efforts.⁷⁸ A month later, the group cleared \$99 from a concession stand at the Broad Ripple Street Fair.⁷⁹

Venture of Faith: It took over three years of intensive visitation and cultivation to bring the Official Board to a decision of approving a building program. This decision would involve raising and spending more than \$60,000. Fund-raising campaigns raised \$42,000 in pledges with \$11,256 in cash on hand. Dr. Blackburn successfully took the fund-raising to the Broad Ripple business community. C. T. Foxworthy, owner of Foxworthy Ford, was one of his earliest and strongest partners. The building program began with a motion at the Fourth Quarterly conference on February 20, 1950. The date of March 12, 1950 was set for a congregational vote for a building program. The conference also authorized employing Kenneth Williams from Kokomo as the architect. Financially, Williams divided his work into three parts to reduce fees. The Expansion Control Committee realized that in order to make additional progress, they needed the physical evidence of a building. With the consent of the Bishop and Cabinet, Ground-Breaking Services were conducted on August 12, 1951. This "Venture of Faith" proved the source of motivation.

Cash gifts and regular payments on pledges, made it possible to move rapidly forward. The Gwaltney Brothers accepted a contract to build the church. Helping to build were members of the Men's Club who contributed 3600 hours of labors. For every dollar expended, the congregation received almost \$1.50 in returned value. The completion of the total plan came in at nearly \$16,000 under the contractor's estimated cost.

With limited cash, the congregation started building on a three-unit plan. Before completing the basement, sufficient funds were available and the Cabinet consented with building the sanctuary. This activity attracted more families to the membership. The first service in the new Fellowship Hall was July 12, 1953. Worship continued there for eleven more months as the old building was removed. Consecration came on June 13, 1954. Bishop J. Ralph Megee preached the consecration sermon to a congregation of happy people, rejoicing in the fulfillment of their expectation of the victorious achievement.



Finishing the tower, 1954. Dr. Blackburn in white shirt and waving.

In the brief span of less than seven years, the congregation invested approximately \$300,000 in building and equipment, with only a remaining \$44,000 mortgage. Membership expanded from 162 in 1948 to 1356 in 1958. During his pastorate, Dr. Blackburn received 1601 persons into the fellowship, including children.

CARRYING ON IN DR. BLACKBURN'S SHADOWS

Dr. Blackburn's assignment to the Church Federation of Indianapolis in 1958 provides the logical break to this history. Understanding the historical significance of events, decisions, and ministry challenges those who are living this history. Dr. Blackburn brought a managerial and leadership style that few could replicate. His pastoral call notebooks reflect the level of detail he

1970

1970 William E. Jones becomes first African-American principal of Broad Ripple High School. Broad Ripple Merchants Association organizes.

1971 Broad Ripple Art Fair held.

1974 Westfield Bridge over White River replaced. Raft racing on White River begins.

1975 Broad Ripple carousel is restored and reopened at the Children's Museum.

1978 First duck-crossing sign erected.

managed. His attention to detail allowed him to keep the pulse of the membership.

The wave of development that swept through Broad Ripple after World War 2 moved into Washington Township, Carmel, and beyond. In the four decades following completion of the sanctuary, population in the Broad Ripple area declined. From the 1960 to 1970, the population declined 19.6%; another 17.2% decrease continued in the 1970s. During this period, the average number of persons-per-household decreased, as did the number of school-age children. Homes were filled with more single persons, childless adults,

and senior citizens. In 1986 with the publication of the *Broad Ripple Village Neighborhood Plan*, it noted the average age of residents (33.4) was considerably older than Meridian-Kessler (29.0) and Butler-Tarkington (29.9). It attributes the age difference to the large number of elderly individuals living in Broad Ripple. Over 23% of residents were 65 years of age or older contrasted with 10.5% in Meridian-Kessler, 14.8% Butler-Tarkington, and 17.8% Keystone-Kessler.⁸⁰

This demographic shift affected Broad Ripple United Methodist in several significant ways. The congregation lost the potential for future leaders as relatively few sons and daughters of the next generation remained in the neighborhood. In one young adult class meeting in 1969, only one couple remains as members. Others moved to the suburbs or out of Indianapolis. Membership in the MYF peaked in the mid 1970s and declined. At one point, only two youth were members of the high school Sunday School class. The residential areas of Broad Ripple also witnessed a renaissance during the 1970s and 1980s. Most houses in the area consisted of small, attractive bungalows. Although low by 2002 standards, the average cost of housing in 1970 was about \$20,000; by 1985, it had increased to \$44,000. Although Broad Ripple

saw a 19.6 percent decline in population between 1960-1970 and 17.2 percent during the 1970s, the number of occupied housing units did not decrease. Singles, adult couples without children, and senior citizens dominated the population of Broad Ripple. In a study conducted for the 1985 development plan; Broad Ripple's population was clearly older, more educated, and more financially secure than surrounding neighborhoods.⁸¹

For the 2000 census, an executive summary prepared by Claritas, Inc. on the Broad Ripple community is not encouraging. They project population to decline by 1.7% by 2007; the U. S. population should grow by 4.8%. Of the 5,660 persons in Broad Ripple, the profile for shows 92.6 White Alone, 3.9% African American Alone, .2% Am. Indian Alone, .7% Some Other Race, and 1.5% Two or More Races. The 3,123 households are estimated to decline by .3% while the number of U. S. household will grow by 5.4%. Of the 3,123 households, 56.9% are Owner Occupied and 43.1% Renter Occupied. The 2000 Average Household Size was 1.8 persons.⁸²

In 1959-1960, Church Surveys from Boston University performed the most extensive audit of the congregation. They analyzed the congregation's growth and evaluated its membership and budget potential for the future. A major emphasis throughout the study was program evaluation. "[For] in any growing church, the program reflects that growth as a building must reflect the

1980

1980 School #80 closed. The Vogue theater reopens as a nightclub. Riviera Club settles lawsuit in Federal District Court; seven families admitted with their African American or biracial children.

1981 Broad Ripple High School becomes a magnet school for the humanities. Shortridge High School closed, leaving Broad Ripple High School to absorb a majority of those students.

1983 Engine No. 587, on display to the entrance of Broad Ripple Park since 1955, is moved to Beech Grove for restoration.

1984 Restoration of Broad Ripple Park completed. School 80 reopens as condominiums.

1985 65% of student body at Broad Ripple High School is African-American.

1986 A new branch of the Marion County-Indianapolis Public Library opens in Broad Ripple Park.

1987 Broad Ripple celebrates its sesquicentennial with parade and festival.

1990

1995 Construction begins on Phase I of the Monon Rail Trail in Broad Ripple. City bans skateboarding in Broad Ripple.

1996 Broad Ripple Village Association, in conjunction with local naturalists, decides to relocate the large duck population living along the Central Canal to other nature areas to protect them from the ever-increasing traffic in the area. The Monon Trail, a “rails-to-trails” project, opens between Broad Ripple and 86th Street in Nora.

program that is operated within.”⁸³ There is no evidence that the congregation attempted to implement any of the recommendations. The Polis Center furnished a photocopy but the congregation’s copy was located in a dusty box in the attic.

Church Surveys began their analysis by complimenting the congregation. The 1958-59 Fourth Quarterly Conference pruned membership rolls. The congregation removed 386 members

that dropped the membership to 720 at the time of the Annual Conference reports. “This was a healthy rather than an unhealthy move in that the remaining 720 persons constitute the actual membership of the church and not a membership made up of 30 per cent non-resident members.”

While circumstances have changed dramatically since 1960, Church Survey’s methodology still has value for evaluating the congregations current or future strategies. There were thirteen specific recommendations and some still may be relevant. Church Surveys projected a congregation of 1,700+ members by 1970. They saw a need to set minimal standards for attendance, service, and financial support by member families. For children up to eleven, the church had only 1,920 square feet; to meet needs of these children, the church should have 6,300 square feet. By 1970, they projected a need for at least 139 car spaces at each service of worship.

Vestiges from the old frame church remain. The original bell now hangs in our church tower. The former outdoor sign sat on the concrete support for the porch. The Blake Chapel pews were salvaged and cut down by the Blake family. The altar was lovingly refinished by Lynn Martin and sits in the back of the parlor.

The trustees had the house owned by the church at 6177 Guilford demolished in 1979 to make way for a parking lot. It was initially graveled but the City required paved parking lots. Using different funds, the trustees had the lot paved and landscaped.

In 1984, long-time member Emily Wright passed away. Her will provided a large bequest to the church. Ken Pearson served as the administrator. In accordance with her instructions, the trustees accomplished many needed improvements. First, an elevator was added making the sanctuary and basement accessible to the handicapped. Second, the heating system was updated and air conditioning was added. Third, the canopy turned the south entrance into the main entrance, as it provided a dry area for members and visitors entering or leaving.

Memorial United Methodist at 56th and Broadway struggled for many years to retain membership. The congregation and successive District Superintendents realized this former Evangelical United Brethren congregation located in the Meridian-Kessler neighborhood would not remain viable. The 1982 Annual Conference approved the resolution to dispose of the church property and place the proceeds in a Memorial Fund for Church Extension in Marion County. Several members from the Memorial Church united with Broad Ripple after the congregation closed.

The strength of the congregation’s music program reaches many people – members and non-members. For over fifty years, Jeanne Pearson Barry and Phyllis Rademacher provided leadership and direction. The choir provided leadership beyond music to the congregation. During the 1960s and 1970s, the men of the choir participated in the Rippletones. This men’s chorus under the direction of Jeanne took barbershop singing to the community.

Jeanne’s retirement as director of the Sanctuary Choir provided the congregation the motivation to honor her service with the purchase of handbells. The congregation honored her service during a morning service. Jeanne sat in the front pew as Rev. Friesen spoke. A group of hastily assembled volunteers began to ring the handbells in the balcony surprising both Jeanne and the congregation. Since that moment, the bell choir expanded the octaves using the proceeds of sales of cookies and nuts. The handbells give more members ways to participate in the music ministry.

For the past 150 years, the Lord gave this congregation an opportunity to share a mission and ministry in Broad Ripple. That mission varied commensurate with our strength and vitality. We know we succeeded when the Lord says, “Well done!”

2000

2000 Library closes at Broad Ripple Park and reopens in Glendale Shopping Center.

2002 Broad Ripple United Methodist Church celebrates 150 years as the outpost for preaching Christ's Gospel.

PROLOGUE

The end to this written history serves as the prologue to fulfilling to Broad Ripple United Methodist's ministry for the next 150 years and beyond. For the past 150 years, our community of faith has ministered to people in

Broad Ripple, Washington Township, Indianapolis, Indiana, the United States, and around the world. In some cases, their ministry began on faith; how we proceed may also come from our faith. Dr. Kennon L. Callahan, a leading long-range planning consultant for churches, invites us to answer these questions:

- Where are we headed?
- What kind of future are we building?
- What are our strength, gifts, and competencies?
- What is God calling us to accomplish in mission?⁸⁴

This history contributes to our memory. The dynamics of memory, change, conflict, and hope will shape the future work for Broad Ripple United Methodist. Hope is the strongest dynamic. We live on hope, not memory. Take away our memories we become anxious. Take away hope and we feel terrified.

At the 2000 Leadership Visioning Retreat, we recognized our ministry framework as both the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

And [Jesus] said, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and foremost commandment. And a second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' (Matt. 22:37-39)

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' (Matt. 28:18-20)

Thus, four essential commitments of the ministry of Broad Ripple United Methodist Church were exposed:

WORSHIP

*To **magnify** Jesus Christ and **motivate** people in their relationship with Him.*

SERVE

*To equip people with the skills and opportunities they need for **ministry**.*

GROW

*To grow people to spiritual **maturity**.*

SHARE

*To connect people to Jesus Christ's loving **mission**.*

For these commitments to drive our growth in ministry, every committee must develop strategies to embrace these essentials. We must work to ensure every project, policy, or program will involve and can be evaluated by adherence to one or more of these commitments. Our remaining work for preaching the Gospel in Broad Ripple remains unfinished.



Top row: Rev. Coahran, Rev. Bachert, Dr. Blackburn, Rev. Farr
 Second row: Rev. Friesen, Rev. Ashley, Rev. Flynn, Rev. Echols.
 Third row: Rev. Schwein, Rev. Gillett, Rev. Sexton
 Fourth row: Rev. Spaulding, Rev. Schwartz, Rev. Current

MINISTERS WHO SERVED BROAD RIPPLE

This list comes from multiple sources including Conference minutes, a Nineteenth Century database in the Methodist archives at DePauw, and the Allisonville Circuit minute book. Biographical information on early preachers came from the 1875 South-East Indiana Conference minutes.

YEARS	NAME	CIRCUIT
1851-1852	John O'Neal	Allisonville
1852-1853	Almon Greenman	Allisonville
1853-1854	Abram C. Barhart	Allisonville
1854-1855	Thomas Stabler	Allisonville
1855-1856	A. C. Manwell	Allisonville
1856-1857	H. A. Cottingham	Allisonville
1857-1858	John B. Birt	Allisonville
1858-1860	John S. McCarty	Castleton
1860-1862	William Blake	Castleton
1862-1863	Alfred G. McCarter	Castleton
1863-1865	Richard D. Spellman	Castleton
1865-1867	George Havens	Castleton

1867-1868	Alfred G. McCarter	Castleton
1868-1870	Jacob C. White – b1821, Huntingdon County, PA. Began ministry in 1849 in Williamsport, IN. Served as chaplain on Wabash and Erie Canal, 1854.	Castleton
1869-1870	Asa Sleeth – b1844, Shelby County, IN. Began ministry 1868 in Jonesville, IN.	Castleton
1870-1872	David C. Benjamin – b1830, Athens County, OH. Began ministry in Cincinnati Conference in Venice, OH. Captain, 39 th Regiment, Ohio Volunteers, 1861; appointed Captain, Regular US Army, 1864.	Castleton
1872-1873	Samuel Longdon – b1815, Derbyshire, England. Began ministry in 1832 with Primitive Methodists serving Hundersfield Church. Emigrated 1838. Admitted to Pittsburgh Conference and served Westchester, PA.	Castleton
1873-1874	James H. Stallard – b1837, Moscow, Rush County, IN; d1875, Nashville, IN. Began ministry, Milton Circuit, 1859.	Castleton
1874-1875	George E. Neville – b1841, Mayfield, Cuyahoga County, OH. Began ministry in 1869.	Castleton
1875-1876	Thomas Wilson Jones – b1821, Harrison County, OH. Began ministry 1854, Mt. Vernon, IN.	Castleton

1876-1877	Abner N. Thornton	Castleton
1877-1880	Alexander Jameson	Castleton Lawrence
1880-1881	Austin H. Reat– b1823, Pickaway County, OH. Began ministry 1863.	Castleton
1881-1883	William M. Grubbs – b1815 near Frankfort, KY. Began ministry 1834 Kentucky Conference. Transferred to SE Indiana 1870.	Castleton
1883-1884	J. S. Ruggles	Castleton
1884-1886	George S. Conner – b1825, Coshocton County, OH. Began ministry in 1852.	Castleton
1887-1889	Jeremiah D. Current	Castleton
1889-1890	David A. Robertson – b1834, Jefferson County, IN. Began ministry 1859 in Canaan, IN.	Castleton
1891-1893	Benjamin F. Morgan – b1831 Began ministry 1856 with United Brethren Conference.	Castleton
1893-1895	Merritt Machlan	Castleton
1895-1896	James P. Maupin	Castleton
1897-1898	Harvey H. Sheldon	Castleton
1898-1900	Carl S. Risley – Began ministry 1894 Ragsville.	Mapleton & Broad Ripple

1900-1901	Charles D. Wilson
1901-1902	Frank O. Beck
1902-1904	Frank F. Lewis
1904-1908	O. B. Morris
1906-1907	Richard W. Raaf
1907-1908	H. E. Moore
1908-1911	Clarence E. Flynn
1911-1912	Samuel L. Welker
1912-1917	Oscar E. Allison
1917-1919	Ray A. Ragsdale – b1881 in Daviess County, IN; d1941 in New Albany, IN. Began ministry in 1904, West Sanborn.
1919-1921	William S. Biddle
1921-1924	Albert J. (A. J.) Spaulding – b1886; d1952. Married Edith Hague while serving Broad Ripple.
1924-1926	Elmer St. Clair
1926-1930	Morton A. Farr – b1866; d1940.
1930-1936	Norbert G. Talbott, Th.D, DD – b1897, Evansville, IN. Began ministry, 1928, Spencer, IN. Chaplain, US Navy.
1936-1947	William Edwin Gillett – b1902 in Weyerhaeuser, WI. Began ministry in 1930.

1947-1958	H. Otho Blackburn, Th.D – b1893 in Ravenswood, WV; d1974, Indianapolis. Began ministry 1919 Harrisburg, Dakota Conference.
1958-1961	Rev. Virgil W. Sexton. Began ministry, 1942, Willow Branch. Chaplain, US Navy, 1945.
1961-1965	Rev. Albert R. Ashley – Began ministry 1938, Sparta Circuit, Tennessee Conference.
1965-1967	Raymond F. Echols. Began ministry Goldsmith-Hopewell, 1945.
1966-1969	John E. Hoadley, Associate Minister – Began ministry 1954, Mt. Zion.
1967-1971	Floyd L. Cook, DD – b in Castleton, IN. Began ministry, Shelby Street, 1935.
1971-1975	Harold B. Bachert – Began ministry 1948, South Milford-Wayne.
1975-1976	W. Merlin Schwein, Sr. – Began ministry 1937 Kent.
1977-1987	Arthur K. Friesen – Minnesota native; began ministry in 1957 in Wakarusa.
1987-1994	J. Alan Coahran – Lebanon, IN native; began ministry 1957, North LaSalle Street, Indianapolis.
1994-1999	Larry R. Schwartz – Portland, IN native; began ministry in Poneto-Reiffsburg-Prairie.
2000 to present	Nancy Blevins – Began ministry in 1997 as Associate at Noblesville First.

MISSIONS

*Is it not [ours] to share food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter –
when you see the naked, to clothe him
and not turn away from your own flesh and blood?
Isaiah 58:9 (New International Version)*

Methodists have supported missions since the days of John Wesley. In the Nineteenth Century, the *Western Christian Advocate* printed reports from missionaries in nearly every issue, whether they were posted to Oregon, Korea, China, India, or Africa. Members and congregations sent contributions to Methodist organizations in New York and Philadelphia that supported these missionaries. In the “Detailed Missionary Report” of the 1875 South-Eastern

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Broad Ripple Methodist Episcopal Church INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA			
THIS SIDE FOR CURRENT EXPENSES			
SALARIES: Pastor, District Superintendent, Bishop, Conference Claimants, Janitor			
OFFICE EXPENSES: Water, Gas, Light, Insurance, Fuel, Barret, Assn., Stationery and Postage, Miscellaneous			
Name _____		Amount _____	
THIS SIDE FOR World Service and Benevolences			
WORLD SERVICE INCLUDES: Foreign and Home Missions; Education; Hospitals, Homes and Deaconess Work; Temperance, Prohibition and Public Mor- als; Patriotic and Relief; American Bible Society			
BENEVOLENCES INCLUDE: Evansville College, Area Expense, Confer- ence Entertainment, Wesley Foundation, Riverdale Improvements, Ministerial Training, Children's Home, Hospital, Gen- eral Conference Expense, City Missionary Society			
Name _____		Amount _____	

Indiana Conference Minutes, eleven Wellington members contributed \$1.00 each and nine 50¢. Of this amount contributed, \$10 made Maggie Moore and Wm. Privett life members of the Conference Missionary Society.

The tradition of looking to the connectional church

continues. This 1933 offering envelopes infers the mission priorities for that era.

Increasing number of boys in Broad Ripple created the need for a Cub Pack and Boy Scout Troop. A special meeting of the Official Board met at 9:30 p.m. on a Wednesday night to consider continuing the church's support of the Scouts. The minutes do not mention the problems but there was considerable discussion. The Board voted to adjourn but continued discussion

until a vote to continue support.⁸⁵ Eventually, the congregation could not find adult leaders and withdrew its support for the charters.

The congregation has reached out to the neighborhood in many ways. For many years, three groups from Alcoholics Anonymous met at the church. Cleaning cigarette butts from doorways strained the church's relationship with the group and they found a new home at Central Baptist. In the 1970s, a group from the Women of the Church felt mothers needed time away from their children and set up a Mother's Day Out program. Both this program and School Time Preschool operated as a ministry to the neighborhood.

A house sat on the site of the current parking lot. For many years, descendants of Mary Coil Dawson lived there. At a Called Quarterly Conference on April 12, 1965, the congregation authorized the trustees to purchase the house for \$22,000. Rev. Hoadley lived there until reassigned in 1969. For several years, Kappa Alpha Theta sorority used it for their Santa House. The MYF used it for a youth house. With declining MYF membership, it fell into disuse (plus the youth did not like the cute pictures painted on the walls from the Santa House). In 1975, the trustees had a quote of \$1,300 for demolition. Before demolition occurred, the Immaculate Heart of Mary congregation in Meridian-Kessler approached the congregation. They were sponsoring a Vietnamese family that needed a home. For several years, this family lived in the house.

Habitat for Humanity: Beginning in 1996, the Rotary Club of Indianapolis formed a partnership with the congregation and Trinity Homes for building homes in 1996, 1999, and 2001. Workers for the church and Rotary met at the Habitat warehouse and built wall panels. When the walls were completed, they moved to the sites for the house and were raised in place on a Friday. By the following Saturday, the house was ready for occupying. Members of the congregation worked on all phases, from nailing panels, to raising walls, to finishing the interior.

CHURCH HIGHLIGHTS

THE CHANCEL WINDOWS

The left stained glass window contains the **Wheat** which when used with the **Grapes** opposite in the right window stand for the Holy Communion. They are symbolic of the body and blood of Christ. The **Sword** is symbolic of the Word of God and refers to Hebrews 4:12. The laurel wreath with the sword is the Olympic wreath of victory and signifies that the Word of God leads to the triumph of eternal life. The **Olive Branches** symbolize the story of the flood and have the meanings of deluge, victory and the expectation of new life.

The center stained glass window has at its crest the buildings of **The Heavenly City**. They symbolize eternal life. Below the figure of Jesus is seen the **Lilies** and **The Open Book**. The lilies have long symbolized the resurrection and eternal life. When used with the open book, they symbolize that the way to eternal life is found in the Word of God. The **Torch** is a symbol of witnessing by men and refers to Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

The symbol of the **Grapes** tops the right stained glass window. The **Anchor** is one of the oldest symbols of Christianity. It was a disguised symbol of the cross used during the persecutions. Most often, it is displayed with a crossbar on the handle giving it the effect of a cross. It is considered by some to be a symbol of Hope. (Hebrews 6:19). The **Crossed Trumpets** are symbolic of the judgment and the call to worship.

The use of leaves in stained glass windows usually refers to **Acanthus Leaves**. The acanthus is an evergreen plant. The leaves are therefore said to symbolize eternal life.

The color **Blue**, being the color of the sky, is the heavenly color. The color **Gold** when used in stained glass is the color of kings. It refers to the kingship and glory of God.

THE ETERNAL FLAME

The Methodist *Book of Discipline*, paragraph 1214, #3 sets out as a goal:

"To create within The United Methodist Church a deepening commitment to personal and corporate Christian stewardship which includes the use and sharing of talents and resources, and the practice of a Christian life-style".

John E. Hague, a long time member who lived at 6170 Guilford, donated the "Eternal Light" when the Church was remodeled. John grew up on a farm in Castleton and Hague Road is named after his family. When a small group of Castleton residents decided that it was time to build a Methodist church in that area, he donated funds to help defray the costs of that project. He joined with others to loan money to the Church to allow them to buy the ground upon which to build the church building. As that Church grew, he and his family were increasingly active. They taught Sunday School classes and served on various boards and church offices. Some members of his family are still active in the Castleton United Methodist Church.

After his children were grown, he moved to Broad Ripple and became equally active in the Broad Ripple Methodist Church. Again, he organized and taught Sunday school classes, participated in the activities of the "Calendar Club" and he supported the church as best he could with his



Looking east during construction in 1953.

time, his ideas, and his financial resources.

The light hangs at the front of the Sanctuary. The light burns 24 hours a day, every day, to remind us of the eternal love of God and of Jesus Christ. If John E. Hague read this paragraph from the *Book of Discipline*, he would say, "That's what I have been telling you all along."

BLAKE CHAPEL

Jane Adeline Blake was the daughter of Paul and Mary Blake. She graduated with honors in 1953 from Broad Ripple High School. DePauw University had accepted her and she was the winner of three scholarships including the National Methodist Youth Scholarship. She died four weeks after graduation.

With church construction underway, the Blake family contributed funds and service for the chapel in Jane's memory. The Blake family performed much of the work on the interior. They cut down some of the old pews from the old church. Jane's grandfather, William Blake, built the pulpit, the altar rails, and the baptismal. The old organ belonged to Frank O. Eaton, Church Treasurer Emeritus, who lived just south of the church. The church dedicated the chapel on December 5, 1971.

The Builders Class, formed in 1954, has been the primary user of the chapel.

STAIRWAY MURAL

The Noah's Ark mural began with an idea to improve the visual experience of young children climbing the stairs to their classes. In 1998, Mary McCallion, Education Chair, asked the teachers for ideas. Julie Foster put Mary in touch with neighbor Kelley Ross and partner, Chris Cassell, two graphic artists who had painted other public spaces in the city. Between Mary and Kelley, they conceived the idea for a mural.

The original plan was a one-wall representation. The Education committee liked the idea but asked the artists to make the mural a three-story project, incorporating two flights of stairs and two landings. This final proposal shows a progression of a viewer moves up the stairs: the gathering of the animals into the ark, the storm and flood, and the final scene of peace. The design closes with scene of a worshipping, thankful Noah and a large rainbow, the enduring symbol of God's promise to mankind.

BLUE COLOR SCHEME

Until 1980, the reredos obscured the bottom third of the stained glass windows. This screen and cloth were part of the original paneling. Knowing these windows would provide a dramatic backdrop to the altar, the trustees agreed to a proposal from members of the choir. A bit of drama introduced them to the congregation. Before Easter Sunday in 1980, a volunteer crew removed the reredos, reusing moldings on each side. The congregation remained unaware of these changes until Sunday. The service began in a dark sanctuary. As the windows coverings dropped off, worshipers could see the entire window. Finally, window coverings came off and all could see the blue and burgundy colors. Between Maundy Thursday Service and Easter morning, volunteers repainted the front walls. An interior designer had recommended the hue of blue to pick up the blue in the windows.

A subsequent remodeling project added the thrust platform, choir chairs facing the congregation, and the table. The blue carpet in the sanctuary complements the walls and windows.



Thelma Merket's Sunday School class with 17 girls, 1955. Before the church was finished, classes were held on the concrete floor using chairs from the old church.

**HOW EVENTS OVER THE PAST 150 YEARS
TOUCHED THE CONGREGATION?**

When Rev. Larry Schwartz commissioned this history, we sought answers to the questions below. Answers to some fell considerably outside available documents or memories.

The Civil War	Prohibition
WW1	Flight
WW2	The Canal
Autos	The Great Depression (plus five other depressions)
The Flood of 1913	Korean Conflict
Vietnam	World Mission
TV – telephone	Space
Computers	Internet
The polio epidemic of the 50s	The rise and fall of the KKK in Indiana
The Gulf War	Atomic energy – bombs
Crime	Railroad, streets, electricity
The old Broad Ripple Park	The Monon Trail
Glendale Shopping Center	The EUB-Methodist merger 1968
Civil Rights	Peace Movement

Underground Railroad

How or if the Underground Railroad affected Broad Ripple and Washington Township remains a topic for other researchers. Hiram Bacon’s 385-acre farm near East 56th Street and Keystone Avenue served as a principal station. The Bacon farm was the first and largest cheese dairy in Marion County.⁸⁶

One route came through Mooresville and another from Greensburg through Shelby County. Converging on this farm, escaping slaves arrived singly or in groups. They hid in deep beds of covered wagons or on foot. At

the Bacon farm, they were hidden, fed, and given needed clothing⁸⁷. They continued north through the Quaker community of Westfield and the depot ran by Levi Pennington. From Westfield, the route ran north to Logansport or Wabash, through South Bend into Niles, Michigan.⁸⁸ Mostly adults participated in the UGRR. Involving their children put them at risk. The reward for turning in UGRR sites ranged \$100-200 – a whole years salary. Families such as the Bacons served humanity without the knowledge of their children or neighbors.

Temperance

Rev. James Havens linked Temperance and the Methodists in this 1855 note in the *Western Christian Advocate*.

I am happy to say the Lord still reigns, that the Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation, and the Church is still alive and moving onward in the purity of her aims and the glory of her conquests. In spite of political demagogues of all parties and the mercenary spirit of the worldly-minded, the towers of our Israel still stand and her bulwarks are yet unmoved. I have never known a better spirit among the preachers nor witnessed clearer or more powerful conversions among the people. In almost every charge, there have been genuine and healthy revivals, and the prospect, I think, is growing brighter. The friends of religion and moral reform in Indiana are everywhere rejoicing over the passage of a judicious, constitutional, and efficient prohibitory liquor law; and now, if the good citizens of the state see to the vigorous enforcement of this law, thousands of souls will be saved from death, and public drunkards, at least, will be heard of no more. May the Lord bless the people of all nations!

The General Conference advocated Temperance in all ME churches. In the 1884, the committee on Temperance urged Methodists to use their influence to “banish the social glass” Churches were to have one temperance lesson in each quarter in the Sunday School.⁸⁹

Temperance articles filled the *Western Christian Advocate* and Indianapolis newspapers during the last half of the nineteenth Century. Gov. Porter of Kansas spoke at the Acton Camp Meeting in July 1882. He was on a speaking tour and stopped at Seymour before coming to Acton.⁹⁰ From 1859 to 1905, the Acton Camp Grounds served as an important forum for the exchange of ideas in central Indiana. The Indianapolis District of the South-East Indiana Conference owned the camp. No documents suggest people from Broad Ripple attended the camp but they would have read reports about events and happenings at the camp.⁹¹

Temperance was an issue for Broad Ripple residents. In 1903, Jacob S. Mustard, a member of the congregation and married to Cassandra Coil, joined the Mason in 1903. His father had been made a Mason in 1839. The Mustard family owned large tracts of land between Indianapolis and the village of Wellington, which would eventually be joined with Broad Ripple. With a desire that the new lodge would have a permanent home, Jacob and his wife Cassandra presented the lodge with a 30 acre tract of land at 46th and Illinois to be sold to establish a building fund. Jacob died the following year, but his executors sold the land and raised \$25,000 for construction of a new lodge. The old Mustard Hall now houses several bars and a dance club when the lodge moved to a former office building near Broad Ripple Park. Cassandra Mustard would probably be less than pleased to know that drinking now goes on in the old building, since Jacob's will insisted that the Hall have a room set aside for the Women's Christian Temperance Union, to which his wife passionately belonged.⁹²

Tolerance existed alongside Temperance activities. Certain "prosperous farmers" thought "the best work at a barn raising, a husking bee, or in the harvest field could be obtained by giving the workers a good supply of whiskey in a tin cup. To have suggested that any of these farmers was anywhere within miles of being a prohibitionist would have incurred his lasting enmity. Their awakening came about sixty years ago [c1858] when Harrison Dawson, a Dearborn county relative of the Washington township Dawson's, came and talked temperance in such an effective way that 'the little jug' disappeared in time from the harvest field altogether and from the other places where its presence had been deemed necessary to stimulate the workers to greater activity."⁹³

On a local basis, the temperance movement met with success in creating "dry" communities. A "blanket remonstrance" in July 1906 closed saloons in Washington Township including Broad Ripple. Predictably, the sheriff arrested violators still selling liquor.

In November 1910, Irwin Dawson and August (Jack) Christian petitioned the county commissioners for saloon licenses. Dawson wanted to open a saloon on Shelby Street in Broad Ripple; Christian wanted to reopen his roadhouse at Allisonville Road and 42d Street.

Washington Township had been "dry" for the past four years, as "blanket remonstrances have kept saloons out of the territory. Such a remonstrance operates during a period of two years, and this year the fight to keep the township "dry" must be renewed. The law provides that a majority of the voters who voted in the last election must sign the application. In 1908 there were 1,405 votes polled."

The December 2 issue reported that Christian and Dawson did not follow up in the County Commissioners Court. The commissioners sustained the remonstrance, "which was filed and which had about 240 majority."

The following week (December 9), they reported on the session with the commissioners and the bitter fight between the attorneys over names and signatures on the petitions. "Remarks almost personal in character were frequently made. Commissioner Carl Von Hake stated he knew personally of the names challenged as non residents and not being voters as those of men who had resided in Washington Township for years." "One signature, that of John R. Johnson, is challenged on the ground that he was serving a jail sentence imposed in Criminal Court, and was disenfranchised at the time the remonstrance was filed."

On February 10, 1911, the headline was "SALOON FIGHT IS HOT. Washington Township Remonstrance in Circuit Court." Old Time Residents and Land Owners are Alleged to be Not Legal Voters. The attorneys appealed to Circuit Court alleging, "nearly 500 names of the 900 on the remonstrance were illegal voters and 14 were dead." "Among the men ...alleged to be illegal voters are Joseph Johnson, who owns a farm and has raided a family there, including his son, attorney Emsley W. Johnson, of this city. John Harcourt,

another landowner and stock grower; Elijah Foley, Omer Boardman, Elmer Trester, George and Charles Hessong and Marion Cline. Some of the men who were said to be not legal voters were placed on the witness stand. They were old school mates of Irwin Dawson, one of the plaintiffs. When asked if he knew them he admitted knowing four and finally said he could not recognize any more. The case will probably last into next week. Attorney Emsley W. Johnson is representing the remonstrators, assisted by R. C. Minton, attorney for the Anti-Saloon League.”⁹⁴

Significant in this story was the township went “dry” in 1906. From population numbers, the township was still predominately rural. The annexation story sent earlier suggested the “town” residents wanted out of the “dry” rural township. Earlier that year, Broad Ripple faced a shortfall of \$750 in tax revenues. The remonstrance closed Broad Ripple’s five saloons depriving the town of this tax revenue. Over 300 signed petitions for the City of Indianapolis to annex Broad Ripple. Many believed they if they would have to cover the shortfall in town revenues, they may as well get city fire and police protection as well. Indianapolis had earlier annexed from the former city limits at 33d Street to 50th Street. The land in between was platted for city lots and landowners favored annexation.⁹⁵

The remonstrance was very important for the coming of Prohibition. In 1895, the state passed a law allowing remonstrances to be filed to block saloons from getting a liquor license. In 1908, the state passed a county local option law (during a special session right before the election) that allowed for a countywide vote on the dry/wet issue (giving rural voters power over city voters). This law was changed about 1910 to township and ward local option (Democrats having gained power as governor in 1908 and in the State House by 1910). In 1917, Indiana enacted statewide Prohibition by statute (not by constitutional amendment).⁹⁶

The Temperance movement continued to fight even with repeal of Prohibition inevitable. The Epworth League planned to attend the District Prohibition Contest at Fletcher Place on May 4, 1927. “At least eight contestants would be present.”⁹⁷ The June 3, 1933, *Indianapolis News* carried a story that the Broad Ripple ME and Disciples of Christ Churches were sponsoring a joint Sunday evening service for June 4th entitled: “Shall the 18th Amendment be Retained?” This service was one of at least nine in the city that

day. The sermon title told how they were going to deal with the topic. All of the services either were at or organized by Methodist churches. This story is not surprising considering how long they had been involved with it. Depending on where we begin the argument, the Methodist Church had been pushing for Temperance for 100 years by the time repeal came. In the opinion of one researcher, “Plenty of time, talent, and treasure invested.”⁹⁸

We can learn from the Methodist Church’s involvement with the Temperance Movement. By the time repeal came, Methodists had pushed for Temperance for over 100 years. It was part of a worldwide effort. As a political movement, Temperance captured the Methodist Church or perhaps they shared common objectives. The Temperance movement built a grass roots effort involving every congregation and preaching point. In 2002, casino gambling represents a similar moral rot to our society. Methodists in Indiana have yet to put together a similar effort. One retired minister publishing a newsletter or a single Statehouse rally attended by the Bishop looks ineffectual compared to efforts of Methodists in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries.

Civil War

How the Civil War touched the Broad Ripple community and the young congregation remains unclear. Without a newspaper serving the community, the only articles mentioning Broad Ripple come in later obituaries. “Among these raw recruits, Methodism was in every regiment, and perhaps every company. As the war grew in its proportions, and as the draft upon the men and means of the country for the prosecution of the war became greater, religious men in larger proportions gave themselves to the support of the national cause. In many cases, whole Bible-classes from the Sabbath schools enlisted together.”⁹⁹

Floods

Mrs. Bates described several floods: “In 1847, Hancock street, [now Westfield Boulevard], was in a forest, no buildings being on it at all. This year also marked the first flood. The principal business part of our village, now Hancock Street, was entirely under water, and boats were used for several days. The following year, 1876, the mill was rebuilt. Then again in ‘84, high waters did a great amount of damage to the surrounding farms, as well as to the village itself.

“In July, 1875, high waters took away the grist mill and Joseph Wray’s house. So high was the water that men worked day and night with soil and straw building temporary levees in front of Charles Silvey’s home, then occupied by Dr. Kerr, to prevent the village from being swept away.”¹⁰⁰

Ralph Shackelford annotated a photo appearing in March 26, 1913, *Indianapolis News* of the 1913 flood. His grandparents lived at 6367 Guilford and water was up to its windows. Floodwaters washed out the tracks behind their home and flotsam floated in the yards.¹⁰¹ Russell Kerr recalls his grandmother saying floodwaters nearly reached their home at Paxton Place and College Avenue, the site of a nursing home today.

From these accounts, the congregation and its members must have felt the impact and devastation resulting from the floods. In early floods, the Union Church was in the path; in the 1913, the church offered shelter.

Gas

Mrs. Bates also recognized the impact of natural gas discoveries: “Dec. 7, 1887, marked a great event in this history, as the first natural gas was discovered. The gas well was driven on Dawson’s subdivision, now near the Pentecost [sic] church, and picnics and family reunions and excursions were held beneath this effulgent light.

“In the winter of 1889, the Ripple Hotel, now named the Gayoso House, was destroyed by fire. It was immediately rebuilt and has been occupied for that purpose to the present.”

“Sept. 4, 1898, a gas explosion and fire destroyed James Watt’s drug store, IOOF Hall, Henry Gresh’s grocery, Christian Church hall, Isaac Whites’ livery barn and a dwelling. Seven men lost their lives in this fire and a number are crippled for life.

“In September, 1899, Isaac White’s livery barn was again destroyed by fire. Two days after ‘The Little Deutsche Haus’, owned by Gus Barthel, was destroyed by fire. This hotel was destroyed March previous but rebuilt each time

WW2:

With the approach of the war years, Broad Ripple High School prepared young men and women for service. A bronze clock plaque honors twenty-one former students who gave their lives for this country; 868 Broad Ripple men and women served in the armed forces in World War 2.¹⁰²

Epidemics

Medical research has eliminated many scourges that infected earlier generations. Indianapolis did not embrace the White River as cholera came with its rising waters. Tuberculosis is rare today. A *Western Christian Advocate* correspondent wrote in 1883 that Indianapolis was small pox free.¹⁰³ At the beginning of the Twenty-first Century, we face threats from HIV and AIDS, and recently the West Nile virus and an unleashing of small pox from Iraq. Sunday School classes did not meet for three weeks in October 1918 at the peak of the Spanish Flu epidemic. While real, mid-Twentieth Century threats to children, families, and neighborhoods came from polio. Parents dreaded warm summer evenings as the disease attacked without warning. Polio affected the congregation in 1945. In his August 26 minutes, W. H. Graver, the Church School superintendent recorded, “Due to two cases of infantile paralysis in our S.S.... the S.S. closed for this Sunday.”

The Klan

Finding germane information regarding the Ku Klux Klan in Washington Township proved as challenging as information on the Underground Railroad. Substantial research documents the Klan’s role in Indianapolis and Indiana. Looking for specific links to Broad Ripple and Washington Township would prove consuming. As opposed to Hamilton County and their trove of Klan membership records, similar documents have not turned up in Marion County. If area residents belonged to the Klan, perhaps their activities were more social than political. Many Hoosiers belonged to the Klan for socialization.

One researcher wrote The Methodist Church possessed “the strongest bent toward social action; it was expected that most Klan ministers and members would come from this domination.”¹⁰⁴ The 1920s were turbulent times with the Klan in Indianapolis. John Duvall, a Broad Ripple native, became mayor of Indianapolis in the late 1920s only to have D. C. Stephenson’s revelations force him out of office.

Sophisticated would describe The Klan's publications. They wrapped their messages with patriotic themes. They also used surrogate organizations for carrying out their objectives. Horse Thief Detection Associations were among such organizations. The Articles of Incorporation at the State Archives for the Millersville Horse Thief Detection Association, No. 180, includes names of nine men from Malott Park and Castleton. A HTDA held annual meetings at Union Chapel for a number of years. Information remains unavailable as to their activities.

One researcher explored the involvement of ministers in the Klan during the 1920s. She identified twelve Methodist ministers including four assigned to Indianapolis churches. One minister served Broad Ripple earlier. (He was serving at Brightwood when identified.)¹⁰⁵ She included a map showing the density of Klan members by neighborhood. The densest areas were on the edges of neighborhoods where African-Americans were moving. For example, the area just south and west of Crown Hill showed a number of Klan members. The map showed only a hundred members in the neighborhoods north of 38th Street to 56th Street. While the demographics cited for the Klan do not match those of the northside, we can only speculate as to the number of sympathizers in the area.¹⁰⁶

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ENDNOTES

¹ Time-line adapted from The Polis Center. *A TIMELINE OF FAITH AND COMMUNITY: BROAD RIPPLE, 1822 TO 1996*. 4 June 2002. <http://www.polis.iupui.edu/RUC/Neighborhoods/BroadRipple/BRTimeline.dft.htzz>.

² Robert Ian Brison. *Methodist Circuit Plans*. 30 May 2002 <http://www.original-indexes.demon.co.uk/intros/DUR-042.htm>.

³ Daniel F. Evans. *At Home In Indiana For One Hundred and Seventy-Five Years. The History of Meridian Street United Methodist Church, 1821-1996*. Indianapolis: Guild Press of Indiana, 1996.

⁴ The *Western Christian Advocate* published in Cincinnati served many purposes. This was an eight-page weekly paper for much of the Nineteenth Century. Editors would include religious news from around the world. It must have also served as a weekly “lifeline” to Methodist preachers on the circuits in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. Preachers would report on their successes at revivals or building a new church debt-free. They would also report births, weddings, and debts. The Sunday School lessons would be on a page. Perhaps preachers supplemented their meager earnings as they *WCA* paid a commission on subscriptions. The Library at Christian Theological Seminary has only paper copies from the 1840s and 1880s. The Methodist Archives at DePauw University has more issues on microfilm. The complete collection is located at the Cincinnati Historical Society Library.

⁵ Conner Prairie Research. *Camp Meeting Training Packet. 1995*, page 37. Quoted on Connor Prairie website. “The Methodists: Life in the 1880s.” 11 June 2002 <http://www.connerprairie.org/historyonline/methodists.html>.

⁶ William Warren Sweet. *Circuit-Rider Days in Indiana*. Indianapolis: W. K. Stewart Co., 1916: Vol. 4: 445

⁷ Conner Prairie: 9-10.

⁸ Department of Metropolitan Development, Division of Planning, Indianapolis-Marion County, Indiana. *Broad Ripple Village Plan*, September 1986: 3.

⁹ Hon. Daniel E. Smith. “Reminiscence of Marion County.” *Indiana Christian Advocate*. June 14, 1871: 2.

¹⁰ Paul. Fatout. *Indiana Canals*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Studies, 1972, 76-92.

¹¹ Junior Historical Society and Riparian Newspaper. *A History of Broad Ripple: From Rough River Town to City Suburb*. Indianapolis: Broad Ripple High School, 1968: 7.

¹² Connor: 2.

¹³ Pam A Rooney. “Mary Coil Dawson & Broad Ripple United Methodist Church.” E-mail to author. 14 February 2002.

¹⁴ Meryl L. Connor. *A History of Broad Ripple High School*. Indianapolis, 1948: 1.

¹⁵ Rooney: 14 February 2002 Email.

¹⁶ Junior Historical Society: 9-10.

¹⁷ Berry R. Sulgrove. “History of Broad Ripple.” *History of Indianapolis and Marion County*. Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1884, 645-648.

¹⁸ Sulgrove: 24-25.

¹⁹ The Polis Center. “BROAD RIPPLE.” 4 June 2002. http://www.polis.iupui.edu/RUC/Neighborhoods/BroadRipple/BRNarrative.htm#_ftn13.

²⁰ Rev. F. C. Holliday, DD. *Indiana Methodism: being an account of the introduction, progress and present state of Methodism in the State down to 1872*. Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Walden, 1873, 57.

²¹ Charles N. Mikels. *Early Methodism In New Castle, Indiana History of a Pioneer Church, The Early Methodist Churches of New Castle, Indiana*. From a paper read before the Henry County Historical Society August 1895. 19 June 2002. <http://hcg.tripod.com/methodism.html>

²² Holliday, 88

²³ Holliday, 98

²⁴ Holliday, 100

²⁵ Holliday, 101

²⁶ Sulgrove places the Washington Presbyterian Church on the Joseph (and later) William Culbertson farm about a half-mile north of Malott Park. Hiram and Mary Alice Bacon were among the organizing members: 642.

²⁷ Sulgrove: 637.

²⁸ Clary, B. F., "Letter from Indiana: Building Churches (Indianapolis, Ia, March 15, 1853)." *The Western Christian Advocate*, March 30, 1853: 6.

²⁹ Dr. Ambrose Gore Ruddell was part of the organizational "glue" that kept the Allisonville Circuit together. He and the Nesbit family owned farms at the present-day Allisonville Road and East 82nd Street.

³⁰ Allisonville Circuit, Quarterly Conference Minute Book, April 10-11, 1852. It is the only known source document for activities on this circuit that includes the current congregations at Bellaire, Broad Ripple, Castleton, Lawrence, and Union Chapel. This book was lost for many years. Mary Nesbit, a descendant of an early Allisonville family, died in 1955. Her niece found the minute book among Mary's papers. When she learned Castleton Methodist Church wanted it returned, she mailed it. Unfortunately, it fell from its wrapping and wound up in the Dead Letter Office in Chicago. Fortunately, a postal clerk found the Castleton name and forwarded it to Castleton Methodist. Ed Dawson, a member of Union Chapel United Methodist borrowed the book to update that church's history. Ed allowed the Indiana Historical Society to copy the book. Ed died shortly afterwards. The location of the original book is now unknown.

³¹ H. A. Mason *History of Town of Castleton, Indiana: 1852-1927*. Self-published: April 29, 1927, 4.

³² Allisonville Circuit, Quarterly Conference Minute Book, August 7-8, 1852.

³³ "Revivals." *Western Christian Advocate*, April 11, 1855: 5. ["F. A. Hardin was assigned to the Anderson Circuit 1854/55. He could have been the Conference evangelist although there is no record in the Conference Minutes. Since he reported as an evangelist at said meetings, we must assume that he was the evangelist at these meetings. – Riggs, John R., Archives Researcher, DePauw University. "Rev. Franklin A. Hardin." Email to author, October 16, 2002]

³⁴ "Revivals." *Western Christian Advocate*, February 14, 1855: 4.

³⁵ Allisonville Circuit, Quarterly Conference Minute Book. Meeting at Allisonville. 8 March 1858.

³⁶ Allisonville Circuit, Quarterly Conference Minute Book. Meeting at Zions Chapel. 10 September 1858,

³⁷ *Minutes of the Eighteen Session of the South-Eastern Indiana Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church held at Trinity ME Church, Indianapolis, September 15-20, 1869.*

³⁸ "About our Churches." *The Western Christian Advocate*, April 14, 1885: 5.

³⁹ Holiday: 138

⁴⁰ Sulgrove: 644.

⁴¹ *The Peoples Guide: a Business, Political, and Religious Directory of Marion County, Indiana*. Indianapolis: Cline & McHaffie, 1874: 516.

⁴² Sulgrove: 637-8.

⁴³ Sulgrove: 646

⁴⁴ Bates: 2.

⁴⁵ "Kingan Packing," *The Saturday Herald*, June 11, 1887: 1

⁴⁶ Mary Coil Dawson was the wife of Volney Johnson Dawson (1854-1915), who was the brother of John Hague's great grandfather, Winfield Taylor Dawson. She was born in 1858 and died in 1923. She had three children: Frank, Jacob, and James. According to the Helen Dawson Hague family history book, Volney and Mary Coil Dawson lived at 6148 Winthrop Avenue after they left the farm. Mary and her sister, Sarah Coil Thompson, (who lived at 6116 Guilford; the house with the white barn behind it) owned large plots of land on the north side of Indianapolis; land which is now known as Broad Ripple. Much of that land was known as the Coil Park Addition. The street just north of Broad Ripple Methodist Church, now known as 62nd Street, was originally named Coil Street.

⁴⁷ "Here and There." *The Western Christian Advocate*, February 9, 1887: 4.

⁴⁸ P. A. Rooney. "Mary Coil Dawson and Broad Ripple United Methodist Church." E-mail to author. 14 Feb 2002.

⁴⁹ R. Vernon, Earle, Jr.. "Stewardship Message ** November 6, 1977." Economic statistics quoted from Historical Abstract of the United States, a Bicentennial publication of the U. S. Government Printing Office, 1976.

⁵⁰ "Showers of Blessing." *The Western Christian Advocate*. March 6, 1889: 5.

⁵¹ Rev. W. R. Jordan. "Indianapolis." *The Western Christian Advocate*, February 18, 1889: 5.

⁵² "All Around the Town." *The Indianapolis News*, August 17, 1932.

⁵³ Connor: 2.

⁵⁴ Judy Frank, ed. *A History of the Community of Broad Ripple*. (Copied from source themes of Broad Ripple High School students, 1949-1952, 1953: 9.

⁵⁵ Connor: 7.

⁵⁶ "Curtis C. Paddock," *Marion County Biographies*. 21 October 2002.
<http://members.tripod.com/~debmurray/marion/marbioref-20.htm#cpaddock>.

⁵⁷ Department of Metropolitan Development, Division of Planning, Indianapolis-Marion County, Indiana. *Broad Ripple Village Plan Update*, March 7, 1997.

⁵⁸ Russell Kerr. *A History of Union Chapel [United Methodist Church]*. 1989: 2.

⁵⁹ Broad Ripple Methodist Episcopal Church. "Pastor's report to the fourth quarterly conference." Aug. 21, 1915.

⁶⁰ Broad Ripple Methodist Episcopal Church. "Minutes of the First Quarterly Conference," November 30, 1915.

⁶¹ Dr. H. Otho. Blackburn "This is Your Life: Broad Ripple Methodist Church." Script for Heritage Sunday (125th Anniversary), Nov 6, 1977: 9.

⁶² George Thomas Kerr and his wife Clarissa Dawson Kerr farmed the land that is now Keystone at the Crossing. About 1900, they moved from the farm to a house he built at what is now Paxton Place and College Avenue. The company that built the nursing home tore down the house. George and Clarissa's grandson is Russell R. Kerr, ninety years old (2002) and lifetime member of Union Chapel United Methodist Church.

⁶³ Russell Kerr. (grandson) Personal interview with author.

⁶⁴ Frank O. Easton. Treasurer. Letter to members, September 3, 1918.

⁶⁵ "146 Lots Sold in Few Days: Unusual Sales Recorded in Forest Hill subdivision." *The Indianapolis News*, June 16, 1922: 27.

⁶⁶ H. Otho Blackburn. Handwritten notes from interview with Louis Wright, c1962.

⁶⁷ Evans: 30.

⁶⁸ Broad Ripple Methodist Church. *Ripple Visitor*, Anniversary, June 1958: Vol. IV No 4, 6.

⁶⁹ Norbert G. Talbott, Minister. "Pastor's Report, Fourth Quarterly Conference, Broad Ripple M. E. Church, March 24, 1933."

⁷⁰ Hugh Gillett. "Gillett memories." Email to author. 20 February 2002.

⁷¹ Rev. W. E. Gillett. Broad Ripple Methodist Church. "Pastor's report to the Fourth Quarterly Conference," May 24, 1946.

⁷² Broad Ripple Methodist Church. "The New Minister – June 1947." *Ripple Visitor*, Anniversary – June, 1958: 3.

⁷³ Emmett W. Green. "Report of Auditor for Broad Ripple Methodist Church." October 13, 1947

⁷⁴ Chas. E. Hess. "Finance Chairman Report of Finance Committee." March 2, 1948.

⁷⁵ Broad Ripple Methodist Church. "Minutes of Special Official Board meeting." October 24, 1948.

⁷⁶ Parker P. Jordan. Letter to Mr. J. Fred Murphy, Secretary of the Broad Ripple Methodist Official Board, November 19, 1948.

⁷⁷Minutes of the Official Board, April 19, 1949.

⁷⁸Minutes of the Fourth Quarterly Conference May 11, 1949.

⁷⁹Minutes of the Official Board, June 15, 1949.

⁸⁰ Department of Metropolitan Development, Division of Planning, Indianapolis-Marion County, Indiana: 57.

⁸¹ Department of Metropolitan Development: Appendix A; Census Figures.

⁸² Claritas, Inc. "Executive Summary, Prepared for Broadripple." c

⁸³ Church Surveys, Boston University. "Preface and Purpose," *A Study of The Broad Ripple Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Indiana*, 1960, iii.

⁸⁴ Kennon L. Callahan. *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church: The Leaders' Guide*. San Francisco Harper & Row, 1981: 99.

⁸⁵ Minutes of the Official Board, May 11, 1949.

⁸⁶ Edward A. Leary. "Quakers Mind Busy 'Railroad.'" "Helping Shoes." *Indianapolis Star*, August 26, 1973.

⁸⁷ Leary, *Indianapolis Star*, August 26, 1973.

⁸⁸. Turk, Arville L. "Tales of our Hoosier Heritage." *Railroad to Freedom*. 1965: 65

⁸⁹ "ME Conference." *The Indianapolis Times*, May 21, 1884: 1.

⁹⁰ "Acton Camp Meeting." *Indianapolis News*, July 6, 1992: 8.

⁹¹ For detailed information on the Acton Camp Ground, see the booklet written by Sylvia C. Henricks. *A Good and Profitable Occasion: The Story of Acton Camp Group*. Bloomington: Trustees of Indiana University, 1970. (Also published in *Indiana Magazine of History*, December 1970.)

⁹² Broad Ripple Masonic Lodge. "A brief history of Broad Ripple Lodge #643." 4 June 2002. <http://members.aol.com/brlodge/brhistory.html>.

⁹³ "Dr. Oldfish Relates Tales of Early Broad Ripple Life," *The Indianapolis News*, October 17, 1918: 5.

⁹⁴ *Marion County Mail*, February 10, 1911: 1.

⁹⁵ "Wants To Join City: Broad people will ask city county to annex." *Marion County Mail*, January 26, 1906: 1.

⁹⁶ Jason S. Lantzer. "Broad Ripple people woke up annexed." E-Mail message to author, 11 Sep 2002.

⁹⁷ Broad Ripple ME Church, Easter Sunday Bulletin, April 17, 1927.

⁹⁸ Jason S. Lantzer. "The last sermon before repeal." E-mail message to author. 11 October 2002.

⁹⁹ Holliday, 152.

¹⁰⁰ Mrs. J. W. Bates, (nee Birdie Butterfield). *BROAD RIPPLE*. Unpublished: c1900: 1. Mrs. Bates was the wife of Dr. Joseph W. Bates, Broad Ripple Physician from 1883 to his death in May 1909 from pneumonia. Mrs. Bates died a few months earlier from ptomaine poisoning. Mrs. Bates was daughter of Luke Butterfield. Dr. Bates was born 1857 in Castleton; he was on the town board that ordered the first cement walks for village; he was also a member of committee that built the high school and helped in erection of both the Methodist and Christian Churches.

¹⁰¹ Ralph W. Shackelford was born in Broad Ripple in 1909. He was a long-term member of the congregation. His grandparents were John W. and Martha Ann Van Scyoc. They lived at 6367 Guilford. Before his death, Ralph gave the Indiana State Library his memorabilia collection consisting of nine boxes and two oversized folders. The collection represents an eclectic mixture of documents, letters, church bulletins, and financial records. An inventory is available at <http://www.statelib.lib.in.us/www/indiana/manuscripts/Shackelford.html>.

¹⁰² Broad Ripple High School. "History of Broad Ripple High School." 5 June 2002 <http://www.ips.k12.in.us/s717/general/history.htm>.

¹⁰³ DM, "Letter from Indianapolis," *Western Christian Advocate*, February 21, 1883: 6.

¹⁰⁴ *American Mercury*, April 26: 445.

¹⁰⁵ Ms Markisohn's source was the May 13, 1923, issue of *Tolerance*. Besides the twelve Methodist ministers, there were nine Baptist, three Presbyterian, one Quaker, two Disciples, one Free Methodist, one Nazarene, one Pentecostal, and twenty-two other ministers in Indiana.

¹⁰⁶ Deborah Balleu Markisohn. *Ministers of the Klan: Indianapolis Clergy's Involvement with the 1920s Ku Klux Klan*. Dissertation submitted for Master of Arts, Department of Religious Studies, Indiana University, 1992.

Prepared using Microsoft Word 2000. The font used for the text is Garamond, based on the types of the sixteenth-century printer, publisher, and type designer Claude Garamond, whose sixteenth-century types were modeled on those of Venetian printers from the end of the previous century. Printed by Printing Partners.