

The Birth of Walkerville Baptist Church

“And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd” – (John 10:16)

“The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice”
– (John 10:3-4)

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me”
– (John 10:27)

When the appointed time arrived, He started His Church, and Walkerville Baptist Church was born

God the Holy Spirit guided a group of people to pray for mission in Walkerville, and He put passion for souls in their hearts

It was in the fall of 1911 when a committee was appointed by the Bruce Avenue church in Windsor to carry on cottage prayer meetings in the Walkerville district. These were so successful that a hall was secured in which to carry on Sunday preaching services.

He sent His servants

On March 24, 1912, A regular Baptist Church was organized with 37 members, including 20 from Bruce Avenue Church under the leadership of Rev. J.S. Hall, a student from McMaster University. During his pastorate, the membership grew to 54 and the church was recognized and received into the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, Western Association, under the name of Walkerville Baptist Church in September, 1912.

“..... God gave the growth” (1 Cor. 3:6)

Rev. W. T. Bunt followed from October, 1912 to August, 1914. During 1913 there were 12 baptisms and the membership was growing rapidly that a decision was made to purchase a site for the construction of a church building.

When there was a need – He provided abundantly

The pastorate continued under the Rev. A. E. Kelly from December, 1914 to January, 1917. This period saw the completion of the structure at a cost of about \$6,000.00. On January 16, 1916, a special service was held and the church building was dedicated to the work of the Lord.

Rev. A. R. Forsyth ministered from April until June 1917. On September 11, 1917, under the pastorate of Rev. H. A. McDiarmid, a decision was made to purchase the residence of Mr. Scott at 815 Windermere. Pastor McDiarmid was the first to move into the parsonage until he left in July, 1921.

“So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth” – (1Cor.3:7)

In that same year, Rev. J. H. Slimon joined the Walkerville Baptist Church (WBC) staff. The next few years brought with it growth and prosperity. The membership increased to 275 that the church building could no longer accommodate such a large group. The structure was rebuilt and enlarged so that it could seat about 300 comfortably. The new addition was dedicated with Rev. Dr. Hughson of Stratford as the guest preacher. Pastor Slimon was called to another pastorate in March of 1925.

He sent His missionaries

From April, 1925 to December, 1929, Rev. A. B. Vincent lead the work. Although money was not plentiful, the church was able to support two new city missions. The one mission, Ford City Mission was very successful that there came the need for a new building. On September 8, 1926, the people of Walkerville agreed to take out a \$1,500.00 mortgage and purchased a building located on Aubin Road which was later referred to as the Aubin Road Mission (currently the PIBC Building). Eventually this Mission became self supporting and called Rev. John Christea to lead the work. Another mission work supported at the same time was the Walkerside Home site - the name of which was later changed to Walker Road Mission, but the lack of interest by the community lead to its demise in 1932.

In January, 1930, Rev. A. H. Fromow became the Pastor until May, 1935. He was responsible in bringing about the much needed change in the Baptistry which was completed in October, 1934. A quiet portrait of Jesus Christ is now the background for the new Baptistry, thanks to Miss may Richards, the artist.

One of the more memorable pastorates was that of Rev. C. H. Leggett. Pastor Leggett arrived in August of 1935 and during his first 21 months, there were 61 new members added, most by baptism. There was a Men’s Bible Class with a maintained attendance of near the 100 mark and a cradle roll of 84. This pastorate was marked by revival meetings, evangelistic meetings and special speakers that include Mr. Bob Ingersoll, Miss Stockton and Miss Gould and Dr. De Haan who started “Our Daily Bread ministry”

God is always at work, sometimes through trials and tribulation, to accomplish His purposes – He is the Sovereign Lord

Once again, however, the world was torn apart by war. The people here rallied to support our boys in the service. Monies and packages were sent to mission hospitals in England. Again the church's faith and trust in God was put to the test. As the war raged on, sadness reached Walkerville Baptist Church's own doorstep. On Wednesday, November 10, 1943, Pastor Leggett collapsed in the parsonage and God called his spirit home to rest and reward.

Once more the pulpit committee was faced with the calling of a new minister. This time the Lord lead Rev. W. E. Smith to WBC. In March, 1944, he was welcomed to the pulpit and his ministry continued until October, 1954. The growing Sunday School Classes in the basement brought about a classroom renovation which was done by Mr. J. Medel, Sr.

The war was coming to a close but Windsor experienced some rough times. A tornado hit the city, that caused considerable damage and the people rallied to support a tornado fund designed to help the victims. Then a strike at the Ford Motor Company brought hard times for many of the Church families. The church was able to pay some of the men to pain the new basement renovation.

On January 16, 1946, Rev. Cameron Orr, a missionary since 1938 to the sailors that traverse the Welland Canal came to the WBC pulpit. He continued to return each year to tell the church how, through its support, sailors were being won for the Lord.

Plans were made and a proposal put forth for a major addition but Rev. Smith left before plans were put into effect.

On January 21, 1955 Rev. J. Linton came to WBC as an Interim Pastor and eventually accepted the pastorate at WBC which lasted till November, 1957. During this period of time a major construction was done at WBC. New baptismal change rooms, a choir room, a brand new kitchen, new furnace facilities and a study for the Pastor were added.

Rev. D. Krehbiel was next to join the WBC staff. He arrived in April, 1958. In October of the same year, the congregation first voted to purchase Gideon Bibles instead of flowers as memorials to the deceased. Then in January, 1959, the decision was made to sever WBC's ties with the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. WBC was now an independent Church and supported the missionaries directly. Rev. Krehbiel left in September of 1959.

Once again Rev. Linton stepped in as Interim Pastor. He agreed to stay until June of 1960. On October 21, 1959 the congregation decided to join the Conservative Baptist Association of Greater Detroit, (CBA) of Michigan and CBA of America. WBC was first Canadian Church to be a member of this Association.

Ministry to the youth

Upon the recommendation of the pulpit committee, the congregation voted to call Rev. N. H. Street as the next Pastor. On June 23, 1960 he was welcomed to the pulpit. This pastorate was marked by an emphasis on youth. A vigorous visitation program was established to increase the Sunday School attendance. The Church now had two buses bringing in children to Sunday school. Programs that were designed to encourage the children in Christian growth were started.

During the summer of 1964, Keith and Cynthia Frew came to Walkerville and spent some time in Youth work before going on to the Mission field in Zambia. They were then included in the circle of Missionaries that WBC support and enjoyed their visits during each furlough.

After careful consideration, the WBC members voted to purchase a new parsonage at 1015 Frank Avenue. It was far from WBC but as the Pastors resided there, they were able to carry the truths that WBC believed to their neighborhood. In July of 1969 Rev. Street resigned from being a pastor of WBC. A mild man of God, Rev. Frank Smith, stepped in as Interim Pastor from October 19, 1969 to June 1970.

Emphasize on Missions: World outreach through the Welland Canal and Trans World radio

Rev. ;J. P. Murray was next to answer the call at Walkerville. His pastorate lasted for 11 years from July, 1970 to June, 1981. WBC always considered Mission giving top priority but with the encouragement of Pastor Murray, Mission giving increased and soon became 20 percent of all monies given to the church. God rewarded their faith and for the first time WBC was financially free of debt.

It was with sadness that WBC learned of the death of Rev. Cameron Orr of the Welland Canal Mission. God provided another man, Arthur Taylor, to step in and continued the much needed work among the sailors. WBC decided to support another important Missionary outreach at this time, Trans World radio. For the first time, millions all over the world can now be reached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Joined the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada

After much work, a new church constitution was drafted. Upon unanimous acceptance, each member received a copy of the new constitution in 1971.

In 1974, the congregation voted to leave the Conservative Baptist Association of Michigan and decided to join the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada.

It was during Rev. Murrays' pastorate that a new Young People's group began to emerge and grow. They took an active part in many of the Church projects. They provided special programs, served at banquets and served the Lord at WBC in many areas. What was unique about this group, however, was that many went on to Bible School; some joined special summer Mission groups and a few have chosen full time service for the Lord.

Modification of the Church Building

In April, 1980, the people decided that it was no longer practical to pay for the upkeep of the annex. As the bulldozers arrived, WBC bid farewell to the little friend who had served so faithfully for 63 years.

Pastor Murray resigned in June, 1981 and on January 3, 1982, Pastor R. McCready came to fill the vacancy. Under his leadership, WBC saw the start of yearly Mission Conferences. The deacons have started a Deacon's Caring Program and they had a retreat once a year so that they could better serve the Church. There were two summer interns, Doug Watson and Don Miller. Daily Vacation Bible School was started once more and groups for the young were encouraged. A Seniors' group met and had monthly fellowship. It was also at this time that additions were made to the church building; several classrooms, office space, handicap facilities and a new study, nursery and a new elevator. The lawn area was paved to be used as parking lot.

A new seed emerged – The Philippino Congregation

In (month, 1993), a group of Filipinos led by Pastor Juanito Lasada requested WBC to use its basement to congregate for a new ministry. This new born church was called the First Philippino Baptist Church (FPBC) to reach out the Philippinos who lived in Windsor. The two congregations grew together in ministries beautifully in one facility. Joint services were conducted for special occasions followed by fellowship around the tables.

As the congregation grew rapidly in numbers, the leadership of FPBC started to find a permanent building for FPBC to congregate. They found that the property and building of the Aubin Road Mission was for sale. This was formerly the daughter church of Walkerville Baptist Church. The FPBC conducted fund raising to her members, and WBC also helped them by providing \$30,000 loan to purchase the property. Later on, the WBC decided to donate the loan to the FPBC.

The ministry continued to grow and the shepherding was carried on by Pastor Nonie Lasada. The name of the First Philippino Baptist Church was changed to the Philippino International Baptist Church (PIBC).

In (July, 1999) some of the PIBC members decided to start a new service at the Forest Glade Community Center. Services were conducted by inviting guest speakers. WBC came along side by sending several speakers periodically. As the time went by, the number of members of WBC gradually decreased because of internal crisis. The need of a shepherd in one side and the shortage of church members in the other side had brought the thought between the two groups to merge.

In the early 2001 the two groups merged to be Walkerville Evangelical Baptist Church (WEBC).

Pastor Ray McCready left the church in 2002, leaving the pastoral office be filled by Mr. Doug Hill who served as an interim pastor for almost two years. For the following five years God's mighty hand sustained the existence of WEBC without the pastor, supporting our pulpit Sunday ministry through His servants throughout Windsor, Essex, and Amersburg area. In 2009, Mr. Allen Mickle Sr stepped in to take the pastoral office for almost three years. Through up and down, storm and hail we have experienced the faithfulness and loving kindness of the Lord as He alone preserves and protects and sustains His body at WEBC.

On April 1, 2013, Pastor Tom Perry was called to serve as lead pastor of WEBC and is the current pastor to date. He is a relational pastor that leads WEBC in preaching, church vision, pastoral administration, pastoral care, pastoral prayer, and biblical counseling.

The Fire – “New Beginning” – Pending rebuild

In the fall of October 2019, the church building experienced a horrific fire. Despite the tragic destruction of the historical church building, no one on that day got hurt. Since the fire, the WEBC congregation has looked forward to new beginnings as they seek God's direction and wisdom in the rebuild.

We are blessed and honored that the Lord has included us in His beautiful work in this local church. Let us celebrate His faithfulness through these years. All the glory, majesty, splendor, power and strength are to His praise from everlasting to everlasting.