

[Text from original booklet]

## **A Story of Progress**

### **We Aspire to Progress**

The founders of our congregation had vision. They foresaw nothing but continued growth for the project they had begun. They had great plans for the future, and they lived in the hope of seeing the materialization of those plans.

More than a quarter of a century has passed. Only a few of the charter members remain. A new generation has arisen. But the congregation's vision is still the same: PROGRESS, GROWTH, GREATER SERVICE IN THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

### **We Work Toward Progress**

A little more than two years ago the Voters' Assembly of St. Andrew congregation reached the conclusion that relocation was the key to the future, and that the newly developed residential area of Maple Heights would be the most advantageous location. The conclusion was based on these considerations:

A survey, made six years ago, and covering 400 homes in the immediate vicinity of St. Andrew Church, brought to light only four children who were not affiliated with a Church or Sunday School. The same survey revealed that three out of every four homes were Roman Catholic, and the others were divided among the ten, or more, protestant congregations located within the same general area. The complexion of the community has not improved during the ensuing years, but has become less and less promising, as far as stable growth for the Church is concerned.

The new development in Maple Heights offers a wide-open opportunity to the Church. In a compact area of many hundreds of new homes, and other hundreds still being erected, there is not one house of God. The people living in this area are home owners, not transient renters. They are mostly young couples with growing families. Many Lutherans, from sister congregations in the Cleveland area, have moved to this suburban settlement. The exact center of the field is only three miles distant from the present location of St. Andrew Church.

### **Problem and Solution**

But what about Trinity Church, already located in Maple Heights, and only one mile from the area in question? The solution immediately suggested itself: why not approach Trinity congregation with an invitation to join St. Andrew in the contemplated move?

The invitation was extended at once, and was favorably received by the Voters' Assembly of Trinity congregation.

The passing years have brought less and less promise for Trinity's future, too. The growth of Maple Heights has been away from Trinity's location, rather than around it, with the result that,

instead of being in the center of the community, as the founders had envisioned it, Trinity congregation has found itself sitting on the outer rim. There was no question but that relocation to the center of the new residential development would mean increased missionary opportunity and greater growth. Moreover, the combined strength of the two congregations, Trinity and St. Andrew, would make relocation easier than either congregation could do it alone.

### **We Consult Together**

A number of joint meetings were held by the two Voters' Assemblies, to discuss the proposed project. The following terms were agreed up on as an acceptable basis for the proposed merger of the two congregations, and then the congregations were polled to learn the membership's reaction to the plan.

### **Terms of the Merger Agreement**

1. All properties, all debts, and all problems of both congregations will become the concern of the new congregation.
2. Any plans for building a new church will become the problem of the new congregation.
3. The new congregation will retain both pastors on an associate basis.
4. All present societies will dissolve, and new organizations will be formed. (This to be done when the new church can be occupied. Until then, organizations will function as at present.)
5. New administrative officers will be elected, who will govern both present locations. However, during the interval before entering the new church, each unit will continue to manage its own affairs, as at present, being responsible in all things to the Voters' Assembly of the new congregation. The present Trustees of the two congregations shall constitute a Board of Trustees for the new congregation, until such time as the new congregation shall elect its officers.
6. A new constitution will be adopted.
7. The new congregation will be an Evangelical Lutheran Church of the English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.
8. The new congregation shall be known as "The Lutheran Church of the Covenant."

Trinity congregation mailed cards to its communicant members, asking the individual to indicate whether he favored or opposed the merger. St. Andrew congregation sent out a corps of canvassers to determine the same by personal visitation. A few of Trinity's members did not return their cards, and some of St. Andrew's members were not found at home by the canvassers. But both polls were better than 90% complete, and in each case more than 80% of the membership favored the proposed merger.

## **We Build Together**

Such a heartening response was all the project needed. Legal advice was sought, concerning the mode of procedure, and on March 17, 1947, the merger was formally effected.

St. Andrew and Trinity congregations are now, under the new name “The Lutheran Church of the Covenant.”

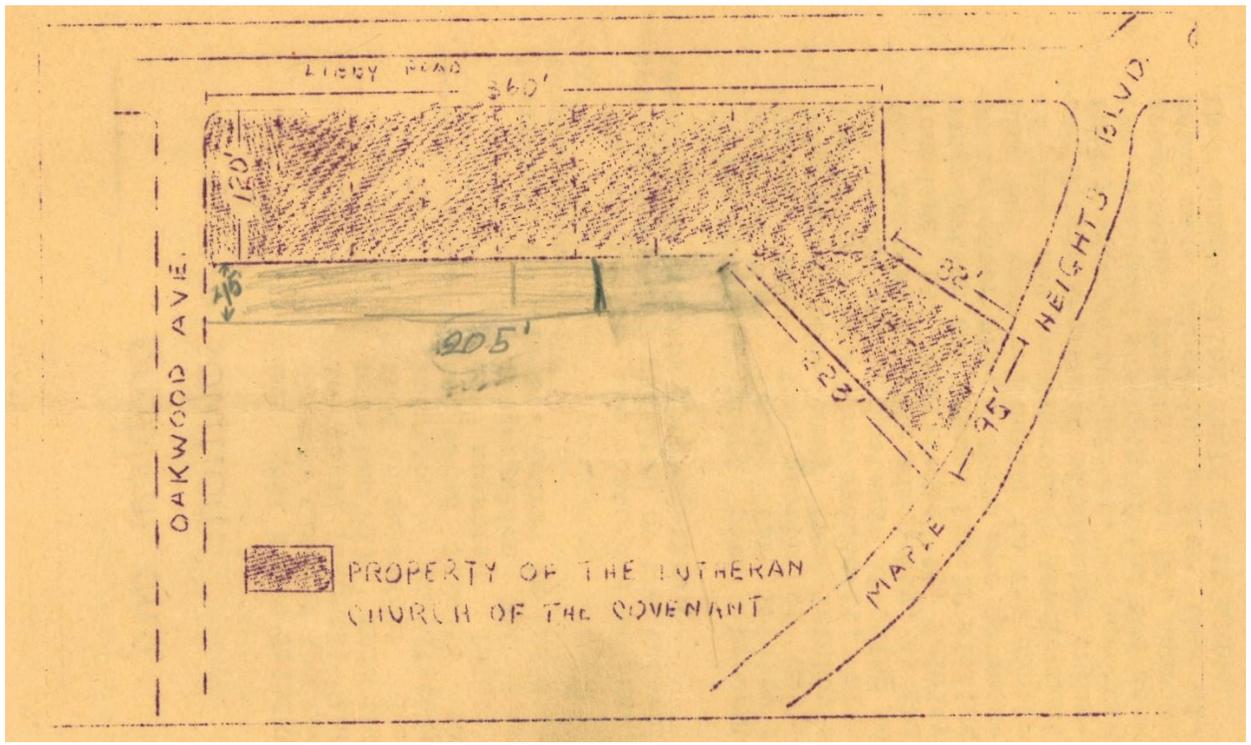
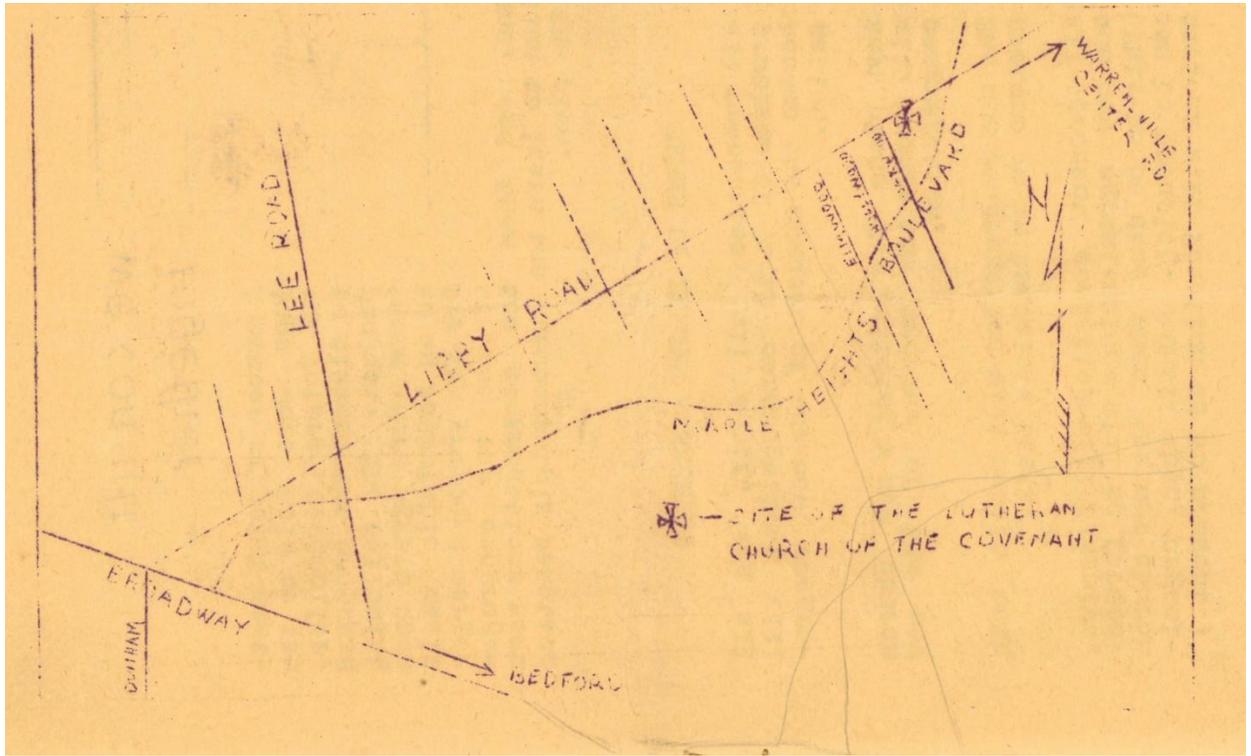
A beautiful building site has been purchased, comprising eleven lots, with frontage on Libby Road, Maple Heights Boulevard, and Oakwood Avenue. (See maps on foregoing pages.) A new constitution was drawn up and adopted. The following men were elected to office: C. Lembke, chairman; F. Schieman, secretary; B. Schutte, treasurer; W. Auping, financial secretary; G. Bergsieker, A. Taylor, L. Kolsom, trustees; H. Simler, R. Depenbrok, G. Telzrow, members of the church council at large. A building committee has been appointed, and an architect has been engaged to draw the plans for our new house of worship.

## **Soli Deo Gloria**

We cannot look back upon the accomplishments of the past two years without recognizing and acknowledging the rich blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose guidance and help we had implored from the outset, and in whose name we have undertaken this task.

We pray that our Lord will continue to bless us and inspire us with faith and love and zeal to complete this work to the glory of his name.

This report has been compiled, and is presented by Pastors Oehlschlaeger and Swigart, at the request of the Voters' Assembly of the Lutheran Church of the Covenant.



**[Handwritten notes found inside this booklet:]**

Note: Date unknown, probably a report to Voters' Assemblies of both churches so when it became evident to both congregations that a merger was the real solution to our problems the next step, of course was to find a desirable location in the heart of the rapidly expanding community of Maple Heights. It was felt that the best spot would be at the junction of Libby Road and Maple Heights Blvd., since it was geographically in the center of the community and also within the area where the tremendous expansion was taking place in the homebuilding. In fact it was called the "fastest growing community in Ohio." Having picked our location, a committee was authorized to take steps to obtain the desired lots. The first results were disappointing but, after getting deeper into the matter, it was found that the lots we desired were available and at a price very acceptable to us.

Since the merger was not yet completed, the lots were purchased by St. Andrews and we now hold the title to 9 lots fronting on Libby Road and also 2 lots butting into these from off of Maple Hts. Blvd. Negotiations are now in progress to obtain one more lot on Oakwood which runs directly behind those we now have on Libby Road and which will add 40 feet more depth to these lots. This will give us a total frontage of 360 feet on Libby Road, 160 feet on Oakwood and 95 feet on Maple Heights Blvd. but does not include the corner lot there which we considered too costly (purchased later).

These lots were purchased at a total cost of about \$9000, (excluding the Oakwood lot, not yet final) or an average of about \$818 per lot of which 75% represented delinquent taxes.

This was an exceptional figure since adjacent lots there sell for about \$1000 and upwards today. The price of the new Oakwood lot totals \$425 -- \$300 for the lot and about \$125 delinquent taxes.

All in all we now have a fine site for our proposed new building in the heart of an expanding community with great possibilities for our Church.

Gordon A. Telzrow