

U.S. – Mid Atlantic

This section contains North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Washington D.C., Delaware, and Pennsylvania.

North Carolina

The earliest work in North Carolina seems to be in Asheville in the western part of the state. The story of the Asheville Gospel Chapel starts with W. G. Smith, born in Scotland in 1884. Coming to the U.S. in 1911, he was commended to full-time Christian work about 1913. Mr. Smith moved to Asheville and first lived in a tent at the lower end of Swanannoa Avenue, from which he witnessed for the Lord Jesus. When several were saved and instructed, the Christians became interested in having the Lord's Supper. Mr. Smith instigated the building of the Asheville Gospel Hall on Alabama Avenue.

The Varner family moved to Asheville in 1921 and were among the first in fellowship. Miss Carrie Bellinger, who had moved from Columbia, SC was a devoted and useful sister in the assembly. Evangelist Robert Curry worked with the assembly in the early 1920s. W.G. Smith had tent meetings in the summers of 1924 and 1925. During the later 1920s, Fred Nugent and Andrew Foster worked in the Gospel at nearby Canton. Some who were saved there and who later came to Asheville were Opal Snyder, Mrs. Reed, and Willa King. An assembly was started in Canton but was short-lived. The Lannings moved to Asheville in the 1930s and contributed much to the Asheville assembly.

In the early 1930s, three different evangelists – James Smith, David Calderhead, and Oswald McLeod – lived in and worked out of Asheville. James Smith's initiative in 1937 brought about the purchase of property and building at 20 Hanover Street, the home for many years of the Asheville Gospel Chapel.

During the World War II years, there was much to discourage. At times Ralph Poole was the only man to carry on at many of the meetings. Mr. Poole had been saved through the ministry of Donald Ross in Savannah. The women were faithful in maintaining a Sunday School. In about 1945, James A. Innes, his wife, and their three sons moved to Asheville from Minneapolis. They were a great help to the assembly for many years. About 24 were in regular fellowship in this period. William Brown came from New Jersey to assist in the work until late 1947.

After the war, the Sunday School, which had been discontinued, was restarted and a period of growth ensued. Soon the assembly needed more room. An addition to the Asheville Gospel Chapel was made in the fall of 1947. The children's work grew through the start of a Bible school by Tom Innes and children's meetings with Ernie Gross. Some were saved and several Christians who had left the fellowship in previous years returned, so that by 1952, there was again need for more room. The lot next to the chapel was purchased. This was the time of the Korean War, and some young men who had been active in the assembly were drafted. Plans went

ahead, however, and an addition was started in 1953, about the time when a Family Bible Hour was started. When the Korean War ended, some men returned. Walter Peck moved back to Asheville and associated with the assembly. The Southeastern Workers' Conference was held there in March 1955.

A peak attendance of 145 was reached in 1958. There was a shift at this time from attendance by children whose families had no connection with the assembly, to an increase in the assembly family. By 1964, the Christians were considering a move. An offer for the Chapel property was made and accepted. Property on Old Haw Creek Road was purchased and a chapel built. The first meeting in the new building was January 15, 1967. An addition to the building was completed in the fall of 1993.

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At about the same time that the work in Asheville began, a similar interest was stirring in Raleigh in the north-central part of the state, the so-called Piedmont area. The work at Raleigh dates back to before 1924, when James C. Chappell returned from World War I. He had heard about the New Testament church meetings through a fellow soldier. He discussed what he had learned with his friend David Allen. They invited Sam McEwen and W.G. Smith to come to Raleigh for a Gospel effort, and these evangelists held a tent campaign in September 1924. After the campaign, a hall was rented on Gaston Street, and the first Remembrance meeting in the Raleigh Gospel Hall was held in November 1924, attended only by David Allen, Mr. and Mrs. Chappell, and the two preachers. About a month later four other Christians had joined the circle around the table. Records of the assembly show a continuous growth in numbers.

The two evangelists returned each year for five years. Souls were saved each year. By 1931, there was an assembly with 40 in fellowship, meeting in a former church building. James Chappel, a pharmacist, carried on an extensive pastoral and visitation ministry.

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Before continuing with the work in Raleigh, we turn to the ministry of Lester Wilson in the Piedmont area of North Carolina. Mr. Wilson, more than any other individual, was responsible for the building up and maintaining of the assemblies in this area, and for instituting a modified style of meeting. He favored the use of large buildings for the meetings of the assembly, introduced the now common practice of a Sunday morning Family Bible Hour, and encouraged a strong musical program. The following are the words of Mr. Wilson from his article in Letters of Interest, month?, 1943, p. 25, with portions edited out:

...[In 1931], I came south [from Canada] with Brother Fred Nugent. We arrived in Canton, NC and after about three months we went to Raleigh where there was a hearty little assembly of around twenty; the fruit of the labors of Mr. Sam McEwen and W.G. Smith.

Mr. Nugent left me after three weeks in Raleigh and I labored alone around Raleigh for three years, having meetings mostly in rural sections. A number were saved in the following places and fruit of these meetings remain unto this day [1943]: Clayton, Six-Forks, Wendell, Wilder's

Grove, Ebenezer, and Swift Creek...

I then went to Winston-Salem about 100 miles from Raleigh... The first tent I pitched in the city was destroyed by a storm a week after it was erected. We obtained a new one and started meetings again. After five years of labor we had an assembly of around 100 with a nice Sunday School... The Lord then exercised me about Greensboro, a city of 55,000 thirty miles away.

With the Winston work not strong enough to be left alone, the brethren still but babes in the things of God, and the interest good, the Lord led me to invite brother Harold Mackay to take over the work in Winston. This move was definitely of God as brother Mackay applied himself wholeheartedly to this work, and after four and a half years has established and built up the Winston work until today [1943] we have an assembly of around 150, with a Sunday School over 200.

... After four years in Greensboro we had an assembly of about 100 with a Sunday School over 200 and a fine big building with large auditorium and 17 Sunday School rooms. This is known as Forest Avenue Tabernacle and prior to our obtaining it, was a Baptist Church... I was helped in the Greensboro work by Mr. and Mrs. Gross who lived there about ten months, and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Brown who were with us for nine months.

While at Greensboro I opened up Burlington, a city of 20,000 about 20 miles from Greensboro. Mr. and Mrs. Gross were with me and we had two six-weeks series of meetings. The result was a nice group of Christians gathered, some saved in our meetings and other Christians contacted who were seeking food and fellowship. Mr. and Mrs. Gross stayed in Burlington until spring helping these Christians, and then moved to Florence, SC. I then went back [to Burlington] and had a six weeks series which was the best series yet in that city. The interest picked up remarkably and a number were saved and more Christians contacted. Each Sunday afternoon we have a meeting there and from 100 to 150 attend. We expect to give them more meetings during the winter and then another summer in the gospel, by which time we should be ready to "Remember the Lord."

After the Burlington campaign I went to Siler City, a town 35 miles away where a group of Christians were exercised about New Testament principles. This interest was contacted and helped by our radio work and these Christians built a nice tabernacle capable of holding 300. We started meetings the middle of October... some eighteen professed and a nice number of Christians were contacted and helped. The interest was excellent for a new field, up to 150 some week nights, and 235 Sunday nights. Mr. Frank Detweiler helped in this series by taking care of children's meetings and singing, as well as noon hour meetings in factories. An assembly should be established in Siler City in the spring after a winter's work of teaching and consolidating.

Thus we have in these parts three large, active assemblies [in 1943]: Raleigh with around 75 in fellowship; Winston-Salem with about 150; and Greensboro with 100; a possible 50 Christians in Burlington not yet breaking bread, and around 35 in Siler City not yet breaking bread. Some 800 children are in the Sunday Schools of these assemblies.

I have had five series this year... [and] some 150 radio broadcasts... and now that brother Mackay has recently moved to Greensboro, I will be free to work Burlington and Siler City...

The secret under God that has produced results in NC is going to a place and staying there until something is done. This will take years. You can't expect people to get saved one summer, and without any teaching or pastoring during the winter, find them going on and ready for an assembly the next summer...

Mr. Wilson continues in this article to espouse his philosophy of pioneering, which was quite different from that common in Canada and the northern part of the U.S.

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The Christians at Raleigh Gospel Hall constantly brought the Gospel to the surrounding cities and countryside. Fred W. Nugent had introduced the young Lester Wilson to Raleigh in 1931. A building at Clayton, 17 miles southeast, was made available for a Gospel campaign, which the seasoned evangelist and the young preacher were to launch together. Home affairs kept Mr. Nugent from participating, and Lester Wilson fearfully started the meetings alone. Crowds packed the big building and in five weeks 51 persons professed faith in Christ. For three years, Mr. Wilson, a guest in the Chappell home, preached in church buildings and school houses, and held Bible readings in homes around the Raleigh area. A branch work at Six Forks, nine miles away, was opened up by Lester Wilson in 1932.

In 1939, the Raleigh Gospel Chapel was built on Franklin Street, about a mile northeast of the city center, to house the growing assembly. Evangelistic meetings, the Sunday School, and personal work all contributed to further growth. By 1946, about 225 regularly attended the Breaking of Bread. In 1952 the main auditorium was enlarged to hold 420 people. The Sunday School averaged 375 at that time.

In November 1974, more than 400 people filled the Gospel Chapel on Franklin Street for a service commemorating the fifty year history of the Raleigh work. W. G. Smith, then 90, reminisced about tent work in the early days. Lester Wilson, then working in Albany, GA spoke of the burdens and blessings of pioneering days in North Carolina.

The Christians at Raleigh Gospel Chapel sold their building and joined with other Christians in 1993 to form the North Ridge Bible Chapel in Raleigh. (see below).

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In 1967, forty people hived off from the Raleigh Gospel Chapel to start a second assembly on the north edge of the city. The new meeting grew rapidly and soon built its own chapel at 5421 Six Forks Road, called the North Raleigh Chapel. Comma Danieley, Jerry Lovelace, Norman McKelvey, Tommy Jeffreys, and George Sloan were those instrumental in starting the new assembly.

William McNeil moved to Raleigh from his native Scotland in 1959 and was of assistance to all the Raleigh assemblies. When the North Raleigh Chapel was opened, he was responsible for the services for the first six weeks. William Oglesby of Virginia visited the area frequently, then moved to Raleigh in 1970. In mid-1974, Donald Pelon came to work with the assembly. Ingimar DeRidder has since been commended as a full-time worker at North Raleigh Chapel, where about 150 to 200 adults and youngsters attend.

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North Ridge Bible Chapel in Raleigh was formed by a merger in 1993. Several Christians desiring a testimony in a new part of Raleigh were joined by the group that had been meeting at the Raleigh Gospel Chapel on Franklin Street. The latter Christians had decided that a move should be made from Franklin Street at the time. Helping with the establishment of this testimony were Clarence Jeffreys, Richard St. John, L.H. Price, Cliff Webber, C.C. Pipkin, and John Gordon.

The North Ridge Bible Chapel, including an auditorium, class rooms, and fellowship hall, was built in 1994. About 200 were in the fellowship in 1999, with a Sunday School of about 100 students.

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Faith Bible Fellowship in Raleigh was not a hive-off from another group. Instead, a small number of Christians, anxious to have a testimony for the Lord in their part of the city, started meeting together in about 1967. Meetings, including a Sunday School, were held in a large home. Some of the number wanted to establish a Baptist Church, but others wanted to form an assembly patterned after the New Testament churches. In time this view prevailed. A new building was erected in 1974 for Faith Bible Fellowship, just across the southern boundary of the City of Raleigh.

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Pittsboro is about 30 miles west of Raleigh, and is the home of the Pittsboro Christian Village, a retirement facility sponsored by the brethren. The Pittsboro Bible Assembly meets there, established in January 1972 by Eugene Hollingsworth, Thomas Ridley, David Ednie, Robert Gay, Colin Heath, and Charles Balsan. The constituency of the assembly are the retirees living at the Village, plus some service staff.

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In 1934 a call for meetings came from Winston-Salem through Mrs. James Chappell's sister, and Lester Wilson moved to that city. The work was slow in starting, but in time an assembly developed. Radio work started in 1936 brought many out to the Gospel services and established contacts with Christians. By 1939 there were 35 believers in fellowship; in that year another 46 professed faith in Christ and of these 38 came into the assembly. The Winston-Salem Gospel Chapel was built there that year, 1939, and Lester Wilson moved on to Greensboro to conduct evangelistic work and teach believers there. Harold Mackay moved to Winston-Salem to minister at the assembly. When Mr. Mackay left a few years later, Gordon Reager came for a time,

followed by William Bousfield.

Glenn Avenue Gospel Chapel in Winston-Salem had its roots in the work of Lester Wilson, Mr. Gentry, Mr. Drage, and Mrs. Grace Snead. The assembly first met in the home of Mrs. Snead on 4th Street, and later moved to a storefront on 9th Street, and then to Glenn Avenue. Elders in the assembly have been H.R. Cromer, George D. Binkley, A.R. McConkey, Tommy Steele Sr., R.H. Wofford, C. Stender, H.R. Larrymore, C.C. Fishburne, James Crouch, and J.H. Cockerham. In the mid 1960s, the assembly dissolved into two new assemblies – Fair Oaks Chapel and Parkway Chapel.

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Parkway Chapel in Winston-Salem, at 2651 Buchanan Street, was established in 1964 by J.H. Cockerham, R.H. Wofford, H.R. Larrymore, C.C. Fishburne Sr., Tommy Steele Sr., L.A. Cowling, and H.R. Cromer as a hive-off from Glenn Avenue Gospel Chapel. For a time the assembly had the name Parkway Gospel Chapel. In addition to those mentioned, elders at Parkway Chapel include P.J. Bonardi, W. Kornelis, and I.G. Scherer. About 135 adults and youngsters are in the assembly. Parkway has commended a worker to serve with Child Evangelism Fellowship.

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Fair Oaks Gospel Chapel in Winston-Salem began in the fall of 1967, its roots being in Glenn Avenue Gospel Chapel. Those involved in the start-up include George Binkley Jr., Herman Cromer, Bill and Don Fulk, Nelson Davis, A.T. Watkins Sr., Jim Binkley, and Frances Forcum. The assembly is now known as Fair Oaks Chapel. Leadership has been shared also by Tommy Steele Sr., Julian Stephenson, and Charles Baker. Fair Oaks Chapel has commended a worker to the Lord's field in Korea. About 30 adults and youngsters attend Fair Oaks Chapel.

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Lester Wilson found the going tough the first year in Greensboro in 1939, but the second year was different. He held tent meetings and souls were saved. About 30 people were involved in starting an assembly. A vacated Baptist church on Forest Avenue, having a large auditorium and 17 Sunday school rooms, was purchased in 1940 by the assembly and became the Forest Avenue Tabernacle. Within 15 months of taking this building the assembly tripled and the Sunday school had over 250 in attendance. Ernest Gross joined Mr. Wilson in August 1941. A steady radio program was carried on in connection with this work. In January 1943, William Brown moved to Greensboro and remained until about August, when he moved to Asheville. Harold Mackay then moved to Greensboro. The work continued to grow under his care and reached over 100 in fellowship, with a Sunday school over 300. A daily radio program was carried on at that time. A branch Sunday school at Halburg, opened up during Mr. Gross' stay, was carried on by local brethren.

From this work has developed the present Shannon Hills Bible Chapel in Greensboro on Vandalia Road. Leaders since the early days include Jim Redling, J. Eddie Schwartz, Larry Batts, C.R. Andrews, Charles Crawford, and Mark Shelley. The assembly has had seven full-time

workers over the years, and 12 others have gone into full-time Christian service. Shannon Hills Bible Chapel has commended several missionaries to the foreign field, including South Africa and Burundi. About 350 people attend Shannon Hills Bible Chapel.

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In July 1942, Lester Wilson rented a large tobacco warehouse in Burlington, which is between Greensboro and Durham, and started meetings, assisted by Ernest Gross. Souls were saved and Christians contacted. Mr. Gross cared for the work until he left for South Carolina in June 1943. Mr. Wilson held three more campaigns in Burlington. A simple hall was built there in about 1943, and a larger Ireland Street Chapel in Burlington was built in 1946. Sunday school attendance soon reached 170. Harold Mackay and Welcome Detweiler helped out in this work when occasion permitted. W.G. Smith moved to Burlington in February 1946 and continued the work there.

Other families involved in the start-up of Ireland Street Chapel were Warren Miles, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sutton Sr., Mr. and Mrs. A.C. Cooper, and Mr. and Mrs. Bob Burns. Besides the men mentioned above, elders have included Kirk Dixon, Ed Lovette, Larry Hughes, and A.G. Sutton Jr. One of the sisters has been commended by Ireland Street Chapel as nurse at the Pittsboro Christian Village. About 115 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

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Evangelistic work was carried on simultaneously in Burlington and Siler City, with Sunday morning services in the former city and Sunday evening services in the latter. A temporary tabernacle was employed in Siler City for the evening Gospel meetings. A little company started Breaking Bread in 1941. Some Christians, having heard Mr. Wilson over the radio, urged him to come to Siler City; these gave the work an early start by their solid testimony. In October 1943, Mr. Wilson held his first series in Siler City, with a number of souls saved. Later, Frank Detweiler and William Bousfield had a series out in the country in a tent, and more were saved. In 1946, about fifty Christians in the Siler City assembly were carrying on the work, and built the Siler City Chapel in April of that year. William Bousfield stayed for three or four years in the area, living in Winston-Salem and also helping in Siler City and Sanford. Joe Giordano moved to Siler City in 1949 to help with the work there.

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A Christian woman in Durham, who had heard the Burlington radio broadcasts, asked Lester Wilson to have meetings in her home. Mr. Wilson came in January 1944, and a month later followed with a special series of meetings in a large rented store building on Mangum Street. Welcome Detweiler, from the Curly Hill country in Pennsylvania, came during a quiet time in farming to help with the singing in these meetings. Some 25 people were saved, and many more in a follow-up series. The Gospel effort continued through 1944, although in smaller quarters. During that year Welcome Detweiler traveled seven times back and forth between the Pennsylvania farm and Durham. In October 1944, he helped form a Young People's Discipleship group.

The new converts in Durham expressed a desire to establish a nondenominational local church, and at the end of 1944, purchased a lot on Driver Street for a building site. In January 1945, Welcome Detweiler and his wife Helen moved their family to Durham to guide the young believers. In April 1945, a company of 18 gathered in a rented building to Remember the Lord, their first meeting as an assembly. In June, the first section of the new chapel, seating 300, was officially opened and called the Gospel Center.

The first Thanksgiving Bible Conference of the Gospel Center was held in November 1945, and has continued to be an annual event throughout the church's history. Interest quickened in September 1947, when quite a number were saved. An addition was completed in October 1948, but within six months the enlarged building was being crowded as much as the original. In March 1950, a house and lot behind the chapel were purchased, and the building was enlarged to a capacity of over 960 in the main auditorium. By the mid 1950s, average attendance at the Family Bible Hour was about 1200.

In 1954, Welcome Detweiler had two weekly radio broadcasts in Durham. A leading professor at Duke University telephoned that he had been listening to Mr. Detweiler on the radio for several years and wanted him to come and try to help him. Psychiatrists had done him no good. That visit eventuated in the man's salvation.

Several score of the Christians at the Gospel Center have written out their testimonies. Many of them mention visits to their homes by "the preacher." Most of the men in the assembly were drinkers before they were saved; some were rather desperate characters. Real shepherd work on the part of Welcome Detweiler and of others in the assembly, both men and women, was a vital phase of the work at Durham. Doubtless it had much to do with the progress and growth there.

A number of Christians living in the Northgate area of northern Durham desired to reach their own neighborhood with the Gospel. In 1964, about one-fourth of those attending the Gospel Center left to start the new assembly, now known as Northgate Chapel. Still, the Gospel Center continued to expand. A gymnasium was built at the Gospel Center to accommodate youth programs.

Larry Batts became Mr. Detweiler's associate in 1973. Later, he left to engage in full-time service in Burlington and later in Greensboro. Rod Sharp of Scotland joined in the work at the Gospel Center in January 1979 and remained there until 1990.

A number of men and their wives were commended by the Gospel Center into full-time Christian ministry, most within the U.S. though two served in Zambia.

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When the East Durham area began deteriorating, causing many members to move away, the Christians purchased an 8-acre tract on Sherron Road in 1976. Many were reluctant to move, but when one of the members was shot and killed in the church parking lot in 1987, the decision to relocate became imperative. Construction of a new chapel was begun in 1989, designed to seat

450. A new name was chosen – Grove Park Chapel. The first services in the new Chapel were in July 1990.

Dale Brooks began serving part-time at Grove Park Chapel at that time, and became full-time in 1991. For three years, Daniel and Teressa Pierce served as full-time youth ministers. These serve with several elders. About 300 adults and youngsters are in Grove Park Chapel today.

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Sanford Chapel in the town of Sanford, had its beginning in March 1946, when Lester Wilson and Welcome Detweiler rented the Armory at Sanford for three weeks of meetings. Some eighteen persons professed salvation. An army barracks was bought from Camp McCall (Fort Bragg) in the summer and moved to McIver Street where it was remodeled. Temporary benches were installed, and the auditorium seated more than 400. Gospel meetings were held nightly for six weeks that summer. Clarence Low joined in the campaign in 1947 and later moved to Sanford. Ray Felton also ministered at several meetings. Lester Wilson stayed with Sanford Chapel until his health broke in 1948 and he had to leave for a rest.

A lot on 405 South Third Street was purchased, and there the first Sanford Chapel was built. The first service was held in January 1949. Clarence Low served the Lord there for 18 years.

In 1966, the original building was remodeled. Attendance had increased, with record attendance being 315. Construction on a new building at 650 Franklin Drive was begun in March 1983, and the assembly occupied it in February 1984.

After Clarence Low transferred to Asheville, Jim Redling worked in the assembly for approximately seven years, Ken Ashton for three years, and Franklin Taylor for ten years. In January 1989, Joseph Gould and his family came from Liverpool, England to minister to the Sanford Chapel assembly.

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An assembly work began in Goldsboro, 42 miles southeast of Raleigh, in about 1954, helped along by John Milton Mills from Raleigh. It continues today as Goldsboro Gospel Chapel.

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The Piedmont assemblies have historically had much interaction. An Easter Conference at Greensboro each year, a Thanksgiving Conference at Durham, and a monthly get-together of the young folks in one of the places each month, supported a strong regional testimony.

Some 1954 statistics provide the following: At the Gospel Center, Durham, the Family Bible Hour attendance stood at about 850 to 1000, including adults and children. About 350 attended the Sunday morning preaching service and Sunday school in the Raleigh Gospel Chapel. Sunday attendance was typically over 200 at Sanford Chapel. At Siler City Chapel, attendance was about 150. Sunday morning attendance was 380 at Ireland Street Chapel, Burlington. At Forest Avenue Tabernacle, Greensboro, about 300 were in attendance, and at the Gospel Chapel in

Winston-Salem, attendance was usually over 200 at the Family Bible Hour.

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In the late 1940s, a little group began meeting for Bible readings in the home of Ralph Carter at Zebulun, 17 miles east of Raleigh. About 45 were attending, and about a dozen of these, mostly women, began Breaking of Bread in the Carter home. In the early days, a Sunday school was held and on Sunday evening there was a Gospel service in an abandoned store and service station four miles from Zebulun, with from 35 to 50 attending. The assembly continues today as Union Hope Gospel Chapel.

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A protracted campaign in Reidsville, north of Greensboro, in the early 1950s did not result in the formation of an assembly there, though that had been the goal. However, an exercise developed in the late 1980s in the hearts of four brethren from Shannon Hills Bible Chapel in Greensboro, for a New Testament church in Reidsville. In the spring of 1989, with the hearty encouragement of the brethren at Shannon Hills, the Reidsville Bible Chapel was launched. Jeff Johnson, Steve Andrews, Jerry Denny, and Andy Burgess with their families began the work after serving in responsible positions at Shannon Hills Chapel for several years.

Reidsville Bible Chapel met first at the Reidsville YMCA, but in 1997 constructed its own chapel at 3016 S. Park Drive. About 80 adults and youngsters are in the assembly.

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In October 1975, seven brethren met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Hill for the purpose of forming a new assembly in the Burlington area. They decided to seek a meeting place in the town of Graham, and called their new assembly Graham Bible Fellowship. The Graham Civic Center was rented for the earliest meetings, and Philip Bomberger gave the first sermon there. In May 1976, a permanent building at the corner of Trail 8 and Moran Street in Burlington was secured and renovated. A piano was donated and an organ was purchased, the beginnings of an active musical program.

Ernie Gross conducted a series of Gospel meetings in the fall of 1976, introducing the young people to Camp Hope in Canton, NC. Also in the first year, a Senior Citizens monthly fellowship was formed, as well as a Youth Fellowship. In 1985, seven acres were purchased on Ivey Road in Graham, and the meetings of the assembly were moved into a building already there. This building was enlarged and renovated in 1988. Graham Bible Fellowship has a tradition of events such as annual Christmas banquets, annual graduation banquets, youth involvement in the musical programs, and Bible Conferences. Leadership has been shared by W.R. Humble and Roy Loflin, in addition to those already mentioned.

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Sedge Garden Chapel in Kernersville, between Greensboro and Winston-Salem, began in 1968, having hived off from Glenn Avenue Gospel Chapel in Winston-Salem. J.C. Musten, Leo Whicker, Charles Atkins, Robert Stuart, Richard Williard, and Jack Micheal were those involved

in the start-up. These with David Cedolia, Jack Parrish, and Bill Puritt have been in leadership over the years. Sedge Garden Chapel has commended a worker to Immanuel Mission in Arizona. About 55 adults and youngsters attend Sedge Garden Chapel.

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The Wilmington Bible Chapel started in the summer of 1968 and met initially in the home of Ralph and Marietta Samppala. The three families who began the work – George and Linda Bowman, Robert and Blanch Duncan, and Ralph and Marietta Samppala – had moved to Wilmington for work reasons and each had an assembly background. The meeting moved in 1972 to a rented house on 41st Street, and in 1974 built and moved into the Wilmington Bible Chapel. The active assembly later added an auditorium and a gymnasium for its Awana program.

Ralph Samppala, Jim Whaley, George Bowman, Willis Stancil, and Bill King have been leaders over the years. Wilmington Bible Chapel has commended workers to the Lord's vineyard in Colombia. About 175 adults and children come to the chapel.

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Waynesville Christian Fellowship in the southwest part of the state has its roots in a children's work, as is frequent in the formation of many assemblies. David Adams had left Cuba after the communist take-over of the country, and contacted Clayton and Kathleen Davis about Gospel meetings in the Waynesville area. A campaign of many weeks showed no evident conversions, but when a Sunday night Bible class for children was begun in the basement of the Davis home, the interest was evident. With Joe and Wilma Jo Arrington, and Dennis and Mary Lou Caldwell helping, the class grew to over 100, and several were saved.

A desire for other meetings developed, and in 1967 three families joined with the Arrington, Caldwell, and Davis families to celebrate the Lord's Supper in the Davis home in Maggie Valley. Later the assembly purchased and moved into a building on Highway 19, opposite Lake Junaluska, and took the name Waynesville Christian Fellowship. George Corn and Dick Reed have shared in leadership of the assembly, which now numbers about 100. Other workers who contributed significantly in ministering in the early history of the work were George Landis and Charles Rolls. The assembly has commended Harold Wells to ministry in the U.S.

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The assembly meeting now at Mebane Gospel Chapel started in 1963 in an unoccupied house on 5th Street in Mebane, between Burlington and Durham. The Christians met in the upper story of a store on Center Street before constructing the Mebane Gospel Chapel at 503 North Ninth Street, the current address. Mebane Gospel Chapel did not derive from another assembly, and was begun by Robert Suitt, George Davis, Moody Summerell, and Samuel Taylor. Robert Suitt, Edwin Petree, James Adams, and Samuel Taylor have been the leaders. Average attendance is around 50.

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Early in the 1960s, the Wallace Hylton family, who had been in fellowship at Bethany Chapel,

Augusta, GA moved to Salisbury, south of Winston-Salem, and entered into fellowship at the Parkway Gospel Chapel in Winston-Salem. Others living in Salisbury were also traveling to Winston-Salem. Because of the distance, Bill Hylton, Wallace Hylton, Warren Hylton, Joe Walmsley, and Jim Myers decided in late 1971 to start an assembly in Salisbury. Thus Bethany Chapel in Salisbury was born, a hive-off of Parkway Gospel Chapel. The group first met in Warren Hylton's office building, then in the Dukeville School, and then in an apartment for a few years. In 1973 they were able to purchase a church building on Main Street in Salisbury. In 1995, the Christians built the chapel at 4260 Stokes Ferry Road where they are now meeting. Elders in the assembly have been David Brewer and Tim Miskell in addition to the above. Bethany Chapel has about 50 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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Pembroke Family Fellowship in the town of Pembroke in the southern part of the state began in 1994 in the home of Ron and Wendy Locklear, where it still meets. For a brief time it was called The Family Church in Pembroke. Ron Locklear, Johnny Locklear, Nicholas Clark, and Scott Kitchens were the principals in the start-up, and Ron Locklear has been the leader. About 75 adults and youngsters attend the assembly. Workers have been commended by Pembroke Family Fellowship to the Lord's work in Zambia.

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The adjacent towns of Newton and Conover are midway between Ashville and Winston-Salem. The Newton-Conover Gospel Fellowship grew from a Bible study in the home of Andy Schaper. The study was attended by members from several local churches. Teaching from the Scriptures led the group to desire observing the Lord's Supper and establishing a testimony as directed in the New Testament. Helping to establish this testimony were Andy Schaper and Jack Proctor. The group met as an assembly beginning in May 1989 at the local YMCA.

In 1992, two adjacent buildings were purchased and modified to provide a facility for meetings and Sunday School. About 20 are in fellowship now, with about 25 in the Sunday School. Several Spanish-speaking folks are attending.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Asheville Gospel Chapel, anonymous, undated but after 1994

Historical Sketch of the Sanford Chapel, anonymous, undated, but after 1989

Brief History of Graham Bible Fellowship, anonymous, undated, about 1990

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Uplook, October 1989, p. 357

Virginia

Assembly testimony in Virginia seems to have started when Henry Catts from an assembly in Chicago, opened a business in Staunton in the western part of the state and was instrumental in bringing two well-known Gospel pioneers, James Campbell and William Matthews, to Staunton. These brethren pitched a tent there in 1887, resulting in an awakening in which many people were saved, black and white. The joy of these new-born souls abounded over all racial feelings and all were baptized together.

Alexander Lamb and William Beveridge, both from Scotland, were working for the Lord in Philadelphia when Mr. Campbell encouraged them to spend their vacation preaching Christ in Virginia. They went down together the following summer and God used them in bringing souls to Christ.

In 1890, Messrs. Lamb and Beveridge returned to Virginia, this time going to Richmond. James Campbell shipped his tent to them and they pitched it in Fulton, a suburb of Richmond. This was something new in that area, and nightly the tent was packed. A rich harvest of souls was reaped. The work continued into the fall, until the weather turned cool. The tent was taken down and these brethren secured an old building and continued there until the end of the year.

Their first baptism was in the James River in October. The whole community had been stirred and all kinds of evil reports were in circulation about the preachers and the “new doctrine.” Throngs came to witness the baptism that day and small boats were lined up the river as far as could be seen. In late October 1890, the preachers and the converts sat down to Remember the Lord in Breaking of Bread and soon about sixty were in assembly fellowship.

Benjamin Bradford, just beginning his work as an evangelist, met the preachers from Virginia and they encouraged him to go to Richmond and continue at the Richmond Gospel Hall while they visited Canada. This he did and more souls were saved, though opposition was strong, especially from a secret order called the “White Caps.” One morning, placards were posted in Fulton, setting a time limit for the “Mormons” to get out. The following Sunday night, the hall was crowded. The devil was defeated in his purpose, for the leader of the “White Caps” was saved that night and the saints were left unmolested.

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In 1891 and after, Messrs. Beveridge, Bradford, and a Mr. Stevens from Cleveland would walk to a coal mining village called Gayton, about 25 miles from Richmond to preach the Gospel. Many souls were saved, and a small assembly began Remembering the Lord in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Clairborne of Gayton. This Gayton Assembly seems to have lasted only a short time.

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The preachers went also to Matoaca, a town south of Richmond. Messrs. Lamb and Beveridge secured a hall there with only planks for seats, but the place was crowded. A tent season followed and there were very few homes in that village that did not witness the grace of God in the salvation of some of the members of their families. The preachers – Lamb, Bradford, and James

Hamilton from Scotland – built Matoaca Gospel Hall for the new assembly in 1897. The Matoaca Gospel Hall continues today.

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Hugh Campbell, who was saved in tent meetings held by Mr. Matthews and Mr. McGill, moved to Petersburg, a short distance south of Richmond. The brethren pitched their tent in that city and again the work took hold, and an assembly was formed. W. R. McEwen had a tailoring business in Petersburg and a number of his daughters and his son Sam were saved in those seasons of blessing. Sam McEwen became a well-known servant of the Lord and was much used of God in Virginia, as was the youngest son, Hugh. The Petersburg Gospel Hall dates to 1900.

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Al and Mattie Ridolfi, Joseph Cheetham, and Thelma Reams, who were in fellowship at Shurm Heights Gospel Hall in Richmond (now Carlisle Avenue Gospel Chapel), decided in 1950 to have a series of children’s meetings in a home in McGuire Park in south Richmond. These meetings drew the interest of a number of parents, and a number of them came to know the Lord as their Savior. A small assembly was started in a home in that area, and before long, plans were made to build a chapel.

With the help of a number of Christians, primarily from Durham, Raleigh, and Siler City, Grace Gospel Chapel in Richmond was completed near the end of 1951 at 3459 Chapel Drive. A number of additions followed over the years, including an apartment which was used by visiting speakers and traveling missionaries.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, the attendance reached 200 or more each Sunday. But when urban blight reached the area, families moved away and attendance dwindled. A six-acre site in Chesterfield County was found and purchased, but it was about eight years before the old chapel was sold. The new chapel at 1201 Spirea Road was finished enough for occupancy in 1995. Attendance was up to about 80 people in 1998 and has grown as a result of visitation in the neighborhood. Grace Gospel Chapel has commended workers to the Pittsboro Children’s Home and other service in North Carolina.

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Bethany Gospel Chapel in Newport News dates back to the turn of the century when five families met each Sunday to Break Bread in the home of William Dunning in the 300 block of 49th Street. At about the same time, a different group formed a Sunday school in a nearby building that had been used by different churches. The leader of that group met Mr. Dunning and was so impressed with the type of services held at Dunning’s home that he made his building available for the assembly services.

A few years later the growing assembly purchased a house and land, and organized under the name Gospel Hall. Expansion led to plans for a new building in 1938. The first meeting held in the new Newport News Gospel Hall at 82 - 29th Street was in May 1940.

Around 1962, when the area around the area was becoming more commercialized, the assembly moved to 40 Ballard Road in a residential neighborhood, where more children could have easy access to hear the Gospel. Construction of Bethany Gospel Chapel was begun in September 1963 and the chapel was dedicated in June 1964.

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Hampton Roads Community Church in Poquoson, north of Newport News, began in September 1989 in Poquoson High School, having split off from Bethany Gospel Chapel. Earl Cheek, Gary Stewart, Chancellor Bailey, Joseph Kingsboro, Kenny Cheek, and Tom Ward were those who started the assembly. The church grew slowly in the first six months as the elders developed a philosophy of ministry. Then they moved into the Poquoson Primary School, where they had exclusive use of the facilities on Sundays. Gary Stewart, Kenny Cheek, and Tim Rutman have been the elders. About 110 adults and youngsters attend Hampton Roads Community Church.

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The assembly known today as Cherrydale Bible Church in Arlington started in the mid 1950s from a home Bible study group led by Colin Heath. This group established an assembly and moved into Tuckahoe School in North Arlington, where it was called Cherrydale Community Chapel. In 1958, the assembly moved to the present building at 1905 North Monroe Street. In 1980, the group took the name Cherrydale Bible Chapel, and later Cherrydale Bible Church.

Mr. Heath was with an assembly in southeast Washington before starting the home Bible study in Arlington. In addition to Colin Heath, Warren Lane and George Grimm were involved in starting the assembly. In 1963, the assembly recognized elders as their leaders, and these have been Bill Barr, Donald Tinder, Dale Knowles, Claude Poole, Edward W. Payne, Excell Duncan, and Conrad Tolosa.

The congregation was fairly large through the 1960s with a good youth ministry. The 1970s witnessed a departure of a large percentage of the young members, and today about 40 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

Cherrydale has commended or co-commended workers to Ecuador, The Netherlands, Chad, Rumania, France, the Emmaus Correspondence School, and to prison and youth work in Virginia. Ted Payne has been commended to ministry at Bethany Bible Fellowship, Canton, OH.

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An assembly in Hopewell was prospering in 1953. Its Hopewell Gospel Chapel was built in 1955.

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Northside Gospel Chapel in Victoria, a rural town in southern Virginia, was begun in 1951 through the efforts of Robert Adcock, Les Doby, C.O. Dunnivant, Ralph West, W.H. Hardy, and A.S. Holloman. The assembly began as a Baptist church, but after about a year, and discussions with the brethren in Durham, NC, they switched to a New Testament style of governance and

worship. The group has always occupied the same building at 2300 Marshal Avenue. In leadership over the years have been Woody Murphy, W.J. Oglesby, and Glenn and Clifford Hood, in addition to those mentioned above. In 1996, the assembly had about 40 adults in fellowship and about 20 children. Northside has commended Glenn Hood to work in the assembly. Charles Vaughan of Lynchburg, VA often ministered the Word at the assembly.

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Blacksburg Christian Fellowship in southwestern Virginia, began in 1969 in rented facilities of the Wesley Foundation at Virginia Tech, where it met until building its own chapel in 1989. Jerry Caskey, Paul King, Sam Metcalf, Paul Ribbe, and Victor Zitta, with their families, were the initiators of the assembly. Others in leadership have been Joseph Kelley, David Kingston, David Kenyon, Dennis Schneck, and Jay Sullivan.

The assembly has commended workers to Spain, Ecuador, Bolivia, Austria, Cambodia, Nigeria, and Austria. Attendance at Blacksburg Christian Fellowship on a typical Sunday is about 600 to 700.

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Sunnybrook Gospel Chapel in Syria, near Culpeper, about 60 miles southwest of Washington, DC, began in 1952 in Criglersville. Mr. and Mrs. Ermal Robinson were the principal people involved in the start-up, and since then McKinley Jenkins and James Hasse have shared the leadership. About 65 adults and youngsters attend the assembly.

Sources:

- Questionnaire Responses
- History of Cherrydale Bible Church*, in *The Cherrydale Messenger*, fall 1997
- Hampton Roads Community Church*, mid 1990s
- Grace Gospel Chapel: Historical Sketch of Assembly*, 1998
- Letters of Interest; November 1946, p. 34; December 1946, p. 30; October 1966, p. 9

West Virginia

Assembly work in Huntington, at the western tip of West Virginia, began as a tent meeting conducted by William Graham Smith in 1931. He also had a children's meeting in his garage around this time. He invited Harold Mackay to come and assist in the Word. Willie Bousefield and Willie Foster came to help with special meetings. In 1935, a store building was rented and Lester Wilson was asked to come and have Gospel meetings. He stayed for six weeks. He was followed later by Robert Holliday. Lester Wilson returned for Gospel meetings in 1937.

W.G. Smith, his wife Ruth, and their two children continued faithfully in their labor of love until 1945, when they moved to Burlington, North Carolina; they saw many saved. One convert, Edwin Porter, developed real ability in preaching. Others who ministered were 'Mac' McDaniel and Harry White. These brethren began the chapel building in about 1938. The Huntington Gospel Chapel was dedicated in 1940. Arnold Clary was saved in the 1940s and continues in the ministry.

Harry Pilkington conducted several Gospel campaigns at Huntington in the 1960s. Eddie Huston from Riverview Chapel in Hinton came into fellowship in 1960 and provided valued Bible teaching. Through the witness of Eddie Huston, Darrell Adkins was saved and also has greatly assisted in the meetings. Herman Luhm of Morgantown has regularly provided helpful teaching over the years. Charles Fizer of Emmaus Bible College assisted in the work in the Huntington assembly in the 1970s.

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In the 1940s, brethren including Herman Luhm, who was commended to the Lord's work by Marlborough Gospel Hall in San Diego, CA in 1942, began a work in the coal mining area of Mullens and Allen Junction. Souls were saved and an assembly formed. Welton Bible Chapel at Allen Junction was built to house this assembly. Harry and Joan Pilkington came from Ontario to assist in the new work. When the Pilkingtons moved to Hinton in 1962, the work at Welton was left in the hands of David Pollock, who had moved there the year before to help.

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In 1956, another work began in the coal mining area at nearby Otsego and continues today as Otsego Bible Chapel. Mike Cook, Doug Hedrick, and Gary Rhodes are leaders in that assembly.

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Riverview Chapel in Hinton in the southern part of the state, began in the late 1940s at 1401 Temple Street. It was called West End Chapel at that time, but changed to Riverview Chapel when it moved to 16th and Temple. Frank Monroe and Herman Luhm were those who started the assembly. Herman Luhm, Bill Chewning, Larry Deeds, Robbie Merritt, and Harry Pilkington have been leaders over the years. Riverview Chapel has commended Bob Deeds to the Emmaus Correspondence Ministry, Larry Deeds to the assembly at Conway, SC, and Harry Pilkington to the local work. About 70 to 80 adults and youngsters attend Riverview Chapel.

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The city of Morgantown sits on the east bank of the Monogahela River, just south of the Pennsylvania state border. In 1949, Guy Meehling started a Sunday School in Morgantown, and out of it an assembly developed, meeting in a school house. In 1957, Herman Luhm moved from Hinton to Morgantown to help the small group of Christians who were meeting to Remember the Lord. Radio outreach was added to camp and Sunday School ministries.

By 1960 the group had outgrown its rented quarters. Family Bible Hour attendance was averaging 100, and reached a record of 153 on Easter Sunday of that year. But the hall only seated 80, so the Bible Hour was being held in two sessions. The assembly itself consisted of only ten families – 33 people, including children.

A lot was purchased across the river in Westover and funds were borrowed from Stewards Foundation for building costs. Brethren from Durham, NC drew up building plans and sent a team of volunteers to help with steel work, carpentry, and plumbing. Crescent Hills Chapel was opened in late 1960.

Growth continued, and a Sunday School wing and assembly room were added to the building. Bible Hour attendance averaged 185 in 1972.

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The Morgantown assembly also reached out to other communities. During the period when the assembly still met in the school house, a young George Kirk, Jr. was won to Christ. Later he moved to Terra Alta, 25 miles to the southeast, and helped establish an assembly there. Hillcrest Chapel in Terra Alta was built and occupied in 1969.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses
Letters of Interest, July-August, 1972, p. 22

Maryland

Perhaps the oldest assembly in Maryland is the Frostburg Gospel Hall in the northwest corner of the state, near Cumberland. It seems to have been in existence in the late 1800s or early 1900s. Nathaniel Dunn, an immigrant from Scotland and a convert of John Knox McEwen, had arrived in the coal mining regions in the late 1800s, and at some point had associated with the Frostburg assembly. In 1938, evangelists Samuel Rea and Alexander Cathers pitched a tent in a country place near Frostburg, and many were saved and joined with the assembly at that time. The assembly continues today.

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Eastern Gospel Hall was one of the oldest assemblies in Baltimore. Located close to Johns Hopkins University and hospital, it ceased to exist around 1987.

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The assembly at Hillendale Bible Chapel in Baltimore has its roots in a chicken coop. In about 1941, a lady left a chicken coop and the land around it to whomever would use the land and coop for a Sunday School. Mr. A.S. Loizeaux along with several others decided to incorporate as a church in order to get this land and begin a Sunday School in the area. The coop was cleaned and renovated, and eventually was added on to. The sessions were held on Sunday afternoons initially in order not to interfere with their other assembly activities. The activity developed into a joint effort of several assemblies in the area. Mr. Bud Young was active in bringing children to the Sunday School, which at one time had about 200 children in attendance.

In the early 1950s, the workers formed an assembly, meeting in that building on Goodview Road. The work at that time had no recognized elders. Will T. Miller, a preacher from New Zealand, and James Dunkerton moved to the area, called Hillendale, in about 1973. They encouraged elder recognition. Elders since then have included Jim Dunkerton, Bill Dunkerton, Roger Dunkerton Jr., Tom Schetelich, and Norris Gorman. The assembly, taking the name Hillendale Bible Chapel, grew and is now the largest assembly in the Baltimore area. The assembly currently rents space in a middle school, and recently purchased land in the Perry Hall district for erection of a larger building.

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Glad Tidings Chapel in Baltimore began in about 1950 at 1633 Laurens Street. It derived from Maranatha Gospel Hall in Washington, DC. Glad Tidings moved from Laurens Street to its current address at 4801 Garrison Boulevard in 1970. Aubrey Wilson of Washington DC established the Assembly, and Sister Lawrence purchased the first building. Those in leadership over the years include Aubrey Wilson, William Strickland, and Arthur Evans. About seven adults and youngsters are in the assembly at present.

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SAYSF Bible Church in Lexington Park near the southwest tip of Maryland, has its roots back in 1935, when Gould M. Brown began an assembly meeting in his home in New York. Newly

saved, he studied the Bible to see what the Lord would have him do, and came on his own to New Testament principles of meeting. Upon meeting E.C. Hadley, he learned of the brethren. It was then that he established Parkside Gospel Hall in Milford, NY. During this period, Theron Davidson met and married Mr. Brown's daughter Barbara, and Theron Davidson joined in the work with Mr. Brown.

Mr. Davidson was a Naval Officer in World War II, and was sent after the war to the Patuxent Naval Air Test Center, adjacent to Lexington Park. The Davidsons began camp work at St. Mary's City in 1946, and when 17 persons were saved as a result, they purchased 13 acres of nearby land to be used for full-time work for the Lord. They built a home and began an assembly there in 1951, calling it the Lexington Park Christian Assembly. After a chapel was constructed on the property, and because of Pentecostal confusions, they took the name SAYSF Bible Chapel. When they learned that local people thought of a 'chapel' as an insignificant church, they changed the name to SAYSF Bible Church (SAYSF stands for 'Seek and Ye Shall Find').

The assembly of about 500 has had dozens of men in leadership, including at present Tom Hanrahan, Dick Jordan, and Peter Dobson. SON-KISS Ministries, which provides construction assistance to assemblies, is one of the many outreaches of SAYSF Bible Church.

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South Potomac Church in Accokeek, south of Washington, DC, began in 1991, having hived off from Clinton Community Chapel in the Washington metropolitan area. David and Deanna Sutherland, Rod and Beth Parker, Chuck and Kit Coleman, Peter and Avis Buckingham, Mike and Margo Clarke, and Brent and Jill Brooks were the principal people starting the assembly. These, with Doug Moore, Eric Burkhardt, Mark Adams, Bob Keysar, Vince Miller, and Storm Hutchinson have been in active leadership. South Potomac Church has commended several to the Lord's work. About 550 adults and youngsters are in regular attendance at the assembly.

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Faith Bible Church in Mechanicsville, south of Washington, DC, came into existence in 1992 as a hive-off of SAYSF Bible Church. Theron Davidson was the principal person involved in the start-up, and leadership has been shared by Rodney Spade, Leon Kelly, and Dick Nevala. About 100 adults and youngsters attend Faith Bible Church.

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Rockville Bible Fellowship, which now meets in a hotel on Rt. 28, began in nearby Gaithersburg in about 1969, and was known then as Gaithersburg Christian Fellowship. George Shabarji and Julius English were those who initiated the assembly; both had assembly backgrounds. Those men, with Arthur Garnes, have taken leadership in Rockville Bible Fellowship, which has about 50 adults and youngsters in typical attendance.

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Cedar Ridge Community Church in Spencerville, just north of Washington, began in 1982 in Riverdale. After that it occupied rented quarters in Greenbelt, Beltsville, and Bartonsville. At the

end of 1997, the assembly moved into its first permanent facility, in Spencerville. Brian McLaren and William Duncan were those who started the assembly, which now has about 500 adults and youngsters in attendance. The vigorous church has commended several church planters.

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Loch Hill Chapel in Baltimore is a merger of Arunah Chapel and the Lauraville Gospel Hall in 1951. In the Arunah assembly, the elders included Milton Loizeaux, Paul Loizeaux, Alfred S. Loizeaux, Edwin Fesche, Roger Dunkerton, and Elmer Knirimen. In the Lauraville assembly, the elders included Earl Barlow, G.T. Willey, and John Suess. After the merger, these men continued in leadership. The Lauraville Christians had been meeting in an old country school house rented from the city; the Arunah assembly sold its building. A new chapel was erected for the new assembly at 6601 Loch Raven Boulevard, still the location of Loch Hill Chapel.

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Brooklyn Bible Chapel in Baltimore began as the Masonville Gospel Hall, which was begun by Stanley Loizeaux, Herbert Gray, and Ermal Robinson at a time not now remembered. Others in leadership since the early days have included Alfred S. Gray, Norman Cannon, and Don Brower. For many years, William Cunningham did much of the preaching and visitation. The assembly later took the name Brooklyn Gospel Chapel, then Brooklyn Bible Chapel. The assembly of about 175 people has an active foreign missions program, and has commended several workers to foreign and local fields.

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Bel Air Bible Chapel, formerly called the Bel Air Bible Community Church, in the town of Bel Air northeast of Baltimore, began in about 1964. It is a small group of about 20 people, of whom Neal Wogsland, Edward Suess, and James P. Sabatino have been leaders over the years.

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The assembly at Laurel Chapel, in Laurel between Baltimore and Washington, DC, came into being on Easter Sunday, 1987. Its founding was encouraged by Christians at Cedar Ridge Community Church in Spencerville, MD. When the Christians at Laurel purchased an old Congregational Church building in nearby Savage in 1994, they changed the name to Countryside Fellowship Church. Many of the older members of the Congregational Church stayed and joined the assembly.

Commended workers Dan and Sue Schmidt, the principals in starting the assembly, were supported initially by Interest Ministries and the Cedar Ridge assembly. When the Schmidts left for the Lord's work in Chile, Charles and Katherine Coleman were commended for work in the assembly, which has about 140 adults and youngsters in attendance.

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The assembly now meeting at New Hampshire Avenue Gospel Chapel, Silver Spring began in April 1916 at F. G. Ruebsam's house at 5224 Illinois Avenue, NW, in Washington, DC. The assembly moved in January 1917 to N. Fillmann's home, 1422-22nd Street, SE, Washington,

where it remained for a time.

Bible Readings were held each Lord's Day at the homes of C. W. Birkett and F. G. Ruebsam alternately, previous to the Breaking of Bread, which was the outcome of Gospel tent meetings for two consecutive summers (1915 and 1916) by Evangelists Benjamin Bradford and Samuel McEwen. Their ministry was followed by F. B. Hanle in the fall of 1916 and the spring of 1917.

The assembly moved to a rented building at 1420 H Street, NE, and later to a rented building at 245-15th Street, SE. In 1938, the assembly constructed a chapel at 5720 South Dakota Avenue, NE, in Washington.

After the chapel at South Dakota Avenue was sold, the assembly services were held in the Seventh Day Adventist's church building on Riggs Road in Adelphi, Maryland on a rental basis, during the construction of the New Hampshire Avenue Gospel Chapel at 12608 New Hampshire Avenue in Silver Spring, still its current location. The first services were held in the chapel on May 24, 1964.

Lloyd Wineberg, Thomas Hall, and Marlow Olsen were the leading brethren for many years. The Sunday Schools have always been important in the assembly. Dorothy Peter (Aunt Dot) is especially remembered for her Sunday School interests. The superintendents have included Lloyd Wineberg, Lou Wieland, Don Kuester, Fred Corley, Ira Mitchell, Ron Gaskins, Rick Markley, Dan Solanki, and Doug Crow. Sunday School picnics were initially held once a year, then twice a year – the Saturday before school closed and a week after it opened in the fall.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

25th Anniversary Celebration of the New Hampshire Avenue Gospel Chapel, 1989

Letters of Interest, Oct. 1952, p. 13; March 1953, p. 18

Washington, D.C.

Immanuel Bible Assembly in Washington, DC has its roots in home Bible studies conducted in the city prior to 1970. Several persons were saved in the Bible studies, and other Christians were drawn to the group, being discouraged with the church settings in which they found themselves.

In 1970, the Christians began meeting in full assembly capacity in the home of one of the saints at 207 Taylor Street, N.W. Soon they were having a Sunday School and had an active young people's group, with 45 in fellowship. Outgrowing the home, they moved into a Washington Bible College building for a time, and by 1977 moved into their own building at 3303 10th Street, N.E. Leaders in the assembly have included LeRoy W. Burns, Burdette S. Burton, Willis L. Davis, Jr., and Lorren E. Hackett.

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Washington Christian Assembly at 30 Kennedy Street NW in Washington, DC is active. Samuel and Joseph Jeremiah have been in leadership.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses

Delaware

In about 1940, Edward and Jean Richmond were commended by the Olney Gospel Hall in Philadelphia, to come to Dover for evangelical work. They started a children's work in a store on the main street in Dover. From that work, the Dover Gospel Hall began in 1946 at a location in central Dover. From 1950 to 1975, the assembly was located in West Dover and called the West Dover Bible Chapel. The assembly discontinued in 1975 but revived in 1979 when Norman Wilkerson and Don Henry came. The group then moved just one mile west and took its present name, Dover Bible Chapel. About 30 adults and youngsters attend on a typical Sunday.

Mr. Richmond and a Mr. Brown in the Dover assembly began an outreach in the late 1940s in the village of Hazelville, about 10 miles from Dover. A Gospel series resulted in about 20 being saved, and a Sunday School was established in an old school house in the town.

Sources:

Questionnaire Responses
Letters of Interest, August 1948, p. 22

Pennsylvania

An assembly known as the Old Meeting in Philadelphia at 18th Street and Fairmount Avenue is known to have existed in Philadelphia by 1881, for Miss Mary Ann Smith (later Mrs. Mary Harry), a recent immigrant to the United States, was directed there by the Irish evangelists James Campbell and William Matthews. A Mr. Reed was a leading elder in that assembly. But after Miss Smith visited a nearby 'exclusive' meeting, she was not allowed to return to the Old Meeting.

Mrs. Harry records that there was no other assembly in Philadelphia to which she could turn, so the Old Meeting was evidently was the only 'open' brethren meeting in the city at that time. The young girl wrote to the evangelists, pleading with them to come to Philadelphia, and they did in May 1884, holding tent meetings on South Broad Street below Federal Street. On the first Sunday of the tent meetings, seven Christians Broke Bread together, the beginning of what became known as the Philadelphia Assembly or the Downtown Meeting. Those present were Miss Mary Ann Smith, her brother Robert and mother Mrs. Charles Smith; James Campbell, William Matthews, William McEwen (brother of John Knox McEwen and father of Hugh and Sam McEwen), and John Greer.

Many were saved in the first season of these tent meetings. When winter came, the Philadelphia Assembly rented a room over a blacksmith's shop at 1113 South Broad Street. It was there that the assembly had its first Conference on Christmas Day, 1887 at which Donald and Charles Ross, James Campbell, William Matthews, Norman Case (later with the China Inland Mission), Frank Crook, William Staner, David Oliver, and John Haliburton were preachers. (Mrs. Harry also mentions attendance by her future husband from the Harrisburg assembly, so the Harrisburg Assembly was in existence by 1887.)

The Christians met for several years over the blacksmith's shop. Many were saved and added to the group, and many believers came from the 'old country' and joined them. Open-air meetings conducted by the assembly were common, and there the greatest opposition to the Gospel was felt, stones and bricks being thrown at the preachers.

From this Downtown Meeting, several others sprang up. People living in north Philadelphia rented the Iron Hall in Kensington for assembly meetings, in fellowship with the Downtown Meeting. These later moved to Howard Street, and in 1910 purchased their own building at 2447 North Mascher Street, known as the Mascher Street Gospel Hall. The Mascher Street assembly continued to exist until 1982, but was not on Mascher Street in its final years.

The Christians at the Downtown Meeting went through several moves, to 13th and Wharton, 15th and Federal, 17th and Federal, 21st and Latona, and then to 20th and Dickinson, where they remained for many years and apparently erected their own building. This building was sold in 1945 and they moved to rented quarters at 71st Street and Woodland Avenue, and then to 64th

and Woodland until 1952, when the meeting disbanded, after 68 years of existence.

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While the Christians were at 20th and Dickinson, some of the group then living in the vicinity of Darby in the southwest suburbs, built Maranatha Hall or Maranatha Tabernacle in or near Darby. A radio preacher, George Palmer, was there for many years. This assembly later was called the Collingdale Assembly.

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This Collingdale Assembly is not to be confused with another assembly of similar name, which began when an Irish preacher, Mr. Nickelson, came to Darby in 1914 and held Gospel meetings. Several were saved, and the little band began meeting in 1915 as an assembly in a rented room in the Odd Fellows Hall in Darby. Robert Henry and Harry Pinney were the principals at establishing the assembly, having moved from Philadelphia. In 1921, the growing assembly built Collingdale Gospel Hall a mile west in Collingdale at MacDade Boulevard and Hillside Avenue. The assembly grew and increased its auditorium and Sunday school capacity in 1953. Now called the Collingdale Gospel Chapel, the assembly has commended several to the Lord's work in the Dominican Republic, Zaire, and Quebec.

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In the 1880s or 1890s, George McCandless, who had a printing business, was preaching on the streets of Philadelphia. He rented a store at 20th and Kater Streets in south Philadelphia, and put a big Bible in the window along with some Bible texts. He invited men to a Bible study and in other ways attracted families to gather, apparently as an assembly. A number of these families later moved to west Philadelphia and met in a room in a large building at 67th and Market Streets, owned by James Arthur, a building contractor. The assembly at that time became known as the West Philadelphia Assembly.

Mr. Arthur knew of George MacKenzie, who had only recently become acquainted with the New Testament manner of gathering and would soon become outstanding itinerant preacher, and encouraged him to teach at the new assembly. In about 1900, Mr. Arthur won a contract to develop a residential area in Kenilworth, New Jersey. He brought some of these Philadelphia Christians with him and helped start an assembly in Kenilworth. He sold the Philadelphia building at that time, and the Christians who had been meeting there moved a short distance west to a store between 58th and 59th on Market Street. The group at that time was small and was affiliated with the 'Grant exclusive' brethren.

A Mr. Mory then built a four-story apartment building at 5917 Chestnut Street and rented the whole first floor to the assembly. There it flourished and grew, and many well known speakers came for special meetings, including H.A. Ironside, A.E. Booth, and George MacKenzie.

Then a split occurred and one group moved out, to 58th and Hoffman Avenue. These were identified with the 'open' brethren. In 1948 they moved into a basement-only building in nearby

Lansdowne and became known as the Lansdowne Gospel Hall, and after that the Lansdowne Gospel Chapel. They later added an above-ground auditorium, but a fire forced them to move out for six months. At that time, the brethren who had remained at 5917 Chestnut, invited them back into that space. When the repairs were finished, the rift apparently healed, those brethren joined with the Lansdowne group.

In 1956, some of the families moved further out into the suburbs and established the Malvern assembly. The Lansdowne assembly today is known as the Lansdowne Bible Chapel, located at Greenwood and Wycombe.

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Another group of Christians were also called a West Philadelphia assembly. Though the names given to its various meeting places have not been identified, I will refer to them collectively as the West Philadelphia Gospel Hall. The assembly was formed in about 1914, and was an offshoot of the Downtown Meeting because of a number who were living in the western area of the city. They first met in a store front property on South 60th Street near Spruce. Some of the early brethren at the West Philadelphia Gospel Hall were David Sutter, John McLeod, Thomas Anderson, Albert Anderson, William Cameron, James Smith, Albert Wilson, William King, William Long, and Edward Moffitt. In 1933, the assembly purchased a building at 62nd and Jefferson Streets in the Overbrook section of the city. It was simply a basement with no above-ground floor. In 1933, Sam McEwen had Gospel meetings in the newly purchased building. In 1963, they sold that building and moved further west to rented quarters in Broomall before moving to their new hall in 1967, located on Route 252 south of Newtown Square. In 1927 or 1928, Robert Halliday and John Conaway had fruitful meetings at the West Philadelphia Gospel Hall.

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In 1906, a group of Christians who had been commuting in to town from the suburbs began meeting as the Ardmore Assembly in the Merion Title Building. A year or so later they moved to Bryn Mawr and became known as the Bryn Mawr Assembly. The believers met for years in the reading room over the public library. Mr. Cesare Patrizio was commended from the assembly in about 1918, and Oswald MacLeod in 1928. Others have been commended to the Lord's work at home and abroad since that time. The preacher James Marshall made the Bryn Mawr assembly his home assembly for many years.

A new building was erected in 1923-24 – the Bryn Mawr Gospel Hall – which is still used today. Some of the names from that time are Samuel Martin, Hugh Clark, Harry Iolitt, Robert Irvine, King Irvine, William Goldsmith, William Oliver, and Charles Dautle. Two expansions to the building have been made since the original, the first in 1975, and the most recent in 1994.

One of the interesting things about the Bryn Mawr assembly was the large number of men and women who worked in the private estates in various capacities. The weekly prayer meeting was on Friday evening to accommodate these folk. Another feature of those days was that the prayer

meeting at Bryn Mawr was almost as large as the morning meeting. The Bryn Mawr assembly sponsored an annual Thanksgiving Conference for many years.

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Before 1921, a work was being carried on among Italian immigrants in Philadelphia. Cesare Patrizio and Louis Rosanio had tent meetings and decided to form an Italian meeting because of the need to use the language for many coming into the country who did not know English. This meeting began in 1921. They met for years in different places in south Philadelphia. Among the various addresses was 8th and Reed Streets. In later years they moved to the Tycony section of Philadelphia; in the 1966 the meeting was disbanded. (See Ethnic section)

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The assembly now at Enfield Gospel Chapel on the north side of Philadelphia, came into being in 1906 at 2838 Ridge Avenue. It later moved to 14 E. Clapier Street where it was known as the Germantown Gospel Hall. The assembly moved to its present location at 6 Summit Lane, Oreland in 1968. Leaders over the years include Charles Brinkman, Harry Sailer, Fred Vollmar, William Wills, William Rickert, Chester Myers, and Ernest Schwarz.

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In 1926, the Olney Gospel Hall in North Philadelphia hived-off from the Mascher Street assembly, which had become quite large with over 200 in fellowship. The Christians met first on N. 5th Street between Lindley Avenue and Tabor Road. In 1928, they moved to 314 W. Chew Street, which is the present location of Olney Gospel Hall

The original elders at Olney included John McQuillen, David Oliver, David Harry, William Richmond, E.B. Sykes, Harry Strain, and John MacEllan. Another early elder was John McQuillen. Sam and Hugh McEwen had Gospel meetings there in 1927. Open-air preaching at the corner of 5th and Tabor was a feature of the assembly. John Bothwell was known for his distribution of Gospel tracts in the neighborhood. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, five preachers made Olney their home assembly. They were Charles Keller, John P. Conaway, William Robertson, Ed Richmond, and Clay Fite. In the late 1940s, Paul Plubell made his home there.

Among those commended to the Lord's work have been Edward Richmond, who pioneered and shepherded a work in Dover, DE (now called Dover Bible Chapel), and C.C. Fite, who preached throughout the continent. The Italian evangelist Cesare Patrizio was also associated with Olney Gospel Hall, though commended by the Bryn Mawr Assembly.

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Grace Gospel Chapel in Philadelphia began in 1927 when a group split off from Olney Gospel Hall. These Christians met on the second floor of a commercial building at 5th and Rising Sun Avenue in Philadelphia. Robert Barnes, George Canning, Granvil Godshalk, and James MacDonald were the acknowledged leaders and among those who started the assembly. In 1944,

they rented a former Episcopal church building for their meetings, on Willow Grove Avenue in the suburb of Wyndmoor on the north side. This small building was next to a large Roman Catholic facility; about a year after Grace assembly occupied the building, the Catholics purchased it and had it torn down for their own expansion.

So in about 1946, the assembly moved into a storefront in the Erlen section of the city on Cheltenham Avenue. This was a busy street and the storefront was next to the Erlen Theater. The Christians called their new home Erlen Gospel Chapel.

The area gradually deteriorated and the Christians began looking around for a more suitable place to meet. In 1970, they learned of an available building long known as Ardsley Chapel in Ardsley, then about 10 miles north of the city. The Erlen assembly purchased the building, calling it Ardsley Bible Chapel, which is the current meeting place of the assembly on Jenkintown Road at Harrison Avenue.

In 1984, the assembly was small and struggling. Apart from Robert Barnes, the early leaders had all passed on, and the assembly had no designated elders. The Enfield Gospel Chapel, about three miles away, was at that time a thriving assembly with a number of young families. A number of these families, about 40 people in all, decided to leave Enfield and join the Ardsley group. James Hulshizer was the leading brother among these.

The assembly became convinced of the Scriptural need for designated elders, and James Hulshizer was chosen, followed later by Albert Crompton. Paul Logan and his family then returned from the mission field in Zambia for medical reasons, and Paul became another elder. In 1989, Norman and Alice Roberts came to the assembly, and Norman joined the three in eldership. In 1994, four young men were added to the eldership: Karl Peterson, Dean Henrich, John MacPherson, and William Parfitt. Karl Peterson was commended for work within the assembly. Ardsley Bible Chapel has commended and co-commended workers to Zambia and Mozambique.

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An assembly in Malvern, in the western suburbs of Philadelphia, was founded in 1957. In 1956, several families living in that area and who were attending the Lansdowne Gospel Chapel, which was closer in to the city, were exercised to start a new testimony in their neighborhood. They met together for prayer for several months. Some from the Bryn Mawr Gospel Hall joined with this group, as did others. The families of Thomas Fraser, James Mehaffey, Stanley Hart, John Dorazio, Herman Sauer, Charles Wilson, and Hans Kurash formed the nucleus of the group.

In 1957, they purchased and extensively remodeled an old Quaker Meeting House at Woodland Avenue and Roberts Lane, calling it Upper Main Line Gospel Hall in Malvern, and that year celebrated their first Lord's Supper there. A major effort was made to reach the children of the neighborhood. A Friday night "Happy Hour" for children would run for 12 weeks each spring and fall; a very desirable side benefit was the involvement of the whole congregation.

Because of the different backgrounds of those in fellowship at the new assembly, decisions and agreements had to be made on matters such as choice of hymn book, the style of the Lord's Supper, and the type of preaching meeting. This was done in a spirit of unity. As the numbers grew from the starting group of about 50, an addition was made in the 1960s, and another in the 1980s. The name Upper Main Line Gospel Hall was changed to Gospel Chapel to distinguish the group from the Kingdom Hall title used by Jehovah's Witnesses. Another change to Malvern Gospel Chapel was made to better reflect the area, and then Malvern Bible Chapel was adopted to emphasize that the whole Bible was preached. The number in fellowship in the late 1990s is about 140.

Those active in leadership from the early years include Harold Harper, Edgar Brightbill, Mervin Madsen, Bart Sloane, Godfrey Greenhow, and William Calderwood. In the early 1970s, the church government was placed in the hands of a group of seven elders. The assembly has commended workers to France, Zambia, and Peru.

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In the mid 1930s, Whitfield Nottage moved to Philadelphia, where he founded the Ebenezer Community Chapel in Philadelphia, ministering there for more than 30 years before retiring.

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The Germantown Christian Assembly began in 1973, the planned product of a Gospel Crusade convened at the Church of the Atonement in the Germantown area of Philadelphia. Under the leadership of B. Sam Hart and others from Calvary Gospel Chapel in West Philadelphia, the new assembly began with 27 members. The assembly's initial Sunday morning services were conducted in the local YMCA, and the Breaking of Bread and other services were held in the building of the Church of the Atonement on Green Street.

In 1974, the Christians purchased a large house at 610 E. Mount Pleasant Avenue, which became the home of the assembly and of the Grand Old Gospel Fellowship, the organization established by Mr. Hart for camp work and radio ministry. By mid 1975, more space was necessary, so plans were drawn to approximately double the seating capacity. The expansion was finished in 1978 after delays caused by a fire and neighborhood opposition. Within a few months, the new sanctuary was filled with new faces.

In 1980, B. Sam Hart left to plant another church (his radio broadcasts and Gospel crusades have led to the establishment of ten or more assemblies in black communities along the eastern seaboard), and Charles Hart was called to pastor the Germantown Christian Assembly. By 1982, the assembly had five elders and nine deacons. In 1983, the assembly observed the 100th birthday of its oldest living member, Whitfield Nottage, whose name is written large in the history of black evangelism in America.

The growing church with its many outreaches into the community and prisons, and active programs within the church, soon required three full-time and three part-time workers. At the end of the 1980s, the old building was torn down, and replaced by a new structure, seating 450

persons.

Others active in leadership over the years have been John Holley, Andrew Trusty, Dan Curbison, Charles Jones, Ed Harris, Ron Felten, and more recently Emmitt Cornelius. The assembly supports many missionaries and has commended workers to India and within the U.S. Ed and Carmen Harris were commended to the Lord's service at the Willingboro Christian Assembly in New Jersey.

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The assembly at Frankford Gospel Hall in Philadelphia bought a church building in Mayfair in the early 1950s and called it Mayfair Gospel Hall. The new building doubled their seating capacity and gave them a new neighborhood in which to work.

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The assembly of Christians now at Roxborough Bible Chapel began in about 1913 and was known as Wissahickon Gospel Hall, with members residing in the Wissahickon, Roxborough, and Germantown areas of Philadelphia. Three brethren were instrumental in starting the assembly as a convenient location for the local residents – James Martin, Thomas Craigmile, and Albert Berry. They came from other assemblies in the Philadelphia area. Over the years, the meeting place for the assembly moved through several rented facilities in Wissahickon, the last being at 5154 Ridge Avenue.

In 1953, a parcel of land at 460 Flamingo Street in Roxborough was purchased. The Roxborough Bible Chapel was completed that year. From this location, the Sunday School and youth work begun in Wissahickon has continued to be an outreach. William Von Buchwald, James Herman, Samuel Thomas, and Paul Roberts are presently active in the leadership of the assembly.

Missionary interest is important in the assembly, and they regularly contribute to the support of workers who have had an association with the assembly and have labored in France, Honduras, and Indonesia. Miss Alice Buckland was commended in 1993 to youth work in the assembly and camp work at Greenwood Hills and Iroquoia.

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In the mid 1920s, Ralph Richards lived in Hatboro, a small village north of Philadelphia, but was in fellowship at the Downtown Meeting in Philadelphia at 20th and Dickinson. He met a Mr. Hunton, a Christian business man who lived in Hatboro but was not affiliated with the brethren assemblies. Mr. Hunton, however, was acquainted with some of the Christians at the old Germantown assembly. Mr. Richards brought him to the Downtown Meeting one Sunday, and Mr. Hunton liked what he saw.

Emory Richards, Ralph's brother, returned to the area about then, and joined the fellowship at Mascher Street on the north side of the city. Soon, in 1926 or 1927, Mr. Hunton and his large family were in the fellowship at Mascher Street.

Mr. Hunton and others at Mascher Street were exercised to start a Gospel effort in Hatboro, and held cottage meetings there. They invited Oswald MacLeod, who along with Samuel Rea had tent meetings there in 1928. A Gospel outreach was continued in Hatboro in 1929 by James Marshall, Charles Teller, and local brethren from Philadelphia. In tents pitched that summer, they saw a few saved, including Mr. and Mrs. Haskell Coleman.

A new assembly was formed in Hatboro in November 1930, with more than 20 in fellowship. The assembly first met as the Hatboro Gospel Hall in half of a rented storefront on Montgomery Avenue, a partition dividing the assembly meeting room from a drum storage area. In 1935, the partition was taken down, and the assembly had full use of the storefront. The wooden floors, wooden folding chairs, and walls filled with Bible texts, are remembered. In that first year, the Hatboro assembly jointly with Mascher Street commended Samuel Rea to the work of the Lord.

In 1943, a building fund was started, and in 1946 the Christians purchased a lot at 23 W. Moreland. Construction was begun that year and completed in 1948. The Hatboro Gospel Hall still meets at that location. Many Gospel series were held by the assembly in the following decades, with speakers such as Gordon Reagor, Hector Alvez, Norman Crawford, Paul Plubell, Fred Holder, and many others. The hall was enlarged in 1982.

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Believers' Fellowship, now meeting in a rented building in Yardley, northeast of Philadelphia, began in 1983 in the home of Paul and Joy Karleen in nearby Levittown. The assembly was started by the Karleens, Sam and Mary Lou Hardman, and Dan and Sue Matlack. Sam Hardman, John Avery, and Paul Karleen have been the leaders of Believers' Fellowship.

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In November 1922, a young Christian, Chester Myers, became burdened about people living in Plumsteadville and surrounding villages north of Philadelphia. Having tried various means of spreading the Gospel, he invited Mr. Harold Harper, then preaching in the Germantown Gospel Hall in Philadelphia, to come to the Plumsteadville schoolhouse for Gospel meetings. The school was packed to capacity and the meetings were continued beyond the original closing date.

Following that, and for the next several months, Mr. Harper held Gospel meetings in many chapels and schools. This faithful preaching of the gospel of God's grace resulted in 75 to 100 souls trusting Christ as Savior. After the evangelist left, Chester Myers undertook the unfolding of the Word of God to these newborn souls. Bible classes were held in Danboro Chapel and in the homes of Mr. Harvey Huber and Mrs. Benjamin Snape. Ten automobiles were used to carry interested believers to the annual Thanksgiving Day conference at Collingdale Gospel Hall in Philadelphia. As many of them had learned the truth of Christian baptism from the scriptures, 19 took the opportunity to be buried with Christ in baptism. Among this number were Harvey Huber, Mrs. Benjamin Snape, Hilda Snape, Mr. and Mrs. Arlington Myers, Howard Tyson, Carrie Leatherman, Helen Lear, Lloyd Tyson; and Monroe, Wilmer, Mabel, and H. Welcome Detweiler.

A meeting was arranged for the benefit of a number who had expressed desire for teaching about New Testament church truths. As a result, 22 believers met to Remember the Lord at Fountainville Chapel in December 1923. Much persecution followed. So intense was it for some believers that they were forced to leave their homes. The Lord sent many of His servants to help the new testimony.

The first Bible Conference at Fountainville Chapel used Harold Harper's tent for the dining room. During the summer months open-air meetings were conducted in Doylestown, Stockton, New Hope, Lonsdale, Quakertown, Souderton, Telford, Perkasio, and Point Pleasant. In the winter months a class for young people was held on the first and third Saturday evenings of each month. These proved to be a source of growth. Fellowship funds from these meetings were sent to workers around the world.

In Fountainville Chapel and nearby places Frank Detweiler, Harold Jones, David Blackburn, August Hasse, and others preached the Gospel and souls were saved and added to the Lord and to the assembly. In May 1928, the Christians decided to build a chapel on the Easton Highway to house the assembly. Grace Gospel Chapel in the Curly Hill, PA area was opened formally in January 1929. The assembly held for many years a Memorial Day conference. Open-air baptisms were held in the summer months in Pine Run Creek on the John B. Detweiler farm, and in the creek under the bridge near the William Tyson farm.

In 1953, about 100 were in fellowship at Grace Gospel Chapel. The assembly has commended to the work of the Lord in other parts Frank M. Detweiler, H. Welcome and Helen Detweiler; and John and Eleanor Schultz.

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In 1975, an assembly was formed and met in the basement of Steve Hulshizer's house in the village of Line Lexington, midway between Philadelphia and Allentown. Steve, Bill, and Dave Hulshizer, and Dave Dove, all from Enfield Gospel Chapel in Philadelphia, were the principals in the starting of the assembly. In 1979, the Christians moved to their present location, and formed the North-Ridge Bible Chapel in Sellersville. Elders in the assembly have been Steve Hulshizer, Wes Reif, Bill Hulshizer, and Don McCaughey. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord's field in Ecuador, Honduras, and the Bahamas.

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The first assembly in the Pittsburgh area was in McKeesport, a southern suburb of Pittsburgh, in 1876. No other details are available for this time period, but it is known that from 1908 to 1913, an assembly was meeting in an upper room in downtown McKeesport, to which William Pinches came to preach.

When several of the saints had moved away or passed away, the remaining believers in 1913 joined with the Homestead Assembly some few miles away. Those in fellowship at the Homestead Assembly at that time included Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Clark and Mr. and Mrs. William McAra.

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From 1913 to 1933, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Clark held a Sunday School in their home and carried on Bible studies in various homes. Gospel tent meetings were held. Many were saved in these years. After Alexander Wilson started a Sunday School in his home in McKeesport in 1933, the believers involved in that work decided for form an assembly in the area, in fellowship with the Homestead Assembly. An empty storeroom was located and rented at 1301 Soles Street. The saints, twenty in all, met for the first time there in March 11, 1934 to Remember the Lord. The Joseph Clark, William Moore, and Alexander Wilson families were among those.

This first McKeesport Gospel Hall was heated with a pot bellied stove in the middle of its only room. There were no other amenities. But the assembly was vibrant, with 100 children in its Sunday School. Sam Rea and Tom Ferguson were among the early preachers coming to the Hall.

In 1938, the building was purchased, then enlarged. The addition was opened with a prayer meeting in February of that year, with about 130 in attendance. The assemblies represented at the prayer meeting were Homestead Assembly, Friendship Avenue Assembly, East Pittsburgh Assembly, the North Side Assembly, Pittsburgh, the Indiana Gospel Hall, and the Mansfield Assembly.

The McKeesport Gospel Hall assembly purchased a lot at Prescott and Broadway Street in White Oak Borough in 1974. The brethren designed and built the new Hall, and the first service there was in March 1975. The assembly has held Conferences each year since 1949, usually with a few hundred people attending. The assembly has commended a worker to Chile, and others to ministries within the U.S. About 60 are in the assembly now.

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Bible Truth Chapel in Murrysville, in the Pittsburgh area, began meeting in December 1956, with nine in fellowship. Four of the families came from Beechwood assembly in Pittsburgh. The work grew and in 1958 the brethren started construction of a building to house the growing testimony. The chapel was designed to seat 110 in the auditorium. By the late 1990s, the name was changed to Murrysville Bible Chapel, still at the same location at 4779 Christy Road.

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After the four families left to form Bible Truth Chapel, the remaining families at the Beechwood assembly built the Beechwood Bible Chapel in Pittsburgh, which was dedicated in November 1958. In the mid 1980s, the name was changed to Browns Hill Bible Chapel and the assembly remains at the same location at 3349 Beechwood Boulevard.

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The assembly meeting at the Gospel Barn, near Harmony on Route 19 north of Pittsburgh, had its start in 1952. Ed and Dorothy Bohl, who were acquainted with some brethren from Pittsburgh, fixed up their barn for a meeting place and invited the Pittsburgh brethren to come preach. The Bohls invited their neighbors, Peter and Lillian Frankenstein, who were

Presbyterians, to come hear the preaching. They liked what they heard and began fellowshiping at the Gospel Barn. For a time, about 30 people came to the assembly meetings. When Mr. Bohl died, the assembly declined; Helen Theis and Lillian Frankenstein are the only remaining members at this writing.

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Donora Gospel Hall in the town of Donora south of Pittsburgh came into existence in 1920 in the home of William Kiddy on Kenric Avenue. Mr. Kiddy was formerly in fellowship at the Lonaconing Gospel Hall in Maryland. Through the years, the assembly met in three other locations in the town, and now is at 201 Thompson Avenue. Robert Grant Sr. and Louis Olsen were also involved in the start-up of the Donora Gospel Hall. Others in leadership over the years include Andrew Craig, Stanley Bell, Lester Wolfe, and Henry Todd.

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The assembly now known as Elk Run Avenue Chapel in Punxsutawney, northeast of Pittsburgh, began sometime before 1900, and probably met in homes initially. The deed to the assembly for the land is dated 1899. A building was constructed soon after that, and a basement added later. Those involved in its start included W.F. Wineberg, Joseph Dennison Jr., George Murray, William Dennis, and Henry Strachan. Known for many years as the Punxsutawney Gospel Hall, the name was changed to its current one in 1970. The assembly has always occupied the same location on Elk Run Avenue. The leading brother for many years was Clifton R. Wineberg. Other elders have been Clifton M. Wineberg and Tony Sushereba, in addition to those above. David L. Roy traveled from Cleveland many times to give help and encouragement, as did Lloyd Wineberg. David Madgwick was co-commended to Africa by the assembly. The assembly has always been small, but has an active work among young people in the area.

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The Indiana Gospel Hall in the town of Indiana east of Pittsburgh was formed in 1912, or perhaps a little before, as a result of the work of David L. Roy, who worked also in Punxsutawney. The Christians met first in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lott Frederick, and in April 1912 moved into a building at 526 Philadelphia Street in the town. Mr. Frederick was a true and loving shepherd of the Lord's people.

Later in 1912, the Christians secured a lot on West Church Street for tent meetings by W.B. Johnston and David Roy. Similar meetings were held in 1913. Sometime between 1913 and 1916, the Christians rented a room in what they called the "Cement Block Building" near the Frederick home, for their meetings. In 1919, they held their first Annual Conference. Over the next two decades, the assembly moved through several rented spaces, and then in 1938, bought the lot at the corner of 5th and Locust streets at which the present Indiana Gospel Hall was constructed.

Located in a college town, the assembly has seen a number of students saved and brought into fellowship. Paul Plubell was commended to the Lord's work in the 1940s and saw many souls saved before going to be with the Lord at an early age. William A. Seale, Jr. was commended to

full time work as an evangelist in the early 1990s. Others involved in leadership over the years have been Jack Byers, Glenn Moose, James Walker, Cammie Plubell, William Craig, Robert Baird, and William Parks.

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The assembly known as East Freedom Chapel, in the town of East Freedom, 100 miles east of Pittsburgh, began in 1951 when Obie and Mary Ann Snider met together with Mary C. Walter in the Snider home at Singing Brook Farm. The were joined in fellowship over the next couple of years by Mrs. Walter's son John, Hugh Caulfield, Cloyd Shaffer, and Sam Hagen. The fledgling assembly was faithfully taught and encouraged with regular visits by T.B. Gilbert, A.P. Gibbs, Joe Neibor, Herman Luhm, David Pollock, and John Milton Mills.

In 1960, the assembly moved into East Freedom Chapel at 16637 Mount Pleasant Street, its present location. The opening was marked by a month's special meetings by Bill Paterson. Harold Blattenburger, David Harper, and Dan Snaddon, have also been active in ministering the Word. David Harper and his wife have been commended for work in the assembly. About 50 were in fellowship in 1996. In 1997, a wing was added to the building to accommodate increased attendance.

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Jefferson Road Bible Chapel in Brookville, a small town about 100 miles northeast of Pittsburgh, began in the home of Terry and Amy McCall in December 1990, and was called at the beginning Believer's Fellowship. In June 1992, the Christians moved into an old Presbyterian church building on the property of one of the members. Numbers never topped 50 despite many evangelistic efforts. When all but one of the families moved away due to employment, the assembly disbanded in 1997. Two workers were commended by the assembly to the Lord's work in Kenya. Eldership included Tony E. Sushereba and his sons James D. and Timothy T. Sushereba, and Terry McCall.

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The assembly in Reading had its beginning in about 1905, meeting on the second floor of a building at 8th and Penn Streets, which was the downtown area of the city. As the assembly grew, it developed into a group of about 125 believers. Later they moved to a second floor room at 6th and Franklin Street in a building called Stauffer's Hall. Around 1928, they bought their own building, a former shirt factory at 5th and Franklin Streets in the borough of West Reading, and converted it into a very fine hall for the assembly. Mr. John Bloore from Plainfield, NJ drew the plans for the renovation. It was called Bible Truth Hall in Reading until the 1950s, when its name was changed to Bible Truth Chapel.

Many brethren from Plainfield, NJ helped in the growth and development of the assembly. In addition to John Bloore, there were other regular visitors, such as Samuel Ridout, George McCandless, Fred Mackenzie, Richard Hill, and R.J. Reid. P. Daniel Loizeaux would visit every month and read missionary letters at the monthly missionary meeting. Harry Ironside frequently

conducted evangelistic meetings at the Odd Fellows Hall in Reading. Thus the assembly was associated with the 'Grant exclusive' brethren in its early days.

Much of the assembly growth came about through the evangelistic efforts of some of the local brethren. George Starke, who was the correspondent for many years, and George Kreidler were very active in children's work throughout the city. They would rent store fronts and conduct children's meetings in them. Also many children were reached through an outreach in federal housing areas. Paul Bitler, who later became a worker among the Spanish in New York City, was very active in the housing project work. Alfred P. Gibbs was brought in each year to conduct a week of children's meetings.

During the years of the assembly's existence, there were three commended workers. Paul Bitler was commended to work among the Spanish in New York City in 1944. He worked there for almost fifty years and saw Spanish assemblies established in Manhattan and the Bronx. Bill Oglesby was commended also in the 1940s and he first worked in the assembly itself for a number of years. Then he moved to the south, where he labored in Victoria and Richmond, VA, and also Raleigh, NC. Jim Yorgey was commended to the work in France and later worked for many years in Quebec.

In 1988, the assembly closed its doors at the building in West Reading. Its size had decreased considerably and it was felt the building was too large. They then met in a room in the Day's Inn in Shillington, a suburb of Reading. A small group met there until 1996 when the assembly was disbanded after more than ninety years of existence.

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An itinerant preacher from Reading, Gorge Holmes, became very active in seeking to establish a testimony in Allentown, near the eastern edge of Pennsylvania, in the 1920s. Eventually the group met together in a rented storeroom at 5th and Turner Streets in downtown Allentown. Most of the believers lived in the small city and the majority walked to the storeroom, which was heated with a pot belly stove in the center of the room. They called this place the Allentown Gospel Hall, and they met in the storeroom for over twenty five years. The Bethlehem Assembly, meeting in nearby Bethlehem, later merged with the group in Allentown.

Gilbert Renninger was one of the most active of the local brethren in establishing this testimony. His brother, Frank, later became the correspondent and carried on the work into the 1980s. During this time period, many brethren such as Inglis Fleming, David Kirk, and George McCandless taught the Word in the assembly. Lewis Chambers was a regular visitor who brought with him a model of the Old Testament tabernacle. P. Daniel Loizeaux came once a month to read missionary letters at the missionary meetings.

Welcome Detweiler, who later labored in North Carolina, conducted tent meetings in south Allentown. His brother, Walton Detweiler, who was self-employed, was a consistent worker in Allentown. On the third Sunday of each month, he would travel to Allentown from his home in Plumsteadville, near Philadelphia. He would conduct a meeting in the local jail and at the rescue

mission, in addition to speaking at the meeting hall. He visited every month with very few exceptions for over forty five years.

In 1956, the assembly built their own chapel. Now known as Grace Gospel Chapel in east Allentown, on Irving Street, they remained at this location until 1995. Then they bought a larger building at 1642 Ehrets Lane in south Allentown, which is its present location.

Grace Gospel Chapel and its antecedents have commended workers to the Lord's field at Immanuel Mission in Arizona and Colombia; others have been commended to ministries within the U.S.

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An assembly started in Lancaster, west of Philadelphia, in the early 1930s. Samuel Hocking had a machine shop in that city at Grant and Prince Streets. His and two other families started the Lancaster Assembly in the room above the shop. In the late 1930s, the group met in St. Mark's Church on Pershing Avenue. When the Hocking family moved away, this assembly ceased and for a period of time there was no meeting in the Lancaster area.

In the early 1940s, many Spanish-American and Mexican residents lived and worked in the east end of Lancaster. Luis Montalvo started an assembly there in its own hall on Grofftown Road; the assembly had services in both Spanish and English. In the mid 1940s, many of the Spanish-American families moved away to the Steelton-Highspire area to work in the steel mills. Samuel S. Sheaffer, an elder in the meeting, kept the assembly going at Grofftown Road. At about that time, the assembly changed the name to East End Chapel.

About six to eight families met in the small chapel until the early 1970s, when the state made a decision to build Route 23 into Lancaster, and purchased the land the chapel occupied. The Christians then met in the Bird-in-Hand Fire Company for about a year. In 1975, they purchased the Monterey Mennonite Church on West Eby Road, about five miles east of Lancaster, where they presently reside as Monterey Chapel in Leola. Robert Crawford, Bruce Yorgey, and Paul D. Sheaffer have been elders at Monterey. Several men of the assembly are active in teaching and counseling at the Lancaster Country Prison. Monterey Chapel supports the Water Street Rescue Mission as well as many missionaries. About 85 people attend Monterey Chapel.

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The Greenwood Hills Assembly in Fayetteville in south-central Pennsylvania, was established in 1928 by K.B. Moomaw, J. Bishop Nicklas, Bigler Plasterer, Eddie Plasterer, Frank Blair, and Richard McIntire. First meeting in the home of J.B. Nicklas, the assembly moved into the Mt. Union U.B. Church building, and then into the dining room of The Inn of the Greenwood Hills Bible Conference Association. The Christians now occupy a chapel built in 1946, to which a multipurpose annex was added in 1993. Besides the men indicated above, leaders in the assembly have included George Landis, Howard Lankford, Robert Kirkpatrick Sr., Z.C. Hodges, and Bruce Kramer. In 1996 the number in fellowship was about 100, with 20 youngsters. The assembly has commended workers to the Lord's vineyard in Zambia, Aletia Springs, the Philippines, Senegal, and Indonesia with Wycliffe.

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One of the more recent assemblies in Pennsylvania is the Boiling Springs Bible Chapel in the small town of Boiling Springs, near Carlisle southwest of Harrisburg. Early in 1992, five families that had met at the Greenwood Hills Bible Conference began to meet informally for fellowship in the home of William J. Wirl, Jr. in Carlisle. The other families were those of Robert Boelter, Douglas Bates, Rodney Booth, and William Howard. The Bates, Boelter, and Wirl families had assembly backgrounds. After a short time, the group decided to rent a room at a motel for Sunday meetings, and placed an ad in the Carlisle newspaper announcing the start-up of the meeting. This attracted the attention of the Charles Hocking family, who then met with the group. The name Carlisle Bible Chapel was chosen at that time.

They met at the motel until mid 1994, then relocated for a few months to an office building pending the purchase of an old Methodist building at 119 Fourth Street in Boiling Springs. They took possession in January 1995 and changed their name to the current one. The current elders are Douglas Bates, Charles Hocking, Charles Masland 3rd, Paul A. Myers, and William Wirl, Jr. The assembly has joined with the Chambersburg Gospel Chapel in commending Steve Witter to the work of the Lord at Emmaus Bible College.

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The Waynesburg Bible Chapel in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania began in 1981 as a Bible study. Two couples, Jan and Penny Buckhalter, and John and Robin Harding, began meeting in their homes with a desire for a deeper understanding of the Scriptures. None of them had prior knowledge or experience with the brethren. After about a year, William Skelton, who had knowledge of New Testament principles of meeting as a church, joined with them and confirmed what they had been learning in their studies. Numbers increased quickly and in 1983 a building at 859 North Bonar Avenue in Waynesburg was purchased, where the assembly meets today. Others active in leadership have been Paul Parsons and John Schmidt. The assembly has commended workers to serve in Burundi, Africa and with Friends of Turkey and CBM Ministries.

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