

First Methodist Church To Move To New Location

After 113 years of service to Santa Cruz as the oldest Protestant church under continuous leadership in California, the First Methodist church plans to move from its downtown location at church and Vine streets to new property recently purchased on California street overlooking the Neary lagoon.

The new building will be the fifth structure erected during the life of the institution which in early days housed the local public school.

On Sunday, officials of the church will begin a campaign under the leadership of Fred Whiting to secure \$60,000 in capital funds with which to erect the first unit of the new church plant.

Officially opening the drive for funds, a "Kick-off Dinner" is scheduled for tomorrow night at 6:30 o'clock in Heath hall when parishioners and interested citizens will gather to hear about plans for the new building. The chief speaker will be Rev. Herbert Neale, newly-appointed district superintendent of the San Jose area of the Methodists church.

Whiting said there will be no solicitation for funds at the dinner.

The financial campaign will get under way Sunday afternoon when 25 teams of selected laymen under the leadership of Ralph Scott begin soliciting funds which will be payable over a two-year period. Workers in the drive will be consecrated in a special dedication rite by the pastor, Rev. Don

S. Fleming, at the 11 o'clock worship hour on Sunday morning.

It has been announced the first unit of the new church plant, which will be constructed on the five-acre plot in west Santa Cruz, will be an educational unit with some type of a multi-purpose room and class facilities which later can be used for a wing of the completed church. Original plans for the new building were begun under the leadership of Dr. Paul Kurtz, former pastor of the church, when cash and pledges were secured to purchase the California street property.

Following a recent study of the history of their institution, First church leaders found that during their lengthy period of service to this community they have outgrown their facilities for worship and religious instruction four times. Every 28 years, on the average, they have been forced by growing population and changing demands to move out of inadequate quarters.

The present building, which has been occupied for 47 years, was erected under the ministry of Rev. Harry E. Milnes in 1914. Once the pride of local downtown churches, time and termites have wrought irreparable devastation which makes the new building imperative, according to the official board of the institution.

"Also," comments Rev. Fleming, "the nearest child in the church school lives five blocks away, and that is the kiss of death for any growing church these days."

In a pictorial brochure distributed among members of the church, the striking differences between each of the four buildings which have housed the Methodist congregation since 1848 are noted. The first building, which was erected on Mission hill at the corner of Mission and Green street, was 20 by 30 feet in size with two old-fashioned windows on each side. It was unpainted inside and out. The first pews had desks in front of them, since the building was also used as a public school. It cost between \$3000 and \$4000. Lumber was priced at \$150 per thousand feet in those days and carpenters worked for \$16 per day. They were hard to get at that rate, because most men had run off to the gold fields.

The second structure was built in 1862 under the first pastorate of Rev. P. Y. Cool. It was larger, 36 by 60 feet, and had a tall steeple. It cost \$4500 to construct. Later it was bought by the Roman Catholic church, moved to their grounds, the steeple replaced by a cross, and called Montgomery hall.

For their third site, the Methodists purchased the Church street location from the Congregationalists. During construction of the sanctuary, which occupies the present site, the old Congregational building was moved to the rear of the property and the large worship center which has graced the present structure since 1914 was built.

The building committee for the present church was: the late Charles D. Hinkle, J. H. Garrett, F. L. Heath, C. Izant, D. C. Merrill and G. A. Briggs.

4 Persons Hurt In Two Accidents

Four persons received minor injuries in two separate three-car accidents yesterday afternoon on Highway 17, which handled a huge volume of traffic.

California Highway patrol officers said a vehicle driven by James Bledsoe, 17, Holy City, swerved and hit two oncoming vehicles about two miles south of the Santa Clara line when a tire blew out. It is recommended that he be cited for driving an unsafe vehicle and not having an operator's license in his possession.

Injured were the driver of another of the vehicles, Evangelos Pezibtzoglou, 31, and passengers, Zineta Pezibtzoglou, 30, Dina Storing, 20, and Dimokratia Paterakis, 25, all of Mountain View. They were to consult private physicians.

The third vehicle was driven by Gilbert Furtado, 45, Santa Clara, who was not injured.

The other accident was on Highway 17 near Mount Hermon road. Receiving minor injuries was Martin Schwartz, 7, who was riding with his father, Edward Schwartz, 36, San Lorenzo. The boy was taken to Santa Cruz hospital by a passing motorist for treatment.

Two other vehicles were driven by Robert Hansen, 31, Mountain View, and Edward Mureset, 79, of 232—30th avenue. No citations are recommended.

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