

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR

DELIVER 234 SUNSET AVE NORTHWEST

WOMEN UNITED OF MINNEAPOLIS MINNESOTA MOURN THE DEATH OF YOUR BELOVED HUSBAND, AND PRAY THAT THE STRENGTH SUSTAINS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY THROUGH TRAGIC HOURS. THE REVEREND DR MARTIN LUTHER KING JR WAS ONE OF THE GREAT CHRISTIAN LEADERS OF OUR TIME. FROM THE



- Church Federation**
- ADVENT CHRISTIAN
  - AFRICAN METHODIST
  - BAPTIST
  - CONGREGATIONAL
  - CHRISTIAN
  - EPISCOPAL
  - EVANGELICAL
  - EVANGELICAL SYNOD
  - FRIENDS
  - METHODIST EPISCOPAL
  - PRESBYTERIAN
  - UNITED BRETHREN
  - UNIVERSALIST
- 133 Churches



# A history worth repeating

greater minneapolis council of churches

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Oct. 23, 1938.

DEAR FELLOW WORKER:

The organization of Minneapolis Sunday School work has been a success. Hennepin County has been divided into 12 districts, of from 4 to 12 churches each. Officers have been elected, secretaries appointed, and the work is well under way.

## Building on 100 years



These Indian children might not have had a Christmas party without help from the Churches. This active auxiliary in many ways how women of various denominations work in

## The Ounce of Prevention—

...to character are the statute books. ...tant agencies to ... that will make ... has unnecessary.

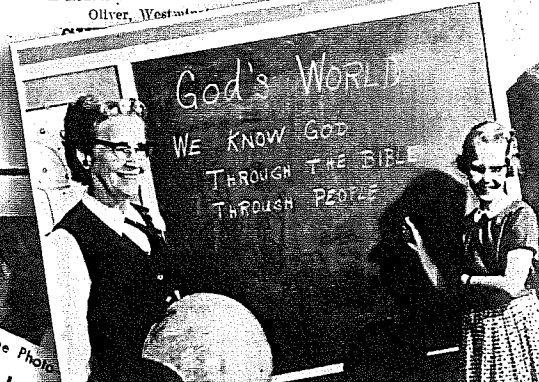
President Wilson said recently that "the Sunday School lesson of today will be the moral code of tomorrow." So vital an institution deserves the support of every thinking citizen—every man, woman and child needs its help.

The churches listed below are paying for this announcement in order that you may feel that you have a personal invitation to

## Begin to Go to <sup>OCT 3 1938</sup> Sunday School

### Next Sunday, Oct. 4

- BAPTIST**—Calvary, Central, Dane-Norwegian, First, First Swedish, Fourth, Judson, Olivet, Temple, Trinity.
- CONGREGATIONAL**—Como Avenue, Fifth Avenue, Avenue, Linden Hills, Lowry Hill, Lyndale, Oak Park, Park Avenue, Pilgrim, Swedish Temple, Thirty-Eighth Street.
- DISCIPLES**—Portland Avenue, University Place.
- DUNKARD**—First Brethren Mission.
- EPISCOPAL**—All Saint's, St. Mark's, St. Paul's.
- EVANGELISTIC ASS'N**—First Church.
- FRIENDS**—Friends Church.
- LUTHERAN**—St. Mark's English, St. Paul's Norwegian, Zion Norwegian.
- METHODIST EPISCOPAL**—Calvary, First Swedish, Central German, Excelsior, Columbia Heights, First Norw. Dane, First, Foss, Hennepin Avenue, Joyce Memorial, Minnehaha, Park Avenue, Prospect Park, Simpson, Trinity, Walker, Wesley.
- PRESBYTERIAN**—Aldrich Avenue, Olivet, West...



**To those who came before:**  
What you began will not be undone.

Today, we embark on a  
Second Century of Service.

**To those who come after:**  
Continue the pursuit.  
A worthy ideal is always a bit beyond grasp.

greater minneapolis | council of churches

UNITING PEOPLE OF FAITH — SERVING PEOPLE IN NEED

**Building on 100 years**

1905-2005

# A History Worth Repeating Our Perspective

We felt like kids going through our parents' attic. Amazed, proud, and sometimes a bit stunned at what we found.

The daunting task of unraveling the history of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC) began two years ago. Where did we come from? Who came before us? What would they think of us today?

For months now we have been looking back at musty archives, searching through stacks of papers, and uncovering forgotten memories. Each dust-covered box hid treasures of old newspaper clippings, faded photos featuring the fashions and attitudes of the day, and personal notes of founders long ago. Quickly, we became very proud of where we came from. And just as quickly, that pride turned into a greater sense of responsibility. We couldn't help but wonder if those who came before us would take pride in what GMCC is today. We hope so.

It is customary to approach one's history with reverent thought. Sometimes we did that. And other times we looked back with laughter and amazement at how little things had changed in 100 years. Obviously, GMCC is a long way from its Sunday school roots, but the original founders' social justice values survived and became the core from which we evolved. No small feat, considering the turbulent times of the past century: Prohibition, the Great Depression, world wars, television, McCarthyism, the Civil Rights Movement, the changing American family, declining church participation, and skyrocketing drug addiction and crime rates.

While GMCC has had many successes, there have been a few times in our history we would have liked to have had a 'do over.' Some missteps were comical, such as when we celebrated our 60th anniversary in 1991, unaware that our history was incomplete and we were actually 86 at the time. Some were simply sad. A few of our early social justice efforts featured a paternalistic 'whites-know-best' attitude toward people of color. Thankfully, we are quick learners. Many organizations fail because they refuse to evolve and learn from their mistakes. GMCC is not one of those organizations.

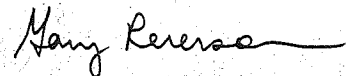
Ultimately, our history has left us struck by the forward thinking of those who came before us. For instance, we didn't wait until the 1960s to tackle the issue of racial equality. We dealt with it in 1924. And, we didn't wait until the 1970s to talk about overcrowded prisons, wasted lives, and the revolving-door of juveniles in jail. We started that conversation in 1925.

Not bad.

This centennial book is more than an album of memories. It traces our past, ties in our present, and looks forward to our next century of service to a community whom we are most thankful and proud to serve.



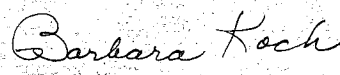
Dorothy J. Bridges  
Chair, Board of Directors



Rev. Gary B. Reiersen  
President



Mary Cederberg  
Chair, Centennial Committee



Barbara Koch  
Chair, Second Century of Service Campaign

# Sunday School Beginning

At first glance, our beginning in 1905 as a training ground for Sunday school teachers may seem disconnected from what the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC) does today. But it was those teachers and their concern for Twin Cities families that laid the groundwork for who we would become.

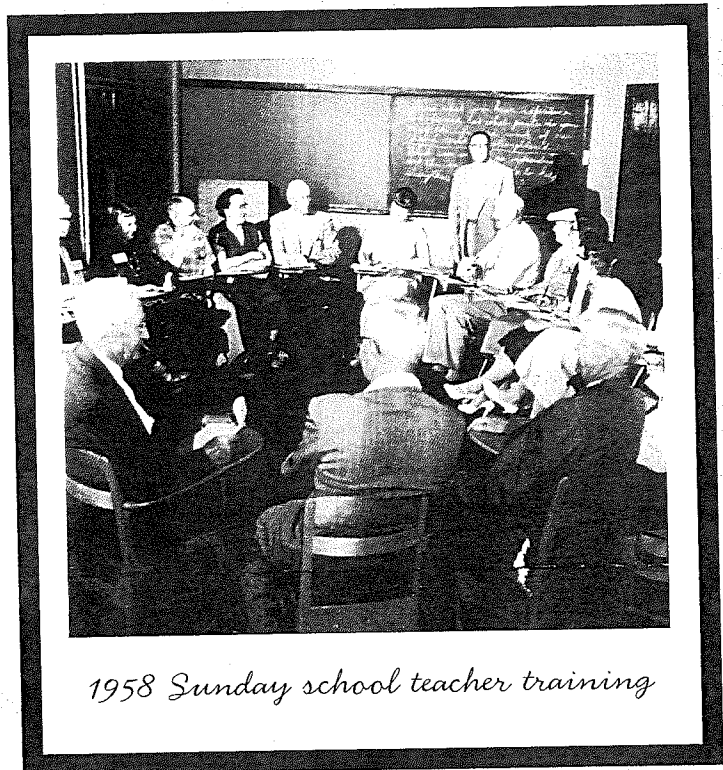
Back then, Sunday school was considered paramount if children were to become compassionate, responsible, and moral citizens. Sunday school melded God, family, and community into one. It was thought to be the best medicine to prevent social ills – and state and local governments not only agreed, they promoted it. In 1905, the line separating church and state was blurred, and would be for the next several decades.

1905 marks the first known mention of GMCC's original predecessor: the Hennepin County Sunday School Association. The organization began meeting in May 1905 and in August it announced: "The organization of Minneapolis for more efficient Sunday School work has now been accomplished. Hennepin County has been divided into 22 districts." At its first meeting, 200 would-be teachers registered for training.

The association took its job very seriously and even advertised. A 1914 ad in the *Minneapolis Tribune* touted Sunday school as "The Ounce of Prevention" and quoted then U.S. President Woodrow Wilson:

"Right moral standards wrought into character are better than reform laws placed upon the statute books . . . . President Wilson said recently that 'the Sunday School lesson of today will be the moral code of tomorrow.' So vital an institution deserves the support of every thinking citizen – every man, woman and child needs its help. The churches listed below are paying for this announcement in order that you may feel that you have a personal invitation . . . ."

Their efforts worked. A 1915 news story trumpeted Hennepin County Sunday school enrollment at 64,191 students. "The Sunday schools are the greatest feeder for the new members taken into the churches," the article declared. "2,635 pupils have joined the churches of which their schools are a part, during the last year. Fully 85 percent of the new members of the churches in Minneapolis came from the Sunday schools. There were 1,126 temperance pledges [a pledge to abstain from alcohol] signed by the pupils last year. The report shows there are 241 Protestant Sunday schools in Hennepin County, 25 Catholic, and 5 Christian Science."



*1958 Sunday school teacher training*

Hennepin County  
Sunday School Association  
Minneapolis

W. S. WINGATE, PRESIDENT,  
3322 DUFOUR AVE. SO. T. C. 1211  
W. R. HOLBROOK, SEC. - TREAS.  
772 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE T. C. 2284

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Aug 23, 1905.

DEAR FELLOW WORKER:

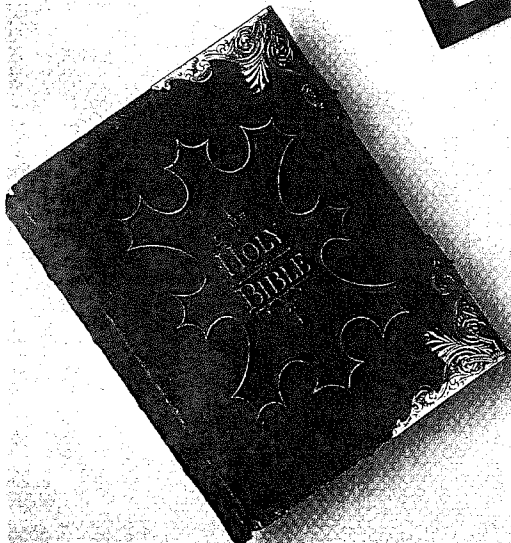
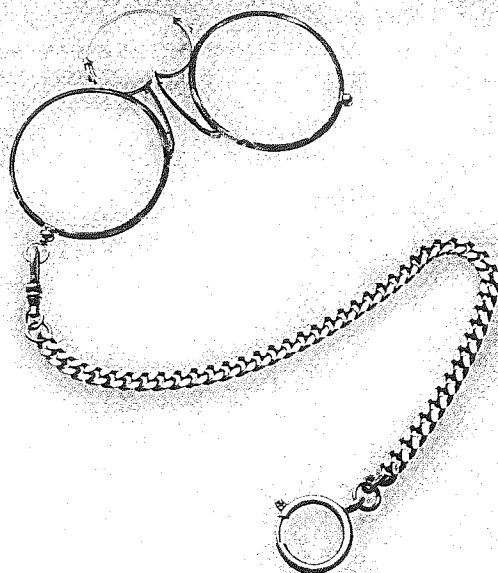
The organization of Minneapolis for more efficient Sunday School work has now been accomplished. Hennepin County has been divided into 22 districts, of from 4 to 12 churches in each district. Four officers have been chosen for each district—president, secretary, treasurer and teacher training secretary.

In order to better plan our work for the year it is proposed that all these officers and the Hennepin County executive committee meet at the Central Baptist Church, corner 4th Ave. S. and Grant St., next Wednesday, August 30th, at 8 o'clock P. M. This will be a very important meeting where plans of our work for next year will be decided upon and an educational campaign begun for better trained teachers in every Sunday School of the city.

You are earnestly requested to be present at this meeting. Please do not fail us.

Yours truly,  
W. S. WINGATE,  
Pres. Henn. Co. S. S.  
A. M. LOCKER,  
Genl. Secy. Minn. S. S.

*Mailed 8/25  
to your office  
1905*



### The Ounce of Prevention—

Right moral standards wrought into character are better than reform laws placed upon the statute books. The Sunday School is one of the important agencies to develop principles in the individual that will make reform laws unnecessary.

President Wilson said recently that "the Sunday School lesson of today will be the moral code of tomorrow." So vital an institution deserves the support of every thinking citizen—every man, woman and child needs its help.

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Begin to Go to <sup>OCT 3 1914</sup>  
**Sunday School**  
Next Sunday, Oct. 4

- BAPTIST**—Calvary, Central, Dane-Norwegian, First, First Zion, Swedish, Fourth, Judson, Olivet, Temple, Trinity, Avenue, Linden Hills, Lowry Hill, Forest Heights, Fremont Avenue, Ullrich, Swedish Temple, Third, Oak Park, Park
- CONGREGATIONAL**—Como Avenue, Fifth Avenue, Park Simpson, Trinity, Walker, Wesley, University Place, Third-Eighth Street.
- DISCIPLES**—Portland Avenue, University Place, Mission.
- DUNKARD**—First Brethren Mission.
- EPISCOPAL**—All Saint's, St. Mark's, St. Paul's.
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- LUTHERAN**—St. Mark's English, St. Paul's Norwegian, Zion Norwegian.
- METHODIST EPISCOPAL**—Calvary, First Swedish, stov, Columbia Heights, First Norse, Dane, Central German, Excelsior Avenue, Jersey, Memorial, Minnehaha, Park Avenue, Prospect Park, Simpson, Trinity, Walker, Wesley.
- PREBYTERIAN**—Aldrich Avenue, Andrew, Bethlehem, Olver, Westminister, Calvary, Grace, Highland Park, Knox.
- SWEDISH EVANGELICAL MISSION**—Scandinavian Evangelical Free, Swedish Mission Tabernacle, Bethania.
- UNITED BRETHREN**—First United Brethren.
- UNIVERSALIST**—Church of Redeemer, Tuttle.

1914

# Public Schools, Public Faith

Having gotten their feet wet with Sunday school teachers, our founders decided in 1921 it was time to branch out. In a bold move, the Hennepin County Sunday School Association decided it was time to bring religion to the public schools.

It began weekday religion classes for public school students in Minneapolis and surrounding suburbs. Children with parental permission were excused from their public school lessons for one hour each week. The religion classes were nondenominational and taught at nearby churches. They were wildly popular; public schools competed for the chance to offer the classes. And, if there was ever any doubt about their legality, in April 1923 the Minnesota Legislature passed the Weekday Religious Instruction Bill, fully endorsing the merger of public school and religion classes. By 1945, there were 6,000 students in 4th, 5th, and 6th grade taking part in the classes.

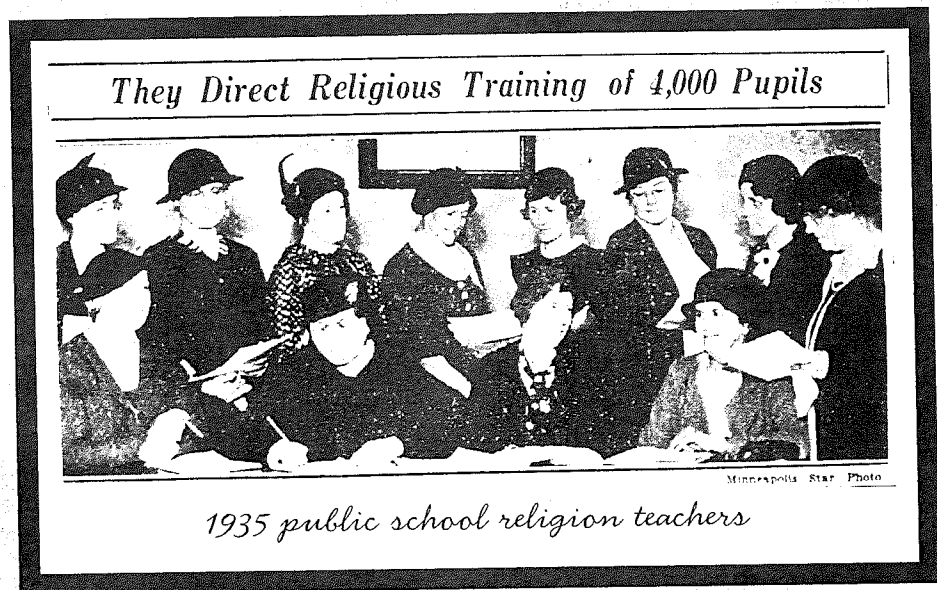
Since its educational reach was no longer limited to Sunday school, in 1924 the Hennepin County Sunday School Association changed its name to the Minneapolis Council on Religious Education. Around this time, the Minneapolis Council of Churches formed as a trade association of churches to help local congregations

become more involved in the community. Seeing an ideal partnership, the two organizations merged in 1927 and became the Minneapolis Church Federation. In 1951, the name changed to the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC).

The culture of the Minneapolis Church Federation was an interesting mix of evangelistic efforts to recruit the "unchurched" and liberal social justice causes. By far, its focus – and the largest percentage of its budget – was public school religion classes. But by the late 1960s that would change and a shift to social justice causes would take hold. In February 1968, the religious instruction ended after community and church interest waned and U.S. Supreme Court decisions emphasized the separation between church and state.

*"It is my opinion that religious education in the schools is one of the finest methods we are adopting in combating delinquency and in giving to many unfortunate youngsters in our city the opportunity to secure religious education that they otherwise would not get."*

**Minnesota State Supreme Court Justice Luther W. Youngdahl in 1937.  
He later became governor of Minnesota.**



# In their own words:

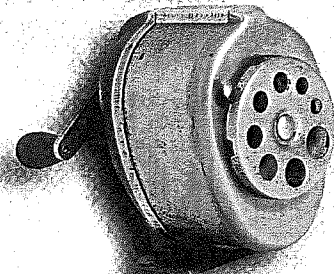
The impact classes had on students

— Taken from a 1935 *Minneapolis Journal* article

*"A sunny little girl in the front row beamed at her teacher, excitedly shook one hand for attention and leaped to her feet as soon as the class began. 'I tried it teacher,' she exclaimed breathlessly 'and it worked.'*

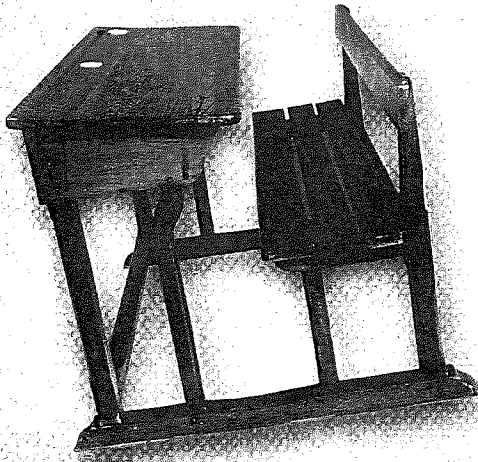
*"What worked?" was the puzzled rejoinder.*

*"Why the golden rule. You told us last week that it would work, and it did! You said that if we did unto others as we want them to do unto us, that we'd be much happier. I let the little girl next door play with my doll Sunday because she didn't have any. Yesterday she got a bicycle, and came right over and let me ride it."*



*"I used to take money out of my mom's purse but I can't do that any more since I came to religious class and found that it is the wrong thing to do."*

— A 1935 student



Minneapolis Star Photo—

1957

**12 more districts want weekday church schools.** Last year, fourth, fifth and sixth graders from 57 public schools attended religious classes sponsored by the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches. This year, the Council hopes to fill requests for teaching and supervision from as many of the school districts as funds allow.

## "GOD IS LOVE"

1937

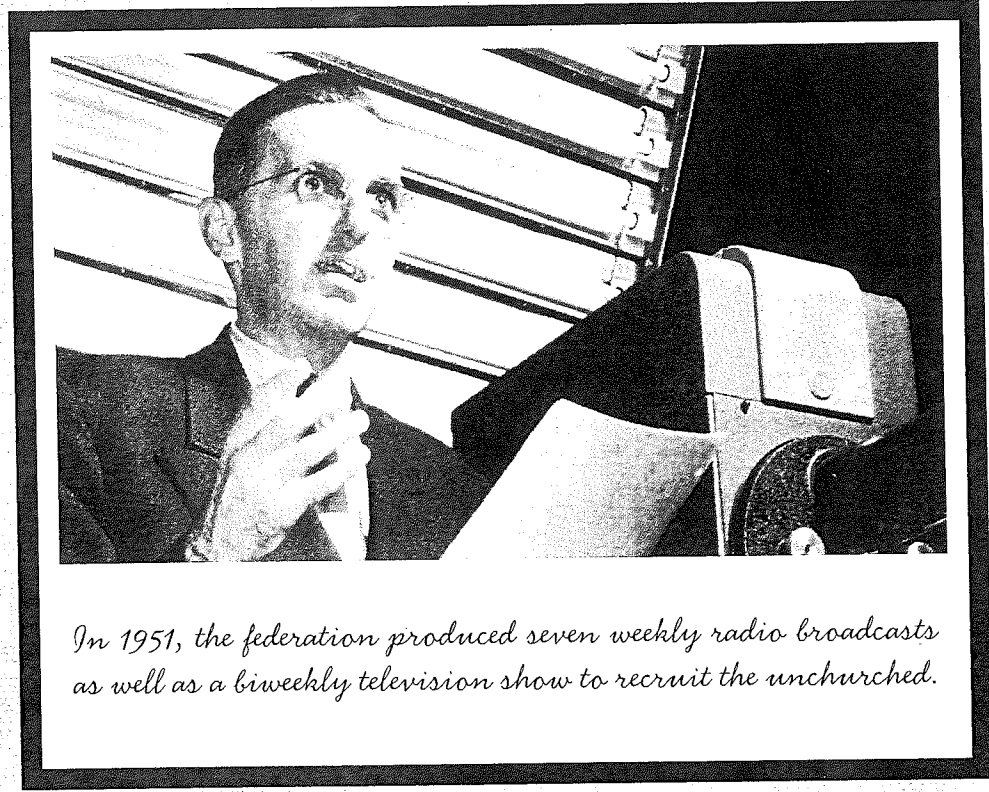
Jim was sitting in Weekday Religious Education class, rigid and unyielding—"I won't pray to a mean God. Last summer He let my mother die. I even promised Him my new bicycle if He wouldn't." At the closing exercises of the Weekday Schools, Jim led the prayer, ending it—"and, dear God, teach other boys that you are a kind God and that you do not take their mothers away from them. Amen."

# 'Your Clergyman Comes Calling'

Back in the day, our predecessors made it their business to seat the "unchurched" in a pew.

In the 1930s-1950s, the Minneapolis Church Federation actually had a Department of Evangelism whose job it was to "win souls to Christ." The department ran church loyalty crusades to increase church attendance, openly used the public school weekday religion classes to recruit new families to churches, and even produced weekly radio and television broadcasts such as "Your Clergyman Comes Calling" to spread the Christian message.

"Over half of our City's population seems to be unaffiliated with any organized religious institution. Church Federation should mobilize the Churches to reach the unchurched," proclaimed the 1935 annual report.



*In 1951, the federation produced seven weekly radio broadcasts as well as a biweekly television show to recruit the unchurched.*

In addition to recruiting church-goers, in the 1930s we became involved with the Legion of Decency to boycott "undesirable motion pictures" and lobby the legislature on moral issues. It continued through the 1960s when parents were encouraged to use a service called Dial-a-Movie to check whether a movie was appropriate.

## EVANGELISM

1958

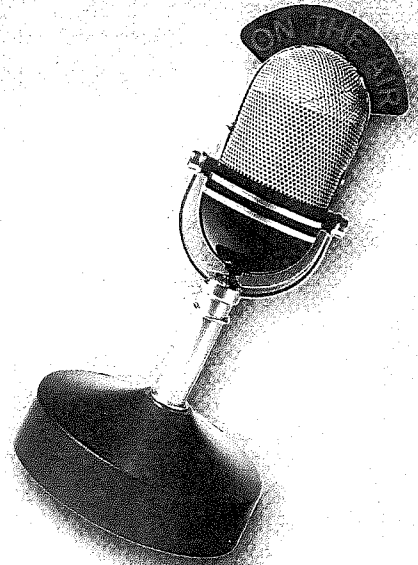
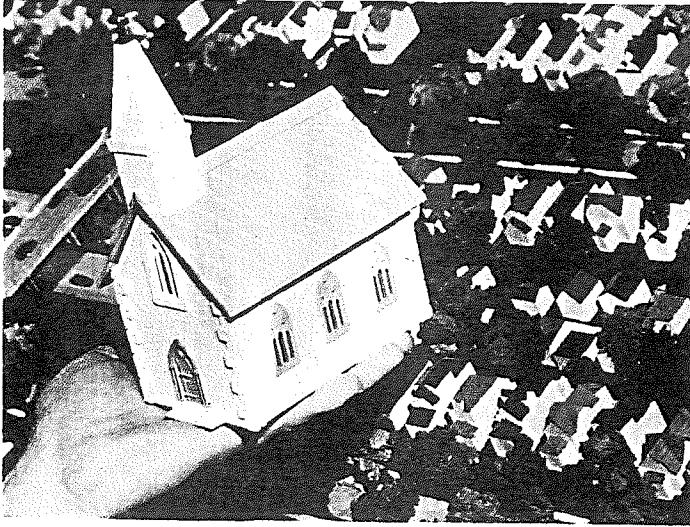
Another important item carried on by the Evangelism Department is the sending of names of newcomers to the nearest church of their denomination. Again this year the unchurched young people in the Weekday Religious Education program of the Council have had their names and addresses sent to participating pastors, so that an effort may be made to win them and their parents to Christ.

Also during this era, a Department of Comity counseled denominations about where to and where not to locate churches in Minneapolis. Department staff acted as mediators, helping to solve arguments between competing churches and denominations. "The aim always is to promote a good feeling among the various sectarian groups and to prevent the over-churching of Minneapolis communities," explained the federation's 1936 annual report.



Church planning and location help is being given cooperatively to all churches. New growth and population moves will be even more closely studied with the addition of professional research talent.

1961



WHEN THE MINNEAPOLIS Church Federation sponsored a "church loyalty crusade," they succeeded in bringing crowds like this to scores of city churches. The Holy Trinity Lutheran congregation is shown above. Attendance increases were maintained by all participating churches in the campaign.

1935

# Taking an Early Stand

No where was our founders' penchant for social justice more evident than in the fight for racial equality. They battled intolerance before the Civil Rights Movement ever began.

As early as 1924, we had created a committee to "gather acts regarding the religious, social, and industrial condition of colored people." In 1927, meeting minutes reveal a strategy to target the press: "Mr. Russell and Mr. Carter were asked to give some thought and study to the policy of the local press in reporting news about colored people with the idea that clippings should be made of all items concerning Negroes to see whether any injustice is done."

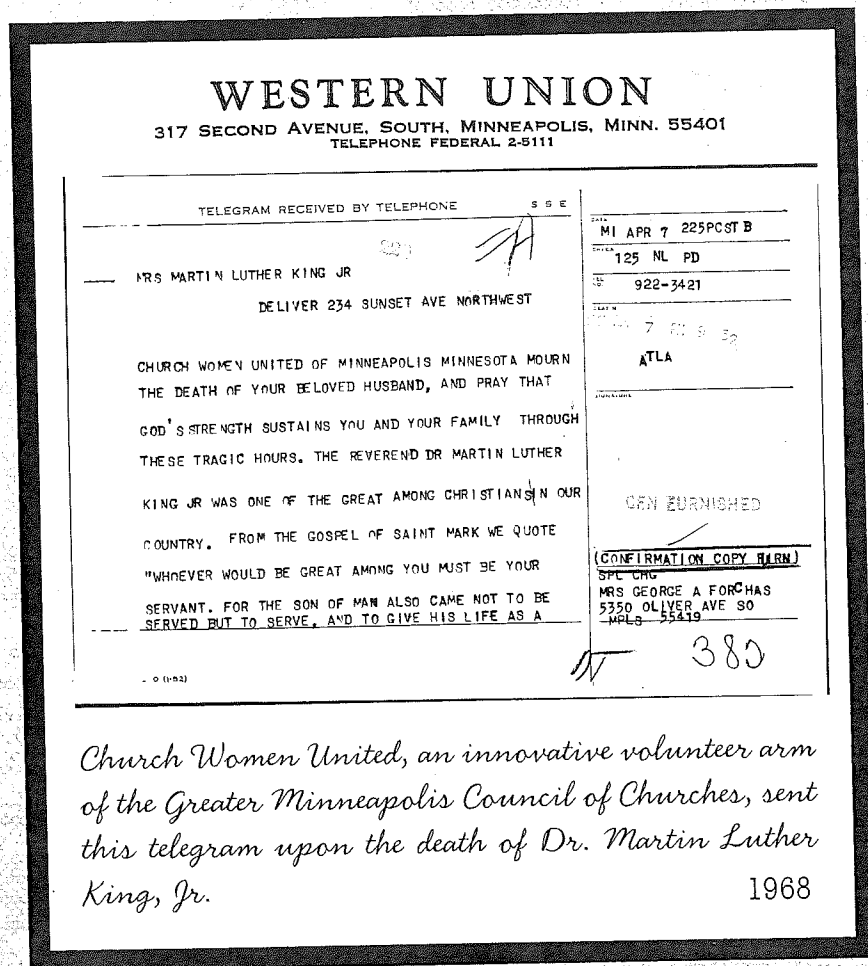
In 1935, the then Minneapolis Church Federation sponsored its first "Race Relations Day" and asked churches to offer a "Christian solution" to the race relations problem.

Deliberately, our elders moved their message from the pulpit to city hall, the state capitol, grocery checkout lanes, laundromats, and movie theaters.

In 1947, the federation took its message straight to everyday citizens with a petition to stop job discrimination. The petition read: "Democracy calls for equal opportunity to equal ability. Believing in this principle, I shall be glad to be served by qualifying sales persons or other employees of any race, creed, or color without discrimination, and shall not discontinue trading with any store because it employs them."

In 1954, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches worked with the Minneapolis Mayor's Office to promote the city's "Declaration of Fair Play," rallying neighbors to take the following pledge: "I will do what I can to see that no family is denied a home in my neighborhood because of race, religion, or national origin."

In 1963, GMCC sent a delegation to march with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Washington, D.C. and in 1965 it sent a representative (Rev. Robert Hudnut) to march with King on his final leg to Alabama's Capitol in Montgomery.



*Church Women United, an innovative volunteer arm of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, sent this telegram upon the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. 1968*

The *Minneapolis Star* recounted the journey: "Mr. Hudnut . . . said he received no threats except for the hard looks of the white people."

"The feeling among the Negroes is one of joy, laughter and friendliness," Hudnut said. "They're always reacting to threats with a smile or a wave of the hand. The children sing 'freedom songs.' The reaction of the white people is just the opposite - hatred - and fear, perhaps."

Also in 1965, the GMCC board of directors sent then U.S. President Lyndon Johnson a clear, concise directive regarding the fight for black voting rights in the South: "We urge the President to initiate federal intervention in the disquieting situation in Selma, Alabama, regarding voting rights for all." That year, the board took it one step further and began collecting donations for Dr. King's movement.

King's assassination in 1968 would bring about anger, prayers, and heartache, but it would awaken a nation's destiny and trigger the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches to tackle segregation on its own turf - the pulpit.

ESTIMATE BY TONKA PASTOR

*Minneapolis Star 3/25/65*

## 150 Have Lost Jobs in Selma

At least 150 Negroes in Selma, Ala., have lost their jobs since the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. began his voter registration drive there, a suburban Minneapolis clergyman said Wednesday.



The minister, the Rev. Robert Hudnut, said the figure is a "conservative estimate" among Selma's Negroes.

Mr. Hudnut, pastor of St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, Minnetonka, arrived in Selma Tuesday to represent the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches in today's final leg of the march to the Alabama's Capitol in Montgomery.

He said he spent Tuesday night with five other civil rights workers at the home of a Negro couple and their 10 children.

"The husband has been out of work for two months because he participated in a demonstration," Mr. Hudnut said. "The family has been living on money from civil rights workers paying for room and board, plus a small amount from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (Dr. King's movement)."

"The woman could work only as a domestic," Mr. Hudnut added. "She said, 'Most women down here work for \$10 a week.'"

He said the woman told him that her last child was born three months premature in 1962 in a white hospital and that a doctor told her, "We don't have any incubator for a nigger baby."

She said the child was sent to a Negro hospital and was dead within hours.

Mr. Hudnut said he also talked with a Negro nurse who said she lost her job when the proprietor of the nursing home where she worked saw her standing in a voter registration line.

He said she told him that the 41 other Negro employees at the nursing home quit after the proprietor called her into his office, fired her and then slashed at her with a cattle prod.

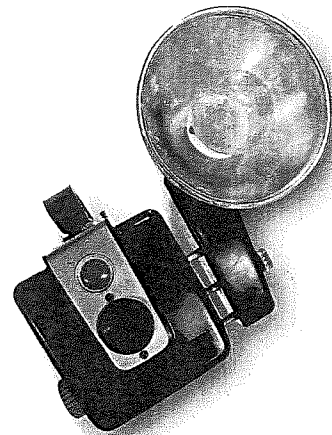
He also said he was told of whites being arrested by police and then being released a short distance away and of Negroes being slapped for failing to address whites as "sir."

Mr. Hudnut, chairman of the Department of Christian Social Relations for the Council of Churches, said he had received no threats "except for the hard looks of the white people."

"The feeling among the Negroes is one of joy, laughter and friendliness," he said. "They're always reacting to threats with a smile or a wave of the hand. The children sing 'freedom songs.'"

"The reaction of the white people is just the opposite—hatred—and fear, perhaps."

1965



March, 1965

We urge the President to initiate federal intervention in the disquieting situation in Selma, Alabama, regarding voting rights for all.

The Board of Directors  
Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches

# No Sanctuary for Racism

The difference between segregation in the South and segregation in the North was the signage. Although the North didn't plaster 'Whites-Only' signs above drinking fountains or paint the words "No Coloreds" in restaurant windows, it was indeed segregated. In the 1960s, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC) was beginning to come to grips with that fact. It decided to push for racial justice in the one area it could make a difference – churches.

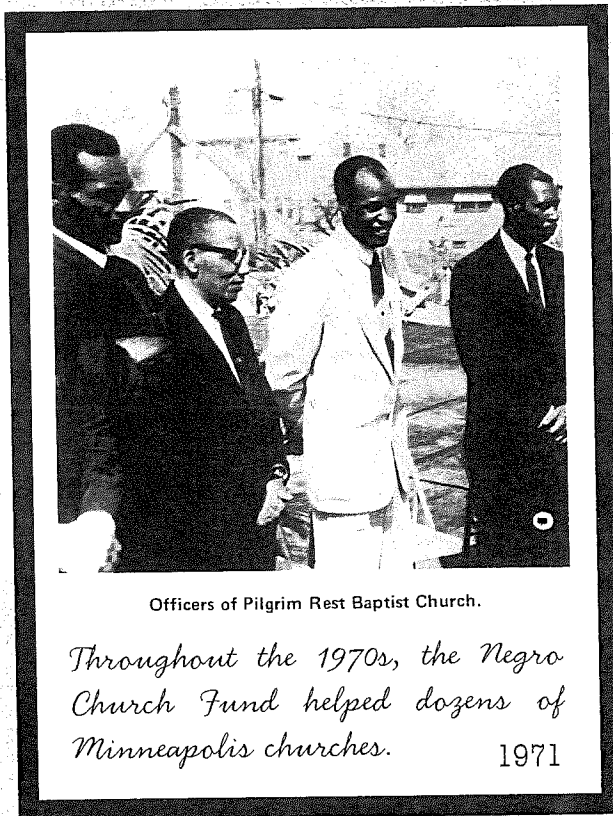
"Perhaps the greatest challenge for the Council during 1968 was the tension and social unrest arising from the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King," wrote James Holloway, GMCC board president, in the 1968 annual report. "Riots and burnings characterized inner-city areas across the country. Many people of suburbia felt a sense of shame and were filled with regret. Sensing an opportunity to lead the people of Minneapolis in taking some action in response to the assassination, the Council initiated a special fund to aid predominantly black churches in the Inner City of Minneapolis."

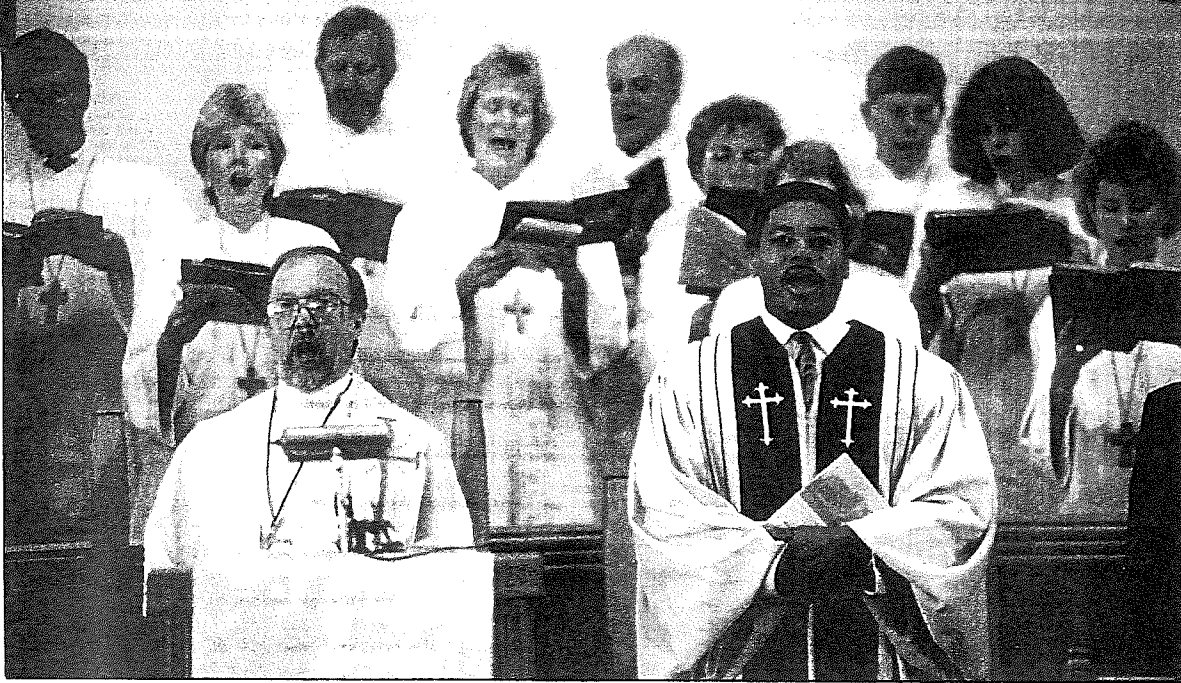
That month, half the Holy Week offerings were designated to the new Negro Church Fund, and a committee of eight blacks and two whites were appointed to administer it. The 1968 GMCC annual report accounts for the money. "So far \$7,105.96 has been received from congregations, groups, and various offerings; and \$3,936.32 has been granted to five needy congregations for roof repairs, insurance, toilet installation, and boiler replacement. In addition, many white congregations have developed personal relationships with black congregations." The fund would continue through the 1970s.

Also in 1968, the federal Kerner Commission was appointed to get a handle on why the racial climate in the U.S. was spiraling out of control. Ultimately, the commission warned that the United States was "moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal." It charged whites with racism and brought to light the disproportionate number of blacks facing poverty, unemployment, poor health care, and dilapidated schools and housing.

The Kerner report hit home. "The publication this year of the Kerner Report brought to our attention the tragic extent of white racism, even in ourselves and our churches, and reminded us that we need to expand our efforts for racial justice," wrote former GMCC Executive Director David Witheridge in 1968.

Efforts were made to recruit more African-American churches to GMCC and better connect white and black churches. In 1990, the effort was renewed when the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches partnered four black and four white churches to go beyond a one-time joint worship service to encourage on-going activities such as choir concerts, social service projects, and tutoring. The effort received national attention in *The New York Times*. Later, GMCC joined with other area councils of churches to fund the Minnesota Churches Anti-Racism Initiative which exists today to offer anti-racism training to congregations, community groups, and schools.





Staff Photo by Bruce Bisping

The Rev. Gary Anderson of All Saints Lutheran Church in Minnetonka and the church's choir were the guests last Sunday morning of the Rev. Richard Coleman and his St. Peter's A.M.E. (African Methodist Episcopal) Church in Minneapolis. The hope is that Christians can share experiences, learn about each other's theology and, in the end, reduce racism.

# Tackling religious segregation

1990

## Project pairs black, white churches to work on common issues

By Martha Sawyer Allen  
Staff Writer

Slowly, cautiously, about a dozen Twin Cities churches are trying to break down the most segregated hour left in America — the Sunday morning service.

More than half of the nation's Christian congregations don't in-

clude a member of another race. With Christianity's central teaching of brotherly love, Christians of all races say it's painful to admit that their churches are segregated.

"Churches often mirror society, and racism is still a part of the structures of society," said the Rev. Tyrone Pitts of Washington, D.C. He is general secretary of the 2 million-

member Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc., the second-largest black Baptist denomination in the country. Previously he was head of the Office of Racial Justice for the National Council of Churches.

The Rev. Gary Reierson, executive director of the Minneapolis Council of Churches, decided about a year

ago to do something about religious segregation. He initiated a project that pairs black and white churches; it has gained national attention mainly because it is a departure from similar experiments that failed in the 1960s.

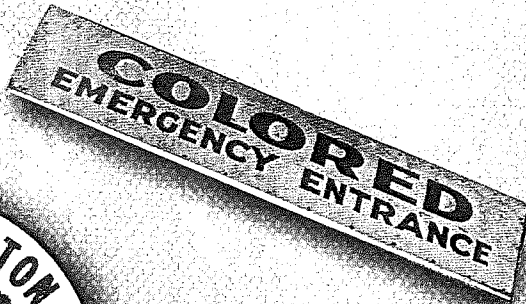
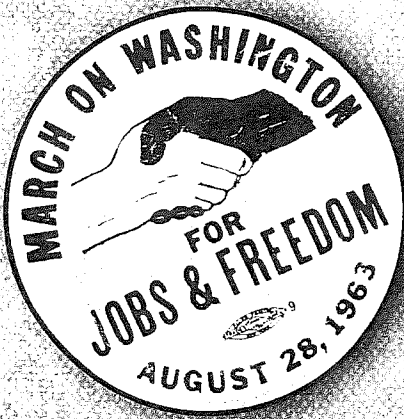
So far, the Minneapolis program has meant that black ministers and white ministers have exchanged

pulpits, choirs have exchanged performances, and people have welcomed each other warmly.

But its intent is to do much more. Black churches and white churches are pairing up as partners, working on community projects that focus on shared interests. Unlike the '60s

Churches continued on page 5B

Reprinted with permission from the Star Tribune.



1990  
 "I think the pairing was done to challenge our stereotypes," said the Rev. Gary Anderson, whose All Saints Lutheran Church in Minnetonka is paired with St. Peter's A.M.E. (African Methodist Episcopal) Church in south Minneapolis.  
 "They're not an impoverished church. We're not wealthy, but we're a comfortable suburban congregation, and members of both churches have many things in common, socially, economically. This really challenges the old stereotype of the suburban congregation coming to the rescue the 'inner-city' church. We want to avoid that at all costs. We have much to learn from them."

# A Sign of the Times

Being around for 100 years means we've witnessed a lot of history. Throughout our existence, there have been many happenings much bigger than we, and it is our reaction to those events that sheds some light on the kind of stock we come from.

## *Prohibition*

Apparently, not of the mind to wait for the U.S. Congress, in 1915 the Hennepin County Sunday School Association pushed for a state ban on liquor. In 1920, the U.S. Congress would pass the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, otherwise known as Prohibition.

The Hennepin County Sunday School Association used its 10th annual convention in 1915 to pass the following resolution: "Resolved: That we are heartily in favor of State Constitutional Prohibition and will do all in our power to secure the submission to the voters of Minnesota an Amendment prohibiting the manufacture and sale of liquor in the state . . ." Prohibition was repealed with the 21st Amendment to the Constitution in 1933.

## *The Great Depression*

The notorious Stock Market Crash of 1929 and the Great Depression that followed left many families destitute no matter how much money they once had. Across the country, transient camps popped up and were filled with families wandering from place to place looking for work and a better way of life. The Minneapolis Church Federation decided to combine our expertise in faith with a tangible helping hand. A 1935 *Minneapolis Journal* article mentioned the effort:

"One of the newest additions to the federation work is the sponsorship of religious services in transient camps established by the government along the Minnesota valley, with Rev. Robert Gale as chaplain. Mr. Gale, in addition to planning religious services conducts personal conferences with the transient men, who range from Harvard graduates to high school lads. He helps them solve personal problems, and is aided by several leading pastors who volunteer their services."

## *Adolf Hitler*

World War II was a horrific time in humanity's history, but we didn't wait for bloodshed to take a stand. Six years before World War II even began, we called for action against Adolf Hitler.

In March 1933, just two months after Hitler was named chancellor, an interfaith group gathered at Temple Israel in Minneapolis "in protest against the anti-Jewish action of the Hitler government." Leaders of all creeds, including Minneapolis Church Federation president Rev. Harry P. Dewey and Minnesota Governor Floyd B. Olson, were there to condemn Nazi Germany and speak out against Hitler's promise to "annihilate the Jews."

"I lift my voice to beseech a civilized world to make articulate the conscience of humanity on behalf of those who have committed no other crime than to be members of a race which has given to the world the priceless boon of the most enlightened culture in antiquity and was divinely chosen to cradle the forces which made Christianity possible," the *Minneapolis Tribune* quoted Archbishop John Gregory Murray.

## Post World War II

World War II ended in Europe in May 1945, and in 1947 the Minneapolis Church Federation pushed to speed up help to war victims known as "displaced persons."

"There are about 850,000 displaced persons now in camps in the occupied zone of Germany. They are refugees who have fled their country of residence to escape the persecutions of race, religion, and political convictions. They are victims of totalitarianism," the federation wrote. "Approximately 15 percent are Jews, 85 percent are Gentiles. For the most part they come from the Baltic States . . . Latvia, Poland, Lithuania etc. Of the first 674 to be repatriated in this country, one-third were Orthodox Christians, one-third Protestants, and the rest Greek and Roman Catholic. The Stratton bill, now under consideration, provides among other things for the placement of 100,000 displaced persons per year for four years. This will remove the present slow, and almost impossible situation which is bound up in immigration red tape. It is an emergency measure, designed to meet the problem NOW!"

The Minneapolis Church Federation became vital to mobilizing local churches to help with displaced persons after the war. Local churches were rallied to conduct an inventory of all available housing and jobs and provide that list to social service agencies who were working directly to relocate immigrants from war-torn Europe.

"Churches will be asked to assist in orientation of displaced persons in the denominational preference of the individual. While oversolicitousness is to be avoided, a warm welcome of Christian fellowship will make the repatriation a sure thing!" wrote the federation in 1947.

**JEW'S UPHELD BY ARCHBISHOP**  
**Murray Joins Protest Against Actions of Hitler Government.**

While preparations were being completed for a mass meeting Monday night at Temple Israel in protest against anti-Jewish action of the Hitler government, Archbishop John Gregory Murray of St. Paul Sunday joined in condemning the "narrow-minded program of the nationalistic party" in Germany.

Before leaving for Pennsylvania, Archbishop Murray in a letter to Dr. Maurice Lefkowitz of Minneapolis, who will preside at the protest rally, declared his support of the movement.

"Permit me to unite with you," he wrote, "in protest against political action which adopts as its principal purpose the annihilation of the Jewish people and all other liberty-loving groups in the great country of Germany who are opposed to the chauvinistic and narrow-minded program of the nationalistic party."

"With my fellow bishops of that great land, I lift my voice to beseech a civilized world to make articulate the conscience of humanity in behalf of those who have committed no other crime than to be members of a race which has given to the world the priceless boon of the most enlightened culture in antiquity and was divinely chosen to cradle the forces which made Christianity possible."

Leaders of all creeds, along with Governor Floyd B. Olson, will speak at the mass meeting Monday night at the temple, Emerson avenue south and Twenty-fourth street.

Among them are the Rev. H. Augustin Pardue, minister of the Gethsemane Episcopal church, Rabbi David Aronson of the Beth El synagogue, the Rev. E. H. A. Peters, chaplain of the Newman club, Catholic organization of the University of Minnesota; and the Rev. Harry P. Dewey, president of the Minneapolis Church federation. 1933



**DISPLACED PERSONS.** 45 families or units of displaced persons have been brought to America and established in this community—largely through the help of the Church Federation and individual Minneapolis Churches.

1951

# A Sign of the Times

## The Cold War

The Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States was an edgy time of mutual distrust and misunderstandings. Neither government liked the other's ideology, and the fear of a World War III was real. In 1949, the Cold War heated up when the USSR tested its first A-bomb.

Here at home, our founders advocated for peace and looked at some innovative ideas to get us there – including a world government that would eliminate national rivalries.

## Civil Rights

There wasn't a facet of the Civil Rights Movement with which the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC) didn't involve itself. From sending representatives to march with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to lobbying then President Lyndon Johnson regarding voting rights in Alabama, our founders made sure their voices were heard.

Locally, GMCC lobbied state and city officials for racial justice. They circulated petitions against discrimination in housing and jobs and helped fight to create a city Commission on Human Rights.

## Vietnam War

There was no shortage of opinions when it came to the Vietnam War, but unlike the Civil Rights Movement, the war and GMCC's response to it are only briefly mentioned in historical documents. One such mention is the following passage from the 1968 annual report:

"Another challenge was Christians' dissatisfaction with the United States' continued participation in the Viet Nam War. Although the Council was already strained with responsibility for its normal ministries, the staff and the various divisions applied the Gospel to this controversial area whenever possible."

## All Welcome MINNEAPOLIS TOWN MEETING

*Our Purpose:* TO HELP BUILD A SOUND PUBLIC OPINION

*Subject:* **Is Federal World Government Possible Now?**

**Speakers:**

*Presentation of the Plan*

**MR. AND MRS. RONALD McLAUGHLIN**  
State Chairman of United World Federalists

*Special Problems Raised:*

I. Status of the Subject Peoples

**ROBERT B. STAUFFER**

Teaching Assistant, Department of Political Science,  
Univ. of Minn. Specialist in Problems of the Far East

II. Rivalry between United States and the Soviet Union

**STANLEY V. KINYON**

Professor, Law School, University of Minnesota

**Date—Monday, April 11, 1949**

**8:00 P.M.**

**Where—Benton Hall—Y.W.C.A.**

**Admission—Membership Card or Adults 25c Students 10c**

**SPONSORING GROUPS:** Russell D. Brackett, Chairman  
American Ed. Fellowship  
Central Labor Union  
Central Council of P.T.A.  
Chamber of Commerce  
College Women's Club  
Council of Jewish Women  
First Unitarian Society  
Hadassah  
Hennepin Co. C.I.O. Council  
Junior Chamber of Commerce  
Midland Cooperative Wholesale  
Minneapolis Church Federation  
Minneapolis Social Science Study Club  
Minnesota Jewish Council  
Nat. Assn. for Advancement of Colored People  
Railroad Brotherhood Legislative Board  
Saturday Lunch Club  
Twin City Chapter American Association Social Workers  
Twin History Club  
Twin Cities Consumer Cooperative Council  
Urban League  
Women's Int'l. League for Peace and Freedom  
Y.M.C.A.  
Y.W.C.A.

1949



## Vatican II

Although created clearly as a Protestant group, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches and its forefathers were always open to other religions. In 1965, with Vatican II under way, GMCC decided to openly branch out to other Christians and make a special effort to recruit Roman Catholics. Minutes from a 1965 board meeting outline the first step:

“Suggested by President Bingea that we give some thought to a different type of Spring Delegates meeting. He suggested an Ecumenical Evening – possibly a dinner meeting bringing Catholics and Protestants together. Suggestion was made that each delegate might bring a Roman Catholic friend.”

Later in 1969, GMCC board President John Burger pushed harder to have Roman Catholics join. In 1970, the board’s first three Catholic members were elected and parish memberships soon followed.

## 1976 Bicentennial

In 1976, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches joined in the nation’s Bicentennial celebration by sponsoring a religious freedom exhibit and banner competition in the Hennepin County Government Center.

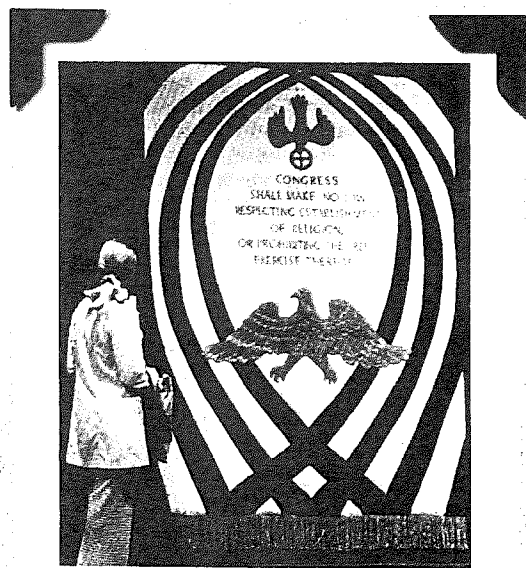
It included banners and children’s art made by people of all denominations. The exhibition drew protests from the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union (MCLU).

“While the exhibit supposedly has a religious freedom theme, much of the exhibit is nothing more than the use by religious organizations of government facilities for the purpose of propagating religious dogma,” Randall Tighe, MCLU legal counsel, told a press conference at the time.

Ted Farrington, public affairs director for Hennepin County, responded: “Churches are as much a part of our heritage as any other institution and the freedom of religion display is thereby a proper project for the Bicentennial Commission.”

## Welfare Reform

In 1996, the federal government overhauled the nation’s welfare system and mandated that families on welfare find work or lose their monthly benefits. In Hennepin County alone, 16,000 families were hit with the news. In response, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches stepped in to create work-skills classes, quality child care centers for working families, and emotional support groups for families moving from welfare to work. We complemented a government mandate for work with common sense and compassion.



**Winner**—Among 60 entries, this banner created by the banner group of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, was awarded first place in the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches’ Bicentennial Religious Freedom Banner Exhibition at the Hennepin County Government Center. On a recent visit to the center, Kristine Roe, a member of Bethlehem, stopped to view the prize-winner.

It was designed by Darold Johnson, an exhibit designer who is a member of Bethlehem. The words, from the First Amendment to the Constitution, declare that “Congress shall make no law respecting establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

1976

# Social Justice Evolution Church Women

Their fashionable hats, crisp gloves, and delicate pearls were a bit deceiving. These women weren't content to partake in polite conversation between sips of tea. They preferred to work in the trenches. And, it was these volunteers who might very well have had the most profound influence on the social justice organization GMCC is today.

This group of women, known by a variety of names (the Woman's Department, the Council of Church Women, and Church Women United), insisted on common-sense, hands-on help for those in need. If the elderly were hungry, they fed them. If the sick were lonely, they visited them. Several of GMCC's programs today can trace their roots – in part – to these women.

They began after-school programs to tutor under-privileged children. They created a network of women who made the rounds at hospitals visiting the sick. They brought friendship to the mentally ill and mentally retarded at Glen Lake Sanatorium and Anoka State Hospital with programs such as the Circle F Club and Gadabouts. And they served meals to elderly, isolated in their homes.

They began the Thursday Sewing Service Guild to make clothing and quilts for American Indian children and helped them pay for summer camp. The Broken Arrow Guild paired church women with Indian women in a sewing circle to provide fellowship. The Family Relationship Project involved 30 church groups adopting 30 Indian families to bring cheer at birthdays and holidays and to help with employment and housing.

Throughout our 100-year history, the church women played a key role in shifting GMCC's focus from Sunday school to social justice and became players in public policy debates as well.

In 1947, then Minneapolis Mayor Hubert Humphrey tapped the women to conduct polls about minority housing, restaurants, and hotels to determine the level of discrimination against blacks. The study was a forerunner to legislation for open housing and equal treatment in restaurants. In 1973, as the women's movement took hold nationally, Church Women United questioned the sexist language in the Protestant church, fought obstacles facing women seminarians choosing full ordination, and supported Roman Catholic sisters seeking greater participation in their church.

Sometime in the 1990s, faced with declining revenue and membership, Church Women United disbanded, leaving behind a legacy of volunteerism that would become the cornerstone of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches.

## WOMAN'S DEPARTMENT



This group of Minneapolis Church women are members of the Volunteer Visitors' Committee of the Minneapolis Church Federation. This picture was taken recently when an all day meeting was held at the Glen Lake Farm School for boys.

Minneapolis Church Federation

1931

1973



"Dinner at Your Door" promoted by Church Women united.

*Bringing meals to the elderly became a calling for Church Women United.*

Trained United Church Women volunteers bring friendship and interest to many confined to hospitals and nursing homes, present "Hospitality Programs" to foreign students and visitors, and show Christian concern for bringing Indian families and former mental patients into active church and community life.

1961



Minneapolis Tribune Photo—

**These Indian children might not have had a Christmas party without help from the Council of Church Women**—a department of the council of Churches. This active auxiliary force demonstrates in many ways how women of different races, creeds and denominations are working together to do Christian work in your community. Each year, the Women's Council sponsors citywide clothing and relief drives, visitor service to nursing homes, and welcoming foreign students.

1958



Church Women United volunteer and Gadabouts member\*.

*Gadabouts began in 1963 and offered field trips, parties, and friendship to retarded adults.*

1971

# Social Justice Evolution Chaplaincy

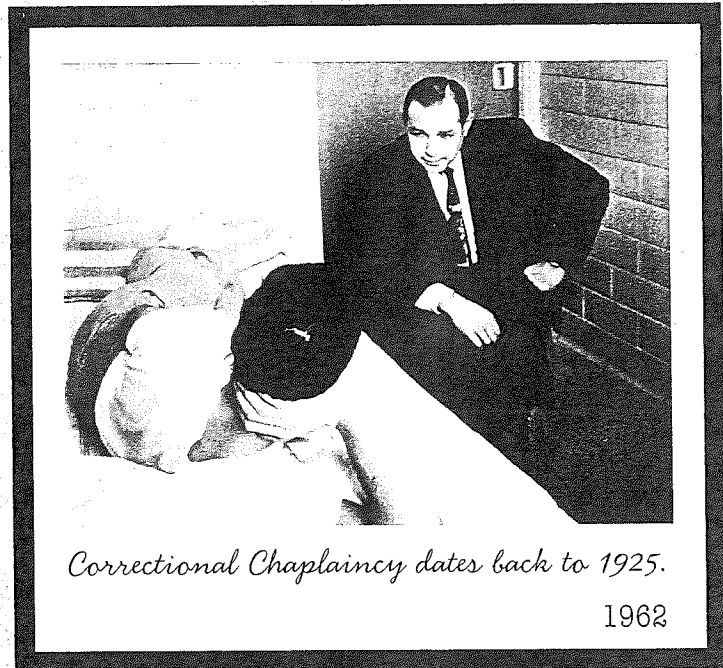
It is difficult to pinpoint the exact moment in our history when the shift to social justice took place, if indeed there was a definitive moment. It is clear, however, one social justice effort has withstood the test of time – and it was our first.

Among our earliest efforts to help the overlooked in the Twin Cities was the day we stepped into juvenile hall and asked: "What can we do?"

In 1925, our predecessor, the Minneapolis Council of Churches, began a program known today as Correctional Chaplaincy. The effort brings chaplains into jail cells to help lost souls take responsibility and take charge of their lives. Among the earliest mentions of this program is a July 31, 1925 newspaper article written by A.F. Benson, then president of the Minneapolis Council of Churches. It reads:

"Sometimes I wonder what chance some children have in this world, when they are born into an environment that is anything but conducive to the development of desirable moral character. They don't have half a chance. They are born with possibilities for good or for evil. Environment is a big factor in determining which tendencies and which possibilities are to be the dominant character-forming elements. A man is greater than his environment; he can determine his environment. Not so with a child. Minneapolis owes it to the underprivileged boy or girl, in fact to all boys and girls to see that, in our city, it is easier to be good than it is to be bad. Are we doing this? I am afraid not as we ought."

"The Juvenile Court is doing a splendid piece of work in salvaging misdirected boyhood and girlhood . . . . No work, however, can be permanent that does not rest fairly and squarely upon a religious foundation. The Council of Churches recognizes this fact and faces it . . . . The solution is found in the changing of the purpose of the life."



*Correctional Chaplaincy dates back to 1925.*

1962

## Chaplaincy today:

- Nearly 8,000 inmate counseling visits annually. Chaplains in all three Hennepin County correctional facilities.
- Clergy and lay ministers specially trained to counsel in a prison setting.

By the 1950s, chaplaincy had branched out to Boy Scouts camps, the Glen Lake Sanatorium, hospitals, and to American Indians in the city.

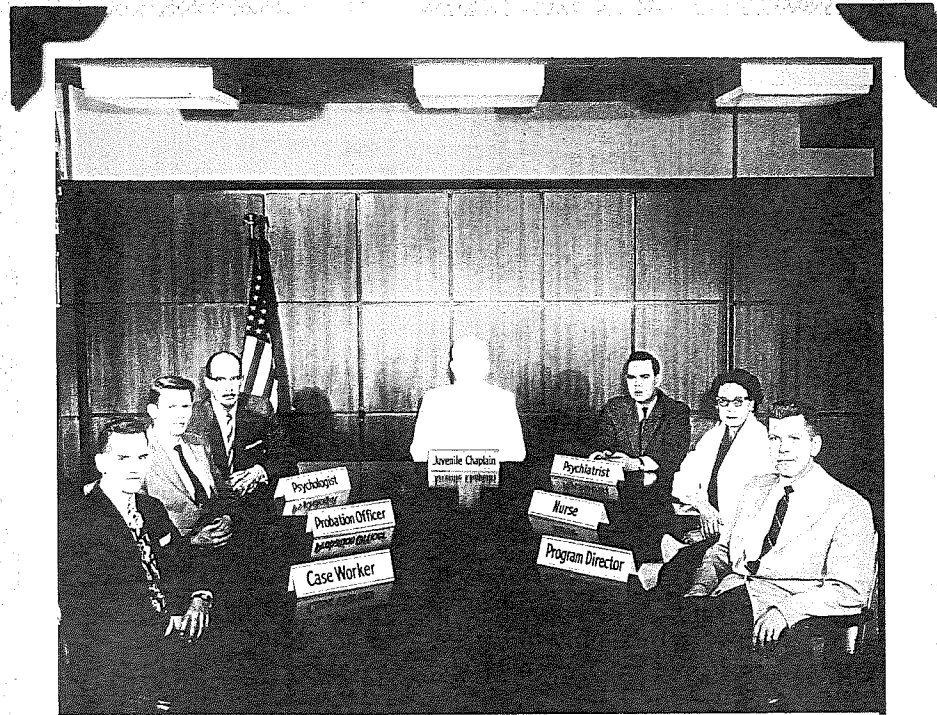
In 1958, a Hennepin County juvenile court judge began pushing for our first full-time court chaplain. In a *Minneapolis Tribune* editorial, Juvenile Judge Thomas Tallakson said: "This isn't simply a matter of demanding, 'Do you believe in God? If not, why don't you?' The brusque approach won't do at all. What we need are chaplains who are trained in the work, who have an understanding of the problems involved, and who are able to devote the time necessary to get a youngster straightened out."

That year, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches campaigned to raise \$122,500 – in part to hire a full-time chaplain at the Hennepin County Juvenile Detention Center. The pitch stated:

"2,700 youngsters under 18 passed through the Hennepin County Juvenile Detention Center in 1957. Many of the young people arriving at the Center are in situations where the right kind of spiritual guidance could mean a turning point in their lives. Heretofore there has been no organized program of spiritual counseling for the Protestant youngsters in this group. A

Juvenile Court Chaplain supplied by the Council will help these youngsters toward a more productive life."

Realizing the real work begins when an inmate is released, in 1965, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches lobbied the legislature to consider life after prison. They favored "adequate legislation to train and rehabilitate persons now in, ready to leave, and those released and paroled from the prisons within our State." They recommended "a positive program of training be established, halfway houses or other means, to assure a minimum of recidivism." Forty years later, GMCC would create such a program on its own.



*This photograph was used to show what was missing from the lives of youth in Hennepin County's Juvenile Detention Center.*

1958

**Community Justice Project launched to reduce recidivism. It recruits congregations to develop housing, employment programs, mentors, and support groups for newly released inmates. It also offers community service work to qualifying offenders and activities for at-risk youth.**

# Social Justice Evolution Division of Indian Work

To this day, many find it an odd marriage – American Indians and the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches. But over time, it has proven its critics wrong.

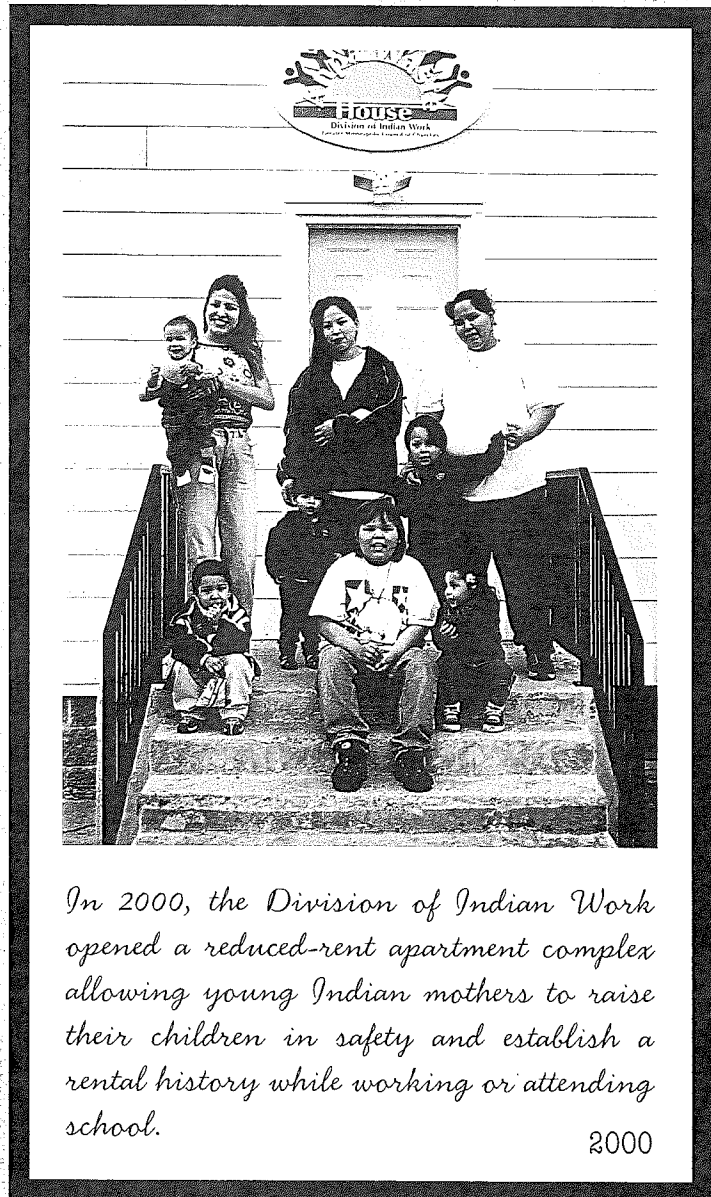
The early relationship began out of a desire by white churches to help Indians escape poverty. And, as in any new relationship, there were rough spots. Truth be told, the early days were marked by undertones of superiority on the part of some whites and distrust on the part of some American Indians. But to its credit, the relationship persevered. The churches learned to ask the right question: 'How can we help Natives serve their own people the way only they can?'

The Division of Indian Work (DIW) has its 53-year-old roots in the post World War II 'relocation' efforts of Japanese-Americans.

After Japanese-Americans were resettled from internment camps to urban areas in the late 1940s, the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs decided to encourage American Indians to leave reservations and resettle in urban areas as well.

In Minnesota, about half of the American Indian people left their reservations for Minnesota cities, especially Minneapolis. To those who left, the federal government gave some financial assistance, but no help in locating housing or employment. That's where local churches stepped in.

In the fall of 1952, Minneapolis churches organized to help their new neighbors find housing, furniture, jobs, schools, emergency financial assistance, and emotional



*In 2000, the Division of Indian Work opened a reduced-rent apartment complex allowing young Indian mothers to raise their children in safety and establish a rental history while working or attending school.*

2000

## **Division of Indian Work today:**

Works with 350 Indian parents, children, and grandparents each year to offer prenatal, parenting, and nutrition classes.

- Operates a food shelf that feeds 8,800 low-income Minneapolis American Indians annually.



*Volunteers package holiday meals for needy American Indian families.* 1997

In 1974, the effort to help American Indians moving to Minneapolis became part of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches and was renamed the Division of Indian Work. Since then DIW has become a leader in creating innovative culturally-based programs to empower urban American Indian people.

Today, the Division of Indian Work still offers emergency assistance such as a food shelf and financial help with heating bills and funeral expenses, but it has expanded its efforts. It also offers families prenatal and parenting classes, after-school tutoring, family violence counseling, affordable housing for young mothers and their kids, and loving foster homes for Indian children.

Its award-winning programs succeed because they link American Indian families to their proud cultural past.

support. The effort became known as the United Church Committee on Indian Work. While it started in Minneapolis, the work expanded to Saint Paul and outstate Minnesota.

One of the ministers active in this effort was Rev. Daisuke Kitagawa, a Japanese-American, who himself had been 'relocated' against his will to the Tule Lake War Relocation Center in 1942. Kitagawa, a GMCC staff member, saw a distinct parallel between the resettlement of Japanese-Americans after World War II and the off-reservation resettlement of American Indians. He set the tone for the marriage.

"It is no less than the sacred duty of Christian leaders, both Indian and non-Indian alike, to accept, before they do anything else, one another as brothers – absolutely equal in the sight of God and treat one another as such. There should exist a true sense of partnership between them," Kitagawa wrote in 1955.



*Tutoring works. Each year, about 90 percent of the students enrolled in the Division of Indian Work's weekly tutoring program improve their school grades.* 1992

Provides counseling to 300 American Indian women, children, and men impacted by violence in the home.

- Operates a group home for American Indian foster children and licenses Indian foster families.

- Tutors 90 American Indian students and provides summer cultural activities to 50 youth.

# Social Justice Evolution

## The 1980s Boom

For our first 75 years, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC) was a pint-sized organization. Although we began in 1905, we didn't hire our first staff person until 1914. In 1938, we boasted two employees and a budget of \$19,945. Our modesty would prevail over the next 40 years, but in the 1980s, everything changed.

The decade began with eight staff people but by 1984, with the addition of three major new programs, that number jumped to 30 and the budget topped \$1.35 million.

The 1980s clearly defined us as a social justice organization ready to do whatever possible to help Minnesota families living in poverty. The launch of Minnesota FoodShare, Metro Paint-A-Thon, and HandyWorks made sure of that. Today, they are among GMCC's largest and most popular programs.

Minnesota FoodShare began in 1982 as Metro FoodShare, a campaign to restock food shelves in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area. Awareness of hometown hunger was growing and neighbors felt compelled to act. After one year, FoodShare's popularity was so evident that it became a statewide effort. Since 1982, Minnesota FoodShare has raised 400 million pounds of food to restock 265 food shelves across the state.

1982 also marked the beginnings of HandyWorks, although in its early days it was known as the Chore Services Coordination Project. It was triggered by church concerns that too many elderly were struggling to keep their homes and their independence. To this day, HandyWorks helps hundreds of seniors each year by



Reprinted with permission from the Star Tribune.

*Minnesota FoodShare's first year in 1982. Back then, it was known as Metro FoodShare.*

### Minnesota FoodShare today:

- Collects more than 8 million dollars and pounds of food annually to feed hungry Minnesota families. Half of all the groceries distributed at Minnesota food shelves each year are generated from FoodShare's annual statewide March Campaign.



matching them with those who can help with housekeeping, minor home repairs, and outdoor chores. Volunteers and paid workers complete chores such as lawn mowing, snow shoveling, appliance repair, and housecleaning.

Metro Paint-A-Thon emerged in 1984 after GMCC staff member Steven Newcom read about a project in Denver that used volunteer teams to paint the homes of low-income seniors. He thought it would be a creative way to help needy Twin Cities seniors and at the same time involve teams in a rewarding volunteer experience.

The 1984 GMCC annual report recounts Paint-A-Thon's beginning: "The Metro Paint-A-Thon was initiated and implemented by the Chore Services Coordination Project. Homes throughout the entire metro area were painted using donated paint and volunteer labor. On one day, August 18, eighty-two homes were painted by approximately 1200 volunteers. Following a hard day of painting, a grand picnic was held at Minnehaha Falls for the volunteers and seniors."

To date, Paint-A-Thon has painted 5,417 homes and averages about 150 homes each August. Teams from corporations, congregations, and civic groups make up the 2,500 volunteers who participate annually.

*"Our voices are respected and listened to, as we speak out against the injustice of balancing budgets on the backs of the poor, and as we support the hospitality of congregations who welcome refugees from the war in Central America or refugees from the war on the urban poor in our own land."*

**Wrote GMCC Executive Director, Thomas H. Quigley in 1982.  
Under Quigley's leadership, GMCC became a force in the social justice movement.**



*HandyWorks*



*Paint-A-Thon*

### **HandyWorks today:**

Matches 250 seniors each year with indoor and outdoor chore workers to help the seniors remain independent at home.

### **Metro Paint-A-Thon today:**

- Rallies volunteer teams to paint 150 homes each August for low-income elderly and disabled homeowners.

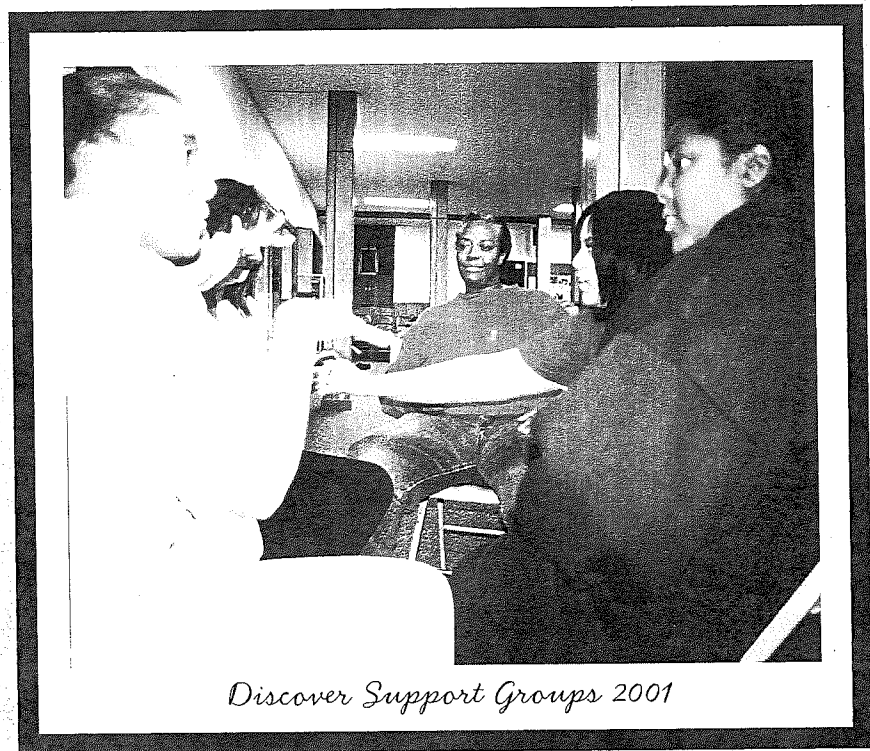
# Social Justice Evolution Contemporary

The past 15 years have solidified GMCC's reputation as a leader in creating cost-effective, volunteer-based solutions to battle Minnesota poverty. Under the leadership of President Gary Reierson we apply business savvy, common sense, and compassion to help struggling Minnesota families become and remain self-reliant.

Our expertise was recognized in 2003 when GMCC became one of only a handful of agencies in the nation – and the only one in Minnesota – to receive a federal Compassion Capital Grant to train grassroots groups to help local families living in poverty. Our efforts reach beyond providing a meal or a shelter bed. We want lasting change – programs that empower our neighbors to help themselves and teach the rest of us to understand poverty better.

Today, we complement strong programs from the 1980s such as Minnesota FoodShare, Metro Paint-A-Thon, and HandyWorks with new ones such as Discover Support Groups, Urban Immersion Service Retreats, CATCH, and Project Persevere.

Discover Support Groups began in 1997 and offers weekly talking circles for low-income parents working to better the lives of their children by bettering themselves. During the year-round program, the moms and dads set job and home-life goals and lean on one another as they work toward those goals. For some, the goal may be to learn positive ways to discipline their kids. For some, it may be to find a good job. For others, it may be to find a safe place to live. The program serves about 240 parents a year.



*Discover Support Groups 2001*

Urban Immersion Service Retreats also began in 1997 and operates weekend and week-long retreats to combine the study of why people are poor with hands-on help to those in need. Each year, we train more than 1,600 volunteers from

## **Discover Support Groups today:**

- Operates weekly support groups for 240 low-income parents working to prevent child abuse and neglect.

## **Urban Immersion Service Retreats today:**

- Trains more than 1,600 volunteers annually to combat urban poverty.

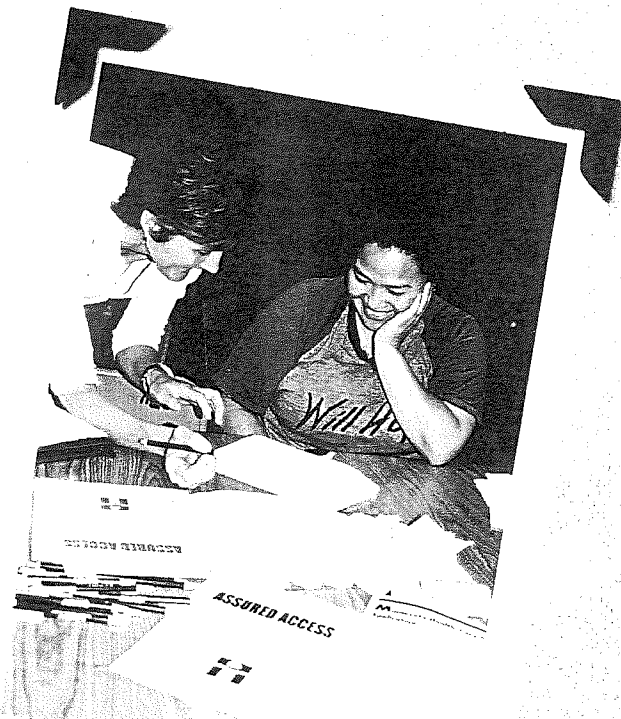


all over the Midwest to serve meals at shelters, renovate affordable housing, do chores for low-income seniors, and reach out to children in homeless and battered women's shelters. Ultimately, we challenge retreat-goers to go beyond a one-time volunteer experience. We ask participants to reflect on what they have learned and to set tangible goals to impact poverty in their home communities.

CATCH (Congregations Advocating Their Communities' Health) began in 2004 and uses our network of churches to encourage preventative health care for low-income children from birth to age 20. CATCH offers congregations a grant to help hire a parish health advocate. That person compiles a caseload of 10 to 15 low-income families from the congregation and surrounding neighborhood and helps those families schedule well-child doctor visits.

CATCH grants also fund neighborhood child/teen health clinics and special events to help low-income families enroll in government health insurance, such as MinnesotaCare and Medical Assistance.

Project Persevere began in 2004 and partners with Hennepin County to reinstate parents cut off from monthly public assistance cash benefits because they haven't found work as the law requires. In an effort to help these families, especially the children, we locate the parents and reconnect them with job counselors. We also report on special mental health and hardship issues of which the county may be unaware.



### CATCH today:

Uses its network of churches to help 123 low-income families get their children to the doctor each year.

### Project Persevere today:

- Reconnects 70 destitute families with county job counselors each year and helps get their public assistance reinstated.

# What's Next A Second Century of Service

If researching the past 100 years has taught us anything, it's that our founders chose what was right over what was easy – every single step of the way. They never took the easy road. So, in their honor, we won't either. There is much work to be done.

To celebrate our centennial, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches is launching a \$5.8 million campaign called A Second Century of Service. It is designed to help the Twin Cities community take a proactive approach to four emerging social justice issues: helping new immigrant families plant roots, creating supportive housing for young American Indian families and foster youth, expanding household help to vulnerable elderly so they can keep their homes and independence, and reducing recidivism by helping ex-offenders reconnect with the community in healthy ways.

## Helping Immigrants

- A new Center for Families will open in Minneapolis to help immigrants – especially those from West Africa – plant strong roots in their new community.

The 19,000-square-foot facility located on the campus of Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church in North Minneapolis will house immigrant services such as language classes, job training, health screenings and referrals, mental health services, adult basic education, and many others. The center is expected to open in late 2005.

During the past 10 years, Minneapolis and St. Paul have seen a significant jump in the number of African immigrant families. The Twin Cities has the fourth largest African immigrant population in the country and the highest growth rate in African immigrants (628 percent since 1990).

Unlike more well-established immigrant groups from East African countries such as Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, those from West African countries such as Liberia, Nigeria, Ghana, and Cameroon have few services available to them.

## Supportive Housing for American Indians

- GMCC's Division of Indian Work has entered into an agreement with Plymouth Church Neighborhood Foundation to create more housing for homeless American Indian mothers and their children. The foundation plans to buy and renovate a 10-unit apartment building in South Minneapolis. It will serve as the developer and owner of the building and the Division of Indian Work will provide parenting classes and other supportive services to the mothers and their children at its headquarters on Lake Street.

Since 1999, DIW has offered Anpa-Wasté House: a 4-unit apartment home for Indian families who cannot find affordable housing. Mothers and their kids live at Anpa-Wasté for up to two years while the mom goes to school or finds work. Rents are reduced, and the mothers who live there participate in DIW's weekly parenting and nutrition classes as well as regular home visits with DIW staff. Since its opening, the list of mothers waiting for their chance to stay in the home has grown quite long, prompting the partnership with the Plymouth foundation to create more housing.

- American Indian adolescents in foster care make up another group at serious risk for homelessness. The Division of Indian Work, in partnership with Hennepin County, is working to provide a house for long-term American Indian foster children. Most have been shuffled from one foster home to the next, know little of their culture, and are trying to figure out who they are before they turn 18, age out of the system, and find themselves on their own in the world.

The Healing Spirit House will serve teen boys, ranging in age from 13 to 17, and offer a stable home and lifestyle that includes school, American Indian spiritual and cultural activities, independent living skills, career development, and physical and mental health care. In addition to live-in foster parents, these young men will benefit from a DIW staff member assigned exclusively as their caseworker and advocate.

In Minnesota, more than 1,000 children are under state guardianship and living in foster care, according to the state Department of Human Services. Of that number, more than 300 are considered to be in "long-term" foster care, which means it is unlikely they will be adopted. Statistically, American Indian youth make up the second largest group living in long-term foster care: 32 percent.

## Community Justice Project

- The Community Justice Project is a new effort to reduce Minnesota's crowded prison population by making a dent in the number of repeat offenders. The project offers grants and technical training to Twin Cities congregations able to mentor newly released inmates and help them reconnect to the community.

Qualifying congregations will receive grants and training to develop housing, employment programs, and support groups for ex-offenders. Area churches will work together to provide different but mutually reinforcing services to ex-offenders ranging in age from 15 to 30.

According to the Minnesota Department of Corrections, 60 percent of inmates released from Minnesota prisons re-offend within three years. Minnesota's existing 10 prisons are expected to reach capacity in 2010. We need creative approaches to reduce recidivism to ensure society's safety, to save tax dollars, and most importantly, to save squandered lives.

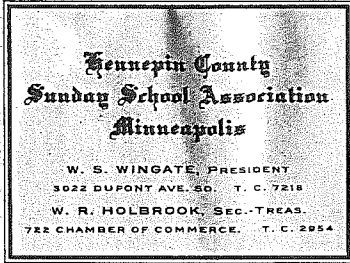
## Expanding Chore Services for Seniors

- For more than 20 years, GMCC's HandyWorks program has helped many Twin Cities elderly avoid a nursing home and remain independent in their own home. The program matches seniors with those who can help with housekeeping, minor home repairs, and outdoor chores such as snow shoveling and lawn mowing. The need, however, is growing as the population ages. By 2010, the number of seniors in the Twin Cities is expected to climb 13 percent and the number of frail elderly 85 and older is expected to jump 41 percent. A component of the Second Century of Service campaign would expand chore services to more elderly, especially in underserved areas such as Ramsey County.

# 100 Years of History Timeline

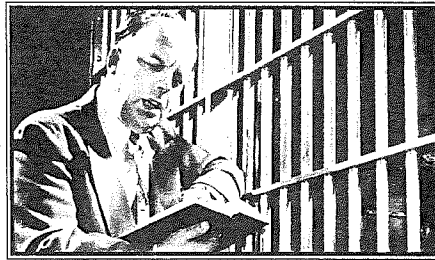
**1905**

GMCC begins as the Hennepin County Sunday School Association



**1914**

First staff member



**1915**

Sunday school association pushes for Prohibition

**1922**

Minneapolis Council of Churches launches independently

**1925**

Correctional Chaplaincy begins

**1933**

Church federation calls for action against Adolf Hitler

**1921**

Weekday religion classes begin in public schools

**1924**

Sunday school association changes name to Minneapolis Council on Religious Education

**1927**

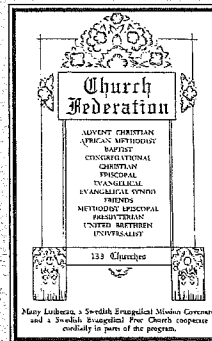
Minneapolis Council on Religious Education merges with Minneapolis Council of Churches; creates the Minneapolis Church Federation.

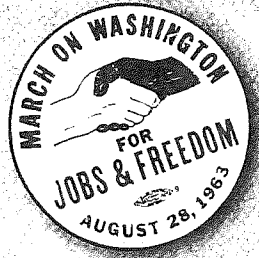
**1935**

First Race Relations Day

**1935**

Federation helps men in transient camps during the Great Depression





**2005**

Centennial Anniversary

**2004**

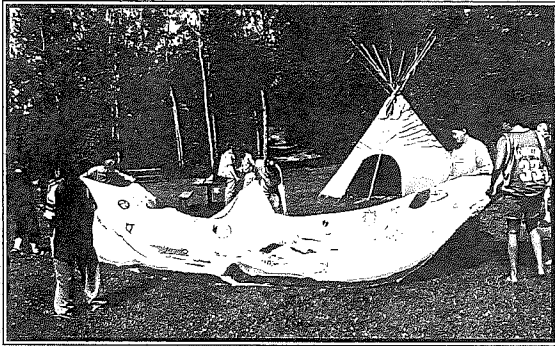
Project Persevere, CATCH, and Community Justice Project begin

**1997**

Urban Immersion Service Retreats and Discover Support Groups begin

**1984**

Metro Paint-A-Thon begins



**1952**

Division of Indian Work begins

**1965**

Directive sent to U.S. President Johnson regarding voting rights in Selma, Ala.

**1970**

GMCC board welcomes first Catholics

**1963**

GMCC delegation marches with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**1968**

Weekday religion classes end in the public schools

**1982**

Minnesota FoodShare and HandyWorks begin

**1951**

Federation changes name to Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches



**1947**

Push to help "displaced persons" after World War II



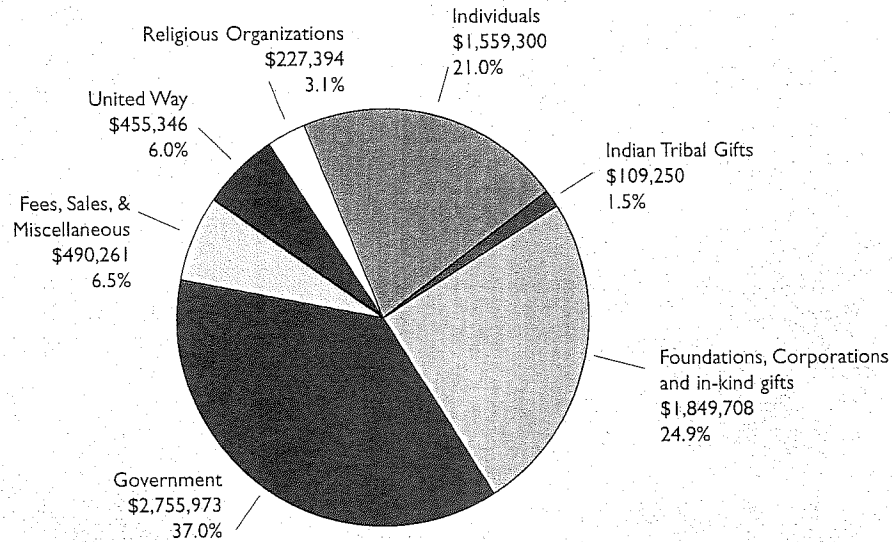
# By the Numbers 2004 Finances

What a difference a century makes. The budget for the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches has grown as its mission and programs have grown. Gone are the days of a few thousand dollars and nearly sole financial support from congregations. Today, GMCC also is funded by individuals, government contracts, Indian tribes, corporations, foundations, and the United Way.

## Revenue

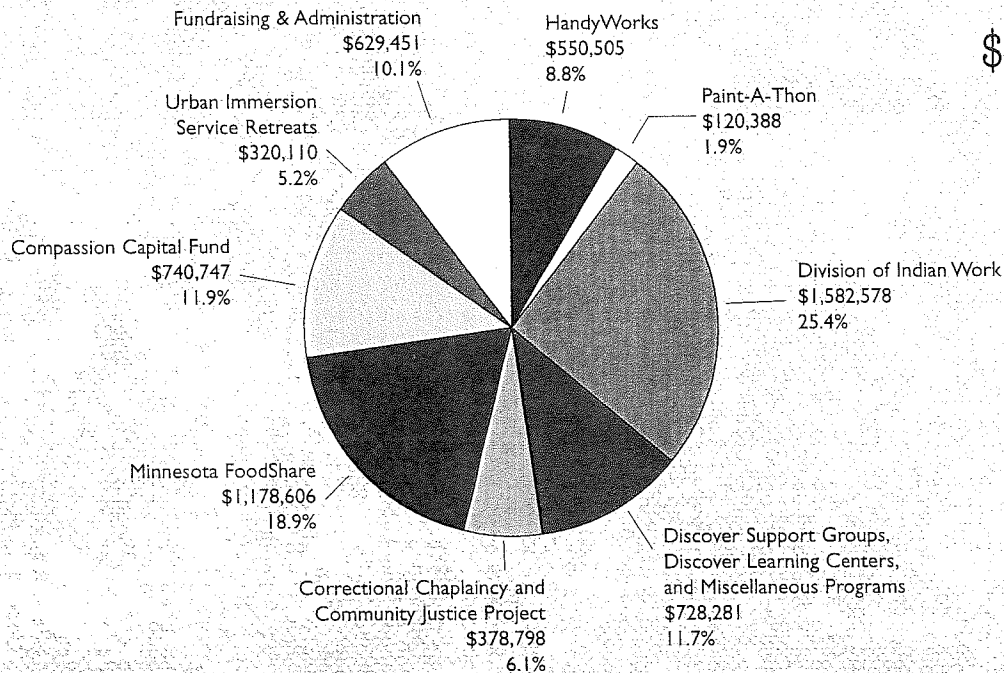
**\$7,447,232\***

\* Revenue includes \$1,344,045 in temporarily restricted net assets for future years.



## Expenses

**\$6,229,464**





GREATER MINNEAPOLIS COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2004 with Comparative Totals for 2003  
*Statements of Activities and Changes in Net Assets*

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Totals	
			2004	2003
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>				
<i>Support</i>				
Direct Federal Grants	\$ 590,636	\$ 915,731	\$ 1,506,367	\$ 971,922
Hennepin County	698,536		698,536	558,979
State of Minnesota	269,605		269,605	416,335
City of Minneapolis	281,465		281,465	233,372
United Way	406,221	49,125	455,346	403,442
Religious Organizations	180,229	47,165	227,394	164,518
Corporate and Foundation Contributions	563,927	1,268,848	1,832,775	2,913,484
Individual Contributions	888,435	670,865	1,559,300	607,029
Indian Tribal Contributions	109,250		109,250	82,000
In-Kind Contributions	16,933		16,933	19,748
Total Support	<u>4,005,237</u>	<u>2,951,734</u>	<u>6,956,971</u>	<u>6,370,829</u>
<i>Revenue</i>				
Fees and Sales	410,884		410,884	443,734
Interest Income	21,128		21,128	18,073
Unrealized Gains (Losses) on Assets	(887)		(887)	
Affiliated Organizations	59,136		59,136	56,384
Total Revenue	<u>490,261</u>	<u></u>	<u>490,261</u>	<u>518,191</u>
<i>Net Assets Released from Restrictions</i>				
Satisfaction of Purpose Restriction	<u>1,607,689</u>	<u>(1,607,689)</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
Total Support and Revenue	<u>6,103,187</u>	<u>1,344,045</u>	<u>7,447,232</u>	<u>6,889,020</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<i>Program Services</i>				
HandyWorks	550,505		550,505	561,733
Metro Paint-A-Thon	120,388		120,388	135,074
Division of Indian Work	1,582,578		1,582,578	1,613,357
Discover Learning Centers	18,568		18,568	26,414
Discover Support Groups	102,950		102,950	125,297
Criminal Justice Services	378,798		378,798	380,419
Minnesota FoodShare	1,178,606		1,178,606	1,102,458
Tri-Council Coordinating Commission	226,656		226,656	191,291
Compassion Capital Fund/Church and Community Initiatives	740,747		740,747	196,225
Urban Immersion Service Retreats	320,110		320,110	280,715
2nd Century of Service Projects	16,604		16,604	
Miscellaneous Programs	156,121		156,121	110,064
Total Program Services	<u>5,392,631</u>	<u></u>	<u>5,392,631</u>	<u>4,723,047</u>
<i>Supporting Services</i>				
General Administration	557,873		557,873	487,958
Fund Raising	71,578		71,578	76,135
Total Ongoing Supporting Services	629,451		629,451	564,093
2nd Century of Service Capital Campaign	207,382		207,382	179,959
Total Supporting Services	<u>836,833</u>	<u></u>	<u>836,833</u>	<u>744,052</u>
Total Expenses	<u>6,229,464</u>	<u></u>	<u>6,229,464</u>	<u>5,467,099</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	(126,277)	1,344,045	1,217,768	1,421,921
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>4,349,123</u>	<u>2,589,338</u>	<u>6,938,461</u>	<u>5,516,540</u>
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 4,222,846</u>	<u>\$ 3,933,383</u>	<u>\$ 8,156,229</u>	<u>\$ 6,938,461</u>

Information derived from audited 2004 financial statements available at GMCC corporate offices.

# Board of Directors Historical Leadership

## Past Chairs and Presidents of the Board of Directors

Rev. Dr. James H. Speer	Presbyterian	1936
Rev. Dr. Bert Edward Smith	Methodist	1937
Rev. Lee J. Beynon	Baptist	1938 - 1939
Dr. Dean Schweickhard	Methodist	1940
Rev. Dr. David N. Beach	Congregational	1941
Rev. Dr. Raymond L. Chadwick	Methodist	1942
Rev. George H. Tolley	Baptist	1943
Rev. Dr. Forrest L. Richeson	Disciples of Christ	1944
Leslie Myers	Episcopal	1945
Rev. Dr. J. Arthur Rinkel	Methodist	1946
Gideon Seymour	Congregational	1947 - 1948
Rev. Kyle Haselden	Baptist	1949 - 1950
Rev. Dr. Elmer S. Hjortland	Evangelical Lutheran Church	1951 - 1952
Bobb Chaney	Congregational	1953 - 1954
Rev. Vernon E. Johnson	Episcopal	1955 - 1956
Alan A. Phillips	Methodist	1957 - 1958
Ray Lemke	Presbyterian	1959 - 1960
Rev. Dr. Carl G. Strome	Baptist	1961 - 1962
Bruce C. Winslow	Episcopal	1963 - 1964
Rev. Richard J. Binge	Lutheran Church in America	1965 - 1966
Kenneth R. Wahlberg	Evangelical Covenant	1967
Rev. Dr. James R. Holloway	American & National Baptist	1968
John Burger	United Church of Christ	1969 - 1970
Rev. Dr. Chester A. Pennington	United Methodist	1971 - 1972
Mrs. Leroy E. Hood	United Methodist	1973 - 1974
Rev. Anthony M. Coniaris	Greek Orthodox	1975 - 1976
Oscar Rolstad	Disciples of Christ	1977 - 1978
Rev. Maynard B. Iverson	American Lutheran Church	1979 - 1980
Rev. Dr. Donald M. Meisel	Presbyterian	1981 - 1982
Hallie Hendrieth-Smith	African Methodist Episcopal	1983 - 1984
Rev. Marlene Whiterabbit Helgemo	American Lutheran Church	1985 - 1986
Rev. John M. Chell	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	1987 - 1988
Rev. Kathi Austin Mahle	United Methodist	1989 - 1990
Lawrence Haeg	Roman Catholic	1991 - 1992
Phyllis Sutton	Presbyterian	1993 - 1994
Rev. Ian Bethel, Sr.	American & National Baptist	1995 - 1996
David A. Nasby	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	1997 - 1998
Barbara Koch	Roman Catholic	1999 - 2001
Michael McCarthy	Presbyterian	2001 - 2003
Dorothy Bridges	Roman Catholic	2003 - 2005
Kent Eklund	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	2005 -

## GMCC Board of Directors 2004

Dorothy J. Bridges, Chair

Dr. Ford W. Bell, Vice Chair

Michael McCarthy, Past Chair

Barbara G. Koch, Chair, Second Century of Service

Mary Cederberg, Chair, Centennial Celebration

Rev. Dr. Gary B. Reiersen, President and CEO

Carol B. Truesdell, Secretary

Kent Eklund, Assistant Secretary

Lester J. Swenson, Treasurer

Mervin Winston, Assistant Treasurer/Treasurer-Elect

Rev. Grant Abbott

Rev. Lalahery Andriamihaja

Rev. Ian D. Bethel, Sr.

Rev. Peg Chamberlin

Rev. Richard Coleman

Rev. Dr. Archie Criglar, Sr.

Cynthia Crosby

Heather Watson Durenberger

Jeanne Forchas

Simon Foster

Rev. Albert Gallmon, Jr.

Rev. Dr. Joseph Grubbs

Lawrence Haeg

Rev. Dr. John R. Halbert

Rev. Rosalie Heffelfinger Hall

Rose Herrera Hamerlinck

Rev. Fred Hanson

Rev. Richard Headen

Dr. Patrick Henry

Rev. Oscar Howard †

Rev. Kenneth Iha

Gloria Lewis

Nancy Lindahl

Rev. Kathi Austin Mahle

James Maurer

Ann Merrill

Ronald McKinley

Wenda Weekes Moore

Alice Mortenson

David Murphy

W. Lyle Meyer

Rev. Dr. Christopher Nelson

Carole Mae Olson

Anne Overholt

Nancy Owen

Fr. Harry Pappas

Altin Paulson

Fr. Lee Piche'

Susan Sands

Rev. Dr. Karen Smith Sellers

Rev. Columbus T. Smith, Jr.

Rev. Parker Trostel

Maxine H. Wallin

Fr. Thaddeus Wojcik

† In remembrance

# GMCC Staff Today Contacts

## Management Staff

Rev. Dr. Gary Reiersen – President  
Don Riggs – Senior Vice President &  
Vice President for Advancement  
Noya Woodrich – Vice President &  
Executive Director, Division of Indian Work  
Peter Lee – Vice President &  
Chief Financial Officer  
Bruce Bjork – Director of Programs

## Programs and Departments

Annual Giving  
Sandra Sweatt Hull

Communications  
K. Darcy Hanzlik

Minnesota FoodShare  
Barbara Thell

Metro Paint-A-Thon  
Julie Kinkaid

Urban Immersion Service Retreats  
Michael Manhard

Discover Support Groups  
Project Persevere  
CATCH

LaDonna White  
Barbara Russell

Compassion Capital Fund  
Bridget Ryan

Community Justice Project  
Brian Herron  
Hillary Freeman

Center for Families  
Sara Nelson-Pallmeyer

HandyWorks  
Megan Nolan-Elliasen

Correctional Chaplaincy  
Rev. Dr. Susan Allers Hatlie

Division of Indian Work  
Youth Leadership Development Program  
Louise Matson

Division of Indian Work  
Teen Indian Parents Program  
Leslie Walking Elk

Division of Indian Work  
Family Violence Program  
Suzanne Simerson

Division of Indian Work  
Horizons Unlimited  
Suzanne Simerson

Division of Indian Work  
Healing Spirit  
Kirk Crowshoe

Minnesota Churches Anti-Racism Initiative  
James Addington  
Rev. Carmen Valenzuela

Congregations Concerned for Children  
Norma Bourland

# Our programs today

## **Ending hunger in minnesota**

We restock 265 food shelves each year by directing the largest annual food and cash drive in the state. The effort feeds about 274,000 Minnesota families each year.

**GMCC Initiative:** Minnesota FoodShare.

We operate a food shelf for low-income urban American Indian families, and feed 8,800 families each year.

**GMCC Initiative:** Division of Indian Work.

## **Helping seniors live independently**

We rally volunteers to paint the homes of low-income seniors and people with disabilities, helping 150 seniors each year remain independent in their homes and improving neighborhoods throughout the metro area.

**GMCC Initiative:** Metro Paint-A-Thon.

We annually match 250 Minneapolis seniors struggling to stay in their homes with people who can help with house-keeping, minor home repairs, and outdoor chores.

**GMCC Initiative:** HandyWorks.

## **Helping kids achieve**

We run weekly after-school tutoring sessions for 90 urban American Indian children, emphasizing their culture to help them improve in school and build leadership skills.

**GMCC Initiative:** Division of Indian Work.

## **Training a new kind of volunteer**

We operate retreats to educate people about urban poverty and turn that knowledge into action. Each year, we train more than 1,500 volunteers to serve meals at shelters, renovate affordable housing, do chores for low-income seniors, and reach out to children in homeless and battered women's shelters.

**GMCC Initiative:** Urban Immersion Service Retreats.

## **Ensuring youth receive regular checkups**

We use our network of churches to encourage preventive health care for low-income children from birth to age 20.

**GMCC Initiative:** CATCH – Congregations Advocating Their Communities' Health.

## **Nurturing healthy families**

We operate weekly support groups for low-income parents. Nearly 250 parents take part to celebrate their children and prevent child abuse and neglect. The parents learn positive child discipline techniques and set job and home-life goals.

**GMCC Initiative:** Discover Support Groups.

We offer parenting and nutrition classes to American Indian mothers and fathers who want the best for their children. We also operate apartments for Native moms in need of a safe, affordable place to raise their children. In addition, we counsel hundreds of American Indian families impacted by violence in the home. Finally, we operate a loving home for American Indian foster children and recruit and license Native families to become foster parents.

**GMCC Initiative:** Division of Indian Work.

We partner with Hennepin County to reinstate parents cut off from monthly public assistance cash benefits because they haven't found work. We reconnect them with job counselors and report on special mental health and hardship issues.

**GMCC Initiative:** Project Persevere.

## **Reducing crime and recidivism**

We offer inmates in Hennepin County correctional facilities counseling and worship to help them reconnect to the community once released. Each year, our chaplains conduct 8,000 counseling visits.

**GMCC Initiative:** Correctional Chaplaincy.

To reduce repeat offenders, we recruit congregations to develop housing, employment programs, mentors, and support groups for newly released inmates. We partner with the Minneapolis Police Department and Hennepin County courts to provide community service work to qualifying offenders and review dockets for chronic offenders to encourage tougher sentences.

**GMCC Initiative:** Community Justice Project.

## **Building faith solutions**

We award Twin Cities faith and community groups training and money to create programs which target the unique struggles of low-income families in their neighborhoods.

**GMCC Initiative:** U.S. Compassion Capital Fund Grant.

# An Evolution of Names Our Identity

**Hennepin County Sunday School Association: 1905-1924**

Name changes to:

**Minneapolis Council on Religious Education: 1924-1927**

Separate group forms independently:

**Minneapolis Council of Churches: 1922 to 1927**

Merger:

**Minneapolis Council of Churches merges with**

**Minneapolis Council on Religious Education in 1927**

Merger creates:

**Minneapolis Church Federation: 1927 to 1951**

Name changes to:

**Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches: 1951**

**“Now to the future. Ours is the kind of ideal which is not likely to be fully attained — not in our lifetimes, at least. The finale of fulfillment we leave to the time-table of God. But it means that we have a worthy ideal — always a bit beyond us — beckoning us to press onward. “Ah, that a man’s reach should exceed his grasp — or what’s a heaven for?” concluded the poet.**

**So — to be on the Way — to continue the pursuit — such is the road opening ahead.”**

**Taken from the 1980 Annual Report letter written by  
then Board President Rev. Maynard B. Iverson,  
Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches**

greater minneapolis | council of churches

UNITING PEOPLE OF FAITH—SERVING PEOPLE IN NEED

**Building on 100 years**

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A **United Way** Community Partner

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