

- A Brief History of Grove Bible Church -

1840's - Farmers started a church group with a circuit-riding preacher. They were unable to sustain the group.

1871 - On May 14 the Union Sunday School in District # 1 of Victor Township was established. Later it became First Congregational Church of Victor.

1886 - A small white high-steepled church was built on the northwest corner of Price and Shepardsville Roads by the Congregational Church.

1929 - Victor Congregational Church closed after struggling financially for many years along with the stock market crash.

1951 - In December, Burl Rood, a missionary with the American Sunday School Union discovered the building, which was being used by the Grange (a farmer's organization) as a meeting place. Soon the Grove Union Sunday School began meeting in the old congregational church. (It was called "Grove" because it was located in the Grove School District.)

1954 - Thirty adults and children started to attend regularly. Soon Burl Rood asked Harry Herbruck, Jr to be Sunday School Superintendent. They felt the need for a preaching service. Harry Herbruck, Jr. invited his cousin, Robert Prange (an Ohio farm boy) who had just graduated from Piedmont Bible College in North Carolina, to come and preach. Robert Prange and his young wife Darlene, along with their 18-month old son, Bryon, drove up from Ohio in response to the invitation.

1954 - On Sunday, July 25, Robert Prange preached on "The Three Cups in the Bible" the cup of salvation, the cup of reconciliation that Jesus drank and the cup of God's judgment. Immediately following the service Harry Herbruck, Jr. called for a vote. To the surprise of this young preacher everyone raised their hands in support. By the next Sunday, the Pranges had moved from Mt. Vernon, Ohio to Saint Johns, Michigan. Robert Prange soon became known as "*Pastor Bob*".

1954 - December, Jan Farrier was the first person in the church to be saved and the first bride on June 8th, 1957, marrying Chan Woodbury.

1955 - Ludwig and Lorraine Zerbe, missionaries in Liberia, West Africa were the first missionaries supported by Grove.

1956 - Burl Rood held the first Vacation Bible School. The following year he worked with Glen Perry of Rural Bible Mission.

1957 - A charter was drawn up and the church was incorporated as Grove Bible Church. Three missionaries were added.

1957 - Chuck Price replaced Harry Herbruck, Jr. as Sunday School Superintendent.

1958 - September 29, Pastor Bob Prange was ordained by Grove Bible Church.

1959 - October 1, Chuck and Lois Price donated 2½ acres of their farm on the southwest corner of Price and Shepardsville Roads.

1960 - November, the day before Thanksgiving the basement was dug for the new church building.

1961 - July, the first services in the basement were Daily Vacation Bible School. Regular weekly services immediately followed.

1962 - In the fall, they started to build the needed space in the upper level of the church building. Volunteers donated almost all the labor, working in below zero weather and the heat of the summer, until the building was completed.

1962 - Grove Bible Church began a new ministry with missionary interns.

1963 - On September 25, The upstairs of Grove Bible Church was completed and the new auditorium seating 224 attendees was dedicated.

1966 - August 1, Pastor Bob Prange and his family moved into the newly built parsonage.

1967 - Eight and one-half acres south of the church including the two-story frame (Price) house were purchased and it was first used for missionaries home on furlough.

1969 - John Hamblin (Edie) served as assistant pastor for one year.

1969 - In August, an addition to the main structure was completed and dedicated. This enlarged the Sanctuary by one-third, added the room by the Sanctuary, the nursery, the hall and more offices.

1971 - Steve Everetts (Linda) served as assistant pastor for a short time.

1972 - 15½ acres west of the present church building were purchased.

1973 - January 1, Arnold and Velma Busenitz returned from the Philippines after serving four years. Arnold, one of our missionary interns, served as assistant pastor.

1973 - On September 12, Grove Christian School (K-8), having met full specifications and approval by the State of Michigan, held its first classes in the church basement with 37 students. Pastor Bob was principal at this time.

1974 - The Price house was moved to the back southwest corner of the 15½ acres and was used for the School Principal.

1977 - The new building which would house the Grove Christian School was completed and dedicated debt free! Pastor Arnold Busenitz became principal.

1978 - Dan Keen (Celia) served as Youth Pastor for nearly ten years. He was also the first AWANA commander.

1979 - On July 28-29, Grove Bible Church celebrated its 25th anniversary.

1986 - Pastor Larry Smith (Carol) served as full time Assistant Pastor until his retirement in August of 2006. October of 1986 he also became Chaplain at the Clinton County Jail.

1988 - Jim Maris (Amy) served as youth pastor.

1988 - August, the new mission house was built and dedicated in November.

1989? - The old church building was given to Grove Bible Church by the Congregational Conference. Al Galloway purchased the 7½ acres west of the building and donated it to Grove Bible Church.

1990 - On March 27, Pastor Larry Smith was ordained by Grove Bible Church.

1994 - On January 2, Grove Bible Church had a Celebration Retirement Service for Pastor Bob and Darlene Prange.

1994 - Pastor Larry Smith (Carol) served as Interim Pastor for 23 months.

1995 - November 15, Pastor Marvin Engle (Dawn) became pastor (Installation service January 7, 1996) until March 17, 2002. At the same time, he served as principal at Grove Christian School.

1996 - October 13, Pastor Emeritus Service for Pastor Bob Prange.

2003 - June 29, Pastor John McCaw (LaVonna) became pastor. He served until March 6, 2005.

2004 - Grove Christian School was closed due to the number of students declining. In 31 years, there were 228 graduates.

2006 - February 19, Pastor Krag Johnson (Carrie) became pastor until July 29, 2007.

2006 - August 1, Pastor Larry Smith (Carol) retired after twenty years of service as assistant pastor.

2006 - Pastor Larry Smith became full time Chaplain through Forgotten Man Ministries at the Clinton County Jail, Saint Johns, Michigan.

2008 - March, Pastor Tad Jameson (Elaine) served as Interim Pastor until May, 2009.

2009 - June 5, Pastor Tim Van Loh (Naomi) became pastor (Installation service June 28, 2009) until August 27, 2014.

2013 - September 29, Nate Cropsey (Bethany) became Assistant Pastor.

2014 - December 14, Pastor Glenn Dundore (Helejean) served as Interim Pastor until May 10, 2015.

2015 - February 18, The Lord called Pastor Bob Prange home.

2015 - May 17, Pastor Brendan Holmquist (Melissa) became Senior Pastor.

2017 - May 7, De-commissioning service for the old church. July, the old high-steepled church building was demolished.

2019 - Carl Hyzer accepted the call to become the full time Chaplain with Forgotten Man Ministries.

2019 - January 19, Pastor Jeff Dempsey accepted the position of Assistant Pastor.

2019 - March 27, Grove held a special service to honor Pastor Larry as Pastor Emeritus.

2019 - August 18, Grove celebrated its 65th Anniversary.