

Markey Church History

Ladies of the Markey community met with Rev. R. B. Brown on June 25, 1906, and formed a Ladies Aid Society. On July 3, 1906 they organized the Markey Church of Christ, which would later become known as Markey Community Baptist Church. The first church building was on the corner of Markey and School Roads. Construction was started about 1907, in use by 1910 and probably completed in the 1920's. The ladies taught Sunday school classes and traveling preachers occasionally held services.

During the 1920's Reverend Charles Starr served at Markey. He was offered \$100 a year, which he turned down. He asked that the money be used to buy sheep that he would raise for his livelihood. The funds to purchase sheep came from more prosperous churches down state.

The church bought a 40-acre farm on School Road where Starr and his family lived and tended the sheep, which provided enough income for nine years. This allowed the congregation to grow and make improvements to its building even during a decrease in local population. The farm and parsonage were sold in 1946 and a new parsonage was built on the church property in 1947.

Under the Reverend John Dosh (1951-56) many improvements, including a basement and an indoor restroom, were made to the church. The church names in the earlier years included the Disciples of Christ of Markey, the Markey Church of Christ, and the Markey Christian Church. In 1953 the congregation voted to join the American Baptist Convention and changed its name to Markey Community Baptist Church. Markey's sanctuary was remodeled in 1964 when the Reverend Ernest Ferguson was pastor.

Missionary support of ten dollars per month for local missions throughout the United States was begun in 1952. The church has continued and has expanded missions' support to this day.

Pastor Robert Stuck came to Markey in November of 1970 with his wife Nelda and three daughters. Under the Reverend Robert Stuck, there was considerable growth at Markey, prompting ground breaking on the current Flint Road location on June 10, 1973. The first services were held there on February 3, 1974. Until this building was available, all church baptisms were done in Higgins Lake.

Later that year the parsonage at the old church site burned. Reverend Stuck was severely injured, and his daughter, Shari died in the fire. A parsonage was built on Flint Road in 1977. The original church on the corner of Markey and School Roads was sold and was later destroyed by fire in 1987. The debt for the new church, parsonage, and garage were paid off in 1979.

After Pastor Stuck left in 1978, the Reverend Robert Derby served as interim minister until May of 1979. The Reverend Dr. Benjamin C. Chapman gave his first sermon on May 20, 1979. Pastor Chapman was a pilot and a certified flight instructor. He brought his wife Marilyn and daughter Elisabeth with him. Another interim pastor, Reverend Delmer Case served Markey, with his wife Betty, from April-August of 1980.

In December of 1980 the Reverend James Kent, with his wife Kathy, began his ministry to Markey. One of the church calls for Reverend Kent was to attract younger people and establish a continuous youth outreach program. The program was successful with the assistance of the congregation. The church supported him in seeking a family counseling DMin. The church has continued to grow under Dr. Kent's ministry becoming one of the larger American Baptist Churches in Michigan. Since 1980 the active church membership has grown from 55 to 330. The current Sunday worship attendance average is 178.

In 1989 Markey led the way with other churches and groups to form the Roscommon County Habitat for Humanity and helped to build 10 houses in the first 10 years. We are currently working on our 50th home.

The church built a family center addition in 1992. This facility was shared for 14 weeks in the winter of 1997 with Saint James Catholic Church when they were renovating their sanctuary. On May 21, 2000, the church mortgage for the addition and the East Wing (built in 1996) was burned. The church building is in constant use. The church is open to many community groups.

Reverend Derby returned to Markey Church as our first Assistant Pastor. He was followed by Reverend Charles Mercer. Ronald Howell Jr. became the Minister of Visitation in 1986. That year our church joined three others in pursuing safe, affordable housing for senior citizens. They established Markey Christian Ministries Inc., a nonprofit tax-exempt corporation. The church purchased 30 adjacent acres in 1998, 75% of which went to the future site of Country Village senior housing. The first residents took occupancy in 2006.

There have been three ordinations at Markey Church: Lisa Huber Toney was ordained in 2002, Karen Henderlong was ordained in September 2006, and Mark Montei was ordained in August 2013. Kathy Murphy was licensed by the church in 1996 and served as our Assistant Pastor for ten years. She has since become a licensed counselor and operates Monarch Counseling Center in the East Wing of our church building.

During Markey Church's 107-year history she continues to have a heart for Missions, Christian Education, and Youth that began with so many years ago. We also have several opportunities to learn about God through two Sunday morning services, small groups, ministry teams and Sunday morning study groups. What does God have in store for Markey in the next 100 years?

Markey Church Pastorates 1906-2014

1906	R.B. Brown	1958	Grant Fanger
	Charles Lyons	1962	Ernest Ferguson
1915	O.B. Little	1966	Richard Williams
1916	Charles Starr	1970	Leon Fuller – interim
1934	Joseph Penick	1970	Robert Stuck
1937	Herald DeWeese	1974	Leon Fuller – interim
1946	Byron Dawson	1978	Robert Derby – interim
1948	James Phenicie	1979	Dr. Ben Chapman
1949	Walter Sponsel	1980	Delmer Case – interim
1951	John Dosh	1980	James N. Kent
1956	Richard Coe	2014	David W. Rice