

Westlane Christian Church

History

When Marvin Ross noted that there was not a New Testament witness within a seven mile radius of the Westlane-Grandview area in which his family lived, he began dreaming. He envisioned a church which would fulfill this need and, at the same time, reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the community. With these goals in mind, in August, 1968, he shared his concerns and dreams with men from several Indianapolis area churches.

Thus evolved the Westlane Prayer Project. By December, 1968, representatives from families living in the targeted area who were actively involved in their home church programs began meeting on a regular basis for mid-week services. Among Christian churches represented were North Liberty, Chapel Rock, Traders Point, Martindale, and East 49th Street. Members of the core group were Marvin and Lois Ross, Bill and Nancy Hansell, Norma Cutrell, Carroll and Mary Willey, Roscoe and Twyla Robbins, Doris Bradford, and Eldridge and Mary Faith.

On April 20, 1969, Westlane Christian Church held its first worship service in Orchard Country Day School at 615 West 63rd Street with thirty-six in attendance. An impressive service in July of the same year marked the opening of the charter and the dedication of the nucleus congregation. Signing the charter, in addition to the Prayer Project team, were Shellye and Lisa Bradford, Lisa Cutrell, Jimmy Cutrell, Cecilia Golden, Jean Oldham, Janis Oldham, Sherril Oldham, Donald Oldham, Jr., Michael Oldham, Stephen Oldham, Edmond Willey, and Kyle Willey. By October of the same year the congregation called its first full-time minister, Paul Boatman.

In 1970 the congregation, with the assistance of the Christian Church Evangelizing Association (CCEA), purchased property on the southwest corner of Westlane Road and Grandview Drive. A white frame farmhouse was the church home until increased attendance and expanded programs warranted construction of the present building.