

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE OREGON-IDAHO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Organized Christianity began in the Oregon Territory in 1834 when Jason Lee, a Methodist minister from New England, responded to a call seeking a preacher to fulfill a request by Native Americans who had visited St. Louis. The exact reason for their visit is uncertain, but it was widely reported in church circles at the time that these Indians were seeking religious instruction for their people about “the white man’s Book of Heaven” they had heard about from white fur traders and trappers. The report of their visit fired the imagination of many people in the churches. The Methodist Board of Missions was the first to react by sending Lee over the Oregon Trail as head of a party consisting of his nephew and three lay persons. Their purpose was to establish a missionary effort aimed at converting the indigenous Native Americans and teaching them the arts of civilization.

On the way to Oregon, near the present town of Blackfoot, Idaho, Lee preached to a gathering of trappers in a service that is regarded as the first formal Protestant sermon in the West. The party reached Fort Vancouver, according to Lee, “after a long and fatiguing journey, replete with mercies, deprivations, toil, and prosperity” and received a warm welcome by John McLoughlin of the Hudson’s Bay Co. McLoughlin advised Lee to establish his mission in the Willamette Valley. The first station was about ten miles north of the present Salem where Lee organized a Class, the normal 19th century way for Methodism to begin a local church. Almost immediately they began caring for several orphaned Indian children. They moved later to a place they called by an Indian name, Chemeketa, on a site which is now Willamette University. They wasted no time in putting up buildings and establishing gardens for food.

Soon Lee saw the need for more personnel. In 1837 a physician, a blacksmith, a carpenter, four unmarried female teachers and two more ordained ministers arrived to reinforce the mission. Then in 1838 Jason Lee set out on the long journey east to recruit more missionaries and to raise money for the Oregon Mission. On this same trip he also delivered a petition to Congress urging them to make Oregon a territory of the United States.

Lee and his associates were not notably successful at converting Indians, although they believed they were preaching the pure Gospel. One of the early reinforcements of clergy to the mission, Gustavus Hines, described their preaching in this way: “We preached to them the Gospel as well as we could... giving them an account of the creation of the world, the fall of man, the advent, sufferings, death, and resurrection, ascension and intercession of Christ to save mankind from sin, death, and hell.” The lack of response by the Indians was due in part to the heavy losses among the Indian people to various white-born diseases for which they had no immunities.

By 1840 there were stations fixed at Nisqually, Clatsop, Umpqua (Wilbur), Wascopam (The Dalles), Willamette (Chemeketa—now Salem), and Willamette Falls (Oregon City). (The Nisqually mission at the southern end of Puget Sound, was the first U.S. settlement north of the Columbia River and West of the Cascades.)

What started out as a foreign mission to the Indians in the Oregon Territory, soon became a ministry to the increasing number of white American settlers coming by wagon train over the Oregon Trail and by ship around the Horn. To meet this unexpected need, Lee helped found the white-settler oriented churches in Salem and Oregon City. Lee’s tenure as head of the mission ended, however, when the Methodist Episcopal Board of Missions judged (from unclear evidence) that the mission operations were becoming a secular rather than a spiritual mission. Taking action unknown to Lee at the time, they recalled him and appointed George Gary to de-secularize the Oregon Mission. Gary followed orders but soon resigned to be replaced in 1847 by William Roberts, a friend of Lee’s who shared Lee’s missionary zeal to both Indians and whites.

In 1849 William Roberts formally organized the Oregon and California Mission Conference that included the present states of Oregon, Idaho, Washington, California, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and part of Montana! Though this vast territory included many Methodist “preaching places” most of the churches were in the Willamette Valley — Salem Circuit, Oregon City, Portland, Yamhill Circuit, Marys River Circuit and Astoria and Clatsop, a few in northern California, and one in Santa Fe. The gold rush to California soon changed everything as more preaching places arose in California than in all the rest of the Conference combined. It also caused a huge migration of men out of the Willamette Valley. In 1852 the Oregon and California Mission Conference was divided; the northern part became The Oregon Conference. At its first session in 1853 there were twenty-one traveling preachers who along with

Superintendent William Roberts and Bishop Edward Ames organized the conference.

Gold was discovered in the Boise Basin in 1860, swelling the population to nearly 15,000 persons, most of whom rushed from one “strike” to another. These soldiers of fortune seemed like a “different breed” from the pioneer farmers of the Willamette Valley; they were much harder to evangelize, as ministers sent by the Oregon Conference soon realized. C. S. Kingsley, a retired Methodist preacher living in Idaho City, comments on this in a letter he wrote to a friend: “It is a hard soil to cultivate. People forget God up here, except to profane his name. You can hardly appreciate our difficulties, if you have never been in a mining camp.”

Idaho City was one of the richest gold camps and rife with corruption and lawless behavior (“sheriffs were bandits, bankers were thieves, and drifters, gamblers, whores, pimps, and other social leaches pretty well ran the city”). In 1863 a miner who had been converted to Methodism in the gold fields of California arrived in Idaho City before any Methodist circuit riders. Within a week of his arrival, he canvassed the town and discovered four Methodists. He organized them into a Class. Three months later C. S. Kingsley organized a Society and within a year a building was built.

In 1864 the General Conference designated the Boundaries of the Oregon Annual Conference to include only the State of Oregon and the Washington Territory. Idaho was not included, though in 1865 William Roberts, then Presiding Elder of the Willamette District, was appointed by the Missionary Society as the superintendent of Methodist work in Idaho with the expectation that a new Conference would soon be organized.

It was not until 1873, however, that the Oregon Annual Conference was divided along the crest of the Cascades, creating two conferences, one of which included eastern Oregon, eastern Washington Territory, and Idaho Territory. Then in 1884 a Conference was formed that included only eastern Oregon and Idaho Territory. Two of the new conference’s most famous pioneer preachers were “Brother Van” Orsdell from Montana, and Thomas Iliff from Utah.

The United Brethren Church had a number of members who migrated to Oregon. In 1849 a German American farmer, George Bethers, who lived on a land claim near Corvallis, wrote a letter to a United Brethren periodical asking for a preacher to be sent to Oregon. It took four years to raise enough money to send Rev. Thomas Jefferson Connor who established the first Class at the Union School house in Benton County in 1854. In 1867, Rev. Connor organized Philomath College with a starting enrollment of 100 students.

In addition to the United Brethren, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, began work in Oregon in 1858, establishing their first Class at the McFarland School House (between present day Corvallis and Monroe). The Class established in Corvallis later on bought the buildings and grounds of a bankrupt school called Corvallis College. The church made it a very successful school that ultimately was designated as the Agricultural College of Oregon. The Methodist Church, South, however, in a few years gave up its part of the school, which then became Oregon Agricultural College (later, Oregon State University).

The work of these early pastors and circuit riders was not for the faint of heart. One early preacher records that “we [he and his wife] have slept many times in barns with the horses and cattle, sometimes in the wagon, or on the ground under the trees of the forest: in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst.” He adds, “But we are richer today for these experiences, and would gladly spend another life in the same way.”

Camp Meetings were the primary tool for recruiting church members in Methodism up until about 1900. In 1843 Jason Lee conducted the first camp meeting for white people ever held in Oregon. A pioneer describes a camp meeting held in the Willamette Valley about 1855: “Perhaps a thousand people were gathered. They had come in their ox wagons...many had traveled fifty miles...to renew here the experiences and rekindle the emotions of the old life beyond the Rocky Mountains...One of the older missionaries preached at 8 o’clock...At 11:00 the Presiding Elder of the Willamette District ascended the stand and delivered one of his great religious orations. At 2:00 p.m. one of the younger men who had entered the work...was the preacher. At night a still younger man...was put on the stand.” Camp Meetings gradually declined as preachers moved toward large revival meetings sponsored by local churches in their communities. Both provided a working model for the Sunday morning worship services in early northwest Methodist churches.

One of the most urgent concerns of the Oregon Mission was to establish schools, at first for Indians and later for white children. This task was originally delegated to Cyrus Shepherd, a trained teacher with experience in New England schools. Lee was proud of what Shepherd was doing in what

became known as the Indian Mission Manual Labor School. The school didn't survive Lee's replacement who sold the building to the Oregon Mission, which had formed a school for white children, The Oregon Institute, of which Willamette University was the direct outgrowth and successor.

During the early years of the Mission, there were no public schools, but there was intense interest in children receiving an education. Methodist clergy often led moves to develop facilities and instruction either sponsored by the church or the community. From 1858 to 1865 there were five Methodist preachers who were county superintendents of common schools. In addition, the church started several schools of its own: The Portland Academy, Santiam Academy, Umpqua (or Wilbur) Academy, Oregon City Academy and Female Seminary, Sheridan Academy, Ashland College, Drain Academy and the aforementioned Corvallis College of the M.E. Church, South.

Membership in the Oregon Conference showed both periods of growth and periods of decline beginning from the 1850s. By 1970 the membership was 67,215. However, this figure is the result of the 1969 merger of the Oregon and Idaho Conferences and does not reflect the time when membership in both conferences was declining. This decline continued down to 1997 when the membership was reported as 39,129.

A number of mergers have enriched and pluralized Methodism in Oregon since 1900. Oregon members of the Pacific German Conference (which was organized in 1905) were merged with the Oregon Conference in 1928. Nationally, three Methodist bodies—Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and Methodist Protestant Church—in 1939 agreed, as one church historian wrote, “to kiss and make peace.” This merger created The Methodist Church and involved the merger of several Oregon congregations and conferences. A Japanese Provisional Conference had been established in 1940 on the west coast but then the members in Oregon merged with the Oregon Conference in 1964.

In 1968 the Evangelical United Brethren Church nationally merged with the Methodist Church, creating The United Methodist Church. Most EUB churches in Oregon chose to form a new denomination, though a few congregations merged with the Oregon Conference. In 1969 negotiations were completed for the merger of the Idaho Conference with the Oregon Conference to form the present Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference.

Currently, in Oregon Methodism the fastest growing ethnic group has been the establishment and growth of Korean Methodist congregations. Two new Korean congregations have been established within the bounds of the conference.

Women preachers have been an important part of Oregon and Idaho Methodism. Some revivalist preachers were women and over the years the conference (and its predecessors) have had many women who were “supply” pastors serving local congregations, some of whom had what was termed a “local ordination.” The Idaho conference received its first woman, Grace Weaver, into full connection in 1958. The Oregon conference received its first woman, Ernestine Hitchcock, into full connection in 1960. In 1997 the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference was among the top 11 conferences with the highest percentage of women clergy (21.3% compared with the national average of 15.2%).

The style and content of preaching in Methodist churches in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference has evolved in many forms. The circuit riders and itinerant preachers preached a message aimed at the sinner to repent and be converted. Thomas Pearne, the longtime editor of the *Pacific Christian Advocate* wrote in his memoirs that Methodist preaching in Oregon stressed the guilt and danger of sinners. Humor and sentiment were common in preaching. It was said that a Methodist preacher judged his (there were no ordained women among the circuit riders) sermon by the number of people weeping and thus ready to seek a new life. It took the pragmatism of an Oregon preacher, however, to remind his readers that it is not best to keep penitent people kneeling too long because they might “forget the sorrow of a broken heart by feeling the tortures of painful knees.”

The style and content of Methodist preaching gradually evolved from preaching for a conversion and preaching the moral and good life, to preaching toward problems and issues facing the lives of people. Many preachers today use the Revised Common Lectionary as the basis for sermons.

Issues that the Oregon-Idaho Conference has dealt with have varied from how to keep the many schools and academies afloat financially, how to increase membership in the conference, how to increase the life of the Spirit among Methodists, and how best to organize themselves for effective ministry. Over the years, the Conference recognized the importance of camping experiences for young people. A camping program using several camp and retreat sites in both states has been developed that is currently one of the finest in United Methodism.

Many social issues have concerned the conference through the years. The internment of Japanese-

Americans on the west coast at the outset of World War II was denounced by several Methodist clergy who brought the issue to the conference. A couple of them paid a severe price for their advocacy of justice for the Japanese-American people. Various forms of pacifism were advocated in conference debates during World War II, culminating in official censure of Willamette University for its acceptance of an Air R.O.T.C. training program on the campus. In recent years, the liveliest debates have been on issues surrounding homosexuality.

Two preachers from this Annual Conference have been elected to the episcopacy. The first was Bruce R. Baxter, who was president of Willamette University when he was elected in 1940. The second person was Minerva Carcaño, who was serving as the superintendent of the Metropolitan District when she was elected by the Jurisdictional Conference in 2004.

What of the future? According to Shakespeare, “the past is prologue.” But prologue to what? It is not given to us to know. Perhaps what we can be most sure of was summed up by an historian of Oregon Methodism, Robert Peters (a retired member of the Conference):

This conference has had to think of the plodding task, the often disappointed task of seeing that we're not living in the glory days. Our glory, as a matter of fact, is not in spectacular achievement. It is rather in being faithful to the witness, to the word of hope. ... God called us to this place when it was a rustic frontier to remind each Indian, each settler, that God cared what happened here, how we live with our lives and how we built our society. And that God does not leave us alone ever; wherever we may be in seeking to be faithful. That's our task. It's ever been our task, and it shall be our task on into our future.

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CONFERENCE SESSIONS

The General Conference of 1849 authorized the formation of “the Oregon and California Mission Conference” with two districts, “the Oregon District,” and “the California District.” With this impossible geographical spread it is not surprising that the two never met together as one conference. The Oregon District met four times on its own from 1849 to 1852 with William Roberts presiding. The 1852 General Conference faced the inevitable transportation problem by authorizing the formation of two annual conferences: Oregon and California. The Oregon Annual Conference was organized in 1853 with 13 pastoral charges and a few educational institutions to which clergy were appointed.

The list below begins with that first Oregon conference in 1853. The Idaho conference began as a separate conference in 1884 and is included in the list. The merger of these two conferences took place in 1969 to form the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference. This list does not include the Methodist Church, South, which merged in 1939. Nor does it include the Northwest Annual Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church that merged with the Oregon Conference in 1968. (The listing of its conference sessions can be found in the 1971 PNW (E) Journal.)

Note: James H. Wilbur (1885), E. C. Benson (1886), and C. S. Kingsley (1861 and 1869) are listed as presiding over the Oregon Conference but were not bishops.

Date	Location	Presiding Bishop
1849 - 1852 Oregon District: Salem (1849), Oregon City (1850), Salem (1851), and Portland (1852).		William Roberts
March 17, 1853	Salem	Edward R. Ames
March 16, 1854	Belknap Settlement	Matthew Simpson
August 1, 1855	Oregon City	Osman C. Baker
Sept. 18, 1856	Portland	Levi Scott
August 13, 1857	Corvallis	Edmund S. Janes
August 11, 1858	Salem	Levi Scott
August 10, 1859	Albany	O.C. Baker
August 22, 1860	Portland	E.R. Ames
August 7, 1861	Eugene City	C.S. Kingsley
August 6, 1862	Vancouver, Washington	Matthew Simpson
August 12, 1863	Lebanon	E.S. Janes
August 18, 1864	Salem	D.W. Clark
August 10, 1865	Olympia, Washington	James H. Wilbur*
August 8, 1866	Albany	H.C. Benson*
August 7, 1867	Portland	E. Thompson

Date (OR)	Location (OR)	Date (ID)	Location (ID)	Presiding Bishop	
August 13, 1868	Salem			Levi Scott	
August 5, 1869	Eugene City			C.S. Kingsley	
August 25, 1870	Vancouver, Washington Territory			E.R. Ames	
August 9, 1871	Portland (First Church)			E.S. Janes	
August 29, 1872	Salem			R.S. Foster	
September 3, 1873	Olympia, Washington			J.T. Peck	
August 12, 1874	Portland (First Church)			S.M. Merrill	
August 11, 1875	Salem			J.T. Peck	
August 23, 1876	Albany			William L. Harris	
August 29, 1877	Seattle, Washington			Thomas Bowman	
August 28, 1878	Salem			E.G. Andrews	
August 20, 1879	Portland (First Church)			Gilbert Haven	
August 19, 1880	Eugene			I.W. Wiley	
August 18, 1881	East Portland			William L. Harris	
August 23, 1882	Albany			J.F. Hurst	
August 22, 1883	Vancouver, Washington			H.W. Warren	
August 27, 1884	Salem	Sept. 17, 1884	Boise, ID	Charles H. Fowler	
August 26, 1885	Roseburg	July 30, 1885	Canyon City, OR	J.M. Walden	
August 26, 1886	Forest Grove	July 29, 1886	Union, OR	William L. Harris	
August 31, 1887	Portland (Grace Church)	Sept. 21, 1887	Baker City, OR	R.S. Foster	
August 30, 1888	Eugene City	Sept. 27, 1888	Boise, ID	W.X. Ninde	
August 28, 1889	Portland (First Church)	Sept. 25, 1889	LaGrande, OR	Thomas Bowman	
August 21, 1890	Grants Pass	Aug. 21, 1890	Union, OR	J.P. Newman (OR)	J.H.Vincent (ID)
August 19, 1891	Salem	Aug. 12, 1891	Boise, ID	J.N.Fitzgerald (OR)	Thomas Bowman (ID)
August 25, 1892	Portland (Centenary Church)	Aug. 11, 1892	Payette, ID	J.M. Walden	
August 23, 1893	Albany	Aug. 9, 1893	Baker City, OR	D.A. Goodsell	
September 19, 1894	Eugene City	Aug. 16, 1894	Boise, ID	Isaac W. Joyce	
September 25, 1895	Portland (First Church)	Aug. 21, 1895	Union, OR	Thomas Bowman	
September 23, 1896	Roseburg	Aug. 19, 1896	Blackfoot, ID	Earl Cranston	
September 9, 1897	Corvallis	Aug. 19, 1897	Caldwell, ID	Cyrus D. Foss	
September 14, 1898	McMinnville	Aug. 25, 1898	Idaho Falls, ID	C.C. McCabe	
September 20, 1899	Salem	Aug. 31, 1899	Boise, ID	John H. Vincent	
September 19, 1900	Ashland	Aug. 30, 1900	Baker City, OR	E.G. Andrews	

Date (OR)	Location (OR)	Date (ID)	Location (ID)	Presiding Bishop (OR)	Presiding Bishop (ID)
September 25, 1901	Hillsboro	Aug. 29, 1901	Pocatello, ID	W.F. Mallalieu	
September 25, 1902	Grants Pass	Aug. 28, 1902	Caldwell, ID	Earl Cranston	
September 30, 1903	Salem	Aug. 27, 1903	Boise, ID	J.W. Hamilton	
September 28, 1904	Eugene	Aug. 24, 1904	Hailey, ID	Henry Spellmeyer	
September 20, 1905	Albany	Aug. 17, 1905	Baker City, OR	W.F. McDowell	
September 26, 1906	Portland (Sunnyside Church)	Aug. 23, 1906	Idaho Falls, ID	H.W. Warren	
September 25, 1907	Portland (Grace Church)	Aug. 20, 1907	Boise, ID	David H. Moore (OR)	Earl Cranston (ID)
September 23, 1908	Salem (First Church)	Aug. 20, 1908	Weiser, ID	Edwin H. Hughes	
September 15, 1909	Cottage Grove	Aug. 12, 1909	Blackfoot, ID	C. W. Smith (OR)	H.W. Warren (ID)
September 21, 1910	Hillsboro	Aug 18, 1910	Joseph, OR	Charles W. Smith	
September 20, 1911	Salem	Aug. 17, 1911	Caldwell, ID	Charles W. Smith	
September 18, 1912	Ashland	Aug. 28, 1912	Twin Falls, ID	R.J. Cooke (OR)	N. Luccock (ID)
September 24, 1913	Eugene	Aug. 27, 1913	LaGrande, OR	R.J. Cooke (OR)	N. Luccock (ID)
September 23, 1914	Portland (Centenary Church)	Sept. 16, 1914	Payette, ID	R.J. Cooke (OR)	N. Luccock (ID)
September 22, 1915	Roseburg	Sept. 15, 1915	Boise, ID	R.J. Cooke (OR)	N. Luccock (ID)
September 27, 1916	Lebanon	Sept. 13, 1916	Gooding, ID	Matt S. Hughes (OR)	R.J. Cooke (ID)
September 26, 1917	Springfield	Aug. 29, 1917	Emmett, ID	Matt S. Hughes (OR)	F. Hamilton (ID)
September 25, 1918	Portland (First Church)	Aug. 28, 1918	Idaho Falls, ID	Wm. O. Shepard	
October 1, 1919	Salem (First Church)	Aug. 27, 1919	Weiser, ID	Matt S. Hughes (OR)	R.J. Cooke (ID)
September 24, 1920	McMinnville	Sept. 8, 1920	Canyon City, OR	Wm. O Shepard (OR)	Chas. W. Burns (ID)
October 5, 1921	Forest Grove	Aug. 31, 1921	Twin Falls, ID	Wm. O. Shepard (OR)	Chas. W. Burns (ID)
September 6, 1922	Salem (First Church)	Sept. 6, 1922	Caldwell, ID	Wm. O. Shepard (OR)	Charles L. Mead (ID)
September 12, 1923	Portland (First Church)	Sept. 5, 1923	Baker, OR	Wm. O. Shepard (OR)	Charles W. Burns (ID)
September 17, 1924	Medford	Sept. 3, 1924	Gooding, ID	E.S. Johnson (OR)	H. Lester Smith (ID)
September 30, 1925	Eugene	Sept. 23, 1925	Cascade, ID	Wm. O. Shepard (OR)	C. Edward Locke (ID)
September 22, 1926	Corvallis	Sept. 1, 1926	Union, OR	A.W. Leonard (OR)	H. Lester Smith (ID)
September 21, 1927	Salem (First Church)	Aug. 31, 1927	Burley, ID	Wm. O. Shepard (OR)	E.G. Richardson (ID)
September 18, 1928	Hood River	Aug. 29, 1928	Boise, ID	Titus Lowe (OR)	Wallace E. Brown (ID)
September 24, 1929	Portland (Centenary-Wilbur)	Sept. 4, 1929	Twin Falls, ID	Titus Lowe (OR)	Wallace E. Brown (ID)
June 24, 1930	Astoria	Aug. 20, 1930	Weiser, ID	H. Lester Smith (OR)	Herbert Welch (ID)
June 23, 1931	Eugene	Aug 19, 1931	Buhl, ID	Edgar Blake (OR)	Titus Lowe (ID)
June 21, 1932	Portland (Centenary-Wilbur)	Aug. 31, 1932	Nampa, ID	Titus Lowe	
June 20, 1933	Portland (Sunnyside Church)	Aug. 30, 1933	Rupert, ID	Titus Lowe	

Date (OR)	Location (OR)	Date (ID)	Location (ID)	Presiding Bishop (OR)	Presiding Bishop (ID)
June 19, 1934	Portland (First Church)	Sept. 4, 1934	Boise, ID	E.L. Waldorf (OR)	James C. Baker (ID)
June 25, 1935	Salem (First Church)	Aug. 27, 1935	LaGrande, OR	Titus Lowe	
June 23, 1936	Corvallis	Aug. 26, 1936	Pocatello, ID	Titus Lowe	
June 22, 1937	Klamath Falls	Aug. 24, 1937	Caldwell, ID	Titus Lowe	
June 21, 1938	The Dalles	Aug. 16, 1938	Idaho Falls, ID	W. E. Brown (OR)	J. Ralph Magee (ID)
June 21, 1939	Forest Grove	Sept. 5, 1939	Baker, OR	Wallace E. Brown	
June 19, 1940	Portland (First Church)	May 29, 1940	Boise, ID	Wm. C. Martin (OR)	J. H. Straughn (ID)
June 18, 1941	Eugene	June 4, 1941	Twin Falls, ID	Bruce R. Baxter	
June 17, 1942	Portland (First Church)	June 3, 1942	Nampa, ID	Bruce R. Baxter	
June 16, 1943	Portland (First Church)	June 2, 1943	Buhl, ID	Bruce R. Baxter	
June 22, 1944	Portland (First Church)	June 6, 1944	Caldwell, ID	Bruce R. Baxter	
June 21, 1945	Salem (First Church)	June 7, 1945	Burley, ID	Bruce R. Baxter	
June 19, 1946	Seaside	June 4, 1946	Boise, ID	Bruce R. Baxter	
June 18, 1947	Portland (First Church)	June 3, 1947	Idaho Falls, ID	Bruce R. Baxter	
June 15, 1948	Portland (Centenary-Wilbur)	June 1, 1948	Nampa, ID	Francis J. McConnell	
June 19, 1949	Ashland	May 24, 1949	Twin Falls, ID	Gerald H. Kennedy	
June 13, 1950	Portland (Sunnyside Church)	May 30, 1950	Caldwell, ID	Gerald H. Kennedy	
June 12, 1951	Willamette University, Salem	May 29, 1951	Pocatello, ID	Gerald H. Kennedy	
June 17, 1952	Portland (Rose City Park)	June 3, 1952	LaGrande, OR	Gerald H. Kennedy (OR)	Donald H. Tippett (ID)
June 16, 1953	Salem (First Church)	June 2, 1953	Gooding, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
June 15, 1954	Portland (First Church)	May 25, 1954	Boise, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
June 21, 1955	Eugene (First Church)	May 24, 1955	Idaho Falls, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
May 29, 1956	Portland (First Church)	May 22, 1956	Ontario, OR	A. Raymond Grant	
June 11, 1957	Corvallis	May 21, 1957	Twin Falls, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
June 17, 1958	Portland (First Church)	May 20, 1958	Nampa, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
May 27, 1959	Medford	May 20, 1959	Salmon, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
May 30, 1960	Portland (Rose City Park)	May 23, 1960	Caldwell, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
May 30, 1961	Portland (First Church)	May 23, 1961	Boise, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
June 5, 1962	Willamette University, Salem	May 29, 1962	LaGrande, OR	A. Raymond Grant	
June 4, 1963	Willamette University, Salem	May 28, 1963	Rupert, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
June 9, 1964	Willamette University, Salem	June 2, 1964	Payette, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
June 8, 1965	Willamette University, Salem	May 24, 1965	Burley, ID	A. Raymond Grant	
June 7, 1966	Willamette University, Salem	May 23, 1966	Ontario, OR	A. Raymond Grant	

Date (OR)	Location (OR)	Date (ID)	Location (ID)	Presiding Bishop	Presiding Bishop (ID)
June 6, 1967	Willamette University, Salem	May 22, 1967	Boise, ID	Glenn R. Phillips (OR)	R. Marvin Stuart (ID)
June 4, 1968	Willamette University, Salem	June 11, 1968	Idaho Falls, ID	Glenn R. Phillips	

[Concluding sessions of both the Oregon and Idaho Annual Conferences]

Date	Location	Presiding Bishop
June 3, 1969	Willamette University, Salem	Everett W. Palmer
June 17, 1970	Northwest Nazarene College, Nampa	Everett W. Palmer
May 31, 1971	Willamette University, Salem	W. Maynard Sparks
June 6, 1972	Willamette University, Salem	W. Maynard Sparks
June 4, 1973	Willamette University, Salem	Jack M. Tuell
June 4, 1974	Boise State University, Boise	Jack M. Tuell
June 3, 1975	Willamette University, Salem	Jack M. Tuell
June 7, 1976	Willamette University, Salem	Jack M. Tuell
June 15, 1977	Eastern Oregon State College, LaGrande	Jack M. Tuell
June 6, 1978	Willamette University, Salem	Jack M. Tuell
June 19, 1979	Willamette University, Salem	Jack M. Tuell
June 10, 1980	Willamette University, Salem	Jack M. Tuell
June 2, 1981	Idaho State University, Pocatello	Calvin D. McConnell
June 8, 1982	Willamette University, Salem	Calvin D. McConnell
June 6, 1983	Willamette University, Salem	Calvin D. McConnell
June 5, 1984	Willamette University, Salem	Calvin D. McConnell
June 10, 1985	Willamette University, Salem	Calvin D. McConnell
June 9, 1986	Willamette University, Salem	Calvin D. McConnell
June 15, 1987	Boise State University, Boise	Calvin D. McConnell
June 13, 1988	Willamette University, Salem	Calvin D. McConnell
June 12, 1989	Willamette University, Salem	William W. Dew, Jr.
June 11, 1990	Willamette University, Salem	William W. Dew, Jr.
June 17, 1991	Boise State University, Boise	William W. Dew, Jr.
June 8, 1992	Willamette University, Salem	William W. Dew, Jr.
June 9, 1993	Willamette University, Salem	William W. Dew, Jr.
June 15, 1994	Boise State University, Boise	William W. Dew, Jr.
June 14, 1995	Willamette University, Salem	William W. Dew, Jr.
June 12, 1996	Willamette University, Salem	William W. Dew, Jr.

Date	Location	Presiding Bishop
June 12, 1997	Willamette University, Salem	Edward W. Paup
June 11, 1998	Boise State University, Boise	Edward W. Paup
June 9, 1999	Willamette University, Salem	Edward W. Paup
June 14, 2000	Willamette University, Salem	Edward W. Paup
June 13, 2001	Willamette University, Salem	Edward W. Paup
June 12, 2002	Willamette University, Salem	Edward W. Paup
June 9, 2003	Boise State University & First UMC, Boise	Edward W. Paup
June 9, 2004	Willamette University, Salem	Edward W. Paup
June 8, 2005	Willamette University, Salem	Robert T. Hoshibata
June 7, 2006	Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, ID	Robert T. Hoshibata
June 12, 2007	Willamette University, Salem	Robert T. Hoshibata
June 18, 2008	Willamette University, Salem	Robert T. Hoshibata

Historical Note

In 1784 at the organizing conference of the Methodist Church in America it was noted in the minutes that “following the counsel of Mr. Wesley, who recommended the Episcopal mode of Church government, we thought it best to become an Episcopal Church, making the Episcopal office elective, and the elect superintendent or bishop amenable to the body of ministers and preachers.”

It was Wesley’s strong advice to designate Asbury and Coke as general superintendents of the new church (Wesley refused to use the word “bishop.”). This advice was followed with the exception that these two were designated as “bishops.” As the church grew and more bishops were elected, there were debates about the office of bishop. One lingering issue was whether or not a bishop should be “localized,” that is assigned to a given annual conference.

Before 1939 the prevailing practice□ until 1939 all bishops were elected by the General Conference. There were designated cities in which they were asked to reside but the actual assignments of bishops to preside at each annual conference were made by the bishops themselves, hence the many different bishops found on our roster.

The merger of Methodist denominations electing bishops, each geographical jurisdictional conference elects its own bishop, and each bishop is assigned to specific annual conferences within that jurisdiction.