

## BACKGROUND OF THE UNITED PARISH OF MONTBELLO

The idea of an ecumenical parish arose during the mid-sixties in the minds of leaders in the various denominations involved with the Denver Council of Churches. Among these leaders were the Rev. Robert Inglis of the United Church of Christ and the Rev. Bert Van Soest of the Reformed Church. At various times during 1966-68 seven denominations were interested in such a project, the American Baptist Church, the Christian Church (the Disciples of Christ), the Lutheran Church in America, as well as the four denominations that eventually covenanted together to form the United Parish of Montbello. In 1967 it was decided that the Perl-Mack development of Montbello would be an ideal place for the experiment. Throughout the remainder of 1967 and early 1968 a religious survey was conducted and two or three preliminary meetings of interested families were held. Arrangements were made with Perl-Mack for the construction of a dual purpose facility (parsonage and church) at the corner of Troy and Andrews.

### SIGNIFICANT DATES:

March 31, 1968	United Parish Corporation formed; the Rev. William Byrd elected chairman; and interviews of prospective pastors, Kent Keller, were conducted.
April 1968	Kent Keller was invited to be the Organizing Pastor of the new church.
July 1968	The Keller family arrived in Denver, and Kent began work on July 15.
September 8, 1968	First worship service held.
December 1968	Sunday Church School organized. Classes were held in various homes.
April 20, 1969	Service of Organization; followed by first Congregational Meeting at which Bylaws were adopted, officers elected, and Kent Keller called as pastor.
June 8, 1969	Installation of pastor.
August 17, 1969	First meeting of persons interested in a community organization held at the United Parish facility and led by United Parish members (Ray Wetzel presiding); two months later this group organized the Montbello Citizen's Committee.
December 13, 1970	Building Fund Campaign - Stewardship Sunday
January 20, 1970	Building site at corner of Andrews Drive and Crown Blvd. purchased for \$65,000 from Perl-Mack.
September 17, 1972	Groundbreaking Ceremony
April 22, 1973	First Services held in new building--EASTER SUNDAY!
May 20, 1973	Dedication of building

October 15, 1973	Curiosity Shop Preschool established for community service--and to help the church budget.
September 1974	Kent Keller accepts a call to a church in Indiana.
March 9, 1975	Rev. Steven J. Sprecher is called as our new pastor.
April 6, 1975	Service of Installation for Steve.
September 18, 1976	Montbello Celebration organized and headed by Steve.