Bergvliet Meadowridge Ratepayers' Association

Bergvliet Meadowridge Ratepayers Association
BMRA
for the good of the community

Celebrating 75 Years of Service to Our Suburbs

Some of our Churches

Several of the major denominations are represented in our suburbs with the oldest church buildings dating back to the 1930s when the Catholic Church was built.

The oldest church buildings in Bergvliet and Meadowridge are those of the Holy Redeemer Church and Monastery which were consecrated in 1936.

Monastery for Holy Redemptorist Fathers circa 1934

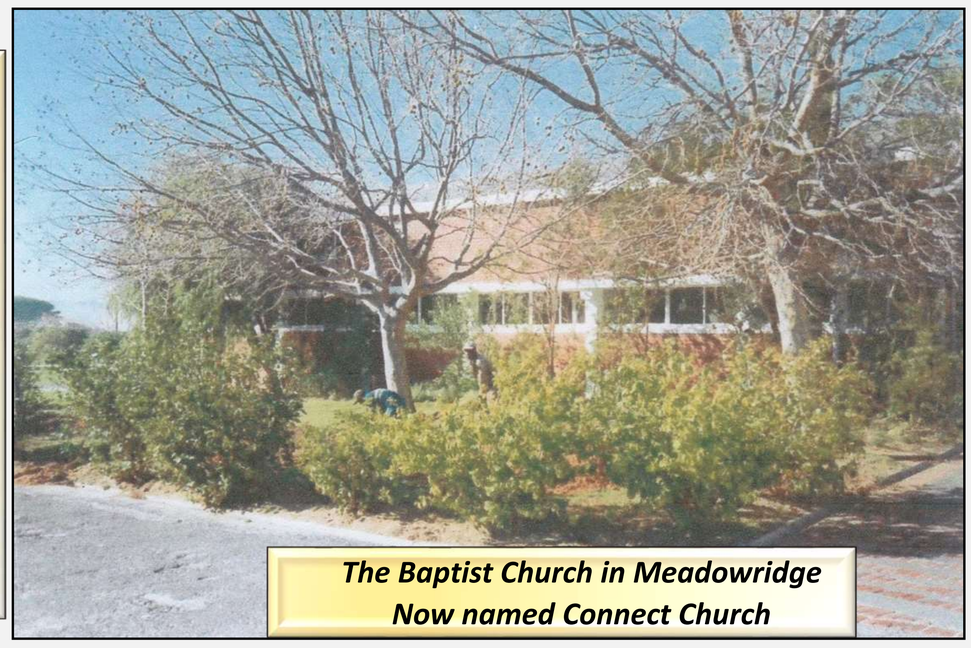
Catholic Church under construction circa 1935

Later photograph of the church
The stone pine was removed in the 1970s

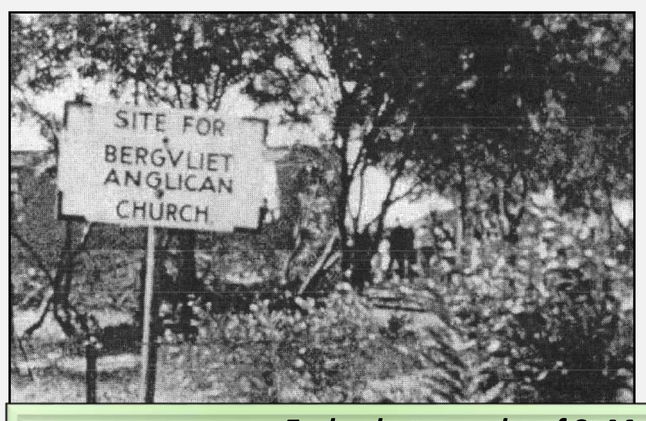
The Methodist Church

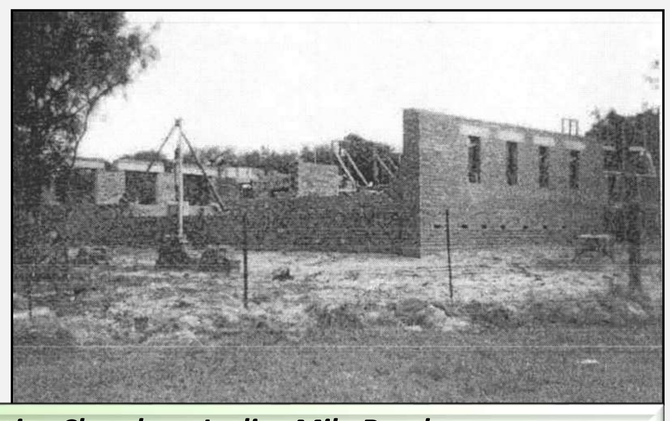
In the 1950s, the first members of the Methodist congregation consisted of 14 families who met in each other's homes for church services and Sunday school classes. Later the services moved first to the Civic Hut provided to the Bergvliet Civic Association by the Divisional Council, and thereafter to the MOTH Hall. The church, situated on the corner of Ladies Mile Road and Homestead Avenue, was built in 1958. During a storm one night, the glass at the top of the A-frame building was blown out, whereafter the window was replaced by a brick cross. The church hall was completed in February 1970 and was extensively used by a very active youth group on Friday evenings as well as the Women's Auxiliary Group which was so popular that two branches had to be established, one a Morning Group and the other an Evening Branch. Jacob's Ladder Pre-school commenced operation at the church site in 1987. The road to the west of the church was later renamed Wesley Avenue after John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.

The first gatherings of the Meadowridge Baptist church were held in 1964 in the Meadowridge Civic Hall, while Sunday School classes were held at the home of Mrs Beryl Bain. After suitable land was obtained, the church on Ladies Mile was officially opened in 1969. The Meadowridge Baptist Church was constituted on 26 August 1970 with 57 foundation members. Dr Sheriffs was appointed the first minister, followed by Revd Roger Voke. In December 1976 a property at 10 Heerengracht Road, Bergvliet, was purchased as a Manse to accommodate the ministers of the church. The congregation continued to grow and a new church was designed in the 1980s. On 5 September 1982, Dr Thomas Brümmer was inducted as the first Elder of the Meadowridge Baptist Church.



The Baptist Church in Meadowridge
Now named Connect Church





Early photographs of St Martins Church on Ladies Mile Road
(Taken during construction)

After the first houses in the newly proclaimed suburb of Bergvliet were occupied in 1947, a group of Anglican congregants met in the Civic Hut which stood near the present hall of Bergvliet Primary School. The Civic Hut was indeed the focal point for much social and community life in the area. Over the years, sufficient funding was collected to erect an Anglican church on land that had been set aside on Ladies Mile Road. Building commenced in 1953 during the time that Father Michael Norman, who had been totally blinded during the invasion of France in 1944, was the priest at St Martin's. Over the years the church buildings grew, the hall being added in 1960.

The Presbyterian Church in Newton Drive

In 1958 it was decided to establish a Presbyterian Preaching Station in Bergvliet with the inaugural service being held in the Civic Hut (where the Anglicans and Methodists also held their services!). Attendance was recorded as 39 adults at services and 13 children in the Sunday School. The part time services of Revd James Summersgill, a retired minister and affectionately known as "Pop", were obtained and the venue moved to the "Dawn Patrol" MOTH Hall in Bergvliet. The congregation began to expand: three elders were ordained, a Women's Association was established and fundraising resulted in the present church building being completed and dedicated on 6th August 1966. At that time membership totaled 95 and Sunday School attendance was 100. In 1974 the Summersgill Hall was opened. Further fundraising resulted in building a pre-school which opened in 1996.