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The church's new headquarters: The old Burton Abstract & Title Building at Lafayette and Griswold.

## Scientology office opens

By HARRY COOK  
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The Church of Scientology of Michigan opened its new state headquarters Monday in the former Burton Abstract & Title building in downtown Detroit.

The church group, which claims 4,000 adherents in Michigan, bought the 50-year-old, four-story stone structure from Burton in October for \$650,000 cash. The church headquarters had been at 3605 Rochester Road in Royal Oak.

Citing a desire "to be more centrally located for our parishioners," Suzanna Lee, Scientology's local public relations director, said the church spent the last three months renovating the building at Lafayette and Griswold.

SCIENTOLOGY, which calls itself an applied religious philosophy and offers counseling and self-improvement courses costing anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000, lists a membership of five million worldwide. Its ministers are licensed to perform weddings and conduct funerals and christenings.

A prominent feature of the

church is a massive desk and large chair — which stand empty in a corner near the front door. The desk is reserved for the Church of Scientology's founder, L. Ron Hubbard, who reportedly runs the affairs of the international organization from a sea-going yacht.

"Yes, that's our founder's desk," Ms. Lee said. "Every branch church has a desk for Ron, in case he wants to stop in."

Hubbard has never visited the Detroit church, Ms. Lee said.

THE CHURCH also holds a library of Scientology's literature, including two large hardbound dictionaries of the church's language.

"Our church has so many words and terms untrained people can't understand that we have our own dictionaries," Ms. Lee said. One is 577 pages long, the other 690:

Included in the library are several volumes of alphabetized "technical bulletins" by Hubbard, Jordanoff's "Illustrated Aviation Dictionary," "Principles of Pharmacy," "Gould's Medical Dictionary," "The Writings of Anna

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Freud," high school texts in modern algebra and biology and a fifth-grade text called "Basic Goals in Spelling."

These, Ms. Lee said, are used to help confused persons understand the meaning of words. "Not knowing the correct meaning of a word is often the cause of a person's problems," she said.

Five leaders of the Scientology church in Washington, D.C., were sentenced in federal court for directing a conspiracy to steal government documents about the church. One of them, Mary Sue Hubbard, is Hubbard's wife. The five are appealing their conviction. None of them is from Michigan.