Excerpts from

IDEAS HAVE CONSEQUENCES

125 YEARS OF THE

LIBERAL TRADITION

IN THE

LANSING AREA

YEARS: 1848 - 1973

by JERRY THORNTON

"History has no meaning, in the sense of a clear pattern of determinate plot; but it is not simply meaningless or pointless. It has no certain meaning because man is free to give it various possible meanings . . . . This insistence on human freedom is not simply cheering. It means that we have to keep making history, instead of leaning on it, and that we can never count on a final solution. It means the constant possibility of foolish or even fatal choices. Yet the dignity of man lies precisely in this power to choose his destiny. We may therefore welcome the conclusion that we cannot foretell the future, even apart from the possibility that it may not bear knowing. Uncertainty is not only the plainest condition or human life but the necessary condition of freedom, of aspiration, of conscience -- of all human idealism."

Herbert J. Muller
The Uses of the Past

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I. Introduction: Two Life Streams

The Mississippi is America's greatest river; the longest, widest water artery in our land. Scarcely any metaphoric vehicle could seem in greater contrast to the stream of Unitarian-Universalist history in the Lansing area than this mighty river. Yet the river and the religious movement here have one image in common: the nebulous quality of their source.

In Itasca State Park, Minnesota, one will find a footpath leading from the big lake into a wooded, rather swampy area to a small bridge above an undefined, almost unidentifiable, shallow-looking water-hole -- sometimes scarcely more than a wallow. The spot is marked "source of the Mississippi". This becomes a lake, a stream, finally a river? The Mississippi?

The path through old church records, historical accounts, newspapers, and legal documents leads through a kind of forested and swampy morass with debris of error; but backing and filling like the way of a stream, one can follow facts to pioneer beginnings of what has become the Unitarian-Universalist church in the area. The beginnings meander; they seem scarcely worthy of notice; the founders are in place, and then they disappear; they are not in place. Yet the small indefinite pool found its way to a larger circumference and to deepening effects in the lives of people and community. No Mississippi, the factual evidence respecting these people, nevertheless, suggests a moving stream -- life in process.

It is this stream you are invited to follow, if you find it of interest. Through the passage of one hundred and twenty-five years, one of the most obvious characteristics is the mobile, transitory nature of its membership; individuals pass as does the stream; at the same time, though almost too subtly hidden between the lines of many pages of secretary's minutes, some elements are constant. Thus, perhaps, the continuity of change may be one deposit left by our historical journey downstream. If one knows how to follow or interpret this experiential records, perhaps he can find the meaning in this process of Unitarian-Universalist experience in central Michigan. I endeavor here to present significant documents in sufficient depth and extent so that readers may be able to draw their own inferences, which, in true liberal tradition, will probably differ from any conclusions I may imply. One of the prevalent qualities of expert, contemporary historians is the recognition that history is written to be revised, constantly revised, as new facts emerge or new requirements and insights demand. While being contemporary, I am neither expert nor a trained historian; therefore,l additions and revisions by others will undoubtedly be necessary. This manuscript is offered as just one bend in, or one view of, the stream of life.

The founding and subsequent history of the Universalist Church in Lansing, lab to l957, envelopes the longer time-span in this discussion. The Unitarian stream began in l947 with organization of a fellowship achieved in l949; Unitarians and Universalists merged in l957 in Lansing, prior to the national merger of the two movements (l959). In a sermon about local church history, with generously inclusive spirit, Rev. Gerald Wyman referred to the first efforts at organizing a church group here as being a gathering of "Unitarians and Universalists" in the area. I find no evidence of any identifiable Unitarians among early inhabitants. In this connection, rather, the church records and all local histories identify persons who were here or had come from Universalist societies -- usually from New York State.

Further, in the l840's and for quite a long time thereafter, ideas held by Universalists and Unitarians, as well as the cultural experience of their adherents, had only a little in common. Because we believe that ideas have consequences, just as streams have beginnings, we shall briefly review some of the differences and commonalities which may explain why Universalists were here, and Unitarians were not.

II. Divergences

America is and always has been a virtual laboratory for the thesis that ideas have consequences. Ideas held by persons in all areas of endeavor affected the movement of the whole process we have been inclined to call "the American way of Life." It may be well to remind ourselves, while not doing <u>more</u> than <u>remind</u>, that philosophical ideas were -- and are -- the bedrock of our process as a people. (In other times we might have written "progress;" in this l973 moment, perhaps more humble, I would choose "process," not being too sure that "progress" is going to be man's choice or outcome.) Among the ideas which emerged in America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were two movements, each relatively small in number of adherents. The Unitarian movement, developing to its peak of influence in the nineteenth century when a high proportion of political, social-reform and literary figures subscribed to its tenants even if they did not always formally attach themselves to its organization, has long been recognized thus by scholars of the nation's history. Universalism, with some basic ideas in common with Unitarianism, has usually been seen as having taken quite a different rout,e particularly in respect to expansion. If it had not been for this different route, I believe it would have been doubtful if there would have been a Universalist Church in Lansing as early as l852, to say nothing of a group in l848. At the risk of seeming to go afield of my charge in this manuscript, I find it necessary to explain this conclusion as briefly as I can.

Both Universalism and Unitarianism arose in America in a time of political and intellectual ferment. In fact, a case can be made for ideas such as were embodied in these religious movements <u>causing</u> the ferment, each movement insisting on man's right to identity and to freedom from exploitation and repression. The two movements developed side by side; neither group believed in the doctrine of original sin, debasing and predestining all men to eternal hell, unless (also predestined) the judgmental all-powerful God, in His great, though whimsical wisdom and grace had chosen to save a particular individual to be one of the few to live with Him in eternal bliss. Universalism began in opposition to this harsh doctrine that only the elect could be saved; Unitarians, experiencing human goodness and believing in human improvement, and having sprung from a revolt against the doctrine of the trinity, likewise cam to think that any afterlife, if credible, could not be described in orthodox Calvinistic terms. Early on, Unitarians began to focus on the experience of life while alive, primarily choosing to leave universal salvation to be the consequence of living. Both groups believed in a God who was benevolent and loving, and that a God of Love would not deny heaven to His children. In most other respects, perhaps primarily because of the sociological and geographic space they occupied, the basic ideas and cultural experiences of these two groups diverged, though they did not greatly conflict.

Genuine Universalists could not be deists, whereas many Unitarians were. Universalists were chiefly Calvinistic and at least tended to be trinitarian in doctrine and orientation (according to Ernest Cassara, a modern historian of the faith, though others point to Horace Ballou's rejection of the trinity). Universalists were "come-outers" from orthodox faiths, many of them former Baptists. They were usually less well-educated than Unitarians and in fact boasted of an uneducated clergy. Unitarians had a highly educated clergy and membership. Unitarians, relying on reason and openness to new ideas and discoveries, increasingly turned to nonbiblical sources for enlightenment and inspiration; Universalists maintained a pious biblical orientation until late in the nineteenth century. The effluent of intellectualism vs. anti-intellectualism comes to the surface again and again in American history, affecting these movements or being modified by them.

During the period known as The Great Awakening (c. l740 ff.), and continuing through the decades of expansion and pioneer settlement, then, while Unitarians were tending to become increasingly intellectual and rationalistic, Universalists became more and more evangelistic and missionary in their efforts. The "enthusiasts," engaging as they did in a variety of emotional, even frenzied activities typical of the Awakening

movement, were in these respects anathema to Unitarians. Many new sects emerged in this country during this era; yet the numerically strongest were the Presbyterian and Baptist churches, and the newly circuit-riding Methodists.

Universalists, as their missionary movement caught on as they encountered new settlements of pioneers, organized local groups into associations. In Michigan the state association met regularly about four times a year beginning in the l840's, two to four delegates being sent from the Lansing church quite regularly after it began. Among this denomination, however, the looseness of the organization commonly made church development subject to the whims of individual preachers, a factor which seems to be behind the picture, stiff in the minutes of local church affairs. Rev. Sanford, and Rev. Knickerbacker (also often spelled Knickerbocker), the first and second preachers in Lansing, fit the pattern of itinerancy typical of Universalists of that day, at least on the frontier. This fact, together with the discovery that laymen now and again briefly became "Rev.", helps to explain some early entries in the records which otherwise puzzle the reader.

In contrast to Methodist circuit riders who were assigned to districts by bishops and replaced when necessary, the Universalist development in this areas was haphazard and problematical, though Peter Cartwright complains that wherever he went on the frontier a Universalist has been there before him, "purveying his damnable heresy." But when a Universalist circuit rider became ill, died, or yearned to move on, there was no bishop to see that he was replaced. As a result, "new, hopeful groups often withered under the attacks of their more orthodox neighbors," disbanded, and as individuals joined other churches or maintained their faith in privacy. Thus, names found in early association with this parish later appear connected prominently with other church groups, and most particularly, during the l940's, when the local group came to a very low ebb, many Lansing Universalists or their children had in preceding years joined the Congregational or other local churches.

Generalizations are always suspect, or should be, and surely the one about level of education falls into this error. (Perhaps Unitarians <u>were</u> more highly educated; nevertheless, certainly not <u>all</u> Universalists were uneducated.) Among the early Universalists in the Lansing area, as the biographical accounts here underscore, were some of the best educated people of the community. There is little evidence that they fit the temper or programs of "anti-intellectualism," though perhaps neither were they highly intellectual. Within the first year of operation as a church, members desired to buy a melodeon, to find someone who could play it well and to pay that person; soon they wanted to sustain a "good choir." In a few years they began to foster public musical programs and forums with guest speakers. These began before the turn of the century and continued much later. These items belie, for Lansing at least, some of the comments generalized about evangelistic Universalism.

Most of us who have been Unitarians have long been familiar with illustrious and extraordinary contributions of famous Unitarians from John Adams on down through the centuries, or before him to progenitors of free thought and self-actualization. Making the inner and outer man one engrosses all realms of human activity. Universalists, likewise, saw their ideas take form in social concerns; though not so many of this movement rose to such national recognition, perhaps their influence in the common stream has been of similar value. They were the first body of religionists to go on record as opposed to human slavery, doing so in Philadelphia in l790. (Quakers did so at almost the same time.) Dr. Benjamin Rush, Universalist layman, signer of the Declaration of Independence, helped organize the first anti-slavery society; he pioneered in the field of psychiatry; he organized the first non-sectarian Sunday School in the U.S. Universalists were early prominent in the women's suffrage and temperance movements, and as we shall shortly see, they had empathy for and charitable concern in worker's movements in Michigan, as elsewhere.

In church organization Universalists have generally been unwilling to pay the price of uniformity in

matters of belief and organization, though they were less resistant in this regard, it would seem, than were Unitarians. The penchant for freedom has always involved risks and paradox; how can one foster free thinking and independence and simultaneously gain the concerted strength desired in an organization? Can unity be achieved if diversity is too wide? If, as Jefferson envisioned, democracy is sustained by an educated, informed citizenry, we believe and assume that we shall arrive at decisions where are rational and harmonious with the principles of freedom. Uniformity, and centrality of power do not have the top priorities. Yet, our churches strive, and have always striven, in a cultural setting which measures "success" in quantitative and ostentatious terms. Certainly in both these streams of religious experience, the dilemma posed between freedom and centrality of order has always been present.

Though John Nichols Booth, in a pamphlet entitled "Introducing Unitarian Universalism" (undated) categorically states, "The Universalists, like the Unitarians, have never set forth an official statement of faith, covenant or creed," in the discussion below we shall observe that the Universalists here, according to their Constitution and their form of membership seemed at least to require a kind of "evidence" that a person "qualified" for membership. A person had to apply, be thought about by the deacons (perhaps only pro forma but whey then include it?), and publicly be accepted, promising to adhere to the covenant and signing the constitution. In this set of requirements, probably a holdover from another denomination, one can sense a ghost of old Puritan ways; having been accepted, a member was admitted in prescribed form. If he misbehaved, he could be disassociated. To us today this does not seem like free thinking. To a twentieth century Unitarian -- as it would have to Ralph Waldo Emerson and Theodore Parker in the nineteenth -- the early membership requirements and the constitutional stringencies contain anomalies not too easily accommodated.

Thus, as I have tried to convey, Universalism as we see it in Michigan and in Lansing had moved with the frontier; Unitarianism mostly did not -- at least not in organizational terms. We, therefore, now follow the Universalist stream for one century before it joins the Unitarian branch.

III. Mid-Nineteenth Century Universalists in Lansing

Six errors surface as one studies the five separate accounts of the beginning of this church. By checking and rechecking various sources, I have tried to clear the original pool of the debris of error; I hope not to have clogged it with more mistakes.

In l847, Rev. John S. Sanford, a missionary evangelist for Universalists, came from Ann Arbor to the "city in the forest" -- plenty of swamp and forest but no city -- here the state capitol was just then being located. He with a few others formed an informal church organization on May 9, l848; it was officially recorded as incorporated on March l6th, l849. James Turner, Elmer Attley, moderator, Levi Townsend, and John H. Sanford signed the official document as members of the group. No further mention of this group is to be found, nor were any of these persons members of another group formed in l852 which never mentions the earlier efforts. Who were these first founders? What happened to them?

The original l849 document is on file in the courthouse at Mason. This fact was verified in l948 by Raymond Wilcox, a long-time member of the church and Lansing township supervisor for many years prior to his death in l964. Parenthetically, Jennie Johnson Wilcox, his wife, is presently the church's member of longest standing. She joined in l908 when she was fifteen years of age; she and Mr. Wilcox were married by their minister, Rev. Aldinger, in l9l4.

Thus in l948-49, on the basis of this earliest document, the local church observed its hundredth birthday. However, in l927, the church celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary, for that choosing as its birthday date the document labelled "first papers," dated l852. How can we account for the discrepancy? Meanderings to discover the original source, nebulous as they are, may be relatively unimportant, unless one wants to secure a verifiable story of the beginnings and to understand that influences of the past are like small drops of water, too subtle to trace.

Except for John H. Sanford, as noted above, no one of the four signers in l849 later appears as a Universalist. In l849 Rev. Sanford installed a small printing press in a building located in the first block of South Washington Avenue. To aid in his evangelistic work, and I assume partly by an act of the Universalist state association, he published a small weekly newspaper called The Primitive Expounder. The first number published in Lansing appeared in l849, though this paper had previously been published in other Michigan locations. A bound volume containing issues published during the l840-l848 period is preserved by the Michigan State Library. The paper during that period was published chiefly in Alphadelphia, Michigan. (Alphadelphia would lead us into a whole new branch were we to follow it, for in the l840's a mutual help colony called the Alphadelphia Phalanx was formed. A similar working man's mutual-help settlement was established in this time at Ann Arbor.) The masthead of The Primitive Expounder at this time carried a text from Mark, given as follows: "Then opened Jesus their understandings, and expounded unto them in all the Scriptures." We can assume this was the source of the paper's name. Returning now to the Lansing publication which began in l849 and continued until l852, we find only one issue available. Though publication of The Primitive Expounder ceased in l852, the Sanford printing business grew in advertising and job printing work so that in l855 the shop was enlarged. However, it appears that Rev. Sanford, in the mode of itinerant Universalist preachers of that day, moved on to other fields.

James Turner was, indeed, a far more important early settler as far as Lansing and Mason history is concerned, though his role in the church is decidedly ambiguous., Mr. Turner built the first frame house in this locality on Turner Street in l847. He came to Michigan from New York when in his early twenties; a

representative of Governor Seymour of New York State, he proceeded to buy land for the governor, for himself and for various other New York financiers and later, also, for New York Quaker groups. He was involved in many of the business, promotional, and financial enterprises of this area, including railroad building, until his death in l869. Perhaps the efforts to promote settlements explains the circumstance that Mr. Turner's name appears as a member on at least five documents of church incorporation besides the l849 Universalist one! He signed for Mason Methodist church in l842, Mason Presbyterian in l844, Lansing Presbyterian l865, and Lansing Methodists l868. Perhaps he was truly universalist after all.

New papers of incorporation for the Universalist Church in Lansing were registered in l852. It is safe to assume that the missionary efforts of Rev. Chauncy W. Knickerbocker stimulated this new beginning. As we will see below, he became the pastor (on a half-time basis), and according to one newspaper account, he was Lansing's "most popular, most civic-minded, and most sought-after clerical figure for nearly ten years" during the l850's. In l852, a Constitution was adopted; it seems likely that this document was modelled after a form dictated by the state group.

About this first Lansing Constitution one can clearly observe certain factors with even a cursory reading:

l. The language is clear and precise, the form correct and evidently cut to anticipated needs; one suspects that someone trained in law had a part in its construction.

2. Requirements reminiscent of convenantal vows subscribed to by early Puritan church members, et al, taken in promise to each other and to God, stand out here. membership was not intended to be casual.

3. The functions of a church in a pioneer setting required that one be one's brother's keeper -- again mildly reminiscent of the much earlier situation in Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colonies, as in later settlements, but not a condition we are often reminded of today. Members, and particular officers (deacons), were charged with the responsibility of caring for the sick, including providing "watchers" if needed; burying the dead; assuming responsibility for any orphans of "tender age;" giving assistance (including relief) to distressed persons; for reprimanding and reconciling members in conflict; and for disciplining members who were found guilty of "profanity, intemperance or minimal offenses against the laws of the land and other unchristian conduct."

As we can see, the social milieu and/or the expectations of the church were different than those to which we are accustomed. About these extraordinary items I have found myself continuously in a paradoxical situation: avid for facts (or gossip?) which could enlighten us in l973 about how these rules were effected in experience, and simultaneously glad that these people were gentle people who performed their churchly duties discreetly (if they did indeed carry them out). As far as their public records show, the only occasions for application of the more curious of the duties were these: one time three children were left without parents and the deacons were instructed to inquire as to their care; nothing further was reported. Again, a burial was paid for by some means not defined; a committee of three was once appointed to investigate a matter "requiring discipline" but on this nothing was further written in report. Thus, while we have the framework of decision and story, little or no story (history) actually emerges. Yet, the Constitution is quite suggestive of the minds, aspirations, and experience of its adherents, one must assume, there being no evidence to the contrary.

I found in the document that follows several fascinating items: 1) Trinitarian doctrine "softly" stated; 2) The Bible is revelation; 3) Independent individual rights regarding interpretation of the Scriptures is to be respected; 4) There is convenantal assumption about membership; 5) Semantic curiosities stand out: I find "dismission" and "disfellowship" unusual and intriguing.

As noted above, Rev. Knickerbocker served the Lansing Church on a half-time basis, the fractional

service being determined indirectly from the clerk's minutes because entries appear which state his salary is to be $400, half-time. This circumstance probably was not at all unusual, given frontier conditions. According to Ernest Cassara, a writer of Universalist history, "there were no settled Universalist ministers in Michigan in early l860's;" churches were served by itinerant preachers. Certainly the earlier decades found people less settled. Further, throughout the early decades and even almost continuously thereafter local "independent" churches were greatly <u>dependent</u> on the capabilities and/or whims of their pastoral leadership.

Rev Knickerbocker organized a Sabbath School (Universalist terminology) in l853, which met, as did the church, in the Senate chamber of the State Capitol. Mr. Knickerbocker also established the custom of an annual Thanksgiving Day service held in the Senate chamber, a tradition observed thereafter for many years. While he was still here, beginning in l856 ladies aid suppers, bazaars, etc., began contributing to a projected building fund.

Church records of membership, baptisms, marriages, deaths, and of minutes of board of trustees' meetings -- the written evidence of the story and linear in form as history tends to be -- are curiously still and fixed, like pieces of statuary or like those stiffly posed photographs found in old family albums of the nineteenth century. Such photographs, minutes, and records redundantly underscore the incessant concern over two items in the picture: leadership and lack of money. About pastors: responses to his nudgings, renewal or lack of renewal of contracts, change; and money: almost always a debt; these are the set pieces recorded by the lens. Absorption of the minutes of the l9th century and the first half of the 20th century fasten this impression indelibly on the mind. From these stiff postures it is difficult to experience lively vitality.

What, after all, is known about the l852 "founders?" Considerably more than about the previous group. We have the most information about J.P. Cowles and family, who came to Michigan in l842. In a talk to the second meeting of the Ingham County Historical Society (l873), Mr. Cowles reminisces that he taught the first singing schools in the County in several settlements. He was
one of several men who offered land sites to the legislature for the location of the new capitol in the spring of l848. On the day when word reached the townspeople that Section l6 of Lansing Township had been voted as the site, several men, of whom J.P. Cowles as one, <u>raced</u> to locate the stakes in the woods. Cowles and four others were the speediest or luckiest in locating the proper stakes. They celebrated their find by cutting down the small trees and brush with their jack-knives and spent the rest of the afternoon playing ball.

To follow the Cowles' name lightly through Lansing history, we find at least two interesting footnotes. First, Albert E. Cowles, son of the above, compiled one of the early histories of Ingham County. This book was evidently a "subscription project" in which "biographies" were included only for the persons pledging to buy the book, and, therefore, many of the persons about whom one wishes to know are not included. Albert E. Cowles was member of the first class of students at Michigan State Agricultural College. The second footnote is about the Cowles' farm cottage on the present campus at Michigan State. It was enlarged from time to time and in the l960's completely rebuilt to be the home of the University president with money from the Jenison estate and named for Mrs. Jenison's mother, Alice B. Cowles, daughter of Albert E. Cowles, and the granddaughter of J.P. Cowles. As far as I have ascertained, this is the only obvious historical link with the members of the first board of trustees of this church.

Of twelve physicians who settled in Lansing in the first two decades of its history, five were members of the Universalist Church. During the first fifteen years of the history at least seven attorneys were board and/or church members or parish members. In pioneer circumstances and likewise presumably of Universalist

experience, a more diverse spectrum of occupations was found among church membership than we have found in some later times. Universalist creed, social culture, and orientation accommodated persons in all work situations and from all economic levels, -- characteristics in which this movement varied, I believe, from the more rationalistic Unitarian membership. While not pursuing the philosophic and pragmatic implications of this observation as it relates to people in the stream of time and understanding, I cannot refrain from noting that ideas have consequences reflected in the flow of the stream from these two religious branches.

During the year of l856 the ladies of the church began giving suppers and held at least one bazaar in efforts to support the building fund. The women thereafter undertook various other such projects; in l873 their strawberry festival was considered a great success. Either from that time on or not long thereafter, the women of this church were the most devoted and the hardest working. For decades they provided the flowers to add beauty to bare congregational rooms, "especially for Easter;" they sent flowers to the sick; they regularly contributed a fund to support church music; by the turn of the century they gave money to the church board ($50-$70 per month) from their resources earned by various projects.

In l858 the State Convention of Universalists met in Lansing. This recognition of the local church and, no doubt, financial reassurances given by the State Association, gave new impetus to the church-building efforts. Collections throughout the years to make it possible to begin, build, and complete the building of the new church and to provide necessary equipment were very difficult. From time to time a collector was hired. In 1859, a resolution was passed, "to build a brick church to cost about five thousand dollars" and a committee of three was appointed to circulate a subscription to raise funds for the erection of said church.

In January, l860, Mr. Knickerbocker resigned again (third time). The resignation was formally accepted; yet, in April, l860, he was still (or again) Pastor. He recommended some action be taken "in reference to our church building, appointing a committee to solicit subscriptions, employing someone to take charge of the work, applying the amount already subscribed, which was nearly $460, and proceeding to the completion as soon as possible."

In February l863, when the church was nearing completion, "The manner of raising funds to complete the church was discussed." On suggestion of Bro. Darling the following resolution was introduced: "Resolved, that the officers of this church be instructed to loan a sum of money not exceeding one thousand dollars for the purse of completing the Church at a rate of interest not exceeding ten per cent per annum and mortgage the church and lot as security for the same." After some discussion it was unanimously passed. On October l4, l863, the new church was dedicated "with appropriate ceremonies". This church was located on the banks of the Grand River at the intersection of Allegan and Grand River Avenue.

IV. Two Remarkable Women

Probably the most illustrious and most widely known persons ever connected with Lansing Universalists were two women. These women stand out partly, if not chiefly, because they were "liberated" contributors to the professional and political life of the country and to the accelerating woman's movement of the nineteenth century in the years l860 to l900 especially.

AUGUSTA JANE CHAPIN (July l6, l836 - June 30, l905) was born in Lakeville, N.Y. (near Rochester). She was the oldest of eleven children of Almon Morris and Jane Pease Chapin. her father was an eighth-generation descendant of a Puritan, Deacon Samuel Chapin, ho had come from England to Massachusetts in the l630's. (The *Dictionary of American Biography* records this man and quite an astonishing number of descendants, mostly ministers.) When Augusta was six the family moved to Vevay, Michigan, the township bordering the south side of Mason. She started to school very early -- the *Biography of Notable Women*, p. 230, records age *three*; she began to teach school at fourteen; at sixteen she was refused admittance to the University of Michigan because of her sex. She then attended Olivet College but did not get a degree there. By l882 Michigan was admitting women and Augusta continued her studies there, receiving an A.M. degree in language and rhetoric in l884.

Much in advance of this accomplishment, she had been "troubled by the problem of eternal punishment and worked through to the Universalist position that all persons will be saved." "From the moment I believed in Universalism," she wrote, "it was a matter of course that I was to preach it." She did not consider the ministry an unusual profession for women, though she found that her choice was constantly questioned and challenged by others who did not share her views. She preached her first sermon in Portland, Michigan in l859.

The Universalist Church was the first denomination to ordain women. l863 was the year of the first such ordination, and Olympia Brown first was so ordained, followed that same year by Augusta Chapin. Augusta had joined the Lansing Church in l856 while she taught school in the town. She spent her earliest ministry as an itinerant minister, meanwhile continuing to teach school. After being ordained she held a succession of settled pastorates in such places as Portland, Michigan; Mount Pleasant, Iowa; Iowa City; Pittsburgh; Oak Park, Illinois; Omaha; Mt. Vernon, N.Y., among others. During vacations she often took off on itinerant preaching! "She delighted in this constant moving about and was proud that she could pioneer for her faith. 'I attended the first State Convention ever held in Oregon,' she wrote, 'and did nearly all the preaching.'"

According to all reports, she was an effective preacher, straight-forward, lucid, unaffected. She also wrote for the Universalist press, early gaining recognition in the denomination. In September l870, the Universalist General Convention, held in Gloucester, Mass., found Miss Chapin a ministerial delegate from Iowa invited to address the Convention. She was the first woman to serve on the national council. She was among those who formed the Women's Centenary Association of the Universalist Church (l87l), the forerunner of the Association of Universalist Women.

Besides her religious work, Augusta Chapin was active in educational and woman's movement activities. She was a charter member of the pioneering New York woman's club, Sorosis, formed in l868 and a member of the initial executive committee of the Association for the Advancement of Women, delivering a paper, "Women in the Ministry," at its first meeting in New York in l873. She attended several national women's suffrage conventions. She lectured on such subjects as "Temperance" (she was a member of the W.C.T.U.), "Woman's Work and Wages," "Shakespeare's Sonnets," and "Wordsworth's Ethics." University extension services as a means of bringing college instruction *to* people claimed much of her interest. She

played a leading part in gathering representatives to the famous World Parliament of Religions held in conjunction with the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in l893, serving as chairman of the woman's general convention and addressing the gathering twice. Lombard University had earlier awarded her an honorary M.A. (l868), and conferred an honorary doctor of divinity degree in l893, the first such degree granted to a woman in this country.

Miss Chapin's last few years were spent in New York City. She was preparing to lead a guided tour of Europe when she contracted pneumonia and died. She was buried near the family homestead in Maple Grove Cemetery, Mason. Biographers note her preaching ability and intellectual keenness, and that she, with two or three others, helped establish a place for women in the Universalist ministry. Within a dozen years of her death, there were as many as seventy women so engaged.

The next three articles in this collection will be of interest to some readers, thought they are peripheral to the record of this church. The account of the Chapin family, and a reminiscence of her childhood given by Miss Chapin to the Ingham County Historical Society in l873, both help give life to early members. The third is an except of an article (or address?) by her printed in The Repository, LI, February, l874, p. l28-l29, entitled "Women in the Ministry." This latter article is revealing to me as an interesting expression of contrasts -- l973-view, that is; in archaic, churchly-toned language she appeals for almost contemporary equal rights for women!

In An Account of Ingham County, by Dr. F.N. Turner (descendant of James), appears an interesting account about the early days of the Chapin family in Vevay township, which follows:

"Another family, or rather two families, were Almon Morris (Chapin) and Levi J. Chapin, who settled on section 33. They were neighbors of the Rolfes. Almon came first, and in a short time his brother came. The letters of these two brothers and their wives to friends and relatives in New York give us today pictures and experiences of pioneer life. They are valuable because they are true. They came into Ingham County in l842-43 and the letters speak of the severity of the weather in the winter of l842-43. They say farmers were out of hay and other fodder to feed their stock and were forced to cut down red elm trees and other brush to furnish browse for their horses and cattle to keep them from starving. Potatoes were scarce and could be bought only by exchanging for the oats the last settlers brought from the East to feed their horses. This was during the wildcat money period and all purchasing was by exchange or barter. The state bank money was not worth the paper it was printed on. The writer also informed relatives that his daughter was teaching the district school at ten shillings a week. From the tone of the letters the settlers in this community were not slow in getting information about mesmerism, Millerism, spiritualism, transcendentalism and other "isms" that were mental fads in the East. He said people were going crazy over these things. In the postscript he warns a purchaser to not come in the spring of the year as he could not make the long journey and get there is time to raise anything or get any victuals or wages for his labor. The women wrote home that the severity of home life in the woods was overcome and trails forgotten by visiting other settlers and neighbors. They state that their hours for visiting were from dusk to 2 a.m. These women also wrote about a traveling Methodist preacher who resided in the settlement and looked after their spiritual wants. They had no church or meeting house but held services in some of the smaller cabins, small blocks of wood, travelling trunks, tubs and such things served as pews. A pioneer preacher to illustrate backbone and independence, in his sermon said, "Every tube stands on its own bottom." The Chapin family were well-educated. Jonathan B. Chapin was a doctor and practiced medicine in Mason, but moved to a larger field in the village of Battle Creek, where he died in l89l. Augusta Chapin, a daughter of Almon Chapin, entered the University of Michigan, the last named granting her a master of arts degree, and she became a doctor of divinity in l892. The title was given her for evangelical work by Lombard University, Galesburg, Illinois. She was the first woman to receive this degree in our state. She was

encouraged to enter this field by a blind cousin, John Bliss, who wrote her from California to "go out with the good cause and let your name be heralded through the earth as champion in the field of the down-trodden and oppressed." Before she began her ministerial work she was principal in the North Lansing Cedar Street School. ...She preached her first sermon in May, l859, and was pastor in Chicago, Milwaukee, Iowa City, New York, and Lansing. Besides her work in the ministry she was chairman of the women's Religious Congress auxiliary to the World's Columbian Exposition" in l893, was lecturer of English literature of the University of Chicago, member of Sorosis of New York City, KIng's Daughters, Chicago Woman's Club and Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Rev. Augusta Chapin, D.D., died in St. Luke's hospital, New York City, June 30, l905, of pneumonia. Alice Chapin, another daughter graduated at State Normal, Ypsilanti, postgraduated at Columbia and Harvard Universities, is a teacher and has taught in schools of Detroit and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Ethel, another sister, after teaching in St. Johns, Michigan, has graduated as a trained nurse from the Nurse's Training School of Chicago University. Maria, the third sister, now teaching, is a graduate of Ypsilanti Normal and Olivet College. Julius, a brother, is a graduate of Michigan State Agricultural College. Mr. Chapin was known as a maple sugar farmer. He tapped annually 2,200 trees and his product was from 6,000 to 9,000 pounds of sugar. He received medals from the "St. Louis Exposition" and a diploma from "Pan American." He was active and took part in all pioneer and historical work, did his part in farmer's clubs and was justice of the peace. He was killed in an accident in l9l4. His sugar bush was sold and made into firewood to cover a coal shortage. Before Mr. Chapin's death, he and his family established a game refuge on part of his farm. This is visited by thousands of visitors and tourists every year.

The following section is excerpted from an address by Rev. Miss Chapin printed in The Repository LI, February, l874, l28-l29, entitled "Women in the Ministry." Today, the article interests us primarily in its contrasts: the archaic, churchly-toned language (l873) used in the more contemporary appeal for equal rights for women (l973).

"...Let us consider...what, being already in the ministry, woman can and ought to do therein. Shall she preach a little by way of experiment merely? There are those who are fond of claiming that all this is an experiment of doubtful issue. Is it so? My own experience, extending through fifteen years of uninterrupted pulpit and parish work; years of work as a settled pastor in a large and growing parish; personal acquaintance with hundreds of parishes east and west in a dozen different states of the Union, all this, together with years of study in college as a direct preparation for the work, has not led me to feel that it is at all an experiment. When I see as many of the wise, powerful and good, and as many of the poor and needy crowding to hear the glad tidings from the lips of my sister and those of my brother; when I see as many converts bow at the one altar as at the other; when I see churches reared, debts paid, and all good works going on and prospering through the blessing of God, in her hands as in his, and this through a succession of years in the same parish, it does not seem an experiment, nor do the people blessed by such ministry so regard it. How is it practically? Here is a congregation, gathered from the different homes and solitary places of the world. Among them, one is struggling with the powers of darkness, and has come as to a place of refuge, vaguely hoping that he may get help to resist the awful strength of the tempter; one is overshadowed by gloom, and hopes for a ray of light; one is bewildered in the crooked ways and needs to be directed; one walks over rough and needs support; one mourns almost without hope, and one stands on the very brink of the river of death and asks of the life beyond. And so all over the house each one has come with a special need and a special burden. And here is a woman with earnest, loving heart, who knows just what needs to be said to these waiting souls, and just how to say it. She speaks the needed word, in the same spirit as she would, in the name of Christ, hold a cup of water to the lips of the thirsty. Is this an experiment? Whatever blind prejudice or unthinking conservatism may say, the good sense and heart of humanity will refuse to judge it so.

Those who fear that women cannot endure the fatigue of the work may be referred to the fact, that among the hundred or more women preachers now in the field, in the various denominations, we hear less complaint of fatigue and ill-health than among an equal number of men doing equal work.

If it can be said that women cannot sustain the ordinary relations of life and preach the gospel, we must reply that women are doing it. In our own denomination, there are more recognized, ordained women preachers than in any other branch of the Christian church, yet of all the number only two are unmarried, and neither of these seems to be any more successful in the work than the rest of the sisterhood. The houses of these women preachers are as well kept as those of their neighbors who do not preach. You can find in New England as cozy, pleasant, and well-kept a little home as there is within all her borders, in which you shall see a babe, as bright, healthy and happy as ever blessed a household, and on every Lord's day morning the mother is found in her pulpit speaking the words of life, comfort and hope to all who will listen. In the pews before her are other mothers whose children are also at home. They spend equal time in the house of God, one cared for during the brief absence. And so while the faithless, and conservative, so called, are assuring us that this cannot be done, lo, it is done! -- and done, not by women who are exceptional and peculiar in their temperament and disposition, but by earnest, devoted Christian women like a hundred of those whom everybody personally knows. Women who are simply doing their own way and as best they can the work that their hands find to do in the Lord's vineyard." (p.65: Mrs. Franc L. Adams, Pioneer History of Ingham County Michigan.

Rev. Augusta Chapin, who was born and grew up in Eden, gave the address of the day, and part of her address follows:

I have for several years anticipated the pleasure of addressing you upon the occasion of this annual reunion, but each time soon unforseen and uncontrollable circumstances has prevented by presence.

The pleasure I have anticipated has been in the thought of meeting you, taking you by the hand (many of whose names and faces have been familiar to me from childhood) and hearing what you had to say, rather than in anything I thought I could say to interest you. We have met here today to think and speak of the early times, and to do honor to those who made the Ingham County of today possible.

I think scarcely any subject has a greater charm for us than that of the beginning of things. The story of how things came to be as they are is certainly next in to the question of what the outcome shall be. The future is an untrodden road. All is misty, visionary, uncertain in that direction; we can only know of it by forecasting from our knowledge of existing laws and our experiences.

But we may with comparative ease retrace the course of the past, and whatever pertains to it has the fascination of a fairy tale. Every bit of information about the origin and history of the world and man upon it is seized with avidity; nay, we are all ready to stop and listen with breathless attention even to conjecture on the subject if it comes from an intelligent source.

There are more historians than prophets, for it is easier within certain limits to tell what has been than to foretell what shall be.

The antiquarian but returns over the path human feet have already trod, while the prophet, or seer, must have clear vision be able to judge from principles established, laws in operation, from the whole trend of nature and the spirit of the times, what the future shall be.

At first I thought, as I have said, it would seem vastly easier to find out the past, but however, this may be, no one who undertakes the study of the past will pursue his researches far without finding that his utmost powers are not sufficient for unravelling the mysteries that lie behind us.

Authentic history takes us back but a little way toward the beginning of the path down which mankind have been traveling for unknown and unnumbered ages. They have left barely enough trace behind them to

show that they have been here. Even what is called authentic history must be accepted with many grains of allowance.

The greatest name will perish from human history, the finest monument crumble into dust, and the time will come when our names will be lost and our places know us no more. Yet we shall survive in the memories of our friends as long as the remembrance will serve any good purpose, and then our work and thought and influence will mingle with the great ocean of human achievement, and the sum total of that will be something more, and something different from what it would have been without us.

All this is as it should be, for if longer preserved there could be no possible use for it. It has served its purpose.

But no wish is dearer to our hearts than the perfectly legitimate one of wishing to keep, after we have gone hence, a place in memories and lives of those we leave behind. It is also a sacred task to help preserve from oblivion the names of those who have gone before us, and to perpetuate the influence of the good they did.

This is one of the chief reasons for the existence of this pioneer society, to rescue from oblivion the names and heroic deeds of the early settlers of our county. This society, with others of similar purpose, is helping the make authentic history.

The pioneers are fast passing away. Those who can remember the early days when this fair county was a wilderness are already few. Many interesting and important particulars of those times will be lost if not gathered soon.

Now is the time to correct the records and make them complete so that they may be of use thereafter. This county will not see the like again of this generation that is now passing away. There is no place now within the limits of the United States so wild and inaccessible as Ingham County was fifty years ago. The pioneers have penetrated every forest, their white covered wagons have been seen on every prairie; they have encamped at the foot of every mountain, on the banks of every river and the shores of every lake.

There are those here today, probably, who can remember when the first white settlement was made in this county, and who heard the wolves howl by night (as I myself did when a child). Many here who can remember when there were no roads except such as wound about among the trees avoiding swamps and impassible places.

The times when letter postage was 25 cents, an it cost something to write a letter, or rather to receive one, for the sender seldom paid the postage, and the poor settler often gave his last quarter to get a letter from the office, while sometimes it lay there for days or weeks before he could raise the money.

Those were stern times, and strenuous privations were endured with a heroism and cheerful patience almost incomprehensible to the present generation -- the plainest food, homespun clothing, no horses, no carriages, no luxurious carpets and furniture, no fine houses, few books and fewer papers, poor schools, no churches, only occasional services by an itinerant preacher.

But the pioneers enjoyed their life in the wilderness, and I doubt if they have been happier in the recent years than in those they spent struggling for a livelihood among the privations and hardships of that early day.

There was the charm of novelty about it all. They were young and full of strength and courage. Everything was fresh and new, and the sense of triumph, when a difficulty was overcome, was a keen pleasure, such as will not come at all under easier circumstances. And yet it makes one's heart ache to think what sacrifices they made, how they faced sickness and hardships, and privations of every kind, giving up uncomplainingly comforts that are necessities of existence to us, to seek a home in the wilderness, there to hew out a road by which civilization could enter, and make the present possible.

We are here today to remember those old times and talk them over to keep them fresh in mind, and to keep green the memory of those who are no longer with us. If any one could or would tell the exact story of what he can remember, and all of it, concerning those old times, we should have a more interesting speech than has ever been made here, or ever will be.

The old farmer could tell us the story of his long, steady warfare with the strumps and swamps, how he

kept the wolf from the door, and kept a stout heart through it all, until at last there were smooth fields, good crops, horses and carriages and plenty of everything, and he moved out of the log house into the spacious one nearby, and sat down to rest after his years of labor.

The merchant could tell us of the days of small things, when money was scarce and he bartered his goods for the things the farmer had for sale.

The doctor could tell of his long horseback rides through the almost unbroken forest, carrying a small drug store in his saddle bags; of his numerous patients prostrated with malarial fever -- sometimes everyone sick in the house and scarcely a well person in the settlement.

He who was an ambitious young man could tell us how, in the face of appalling difficulties, he worked his way through college; how he supported himself by anything that was honest labor, and persevered with such courage and diligence that the story is to his honor, and an example to others, in the college town to this day.

The mother and housekeeper could tell how she cooked before the broad fireplace, before there was such a thing as a cook stove in the country; how she spun and wove and made, in large part, the clothing for the family; how her busy knitting needles kept all the feet, both big and little, in warm serviceable stockings; how she made butter, and cheese, too, washed, and scrubbed and brewed, brought water from the spring some distance from the house, and did a thousand things -- all in one or two rooms and no modern conveniences. She never complained about her lot and never was troubled about the latest fashions.

I looked upon those times with the eyes of a very little child, and in trying to recall them I find that the details of everyday life are mostly lost to me, but certain pictures remain as vividly before my mind's eyes as though the scene was now before me.

Among these is that of one of the pioneers -- Cyrus Austin (some of you must remember him.) He was a stalwart backwoodsman, and if he was not a mighty hunger it is as such that my imagination has always portrayed him. It was late in the afternoon of the last day but one in December, l842. My parents had left the old home in New York and had been travelling for weeks toward a new home that we were to make in the wilderness. We had been directed to the then famous "Rolfe Settlement," where the long pilgrimage was to end. We were tired and hungry. We had surely come far enough to reach the settlement, and there was as yet no sign of human habitation near, only unbroken forest before, behind and on every side of us. The snow was deep, and only a half trodden road wound in and out among the great trees of the primeval wilderness.

We had not seen a human being, except those of our own party, for hours. Those who were driving the teams began to think we had lost our way when suddenly, just where the road made a sharp turn to avoid a hugh sycamore which stood in our way, there appeared a man who had already stepped out upon the snow to wait for us to pass. He looked as though he himself were part of the wild scene. An ample cap of raccoon skin almost hid his face, and he wore a great tunic shaped coat of the same material. He carried a gun over one shoulder, and over the other, trailed in the snow behind him, the carcass of a deer he had just shot. He was asked to direct us to the "Rolfe Settlement." His keen eyes at once took in the whole situation. He scanned the worn teams, the battered covers of the heavily loaded sleighs, the anxious faces of the elders of the party and the scared looks of the children. He saw that we were newcomers, with no idea of what life in the backwoods must be, and before he could speak he broke into a loud ringing laugh that echoed and re-echoed through the woods as thought twenty men were laughing, and then he caught his breath and said with a sweeping gesture toward the woods all around, "the 'Rolfe Settlement?' Why, this is it. It's right here." Sure enough, within a few rods we found shelter in the hospitable home of Ira Rolfe.

Another portrait in the gallery of my memory is that of Uncle Ben Rolfe, grand, good old man that he was, as he stood when he led the singing in the school house services. I always looked upon him at those times with mixed admiration and awe, and listened with delight to his singing of Mear, China, Rockingham Dundee and Old Hundred -- tunes that have no equal among the compositions of recent times.

I remember the old Indian chief Okemos, also, as he sat by the kitchen fire recounting his exploits.

We are here, in addition to all other reasons, gratefully to remember how much we are indebted to the

pioneers in every way. They prepared the way for all the improvements that have come to make life prosperous and pleasant for us. They carried forward these improvements regardless of cost in time and strength, labor and money; our villages and cities they helped to build; our railroads also they encouraged with gifts of land and money. They never ceased to foster to the extent of their ability our schools, churches, and all measures for social culture and every public benefit. They planted the orchards the fruit of which we eat, and the shade trees under which we enjoy the leisure they in a large measure earned for us. It is impossible that we should overestimate the importance of their work, or do too much to honor them.

Ingham county has a noble record among the counties of the State. Nowhere within her borders has more rapid progress been made in subduing the wilderness and carrying forward the various progressive movements demanded by our needs, and the spirit of the age. In peace and in war she has done her duty. A host of intelligent, noble and excellent men and women adorn the walks of public and private life among us. Our schools are second to none, and the homes of Ingham County are as prosperous and happy as any in the land. Let the pioneers be thanked for it all.

Let these annual reunions continue as long as a pioneer lives, and then let their children and their children's children meet to perpetuate the spirit that actuated their fathers and the good institutions they bequeathed.

SARAH ELIZABETH VAN DE VORT EMERY is our second most illustrious woman in the history of the First Universalist Church of Lansing. She was born at Phelps, New York, May l2, l838; she died October l0, l895 in Lansing. She was the seventh of nine children of a "warm-hearted, well-educated and deeply religious man" who was active in a number of contemporary reform movements. The family were devout Universalists, temperance advocates and interested in a variety of charitable causes.

After her schooling Sarah began teaching, first in a district school, and, after completing study at the Clinton Liberal institute, she moved to Midland, Michigan to teach. She met Wesley Emery, another teacher, and they were married in l869. Soon thereafter, they moved to Lansing joining the church in l87l. The Emerys were both absorbed in reform politics, and they attended the State Convention of the Greenback Party held in Lansing in l880. Mrs. Emery later declared, "When I saw that little band of men, I said in my heart, Surely these are people chosen by God to perpetuate the principles established by our fathers, and, though despised and ridiculed, my lot must be cast with them." She was elected a delegate, the first woman so chosen, to the next state convention.

Mrs. Emery soon became known in Michigan and nearby as a powerful and effective speaker. She was one of the delegates from Michigan to the national Greenback Labor Party convention in l884; when this party folded, she joined its philosophical successor, the Union Labor Party and attended its first national convention in l897. She was active in the Michigan Knights of Labor movement, as was Wesley Emery, and during the l880's she played a prominent role lecturing to the National Farmer's Alliance. S he was active in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, holding various state offices and carrying national departmental responsibilities. As early as l874 she joined the woman's suffrage movement, and in l866 she urged a suffrage plank before the Democratic and Prohibition state conventions; in l89l she was one of the state leaders testifying in behalf of municipal suffrage before the Michigan state legislature.

Mrs. Emery maintained her interest in monetary issues, though the Greenback efforts failed, and she continued to lecture and write on issues relating to free silver, bi-metalism, and the dangers of imperialistic monopolies. In l868 she published Seven Financial Conspiracies, an unequivocal indictment of the "money power" appealing to farmers and laborers to wake up to the threats to their freedoms. This small book, distributed by the Farmer's Alliance, sold about 400,000 copies and made her name nationally known among

third-party clientele. When the People's Party was formed in l89l, Sarah Emery immediately joined it as speaker, writer, and associate editor of its official organ. For two years she campaigned strenuously throughout the Midwest and West for the People's Party. She was a delegate to the Conference of Industrial Organizations at St. Louis in l892. Imperialism in America, which she published in l892, is a strongly antimonopolistic book, much used during the l894 Populist campaigns. Cancer soon forced her retirement from active politics.

Sarah E.V. Emery was described as a tall and "proportionally large" woman, "with a soft, penetrating voice and a calm but impressive platform manner." She was a devoted Universalist, serving for fifteen years as a superintendent of the Lansing Universalist Sunday School. As noted elsewhere she presented the church with the Ottawa-Capitol Avenue corner lot on which the church's most imposing structure of its history was built. One biographer writes, "She was, in the fullest sense, a religious reformer who believed in applied Christianity, one whose purpose was, she wrote, to 'preach deliverance to the toiling captives of our land."

I cannot resist including here one other item from this paper, from the December, l893 issue which seems to have come from another printed source and is used, perhaps, as "filler."

"Eligibility to the Ballot: It may be interesting to our readers to know the result of a few minutes examination of the laws governing the ballot in some of the States.

Idiots, insane, convicts, criminals and women are excluded. --Kansas
Idiots, insane women and convicts. -- Minnesota
Idiots, women and convicts. -- Nebraska
Idiots, insane, criminals and women. -- Iowa
Insane, idiots, women, convicts, bribers, boodlers, and duelists. -- Wisconsin
Duelists and women. -- Michigan
Boodlers, women and bribers. -- Indiana
Insane, paupers, women and criminals. -- Missouri

It will be seen that the women of Michigan are not as good as convicts, and in Indiana they are crucified between two thieves. Exchange."

It is further interesting to note that no reference to either Sarah E. Emery nor Wesley Emery appears in the church records beyond three bare facts, namely that they joined the church in l87l and that on April 3, l895, the church board moved "to borrow $500.00 and pay same to Mrs. Emery and get a deed to the lot." This sum was subsequently returned by Mrs. Emery, or perhaps never paid to her. Extraneous references, not contained in the minutes, give Mrs. Emery credit for making the gift of the lot at the corner of Ottawa and Capitol Avenue to the church, which subsequently was the site of the "new" church. Mr. Emery was an officer for several years. Considering the views held by Mr. and Mrs. Emery in regards to economics, women's and worker's rights, and the relations of all these matters to the American ideals and functions of government, with no the slightest reference even to the fifteen years service as Sabbath School superintendent, I think it is not only fair but restrained to note that these two members were undoubtedly "ahead of their time" in recognition and admiration by the church congregation. Otherwise, would they not, on occasion, have been "pointing with pride?"

V. Universalist Church Organization and the Local Parish

If anyone again desires, or is commissioned, to review the church records and to consider the veiled references to ambiguous relationships, both as they appear to be internal in the local group and in connection with the state association, he may be unduly stymied, as I was, about the legal and "spiritual" functions of Universalists -- separate functions, it appears, and the flow of understanding is muddled and circuitous.

Universalists had a most confusing and confused organizational structure, with various levels of organization, each seemingly bound by a set of rules. According to Cassara, if I read him correctly, this was typical of the movement, and I suppose such may be a natural development in the evangelistic situation, where some persons are committed to the creed and many others are outsiders and potential "converts." This characteristic is also, perhaps, a circumstantial backflow (not exclusive to Universalists) from a lack of effective resolution of the basic dilemma between local autonomy (independence, with all the built-in capacities for weakness and indifference and contention) and centralized power with its attendant or anticipated gains in unity. How much freedom? How much unity? This observation may be the effect of having read between the lines too imaginatively; if so, it is hoped that another observer will correct me.

The Church organization on the state level (and later on a national basis) endeavored to proceed within these pressures for freedom and unity; each congregation and, indeed, each individual (since, as per item three of the Official Declaration of Faith subscribed to by each member each averred respect for freedom of thought) claimed local authority over local affairs and choice of ministers. At the same time, the independence of the congregation was circumscribed in several ways. The State Association obviously

1) expected coherence with a central creed and basic doctrine,
2) dictated or strongly suggested the constitutional forms and by-laws in precise terms,
3) suggested replacements and furnished "supply" ministers as needed, and
4) entered into financial arrangements from time to time.

Each of these items can be seen (and was used) as mutually supportive, cooperatively advantageous functions to both local and state interests; but they also could become repressive and exacerbating if full trust and consummate skill in leadership were lacking.

What is confusing about the structure? Chiefly, the confusion arises because in the records for the first twenty years the structure is not explained. Perhaps it was a product of evolving experience, though some basic elements are implied from the beginning. Only incidentally did I run into the Constitution and By-Laws of the State Convention adopted in 1873. This document explains much that is roiled about earlier records.

In small local churches one category of organization was the legal, business or corporate body, with its own set of rules. Another category was the Church which was the "spiritual" body, made up of confirmed members. (Shades of Saints!) The Deacons, Pastor, Clerk and Steward had responsibilities in the care of the spiritual well-being of members as the members also did for each other. The third local category was the Parish (made up of children, relatives, friends, potential members, what-have-you beyond but also including the members) with its separate functions and expectations (especially financial support?) which were strongly implied if not detailed. (Shades of strangers?)

VI. Of Church Place, Property, and Problems

No doubt most, if not all, churches are channeled in the main flow of their streams by the places through which they move or in which they rest. Likewise, the place, spatial or spiritual, may be a "rock" where, like Peter, they take their stand, or it may be a huge boulder, obstructing the clear flow. Whether church space is a resource for deepening the flow of the channel of the stream, or an obstruction which hinders the flow, perhaps depends on much on the resources in energy, creativity, and devotion of those involved as it does on financial means. Board minutes tend to emphasize the latter requirement, and while even these minutes have great gaps or shallows, they are the main source we have for factual information. Therefore, while the facts as exposed engender in this writer considerable depression, it seems important to relate them as forthrightly as possible.

Certainly from the records of the board, charged as it was with responsibility for business matters chiefly relating to church building or meeting place and to pastor's salaries or to relationships with the pastor, throughout the one hundred and twenty-five year history one senses a burden on the stream as heavy as the rock of Sisyphus. From the clerk's records we observe that the biggest boulder was again and again an accruing debt. Again and again it grew; new loans were floated (with interest of course) to pay old debts; new pastors were called, but departing ones on at least three occasions left holding notes for back salaries, sometimes as large as $2000.00. One, at least, (l897) a mortgage against the church building stood at $9500.00, in a time when this was considered a large amount. Whether a particular church property facilitates the flow of the religious movement, or whether it, indeed, obstructs like a damming boulder, presents a circumstance fraught with both economic and psychological ramifications.

As indicated earlier, the First Universalist Church acquired a lot for its first building as a gift from the state legislature as early as l853 (date of payment for the recording of the deed) or shortly before. This lot was located at the south-east corner of the intersection of Allegan Street and South Grand Avenue, on the banks of the Grand River. Erection of a building began in l859, but the church was not completed -- dedicated -- until October 24, l863. The building as authorized was to cost $6000.00, but no firm nor complete financial accounts are available from which to verify that this was actually enough for the brick structure erected.

In thirty years this building had become inadequate and in need of much repair; the site on which it was located was considered "valuable" -- the implication that it was too valuable to be held for a church is interesting. In one board meeting (May l9, l892) a member whose business experience as a prominent local banker made his opinion highly respected asserted that the site was worth $l0,000.00. Perhaps the intervention of the panic of l893 may help to explain whey, in l896, the church realized only $4000.00 from the sale of this property.

At any rate in l895 a new church site was acquired by way of a gift from Mrs. Sarah E.V. Emery, an exceptional woman described in another section of this manuscript. Rev. Charles Legal was pastor during the time of the sale of the old church and the building and occupation of the new one. The new church site was the south-east corner of the intersection of Ottawa Street and North Capitol Avenue, then a highly prized location, as it would be now. Today it is the location of the Lansing Business University Building.

Gaps in the minutes hamper our understanding, but, contrary to the accounts of others previously given about the building and sue of the new church, close reading of the minutes in respect to the advance of building project elicits these facts:

l) The Emery property was acquired in the spring of l895.

2) The church building may have been begun before the end of that year, but nothing appears in the records to verify this claim.
3) The "old" church on Grand Avenue was sole to a Mr. Jervis for $4000.00 on January l3, l896.
4) This is the first indication that the board had in hand any funds with which to begin the new building.
5) The church met for an indeterminate, though not very extensive number of times at the Star Theater beginning February 6, l896.
6) On August 6, l896 the church, parish, and board moved to borrow $6000.00 for three years, rate of interest not noted.
7) The congregation moved into the new building late in l896 or early l897; no minutes appear between October and April of that period, l896-l897.
8) On April 28, l897, the church and board moved to borrow $7500.00 at 7% interest for ten years.
9) On the basis of the foregoing transactions, we may assume, as REv. Ashworth did in print on the Seventy-fifth Anniversary Program, that the church cost $l7,000.

While to us $l7,000 may seem a small amount to pay for a church building, in that time it posed a burden. The building achieved, however, was considered imposing and important, as was the site on which it stood, being directly across from the State Capitol and adjacent to "downtown." The building had a "rose" stained-glass window dedicated to Mrs. Emery and also a window with Masonic symbols in stained glass. This latter fact brings to mind that, in county histories, the accounts of funerals of several prominent Universalist men observe that they were buried with full Masonic honors -- perhaps another indication of either a bent toward Protestant orthodoxy or accommodation with the contemporary social milieu.

In the next fifteen years' records there is less notice made of building problems, but like any householder, inadequacies and needs for repairs are brought to the board's attention. By the early l920's discussion began about how the building might be altered to allow the church to rent three rooms on the lower level to three stores for business purposes in order to get some income from the building to help pay the remaining debt on it. There was considerable disagreement over this plan, but there was an obvious need for money unless endowment funds were to be completely used up. "Shall we go outside for additional income?" was the statement of the official question in the minutes of the board, January, l925. The Board voted to remodel the basement so that three stores facing Ottawa Street might be fitted up for rental purposes at an estimated rate of $300.00 per month. However, this plan was twice rejected by the parish meeting, and the board thereafter were authorized "to make repairs at their discretion." (Latter-day board members will see some irony in that result which may escape non-board persons!)

In the period l928-l935, the Church found its assets dwindling until at the end of this period they were worth about two-thirds of what they had previously been, or perhaps even less. The building's value in l927 was estimated to be worth at least $l00,000; in l93l that value stood at $60,000; then in a few months it was thought that $25,000 - $30,000 was all that it could be valued at. Debts and current expenses made operation difficult.

So, in the mid-thirties the Church seemed to have four alternatives (though if these were discussed in these terms, there is no record of such): l) it could merge with Plymouth Church (rejected); 2) it could quit (never mentioned so perhaps never considered); 3) it could struggle along as it had been doing for years; 4) it could deed its property and all endowment assets, some of which had been liquidated because of bank failure, to the (sate or general?) Universalist Convention, who would assume responsibility for the debts, hold any assets in trust for such time as the local parish might be able to produce a level considered viable, and who would aid the local group as it could in the meantime, but wholly at the Convention's discretion. On February 6, l935, the

local church made an agreement with the General Convention to deed the property and assets, and in return the Convention assumed the outstanding mortgage. At this time Hacker Realty evaluated the property as worth $38,400 (48 feet at $500; and 24 feet at $600). The church actually was sold by the Convention for $24750 (c. l939-40?).

Thus, though the church stood on an important site, though it was built for $l7,000.00 and sold for $24,750.00, and the amount was kept in trust by the General Convention, the experience to the local group must have been depressing and debilitating; however, to have the debt behind them must have been a help to some board members at least. Mr. Walters, having served two years, by l935 had resigned. In November, l935, the local group listed its receipts for that year as $3000.00 contributed by 7l families. We have to conclude that the parish had experienced disastrous shrinkage in assets, depreciation of property, loss of ministers because of inadequate pay, to say nothing of loss of pride and self-respect.

As you may have noted in an earlier section, the longest period when the Church was without a minister was from l938 to l945, and, indeed, Rev. Percival, who served from l935-l938, was preaching only, as he was also chaplain at the Boys' Vocational School. Without a church home the group met sometimes at the Woman's Club House and for a longer period at the YWCA. In May l944, a retired minister from Chicago, Dr. Frank Adams and Mrs. Adams, also a minister, were called to serve this church at a salary of $2400.00 (They returned half of this amount each year to the struggling group.) Thirty-nine families with a total of seventy-eight individuals were considered Universalists in this period. New efforts were made to establish a regular meeting place.

With the encouragement of the Adams a house on North Logan Street was purchased, but immediately this building needed considerable equipment and other necessary attention. Also, it proved too small almost at once. Therefore, it was sold and a large old house on an excellent site on North Washington Avenue was acquired in l946 for $20,000.00. At about this time (l947) a small group of Universalists in Eagle, Michigan sold their church property and gave the proceeds to the Lansing Church. This location housed the group until l954. Again, this building was found in disrepair; more always had to be done to it than could be done. The Sunday School rooms were inadequate and soon were realized to be a fire hazard.

One must not pass over the decade of the forties without thoughtfully considering and appreciating the efforts of a small group of women. Without such persons as Mrs. Bliss, Mrs. Cooper, Mrs. Harriet Goodman, Mrs. Ives, Miss McCree, Mrs. Markley, Miss Florine Smith, Mrs. Trachsel, and probably others whose names are not inscribed in the records, it is quite obvious the church could not have survived. This is <u>not</u> a sentimental observation; it is a literal fact. For years these persons, by small measures adding pennies to dollars by means of various projects, contributed annually about $l,000.00 to the regular church operating fund. They provided flowers for the worship services. They considered the provision of music for church their responsibility. Especially when the group moved to the North Washington Avenue quarters, they took on the run-down, dirty building (which had been in disuse). They, themselves, scrubbed, cleaned, sanded, and refinished floors, cleaned and painted walls and helped refurnish the place. I know such sacrificial spirit and hard work had been employed before that time as it has been since, but surely the work of the women of the forties stands out.

By the fall of l948 Dr. and Mrs. Adams were again about to retire. The Church was having difficulty meeting its obligations on the mortgage and on operating expenses. The property continually needed more and more repair. In view of the difficulties Dr. Adams recommended and the board very reluctantly agreed to ask the Parish membership for authority to deed the property to the State Convention.

Rev. Hartley came to the Lansing Church as minister in l949. Almost at once the efforts to find better quarters began. Needs for repairs multiplied, Sunday School space was very inadequate, fire hazards alarmed parents. The Board and membership were faced with the question: "What shall we do with 83l North Washington?" Estimates were made about renovating, rebuilding the old structure or building new on that site. C laude Chamberlain, husband of a member, said he could build a new church for $50,000. Granger Company estimated the value of the property at $52,000.00. At this point the group as a majority desired to rebuild on that location. Rev. Hartley brought to the deciding meeting a minority report of one (himself). He favored what would be an earlier move: to sell the current site and buy a church at Holmes Street and Prospect Avenue. While the expert appraisers found the former building in <u>poor</u> condition, they found the latter in only <u>fair</u> condition. But the strongly stated minority report prevailed. The Baptist Church, complete with baptistery, was purchased for $49,500.00. The North Washington Street property was sold for $28,000.00. T here was a debt of $7086.l7 against that property. In addition a small adjacent parsonage costing $3300.00 had to be purchased, so the Church had to borrow more money ($8500.00). Rev. Hartley died in l955 not long after the "new" building was occupied. On December 30, l957 the mortgage on this building was retired, assisted by a gift from Louis C. Church, and for the first time in <u>many</u> years the church owned a building without any encumbrance against it.

The pattern repeated; the Holmes and Prospect Church soon developed maintenance and repair problems. In spite of valiant efforts by many, including Sally Underwood with her crew of painters working in the auditorium, the liabilities, the fire department warnings, the poor electrical wiring, the need for a new roof, and other problems continually distress the board as it met. The Church was sold for $45000 in l966; thereafter for four years the meetings were held first at Kendon School in Lansing, then at Red Cedar School in East Lansing. In l97l, property at 855 Grove Street, East Lansing was purchased. Details of this transaction appear in the Annual Report for l970-7l, and interested readers are referred to this source.

Certainly <u>place</u>, <u>property</u> have been two sources of problems. Yet, surely we would all agree that without <u>place</u> for association we would not be able to function as a group nor experience the dynamism of our "life-in-process."

Beginning in the early l950's Rev. Hartley obviously was anxious that the two small groups, Universalist and Unitarian should joint. Mr. Hartley's interest actively carried over until after his death in l955. From the minutes of the Universalist Church and Board meetings it is evident that resistance to such a merger was present, apprehension and fear that qualities precious to the heritage would be weakened or lost; perhaps the reaction was simply reluctance to change. Subsequently the Constitution was changed to allow for such associate membership. In l955 at the Annual Meeting the name of the Church was officially designated The First Universalist-Unitarian Church of Lansing. The complete merger of the Church and the Fellowship came about in a September special congregational meeting in l957. Prior to this time for about two years the Fellowship had been welcomed in the use of the Hartley room and other facilities of the Church. Though I do not yet find if or when there was official action approving the reversal of the names, beginning in l96l the Annual Reports thereafter list the Church name as Unitarian-Universalist.* A matter of alphabetical regularity perhaps, but more likely this was done to conform with the accepted national change which occurred that year.

VII. Unitarianism and The East Lansing Unitarian Fellowship (l949-l959)

The long stream of the liberal spirit which came to be identified as Unitarianism is not the intent or focus of this review. Briefly to furnish a point of beginning for this branch of our stream, we mark the experience of dissent from orthodoxy and the emergence of reliance on reason rather than on "revelation," with history extending at least to c. l530 A.D. (Servetus).

American Unitarianism had its roots deep in colonial religion: l) in the experience of human goodness and of free will as against the doctrine of original sin; 2) the unity of God as against the doctrine of trinity; 3) the necessity of employing reason in interpretation of Scripture against reliance on whim, revelation, and mysticism. Such ministers as Jonathan Mayhew (l720-l766) and Charles Chauncy (l704-l787), among others, advanced these ideas, championing each individual's right of private judgement as key principles, not only of American Unitarianism, but, indeed, of American democracy itself. During the early nineteenth century Unitarianism broke the chains of biblical and theological doctrine, by l830-l850 the chains of class and the chains of fear and sterile tradition by such as Emerson, Parker, and Channing, through the embrace of Unitarian Christianity, Transcendentalism, and Naturalism. During this century, Unitarianism "became mind and pen of America" as the nation sought to define itself and its purpose through expressions of such as Emerson, Thoreau, and others; likewise, Unitarians energized many important social movements with liberalizing effect on the national character, e.g. Dorothea Dix re prison reform and treatment of the insane, etc.

By l865 eastern U.S. leaders were calling for a more centralized national organization of Unitarianism. New strains and growing pains developed between westerns and easterners as the Association moved on to problems of the second quarter of the twentieth century. Like Universalism, Unitarians had reacted to this "new" century unmoved from a state of rather inert contentment, somewhat less sentimental, perhaps, but largely somnolent. Beginning in the early decades of the century, Rev. John H. Dietrich and Rev. Curtis Reese in West and Mid-West and Dr. Charles Francis Potter in New York City were preaching humanism, focussing on live issues, stimulating individuals experience and enjoy healthy lives-in-process by which they might realize the highest values in life. This became the chief field of Unitarian religious orientation.

The Unitarian Service Committee was established in l940 to do extraordinary humanitarian service. The Unitarian Fellowship movement, in small springs as the mobility of Unitarians and the appeal of liberal thought emerged in local communities, developed from about l945 and thereafter. The first fellowship was officially organized in Boulder, Colorado, July 28, l948. The East Lansing Fellowship, officially organized March 4, l949 was shortly in the stream.

In l947 a new small spring, source of a small stream in this ongoing movement, surfaced in East Lansing. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Vaughn, formerly of Saline Valley Cooperative Farms and members of the Ann Arbor Unitarian Church, came to the area where Mr. Vaughn was organizing rural groups for the Blue Cross Association which had an office in the same building where, shortly before, George Thornton had opened his attorney's office. The Thorntons (formerly Unitarians in Lincoln, Nebraska and Ann Arbor) had come here in l946. The American Unitarian Association sent to the Vaughns a list of Unitarians living in the area. Upon invitation of the Vaughns and the intercession of their friend and former minister, Rev. Harold Marley of Chicago, Mr. Munroe Husbands, fellowship director for the American Unitarian Association, met with local Unitarians on March 4, l949. Mr. and Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. O.H. Freeland of Mason who had for sometime been a member of the Church of the Larger Fellowship, George Thornton, Dr. Winter (?), and Dr. Adams, who was then minister of the Universalist Church in Lansing, attended this meeting held at the Y.W.C.A. Mr. Vaughn

was chosen temporary chairman.

Thereafter for about one year rather regular monthly meetings were held at the home of Mrs. Freeland, a charming, old brick home on Hogback Road near Mason. Besides the Vaughns and Thorntons, Dr. and Mrs. William Clark, David and Ruth Steinicki and Marian Felt made up the original group, along with Mrs. Freeland, of course. Emma Mueller (Chaffee) and the Thomas Walshes soon joined the group as did others.

Each meeting featured a subject prepared by one of the members or by a guest with special interest or expertise, followed by lively general discussion. During the first years the attendance varied from l0 to 20 persons. From the beginning the members had the desire to enjoy fellowship with persons of similar liberal religious views and to stimulate growth in knowledge and understanding. Equally important to them was the hope that out of such interest, effective means of exerting social concerns in community action might be achieved. It was on the occasion of one of the meetings during the winter of l949-50 in the nineteenth century, antique-filled parlor at Mrs. Freeland's that Wilma Good (Mrs. Harold Good) of the Community Services Council, together with members whose professional training and experience had alerted them to specific community needs, took the initial action which resulted within the next year or so in the establishment of the Lansing Mental Health Society and the subsequent establishment of the Lansing Adult Clinic, which has since become a tri-county agency. George Thornton, one of the organizing forces and for years a board member of the Mental Health Society, and Dr. William Clark, subsequent president of the Adult Center board of directors, were two of these persons. The Fellowship followed the development of this new service with great interest.

Visits to the Ann Arbor Church, picnics at Saline Valley Farms in conjunction with the traditional Ann Arbor church's occasion; picnics at Mason park, a report of the World Conference of Liberal Religion held in Amsterdam attended by Mrs. Freeland, a series of highly interesting philosophical surveys of World Religion and Unitarian history by Dr. Clark, these were among the other types of activities during the first year or two in addition to regular discussion meetings.

On September 24, 1949 permanent officers were elected. Harold Vaughn was chosen as chairman; Jerry Thornton, vice-chairman; Mildred Clark, secretary and treasurer. Ten members signified their relationship to the group: Mr. and Mrs. Vaughn, Dr. and Mrs. Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Thornton, Mr. and Mrs. David Steinicke, Mrs. Freeland, and Marian Belt. Mr. Vaughn died in May, 1950. Mrs. Freeland, being of advanced age and able to be less active, was unable to continue with her generous hospitality. Therefore, beginning in the fall of l950 through l952 or thereabouts, regular bi-monthly meetings were held at the Thornton home in East Lansing.

Because of felt need of parents to encourage happy experiences and friendly associations for and with the children of the family groups, a developing and stimulating program rather spontaneously unfolded. The picnics made the beginning; children began asking, "When can we do that again?" and "Will ____ be there?" Out of the desires of the parents and children and adults who had no small children of their own, two creative outgrowths came. In the fall of l950 a family fellowship program, made up of a simple worship service in which children and adults participated, games, and feasting, was held at the Y.W.C.A. cottage on Lake Lansing. 24 adults and 23 children enjoyed this occasion. Some features were innovations, later recognized by the American Unitarian Association.

In December, l950, the first Christmas party at the forestry cabin on campus of Michigan State University was held. The forestry cabin, a victim of progress in campus expansion, had been for years the scene of happy occasions for many groups. The Unitarian Fellowship, during its decade of life, made this a "Christmas tradition", continued for a year or two after the merger of the Fellowship with the Universalist

Church. One outgrowth of this experience came after the merger; on at least four occasions for periods from three to seven days, Unitarian-Universalist families enjoyed family camp experiences at various state park facilities: Ludington, Onaway, Wilderness, and Waterloo (?), and perhaps another site. The effort and expertise of such persons as Atamans, Tablemans, Steinickes, Knowltons, Waltons, as well as former Fellowship members and other friends, were among those who provided the leadership and the energy to make these occasions memorable for all those who attended.

Various families associated with the Unitarian Fellowship by the year l952 began to express the desire for church school opportunities and beginning January l, l953, on a bi-monthly basis, a Unitarian church school met at the East Lansing Legion Hall. Also, several families with young children had, by l956, at least, made partial association with the Universalist Church, and several of the adults had provided its church school with teachers by offering their assistance. Jean Dykema was director of Univ. R.E. l953-54 and also active in the fellowship. This experiential need and fact gave the greatest substance to the achievement of the subsequent merger of the Church and the Fellowship. Membership statistics for the Fellowship for each year are lacking, minutes having been misplaced or lost. As mentioned above, l0 members began the group. In l955, 25 persons belonged; in l956, 29; in l957, 34.

In retrospect, what were the advantages and disadvantages of the Fellowship association? In a less formal relationship than found in a larger organization, the Fellowship was a group which moved completely from self-motivation; unpressured, free-flowing. Neither the burdens of a budget, nor of a building, nor of all the accoutrements of organized weighed them down. Each resource, and each person's resources had a direct line to its individual effect; for instance, individuals contributed to U.S.C., AUA, and to local social action projects individually, gaining something of a sense of spontaneity and of responsibility, and likewise, greater interest in the results. On the other hand, individuals acting with such freedom inevitably have to accept the limitations accruing to the insufficiency of numbers to exert force, if it is force of organization which seems most important. Surely, this aspect will be, as it has been, seen by many if not most persons as a considerable disadvantage. Probably there are others.

In September, l957, the Unitarian Fellowship and the Universalist Church formally merged. Previous to this accomplishment, for a period of about two years, the Fellowship met in the Hartley room in the Holmes Avenue/Prospect Street Church. Forum programs were sponsored jointly by these groups. As mentioned above in respect to their Universalist counterparts, some Fellowship members viewed the merger with some reluctance. The recognition that more frequent and more varied experiences for children, particularly, but also for adults in the whole range of religious possibilities led to the decision, which, as we know, was soon also achieved at the national level.

And so, the two branches converged into one stream; one, in simplest terms, relying on human reason and mutual concern and on the human potential for growth; the other relying on faith in universal salvation through love and believing that if humans were not perfect, at least they might be understood and forgiven their faults through love.

Perhaps we often forget, ignore or even deny the sources.

VIII. One Stream: Many Streams

What shall one say of recent history? What characterizes, what clarifies or muddies the stream?

Contrary to my experience in digging out substantive material from minutes of routine meetings and wishing for inklings that would reveal real people, recent history affects me differently. Here, people dominate. Beginning with the leadership of Rev. Wyman, continuing with interim Program Director, Dorothy Jones, with Rev. Smith, followed by Consultant Anita Wolfe, and currently with Rev. Green, the dominant impression is not so much that of events or problems, but PEOPLE. Like dancing glints of light reflected from the surface of the water, the diversity of personality, the variety in talents and creative expression, the warmth, the delight, the sorrow; all these and more spring if one recalls or sees the names of those leading or participating. Persons as persons live in the immediate past and present. They carry the crystal stream with prisms of color, of light and shadow.

The second dominant impression is how MOBILE we are. We bob in and out almost as rapidly as droplets in the flow of the river. We surely ought to be experienced adapters and "lead fish" in the continuity of change.

For one year Dorothy Jones served as Program Director, in addition to being R.E. Director. After delineating what she had and had not done during the year (l963-64), she made some comments which I think bear reviewing: (From Annual Report)

"Observations: We hold certain concepts in common, for example, respect for human dignity and equality, the democratic process, scientific method, desire for advancing knowledge,... for peace in the world, etc., but at the same time we are a group with widely divergent opinions. As some of these opinions have been expressed to me this year, I have felt the need for all of us to be more tolerant of the other person's opinion. Symbols, ritual, or procedures that we use mean different things to different people -- what may seem ultra-orthodoxy to one individual may be extreme liberalism to another. We can take that from our association which is of value to us, and tolerate that which seems less valuable or even obnoxious knowing that it may be of value to others.

All of us probably have a picture in our mind of what we expect a new minister to be. The pulpit committee chairman has said that according to the questionnaire and comments he has heard, no one less than Jesus Christ Himself would satisfy us. I'm not sure that even He would do. I hope we will remember that in a group as divergent and opinionated as ours it will be impossible for any one man to satisfy any one of us completely.

In l96l-62 Report at the end of his finance committee report, the Chairman, Douglas Knowlton, made some comments which are also cogent and pertinent:

"...It is the personal philosophy of the present Finance Chairman that the high pressure, harassing, guilt-edged, type of campaign recommended by professional fund raisers has no place in our organization despite their proven effectiveness with other groups. What is needed is greater insight on the part not only of the Church leadership, but on the part of every member as well, in adjusting their desires for the Church programs to the individual and collective willingness to support these programs. This means we must reduce Church programs, dig deeper down into ourselves, look for extra-parochial sources of funds, or attempt a combination of these three approaches to fiscal balance. Recommendation: If you would really like to know what makes the Church go, volunteer to be Finance Chairman."

People come and stay, some people come and go. We are like bubbles on the stream living in this time and that -- here or there. In the liberal tradition, we may be rewarded by each others' presence; we may also continue to be rewarded by the realization that wherever or whenever one moves, the ideas flowing in consequence go on and on in the stream of life.

Who in his chosen realm of art
Sings a new song, or plants a tree,
Becomes, himself, a living part
of earth's creative majesty.

Who dreams in time and moves through space,
With open heart and spirit free,
Consumes and cleans the crystal stream
That flows wherever life may be.

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