

HISTORY AND HERITAGE

The First Baptist Church of Arlington
Massachusetts

Bicentennial



1781-1981

Dr. Victor F. Scalise, Jr.
Interim Minister

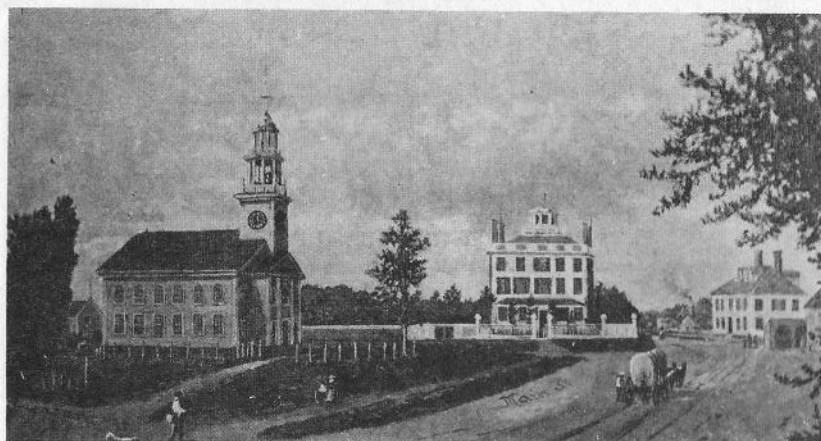
God: Our help in ages past... Our hope for years to come

Dedicated
to
Caroline D. Higgins



First Woman Deacon
of the
First Baptist Church of Arlington
Teacher - Director
of an
Adult Women's Bible Class
known as The Win-One Class
which spanned fifty years.

Born 1889 -- Died 1978



MINISTERS

- Rev. Thomas Green, 1783-1793
Supplies, 1794-1818
Rev. Benjamin C. Grafton, 1819-1823
Rev. John Ormsbee, 1824-1827
Rev. Ebenezer Nelson, 1828-1834
Rev. Appleton Morse, 1834-1836
Rev. Charles Miller, 1836-1838
Rev. Timothy C. Tingley, 1838-1845
Rev. George J. Carleton, 1845-1851
Rev. Joseph Banvard, D.D., 1851-1853
Rev. Samuel B. Swaim, D.D., 1854-1862
Rev. John Duncan, D.D., 1863-1865
Rev. Amos Harris, 1866-1875
Rev. Charles H. Spaulding, D.D., 1875-1880
Rev. Charles H. Watson, D.D., 1881-1909
Rev. Nathan E. Wood, D.D., 1909-1919
Rev. Henry S. Potter, D.D., 1919-1927
Rev. Grady D. Feagan, Ph.D., 1928-1944
Rev. Nathan W. Wood, 1944-1954
Rev. Rollin I. Tingley (Interim), 1955
Rev. Francis Thompson, D.D., 1955-1959
Rev. Robert E. Slaughter, D.D., 1959-1967
Rev. William H. Marsell (Interim), 1967-1968
Rev. Alexander Henderson, D.D., (Interim), 1967 & 1969
Rev. William B. McGinnis, D.D., 1967-1969
Rev. William J. Phillips (Interim) 1970
Rev. Joseph Sweeny, Ph.D., 1970-1980
Rev. Victor Scalise, Jr., D.M., 1981--

The Baptists of the Northwest Precinct of Cambridge had inherited a tradition of defiance of authority in defense of their principles from their early Baptist ancestors and from their staunchly individualistic forebears of the early colonial period. The clergymen of the Massachusetts Bay Colony during the first two generations after the original settlement in the seventeenth century exerted almost supreme political influence on the magistrates they advised. Democracy and religious liberty were suspect ideas which threatened the division and disintegration of colonial political and religious structures.

Church and State were one. When Roger Williams articulated the doctrine of the separation of church and state powers from his pulpit, he attacked the very foundation of the essentially theocratic form of government of Massachusetts in the 1600's. Religious conformity was difficult to impose on those early settlers. The Puritans found their ultimate authority in the Bible; hence, diverse interpretations arose from the many ambiguities of the Scriptures.

For Baptists, the separation of church and state was a tenet of their faith as fundamental as their belief in the baptism of thinking adults rather than of uncomprehending infants. Their insistence on the individual's right to his own interpretation of the Bible compelled them to follow their own religious consciences.

Although present in the area as early as 1654, Baptists did not become fully visible until the formation of the First Baptist Church in Boston in 1665. Baptists committed enough to their beliefs to hold meetings in their homes and make periodic pilgrimages to the Boston church lived throughout this region and as far west as the Connecticut Valley. The pastor made occasional visits to these widely scattered members to administer communion. Despite inconvenience and hardship the earliest Baptists survived with their beliefs and their determination intact.

The seeds of the first important religious revival in the colonies were sown in the sermons of Jonathan Edwards, in Northhampton, Massachusetts in 1734. New England Congregational and Middle-Colony and Southern Presbyterians were stirred into a religious awakening, at a time when people were falling away from the established churches. Edwards inspired a great revival of interest in reading, debating; and meditating upon age-old truths of Christianity. While many ministers of the established churches enthusiastically joined the awakening, many rejected it as a travesty of religion. Those congregations whose ministers

repudiated the awakening eventually seceded and established what were called "New Light" churches, which eventually became Baptist or Methodist.

An early Cambridge Baptist Church of 1751 had dissolved. By 1773, the Baptists remaining in the Northwest Precinct (now Arlington) had attempted unsuccessfully to avoid paying the parish tax. Every citizen of the early Massachusetts Bay Colony had been legally obligated to support the Congregational (state) church. As religious tolerance gradually increased, it became possible for a citizen who wished to support a church other than the state church to file a certificate declaring his intention and perhaps secure exemption from parish taxes. Precinct records of March 15, 1775 show that it was voted not to excuse the people who called themselves Antipedobaptists from paying ministerial taxes. The Baptists in Northwest Cambridge were not then a cohesive group with any political power.

The Revolutionary War brought suffering and bloodshed to the people of the precincts. Although the citizens of Northwest Cambridge fought the British soldiers on their very doorsteps for freedom from tyranny and unjust taxation, the town assessors still refused, for many years, to excuse the unorganized Baptists from paying taxes to support a church they did not attend. If the Baptists were not given full recognition for tax exemption purposes, nevertheless they were gaining strength and credibility. The Reverend Samuel Cooke, pastor of the First Church in Cambridge, perceived them as a threat to the stability of his church. Rev. Cooke feared conflict between denominations, and pleaded for fellowship, not alienation. Excerpts from a January, 1775 sermon revealed his anxiety about religious strife.

'Baptism don't save us from any virtue in the water either in the quality or quantity of it; but only, from the blessing of Christ, when performed according to his will...Much water cannot purge away sin; there is no certainty from this passage (John 3:23) whether they were dipt or sprinkled; nor can it be of great importance for us to know...But the mode or manner, if done in sincerity, ought not to break Christian fellowship, or that love and charity among Christ's disciples by which we give the best evidence of our loving union to him. Where is angry disputing, there is contention, confusion, and very evil work.'

Whatever resistance or intolerance the early Baptists faced, the war for liberty and independence certainly served as an impetus to organize and unite.

The Baptists of Northwest Cambridge held their first recorded Society meeting on September 4, 1780.

"Sept. ye 4th AD 1780

A number of the Baptist Society in Cambridge met at Stephen Robbins, Jr. to have some Discourse about Sending a Letter to the Association, to inform them of our Circumstances: and to Desire their prayers for us: we accordingly agreed and Sent a Letter Signed by Thomas Williams, John Williams, and Stephen Robbins, Jr. in behalf of the Society. At this time we had but four members (that had been baptized) in the Society: the Society made a choice of Elder Blood, to be the bearer of the above-mentioned Letter, to the Association."

Elder Blood was the Rev. Caleb Blood of Newton, who had urged the Cambridge Baptists to unite, organize and take a stand.

Expediency and the desire for financial relief were not the motives of these organizers of the Society. For they were discriminating in their membership and serious about selecting a preacher as quickly as possible. In subsequent meetings in 1780, they voted against an application for baptism by Patten Russell, an eminent citizen, citing their dissatisfaction with him, and they voted to seek Deacon Elhanan Winchester's assistance in securing a preacher for them. By December they had written a letter to the precinct assessors, declaring the withdrawal of their financial support of Rev. Samuel E. Cooke, minister of the parish church. They vowed to stand by each other in the event of "Distress" made on any one.

"To the Gentlemen the Assessors of the Northwest Precinct in Cambridge: we whose Names are hereunto Subscribed; take this opportunity to inform you, that we cannot in Conscience Pay any taxes, for the support of a Minister that we do not hear Nor do we think it our Duty to Pay any Charges that Do arise, for the Support of the Congregational Meeting House in said Precinct; as we are of the Baptist Principles; and Support Publick teaching freely among ourselves, and have done it for this Six Months Past."

On December 15, 1780, the Society adopted a compact of six articles, drawn by a committee of which Captain Benjamin Locke was chairman. There were thirty-nine men, most of whom were from the Northwest Precinct of Cambridge, with the remainder coming from Lexington and Charlestown, which then included most of present-day Winchester and Somerville.

THE FIRST ARTICLES OF THE SOCIETY

Whereas it hath pleased the great and Glorious God of late to pour out of his Holy Spirit, in a remarkable manner upon the people (in this place) and caused many to lay hold upon the Hope set before them; for which we (and all that believe in Jesus Christ) have great cause to adore the Sacred three in one. And for the Honor and the Glory of God, and for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom; We are satisfied that it is our bounden duty (Whose Names are hereunto Subscribed) to form ourselves into a Baptist Society, and fully to comply with the following articles.

Art. 1. We will give up ourselves, and all that we have to the blessed God, for his use and service; by His Grace helping us.

Art. 2. We will make it our great care to promote the Public worship of God; agreeable to his Holy Word.

Art. 3. We will maintain love and friendship among ourselves and all that shall join with us; by God's Grace helping us.

Art. 4. We will labour to promote the Glorious work of God among ourselves and others, according to our ability; through God strengthening us.;

Art. 5. We will receive all those to join with us in Society that give us satisfaction, that they are of the Baptist Persuasion and Principles.

And whereas the People of God (in this place) have been imposed upon (in years past) by people of wicked and disorderly principles; therefore, we think it our duty, not to admit any such into Society with us.

Art. 6. We give full and free liberty, for all people (of sound principles) to join with us, in the Glorious work of our God.

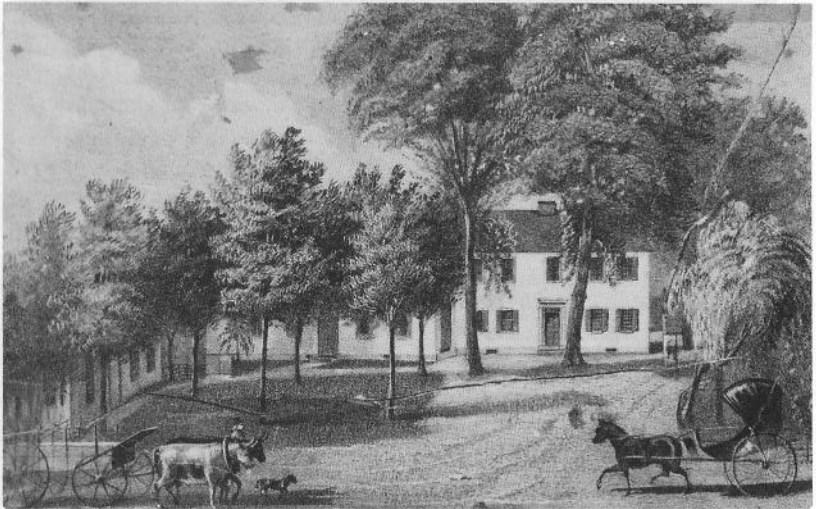
Now may the blessed God, for the sake of his Dear Son, prosper our feeble attempts, to promote his Glory; and carry on the Glorious cause among us; and throughout the whole land and World. Amen.

Thirty-nine men signed these articles;

Thomas Williams	Philemon Robbins	Caleb Hovey
Thomas Cutter	Richard Francis	Jacob Buckham
John Williams	Charles Cutter	Ebenezer Swan
Gershon Cutter	Aaron Swan	Samuel Carter, Jr.

Samuel Swan	Ephraim Cooke	Samuel Bucknam
Benjamin Locke	Samuel Brooks	Abraham Cooke
Isaac Munro	Miles Greenwood	Jonathan Davis
Stephen Cutter	George Swan	Stephen Stearns
Thomas Locke	Joseph Shaw	William Locke
John Winship	John Locke	Amos Cutter
Joseph Robinson	Stephen Robbins, Jr.	Isaac Cutter
Andrew Cutter	Joseph Locke	Silvanus Wood
Gershom Cutter, Jr.	James Locke	Simeon Crosby

The intent of these founders of the Baptist Society was to draw together men and women "of worthy motives" for the common purpose of a church that would serve them all and reflect their beliefs.



Although meetings were held that first winter at the homes of Stephen Robbins, Jr. and Thomas Williams, both of whom lived somewhere in the vicinity of the "Foot of the Rocks" and the Lexington-Northwest Precinct borders, they needed a permanent meeting house to give visible proof to the Precinct Assessors that they had true organized public worship. On March 6, 1781, they "voted, to buy Captain Locke's house with twelve rods of land, for such price as our Committee and he shall agree upon (100 silver dollars), also, to give Joseph Shaw, the present tenant, fourteen hard dollars to remove his family from said house." Money raised for church purposes was raised by an "equality basis." A member wishing to subscribe an amount could do so,



while others were assessed according to the value of their possessions. The original structure, still standing and occupied as a private residence at 21 Appleton Street, was altered for church purposes by removing the chimney, as churches were not heated in those days, and by remodeling the interior into one large hall.

Men and women wishing to form a church met on June 4, 1781. The proceedings of that historic meeting are preserved on record.

"Cambridge, June 4, 1781. This day a number of persons, both men and women professing to be believers in Jesus Christ the Son of God met and made choice of Elder Blood residing in Newton to be their moderator for the meeting and Isaac Munroe for scribe. After which looked up to Almighty God by prayer for assistance and direction as to forming into a church state by inquiring into each others minds.

Proceeded to take under consideration the printed articles of faith adopted by the Second Baptist in Boston.

Voted, that the printed articles, above expressed, are agreeable to our sentiments, touching our belief of the Doctrines of the Gospel.

Voted, to proceed to embody into a church state.

Voted to send to the following churches, viz.: 1st and 2nd churches in Boston under the pastoral care of Rev. Samuel Stillman and Isaac Skilman, also to the church at Newton under the pastoral care of Rev. Caleb Blood, to advise and assist relative to our embodying into a church state.

Voted that the meeting for the above purpose be the 5th day of July at the hour of ten o'clock in the forenoon..."

Their stated intent was recognized by a council meeting held on July 5, 1781. Rev. Samuel Stillman, D.D., Deacon Richard Gridley and Ebenezer Hill from the First Church in Boston, the Rev. Isaac Skilman and Mr. Munro from the Second Church, and the Rev. Caleb Blood, Elhanan Winchester, and Mr. Dana from the Newton Church acknowledged and approved the formation and institution of this Baptist church as the twenty-eighth of Baptist denomination formed in Massachusetts. A meeting at Brimfield, Massachusetts of the Warren Association in September, 1781 accepted into membership this small Baptist Church of the Northwest Precinct of Cambridge.

A
S E R M O N,

D E L I V E R E D

O C T O B E R 24, 1790;

T O T H E

B A P T I S T C H U R C H

And Congregation,

I N

C A M B R I D G E,

At the Administration of

The Ordinance of B A P T I S M.

By THOMAS GREEN,

V. D. M.

And John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

THE BLESSED JESUS.

B O S T O N :

PRINTED BY NATHANIEL COVERLY, Magesri.

The Association appointed Mr. Thomas Green to preach at Cambridge, the third Lord's Day in November. This young man, son of Dr. Thomas Green, First Baptist pastor in Leicester, may have supplied the pulpit throughout that winter. By July, 1781 the Society engaged him to preach six weeks or two months on probation. He was initially reluctant to commit himself to the church for fear that his pay would be inadequate to support himself and his future bride. He wrote:

"Dear Friends,

You are not ignorant that it is my duty to consult the interests of my natural life as well as the spiritual life, as to coming to you without any encouragement to live; it would be well for me, not to do; but to stay where I now be or seek some other place...Therefore if I come you must engage you will do for me if my Preaching is such that you can Profit with; and if I settle with you, you shall be engaged to give me so such as to render my family and myself comfortable..."

Finally it was voted on November 3, 1783 to give Mr. Green four dollars a week for services as pastor to be paid monthly. Later his salary was raised to \$230 a year with house, barn, and garden spot. Ordination was held at Captain Locke's home, the present corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Forest Street, on November 26, 1783.

This Baptist Church of the Northwest Precinct of Cambridge was born in troubled times, in the chaos of the War of the Revolution and the turmoil and uncertainty of the postwar era. The very survival of the new republic was at stake. Taxes levied for war burdened most heavily the poor. Excessive drinking and general rowdiness were rampant. The decline of moral standards gave rise to the apprehension that the new nation was doomed.

Families, individuals, and churches were threatened by the economic instability of the young nation. In Northwest Cambridge, the secession of the Baptists and the general impoverishment of the people seriously weakened the First Congregational Parish. Many of the seceding Baptists were substantial tax payers and had held precinct office; their loss from parish rolls forebode the possible decline and dissolution of that church. Rev. Thaddeus Fiske wrote in 1787 that many feared that if he declined its call, the Congregational Church would disband.

Precinct collectors, eager to redeem the debt-laden parish church, intensified their efforts to secure parish taxes from the Baptists. In his *Historical Sketch* of 1911, Rev. Nathan E. Wood wrote that records of the time abounded in instances of harassment, even persecution of the Baptists, illustrating the saying that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." But these farmers and former minutemen were a stubborn lot, not easily deterred or intimidated. Dr. Wood praised the courage of these early Baptists.

"The men of the Society of the Church made such united and steadfast resistance that at last the law was so modified as to relieve them from taxation to support a church for which they had no sympathy. The support of the Parish church was compulsory and thus they were obliged to support two churches. This struggle against injustice created much bitter feeling and alienation between neighbors, which did not wholly pass away for many years."

Their efforts to secure these taxes culminated in a lawsuit. On January 3, 1785, the Baptist voted "to choose a committee of five to assist our brethren Gershom Cutter, Stephen Cutter and Charles Cutter, who are distressed upon for defending our religious principles and privileges; also to employ Esquires Lincoln and Bradford to defend them." Town records revealed that on January 20, 1785, the town voted to choose a committee of two to assist "Standing Committee in suit against Baptists" allocating nine pounds for the purpose. On November 14, 1785, the town voted not to pay back money collected by Seth Stone from Gershom, Stephen and Charles Cutter. This position was reversed on April 26, 1786 when the town finally voted to "choose a committee to settle with the Baptists" and in May when it was agreed that "they (the Baptists) are to have all their taxes abated that are assessed against them since they joined the Baptist Society, and are to have all costs of courts that they have recovered to this time, and all moneys paid back that they have paid since they joined the Baptist Society." The Cambridge Baptists won their freedom from supporting a church they did not attend, but their brethren in other towns had still to fight similar battles.

In the early years of any church or religious society, the challenge is to balance concern for business with devotion to religious and spiritual goals. Since the Baptist Society was un-

comfortable with the evangelical cast of the Articles drawn prior to the Church constitution, they drafted a new set of articles, which emphasized maintenance, business and other practical matters.

Morning and afternoon services were held in the unheated converted farmhouse. Eventually, the hardship imposed on the Woburn members in traveling to Cambridge weekly prompted their request that the pastor of the church meet with the Woburn branch of the Society in Woburn one Lord's Day each month. This request was granted in May, 1790, and this preaching arrangement remained in effect for approximately three years during which time the Woburn branch grew more rapidly than the Cambridge branch.

As early as 1789 the Society had considered the possibility of constructing a new meeting house. By March 29, 1790, the Society was ready to choose "a piece of land five rods square" donated by Ephraim Cooke and located on the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Brattle Street. Although the deed for this lot was turned over to the Society on April 13, 1790, according to the Middlesex Registry of Deeds this transfer was not officially acknowledged and recorded until October 16, 1809. In November, 1790, the old meeting house was sold back to Captain Locke, its original owner, for \$60 or \$90.



The new church took form, as do many contemporary churches as finances permitted. Mr. Cooke, who had deeded the land for nine pounds, received a pew in return for a contribution of one pound ten shillings to the building fund. The exterior was finished by late 1791, while the interior was not finished even in early 1792 when pews already were being sold.

Conflict with some of the members may have induced Pastor Green's decision to resign in 1793. During the year preceding his resignation the Greens had suffered much discomfort from a "clash of women's tongues." The deacon gave the Greens a parting document for them to communicate "in any place or to such persons as he should judge proper" that stated that the church, after an impartial inquiry into Sister Hannah Cooke's treatment of Sister Salome Green, had decided that the minister's wife had been maligned.

The existence of the young Baptist Church was precarious after the resignation of Pastor Green and the departure of the Woburn members, who chose to divide the church in half. On August 29, 1793, the Church "agreed to have half the church here and half at Woburn for the present. Agreed to choose a committee of four, two here, two at Woburn. John Williams and Deacon Brooks from Cambridge, Joseph Winn and Josiah Converse from Woburn were chosen." The Woburn church flourished, and a new meeting house was built in that community. On May 24, 1794, it was voted to hold Communion on alternate months in the Cambridge and Woburn Church.

From 1795 until re-organization in 1817, the Cambridge Church managed to endure. The Society voted regular annual amounts, varying from \$80 to \$100, from 1795 to 1798 for supplying the pulpit. Failure to support their own preaching would have compelled them to pay for Congregational preaching. Entries in Society records for that time period were infrequent, but regular enough to trace a continuous thread of existence of the Cambridge Church from its inception in 1781.

Faith and spiritual strength kept the Church alive during the troubled decades following the Revolution, a time when religion was at its lowest ebb. A financial blessing brought new hope to the church in 1816 when one of the original founders of the church, Stephen Cutter, made the Society heir to \$5,000, to be paid upon the death of his widow, Mary. This future prospect served as the incentive for securing an Act of Incorporation. Under this act, trustees were appointed "to receive and manage any donations,

legacies, or devises for the use and benefit of said Society," namely, James Frost of Cambridge, blacksmith; Benjamin Locke of West Cambridge, gentleman; and Philemon Robbins Russell of Charlestown, yeoman.

Eleven members who were dismissed at their request from the Woburn Church joined with eleven members who lived in West Cambridge to form a separate, independent Baptist Church in West Cambridge. (The Northwest Precinct was incorporated as a separate town in 1807, with the name West Cambridge.) The relationship with the Woburn church ceased. This group of twenty-two men and women met at the Widow Mary Cutter's house on November 20, 1817, to perfect the organization of the church. After their meeting at Widow Cutter's house, the "faithful little band of thirteen women and nine men fared forth a mile up the road to the meeting house to hold public services in recognition of their reorganization," wrote W.K. Rugg in her history of the Baptist Church. Elder Williams preached the sermon, Elder Baldwin offered the prayer, and Elder Grafton gave the right hand of fellowship. The reconstructed church and society entered a new era, one which would be marked by basic stability and continued growth. The legal and structural foundation of the church and society was then as solid as the faith of its members.

Rev. Benjamin G. Grafton became the first pastor of the newly reorganized church for an annual salary of \$400. Mary Cutter donated a parsonage house, originally on Massachusetts Avenue, in 1926 turned one quarter to become 7 Newman Way.

Like other churches in this period of history, the Baptist Church of West Cambridge devoted considerable time and energy to disciplinary matters. Committees investigated any rumors about the behavior of any of the thirty-eight members, while church records amply illustrated that admonition and inquiry into the personal and family lives of its members were a regular part of the life of the church.

One entry read:

"October 7, 1819. Brethren Reed and Jenkins informed the church that there were some unfavourable reports respecting Br. T.H. Teel. The Church requested their pastor to write to Br. Teel, and inform him of it, and request him not to commune with them until they had an opportunity with him."

Penitence was the key to reconciliation. Brother Teel became reconciled with the church on his "promising [sic] to endeavor for the future to live in such a manner as to avoid the appearance of evil." On the other hand, Brother Cox, who was unrepentant, was unanimously voted, on May 14, 1820, to be excluded from their fellowship for his unchristian behavior.

A member might have been investigating the behavior of a fellow member one year, and be the subject of an investigation the next year. The same Brother Reed who had informed the church of the improper conduct of Brother Teel in 1819, was in trouble himself in 1821. Brother Seth Reed confessed that he was conscious of conducting so imprudently that he justly deserved to be excluded. After an examination of his conduct, the Brethren found that he had been sometime in the habit of telling willful falsehoods, besides he had been long in the habit of other improper conduct. The Church withdrew from him the hand of fellowship.

Apparently the Church considered that the stability of every marriage, and the wholeness of every family was their business to promote. Brother Seth Reed found his marriage and the quality of his family life being questioned and judged in 1829.

"The Standing Committee made a statement of their proceedings in relation to Bro. Seth Reed, concerning whom some reports of ill treatment of his wife are in circulation. The committee have visited Bro. Reed and were satisfied that there was a want of mutual good will and kindness between him and his wife, and that he had sometimes manifested a wrong spirit toward her although not without some provocation. It was also the opinion of the Committee that Bro. Reed had not taken sufficient pains to provide for his wife's attending meeting on the Sabbath."

Although Brother Reed acknowledged "an improper spirit" toward his wife, he denied that he had neglected his duty to see that his wife attend worship services. The committee was dissatisfied with Brother Reed's spirit at this time, but less than a month later, after Brother Reed "made full confession of his wrongs and appeared penitent and desired the forgiveness of the church," the church voted that they were satisfied with his confession and hoped "That God will enable him to overcome every obstacle that has hinder'd the peace of his family."

Equally as important as discipline in the life of the church was

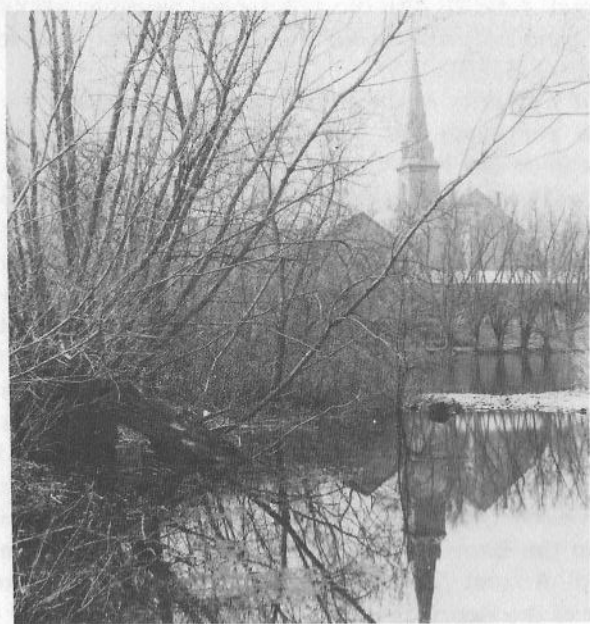
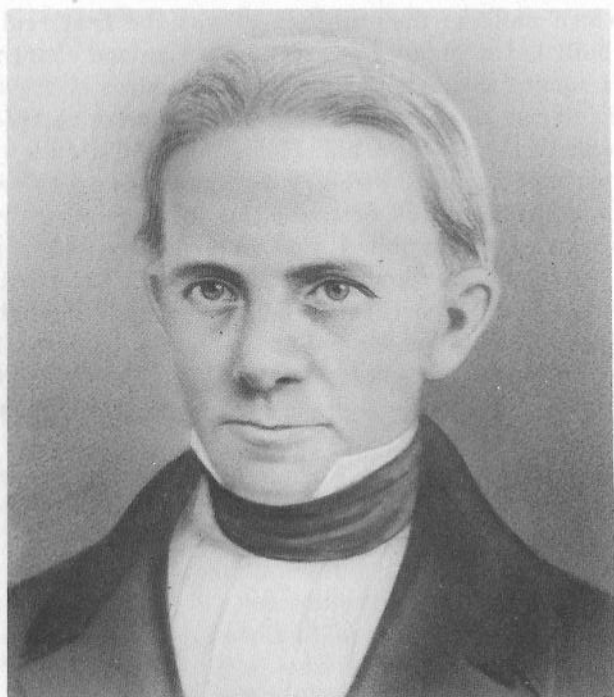
the religious instruction of the young. Two young Congregational women, Eliza Tufts and Eliza Bradshaw (granddaughter of Rev. Samuel Cooke) held a Sunday School in the fall of 1816 of about fifteen pupils and four or five teachers. Despite the disapproval of the minister, Rev. Thaddeus Fiske, who thought the teachers too young, the school grew. After the reorganization of the Baptist Church, some of the teachers began a new school which included pupils from Baptist families. Martha Frost, one of the earliest teachers, had been brought up in the Congregational Church, but became a member of the reborn Baptist Church.

This Baptist Sunday School was first held in a brick schoolhouse at the "Foot of the Rocks", and it continued to meet there throughout the era of the Brattle Street church building. Each Sunday the children and teachers formed a "demure procession from their Sunday School to the service at the Brattle Street Meeting House." Lessons consisted mainly of memorization of the Holy Scripture. The Baptist Sunday School, which was to become one of the central strengths of the church throughout its later history, had simple beginnings.

Rev. John Ormsbee continued the practice of maintaining strict discipline when he assumed the pastorate in 1824. Church finances were poor, but a singing school was operated, and a church library established, complete with a constitution and articles. Mr. Ormsbee served as treasurer and librarian of this modest library, which twenty years after its creation had only fifty-six volumes. Society members paid fifty cents annually to use the library's meager resources, the bulk of which were volumes donated by Anna Bradshaw, granddaughter of the Rev. Samuel Cooke.

The church was small in membership, but not in spirit. After Rev. Ormsbee's resignation in 1827, the church experienced a revival under the interim preaching of Rev. William Bentley. Sixteen people were baptized in the mill pond. By 1828, sixty-three members were looking forward to the construction of a new church building. September 9, 1828 marked the installation of a new pastor, the Rev. Ebenezer Nelson, and the public dedication of the white church.

The white church was built on the western portion of the present church lot, a gift from Mary Cutter in 1827 as "a token of affection." The lot, the western end of the large estate she had inherited from her husband, Stephen Cutter, extended to Cutter's Pond in the rear. A flight of stairs and a railing provided easy access to the pond for baptismal purposes.



This third building (meeting place) was the first real church edifice, built in the manner of early New England churches, topped by a square tower with four tapering spires at the corners. Both the interior and exterior of the building were painted white. Inside were sixty pews, a high, boxed-in pulpit, and whale oil lamps suspended from the ceiling and mounted on the walls. A large woodburning stove between the entrance doors radiated some warmth and supplied the congregation with glowing embers for their foot warmers. A gallery over the entrance accommodated first the orchestra, later the organ. Half the basement housed Sunday School and prayer meetings; the other half provided a table for filling lamps and selling gingerbread to those members who remained at the church between the morning and afternoon services.

The six-year pastorate of Ebenezer Nelson saw not only the erection of a traditional New England church, but also the elevation of the prestige of the church among New England Baptist churches. The religious life of the church prospered in spite of the still precarious financial situation.

Although the Sunday School had been in existence for at least ten years, it was not until the beginning of Rev. Nelson's pastorate that it was organized with a superintendent, Nathan W. Jones, and two assistant superintendents, Isaiah Jenkins and Martha Frost. Rev. Nelson himself served as superintendent for four years from 1830, and he did much to systematize the methods of the Sabbath School.

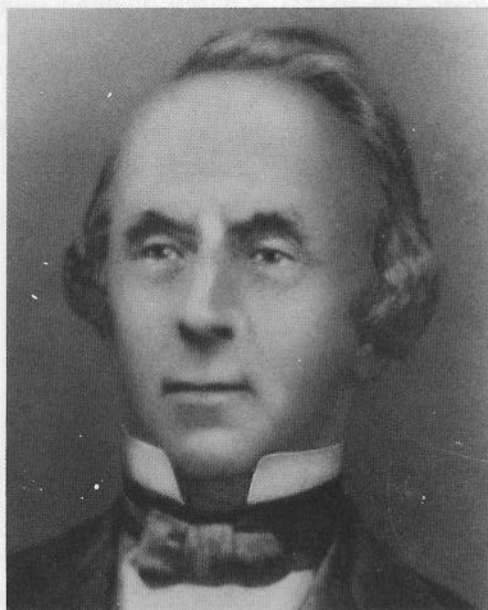
Missionary activity in the church is almost as old as the church itself. The parsonage on Massachusetts Avenue which Rev. Nelson occupied has been called the birthplace of the Home Mission Society. It was there that Rev. Jonathan Going of Worcester met with his close friend Rev. Nelson in 1831 and decided to organize an American Baptist Home Mission Society. Rev. Going had made a trip through the West, and he deplored the dearth of religion in the newly forming communities beyond the Allegheny Mountains.

Although an auxilliary to the American Women's Baptist Society was formed November 9, 1871, complete with constitution, there are references scattered through Church and Society records that attest to Baptist women's involvement with missions work as early as the 1820's. An entry dated December 9, 1825 referred to the Baptist Missionary Society of West Cambridge. One dated August 12, 1827 named Miss Hannah Locke as Treasurer of the Baptist Female Missionary Society. Further, the

Female Domestic Missionary Society presented \$50 to the Northern Baptist Education Society to make Rev. Nelson a life member. Missionary work was a vital part of the work of the church even when church books showed a continual deficit.

The church continued to grow through the pastorate of Rev. Nelson's successors, Appleton Morse (October, 1834 to October, 1836) and Rev. Charles Miller, (October 1836 to May, 1838). The Church struggled to complete payments on the meeting house while it tried simultaneously to pay for operating expenses. This was a period of national economic hardship, culminating in the panic of 1837.

Financial strain eased when the death of Mary Cutter made available the full Cutter bequest. When she died in 1836, Mary Cutter left all her personal effects which were sold by the executor of the estate, Thomas Russell, for over \$1,000, to the Baptist Society, in addition to the original bequest. The total amount realized, including the parsonage, from the Cutter fund, was \$13,500. This enabled the church to buy a strip of land next to the meeting house to render impossible the construction of a town road to Cutter's Pond.

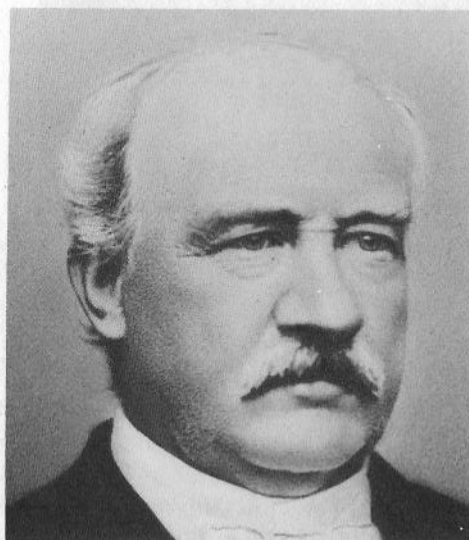


Matters of discipline continued to plague the church. Church members seemed to feel that a stumble by any one of them threatened the balance of them all. Revival and conflict marked the pastorate of Rev. Timothy Tingley, from October, 1838 to

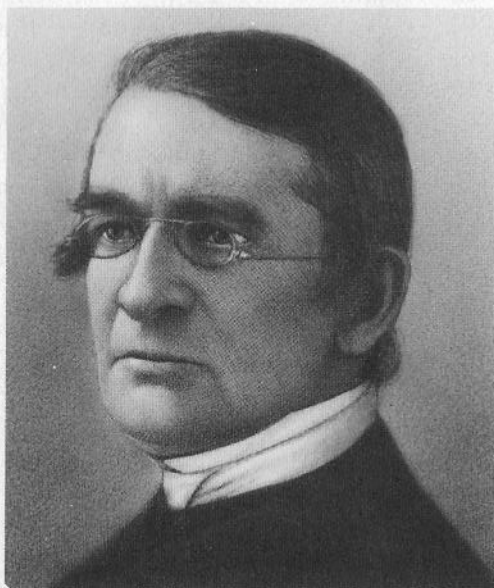
May, 1845. The preaching of Elder Jacob Knapp around 1840 aroused the area into an "extraordinary wave of revival." During the early years of Rev. Tingley's pastorate the church gained one hundred and two members by baptism, according to one account. What the church gained in strength of numbers and religious fervor was threatened by the numerous cases of discipline. A conflict between the pastor and Deacon Isaiah Jenkins, a pillar of the church, almost split the church in two. Jenkins was only one of several members who were excluded from membership during those years. Four days before his death, during Dr. Banvard's pastorate, he was restored to membership. His survivors at least had the consolation of seeing a gravestone purchased by subscription among church members, erected over his remains.

The White Church acquired an organ and a bell in 1840. Sixty dollars was appropriated for the salary of the organist, Sarah Morrison. On May 25, 1840, the Society "Voted to have a bell that shall weigh 1500 pounds more or less." The town required a bell for ringing fire alarms. Previously the Unitarian Church had provided a swinging place for the only bell in town, but it had been demolished in 1840. The Baptist Church pledged to assume the ringing responsibility. A committee of six gathered the subscriptions of seventy-three citizens, many of whom had no Baptist connection.

The discord of the Tingley era was followed by the harmony of the Rev. George J. Carleton pastorate, from 1845-1851. Rev.



Carleton had inherited a membership of approximately one hundred and forty-five. While he was a "direct and spiritual preacher" he was known through town for his jovial good nature. He had a fine horse which he willingly offered to share with his parishioners, and a reputation for speeding. When one of his deacons chided him for this peccadillo, he allegedly replied, "I don't race; if a man tries to pass me, and can't, that's his affair. I drive about like this." With that retort, he raced off "like sixty." Rev. Carleton's was an active pastorate, during which the church sent \$400 to the Home Missionary Union, and purchased one hundred copies annually of the Young Reaper for the Sunday School. Financial prosperity was obviously increasing.

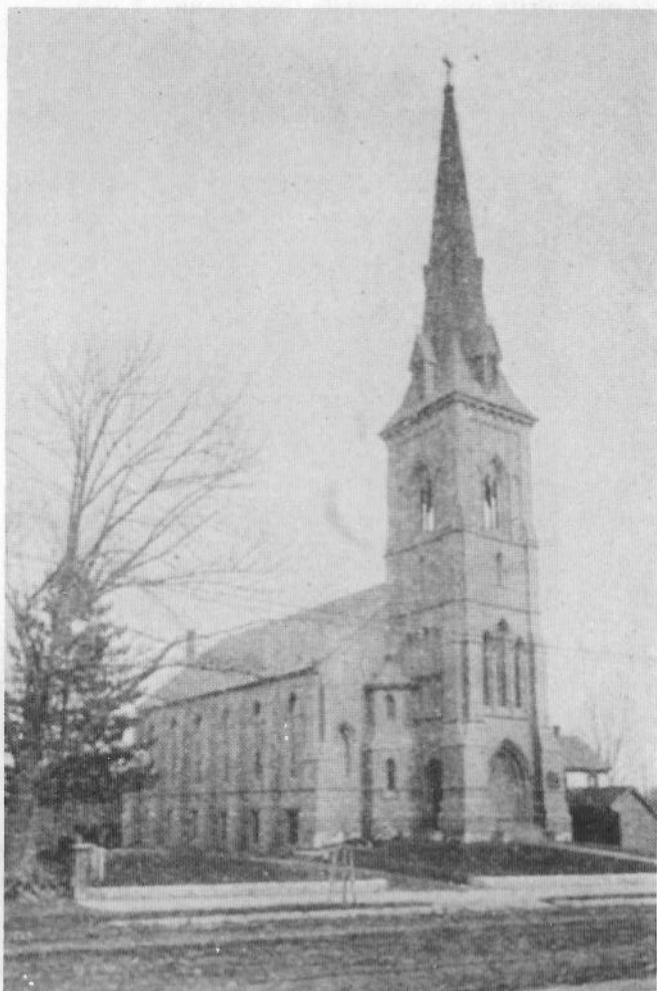


In a letter the Rev. Joseph Banvard, D.D. disclosed that he came to the church primarily because they needed a new house of worship. Dr. Banvard came from the Harvard Street Church in Boston. The first Doctor of Divinity to assume the pastorate, he was a man of considerable education and sophistication, an editor, an author, and a dramatic orator.

The Society voted on March 8, 1852 to build a new meeting house at a cost not to exceed twelve thousand dollars in accordance with plans and specifications drawn by Alexander R. Esty of Boston. These plans were based on a form of church seen and admired by Dr. Banvard. The new church edifice reflected the influence of Gothic Revival forms in American architecture. The

American landscape in the first half of the nineteenth century was dotted with buildings reminiscent of medieval castles. This predilection for Gothic design had its roots in the American desire to capture some of the romance of the European past. Dr. Banvard's preference was wholeheartedly supported by Edwin R. Prescott, chairman of the Building Committee

Dr. Swaim described the church building in his *History of the Baptist Church in West Cambridge*:



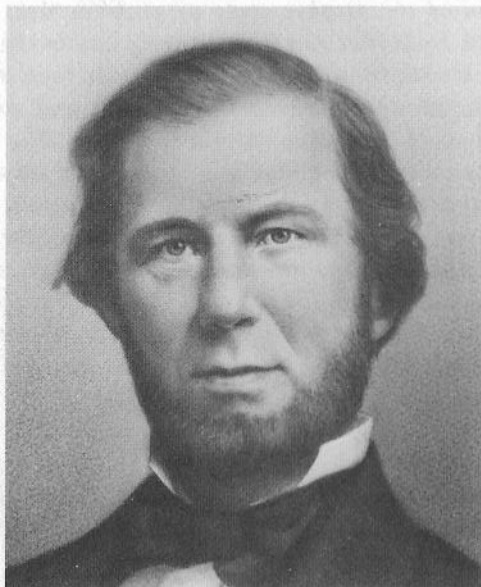
"The structure is of the Gothic style of architecture, the main part measuring 78 by 51 feet. On its southerly end is the tower, 16 feet square, which with the spire is carried up 156 feet; on the northerly end is the chancel, having a baptistry and pulpit, and finished with grained ceiling and tracery wall. The audience room has 80 pews on the floor, and a large gallery for organ and choir. It is finished with open roof sections, pendants, etc., corresponding to the style, and grained in imitation of dark English oak. The basement comprises one room 32 by 61 feet, another 15 by 35 feet, besides rooms for library and committees, with private entrance and stairs to chancel. The entire plan was intended to combine a chaste elegance with convenience and economy to the purpose."

The prosperity of the church in the 1850's can be inferred from a review of the subscription list for the new church and from an 1851 list of members who pledged \$100, \$50 and \$25 amounts toward the minister's annual salary. The cost of the new building, including the organ, was \$15,000. The money was readily obtained through contributions and loans in the form of shares held by members of the Society. The principal and interest would be repaid through proceeds realized by the sale of the pews. The cornerstone was laid on the site of the old one on June 7, 1853. Services were held in the intervening period in the Unitarian Church.

At this time, every family that was financially able purchased its own pew. The poor were not excluded from the congregation, though. The church reserved the front seats and pews number 59 and 20 for those unable to pay. Of significance was the dropping of the word "white" from the form of the new deed for the pews. Now, "any respectable person" could claim ownership of a pew. This pointed to the growing division between northern and southern Baptist churches of the time.

Society notes of March 30, 1857 suggested that the church was notably more prosperous than in the early years of its history:

"Interesting remarks were made by E.R.Prescott, and records read of the ancient history of this Society, showing the difficulty with which money was raised to support preaching and other expenses, and that, at the present time we are in much better circumstances than in the early years of the Society."



Rev. Samuel Budd Swaim served the church for eight years, from 1854 to 1862. He was remembered as a dignified and fatherly man, sympathetic in his dealings with children, and under whose guidance Sunday School methods underwent modification. Monthly concerts replaced regular lessons on the first Sunday of each month. These concerts, which continued for fifteen years as a scheduled program, consisted of Scripture recitations on prepared subjects, the secretary's report of previous concerts, and addresses. Printed programs advertising these concerts were issued monthly.

Rev. Swaim's interest in children and education extended to the secular concerns of the community of West Cambridge. He served for a few years on the school committee, not an unusual position for a Baptist minister. Rev. Ebenezer Nelson, Rev. Timothy C. Tingley, Rev. George Carleton, and Rev. Joseph Banvard had also served terms, as had ministers from other denominations.

A transformation was underway in the membership of the church, one that would not be complete until the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century, by the time of the resignation of Dr. Swaim. Since its earliest history the church had been a family church in which almost every member was related to every other member in some way, and a country church, compos-

ed of the families of farmers long established in the area. To understand the composition of the town of West Cambridge in the early decades of the nineteenth century is to understand the composition of the church. Isaac Hill, a famous politician and governor of New Hampshire, published a sketch of West Cambridge in the *Farmer's Monthly Visitor* for April 30, 1847. An excerpt explains the character of the West Cambridge community:

"The generations succeeding each other on this spot were agricultural men, all of whom from the first have been taught to labor with their own hands. Hosts of men and women, with their descendants, have gone forth from those who first settled West Cambridge, and have carried their habits of industry and thrift elsewhere. All the states of New England and other states of the union have received representatives from these people. But a fact exists in relation to those who remain, which is remarkable—much of the land continues in the ownership of the same families and names as the original occupants. The son has succeeded the father in the same calling...In this length of time family names have become so interwoven by marriage, that the permanent inhabitants of the place are nearly all of blood relation in a nearer or more remote line of consanguinity..."

In the middle of the century Boston businessmen were becoming attracted to West Cambridge in increasing numbers, drawn by the beauty of the area and its proximity to Boston. Also, a railroad appeared by the middle of the 1840's, which branched off by the shores of Spy Pond, extended through the village of West Cambridge, through a gorge in the ridge of hills to the center of Lexington. The older, farmer element of the church came into growing conflict with the newer suburban businessman element within the church.

While West Cambridge citizens were deeply bound by family ties and heritage to Menotomy soil, when a national cause beckoned, they responded promptly. Within a few days of the firing upon Fort Sumter in April, 1861, a public meeting gathered in the Town Hall. Resolutions quickly passed, "referring to the distracted condition of the country, upholding the lawfully constituted authorities of the nation, applauding those young men of the town who had been the first to enlist as a military corps and requesting the call of a town meeting to appropriate the sum of \$10,000 in aid of the families of the soldiers from the town."

Within the church, and within the larger community, West Cambridge residents and Baptist church members have been quick to unite for a common cause.

Predictably, church attendance slackened at the height of the Civil War. Church progress did not come to a halt, though. At the same time that the Society voted unanimously to extend a call to Dr. John Duncan to become pastor, in 1863, it voted to appropriate by subscription the sum of three hundred dollars to secure the services of Mr. Horace Bird for a singing school. Mr. Bird is credited with the inauguration of the chorus choir, a volunteer group that consisted of approximately twenty-five members of twelve years of age and older, and which sang for both morning and afternoon services.



While Deacon William E. Wood recalled Dr. Duncan's manner as one of "exceeding cordiality and heartiness" with an evangelistic tone to his preaching, his pastorate caused a division in the church. Vague references to the poor management of his personal finances appeared in the spare accounts of his brief stay. When a special meeting of the Society was called in September, 1864, to consider the subject of his resignation, Dr. Duncan submitted a pathetic account of his feeling of "mental anguish" on seeing his name posted as the subject of the meeting, which anguish "wholly unfitted me for the Sacred duties of the pulpit,

and resulted during the night of an attack of nervous prostration from which I have not yet recovered not that I desire to remain your Pastor if it is thought not best." Rev. Duncan implored them to allow him time to secure another position, as he had a large family and no means to fall back on. He beseeched them to "remember that a Minister's reputation is his all-if you stab him there you cannot do him greater wrong-and I feel that I deserve different treatment." It was voted that Rev. Duncan cease his duties as pastor on the first of April, 1865, or earlier, if he found a suitable position elsewhere. He offered his resignation officially on January 2, 1865.



Interim preaching filled the Sundays between Rev. Duncan's departure and the arrival of Rev. Amos Harris in January, 1866. There was some difficulty in coming to an agreement over compensation, as Rev. Harris shared a concern common to many minister, that although he did not preach with money as an end, yet he sought compensation sufficient to guarantee a level of living "without feeling cramped and perplexed." The Society had offered Rev. Harris one thousand dollars, annually, an amount first earned by Rev. Banvard in 1851, unchanged for fifteen years. Rev. Harris requested an additional \$200 and financial assistance for his moving expenses. The Church acquiesced.

The postwar pastorate of Rev. Harris, from January, 1866 to January, 1875, was a period of change and growth in membership. Significant changes in the Sunday School, in the interior of the church edifice, and in methods of conducting various church activities occurred in his pastorate, as well as increased friction between the conservative former element and the more innovative city element. Rev. Harris's Maine upbringing suited him to the market gardening and farming constituency of the congregation, noted William Wood in his *Reminiscences*, as he could converse knowledgeably with them about their crops during pastoral visits to their fields. The winter of 1871 was a time of religious awakening. Twenty-six members were baptized between January and March, and evening meetings were almost continuous during that period. Judge Henry J. Wells, superintendent of the Sunday School for five years, spoke every evening, and he persuaded many members to join, thereby demonstrating a well-earned reputation about town as an able debater.

A revolution in Sunday School practices marked the period. E. Willis Corey, a "city man" from Tremont Temple in Boston, was superintendent of the Sunday School from 1872 to 1875. Average attendance at Sunday School increased to between 150 and 160. Monthly concerts, which previously had supplanted the lesson of the day, moved to the evening. Large audiences filled every seat in the large vestry and adjoining smaller one. Exercises included object lessons, blackboard work, acrostics, and music. Sunday School festivals and picnics were a lively and often spectacular part of the religious and social life of the congregation and other townspeople.

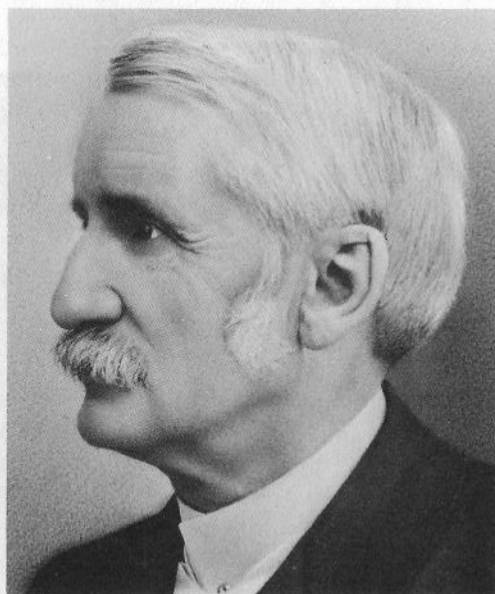
In 1872 Rev. Harris decided to change what he deemed the old-fashioned practice of the congregation of turning their backs to the pulpit to face the choir at the opposite end when singing a hymn. This practice had Puritan origins; the intent was to demonstrate that God did not reside solely in the altar. One Sunday he asked the congregation to remain facing front. One recalcitrant member, Jacob H. Hutchinson, refused to comply with this request for several Sundays, despite the embarrassed entreaties of his family, because, he wanted "to see Mary Teele's face when she sang." The new practice finally prevailed.

Conflict over the election of a deacon to act with Deacon John C. Hobbs, who remained the sole deacon for a total of twenty-four years, and a conflict over the subject of open communion were symptoms of the deepening division between the more conservative and more progressive elements in the church.

When building or repairing the church was the goal, Baptist members have put their differences aside and worked together toward that end. When repairs to the interior of the church required the subscription of \$10,000, the entire amount was subscribed and paid with a balance. The interior work was finished on August 26, 1871. On August 28 a devastating tornado swept through Arlington (Post-war sentiment brought about the name change in 1867). Damages to the spire, the woodwork, and plastering of the building made necessary another month's repair work. The tornado had hurttled the spires of the Unitarian and Orthodox Church to the earth, and badly wrenched that of the Baptist Church.

Rev. Jonathan Bastow, a native of Wales, served as Interim Minister for thirteen Sundays after Rev. Harris tendered his resignation in a letter dated December 27, 1874. His extraordinary memory allowed him to preach without notes, and his preaching drew twelve converts to the church by baptism.

The continued schism in the church between the older and newer elements delayed the selection of a new minister. Since the older farmer element blamed the influence of the city element for the resignation of Rev. Harris, they were determined to oppose anyone selected by that group. The selection committee finally called Rev. Charles H. Spaulding of Pittsfield.



During Rev. Spaulding's four and a half year pastorate membership reached two hundred for the first time. Dr. Spaulding was famous for the number of his pastoral calls, over six hundred a year. Perhaps he relished social interaction, for Deacon Wood wrote that Pastor Spaulding was "not averse to entertainments of a social order being held in the vestry." His sister, Mrs. Hill, promoted events involving large numbers of young people, like "Mrs. Jarley's Wax Work."

Arlington continued to develop as a suburban town in the 1870's, intensifying the older families' fears of the non-farming newcomers who sponsored "citified" innovations. The Arlington Land Company mentioned in the town records of 1872, and composed primarily of Boston businessmen, bought several hundred acres of land in Arlington Heights, known formerly as Circle Hill (presently Park Circle at the summit) to build a village of suburban residences. This location satisfied the requisites of beautiful natural scenery, good facilities for getting to and from the city, pure air and water, and good soil and drainage. By 1878 this village had sixty houses and approximately two hundred and fifty inhabitants, most of whom were not involved in local trade or manufacture, but who did business primarily in Boston. Names of newcomers appeared more frequently on lists of Church and Society officers during this period, although John Hobbs remained the sole deacon.



Prosperity made possible the purchase of a new Hook & Hastings organ in 1879. The installation of this beautiful instrument inspired Organist William E. Wood to study with Prof. S.B. Whitney of Boston for about two years to learn a more churchly style of performance.

The members had an easier time choosing a new organ than they did selecting a new pastor after Dr. Spaulding's resignation in 1880. The division in the church made selection and agreement difficult. Between May 1, 1880 and September 15, 1881, forty-two candidates preached, in addition to several theological school professors and former pastors. Church members sharpened their skills in pastoral criticism and selection, but fortunately they did not need these facilities for another twenty-eight years from the arrival of thirty-four year old Rev. Charles H. Watson, D.D.



Rev. Watson's pastorate, from October, 1881 to May, 1909, was the longest in the history of the church. In the first year of his service the issue of the birth date of this church was settled. The North Baptist Association of Churches had previously published the incorporation date of 1817 as the origin until it was shown that the Woburn and Arlington churches had once been the same body, and that preaching had been continually maintained in Arlington since 1781. Although 1881 was the centennial anniversary of the church, no observation was made until 1890 when strangely,

the 109th anniversary was recognized with special exercises at the time of the annual reunion and roll call.

Rev. Watson promoted harmony in many areas in the church. In his *Recollections*. William E. Wood reflected on the qualities that Rev. Watson brought to this family church. Although the "independence" of some of the older members amused Dr. Watson privately, his "even balance of judgment, the sanity of his ideas and methods, and the beautiful language in which his utterances were expressed, all conspired to bind the Church into cooperative endeavor... His calm and steadying influence built up a situation which can be concisely described as one of harmony and of substantial progress."

After the removal in 1892 of the organ to a position behind the pulpit where a choir gallery was formed in an extension made to the Church edifice for that purpose, Dr. Watson and Organist Wood worked to achieve a harmony between the substance of the Sunday service, the scripture reading and the sermon, and the music selections. A double quartet was formed with the end result being a beautiful and impressive service. Strangers and congregation alike deemed Dr. Watson's and Mr. Wood's musical taste superb.



Mrs. Henry Hornblower, Mrs. Ralph Paris, Miss Nettie Wellington, Deac. Benjamin Conant, Deacon William Wood, organist, Ralph Paris, George G. Allen, Mrs. Moses Coleman, Stephen R. Wood.

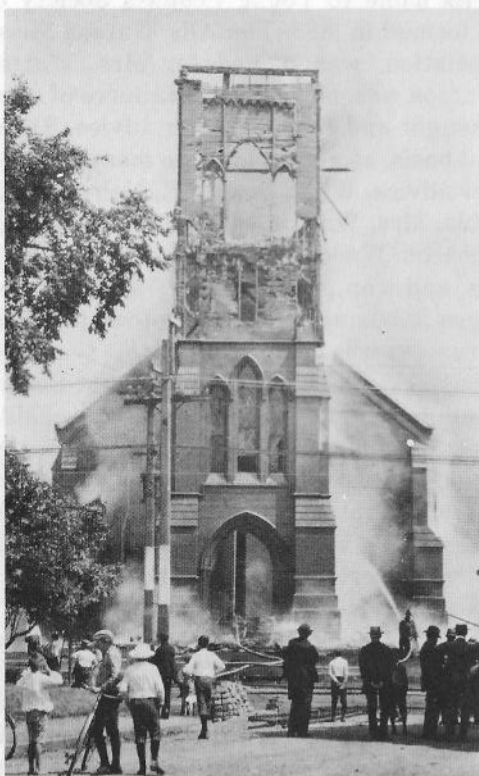
In 1885 Dr. Watson decided that Deacon Hobbs, who had served alone for almost twenty years, needed the help of two young men, Wendell E. Richardson and William E. Wood. Wendell E. Richardson served as superintendent of the Sunday School for five different terms during a twenty-five year period, a total of over eighteen years. William Wood remembered him for his efficiency, kindness, and hospitality, noting that he followed up every case of sickness immediately, and that "his horse and carriage were going everywhere on merciful errands."

Dr. and Mrs. Watson worked together in the work of the church in bringing the children into Baptist fellowship, through their preaching, teaching, and mission work. Dr. Watson taught a young men's Bible class for almost ten years, and he frequently substituted for absent teachers in the Sunday School. Dr. Watson was a forceful preacher who stressed the building of character and righteous behavior, particularly in the young. Several groups provided young people the opportunity for church and missionary work involvement. The Young People's Christian Union, which later changed its name to Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor was formed in 1888. The Ada Watson Mission Band, a children's association, was named for Mrs. Watson. Frail in health, Mrs. Watson was, nonetheless, a source of strength to her husband who sought and respected her advice. She served, too, on an individual basis, as a confidante to many young people who also trusted her advice. When Deacon E. Nelson Blake spent one winter in Florida, Mrs. Watson substituted for him in the Blake Bible Class. Deacon Wood wrote that she substituted during several periods, and won praise for her "scholarly expositions."

Several changes in business procedure took place. The name of the Board of Trustees was changed from the Trustees of the Cutter Fund to Trustees of the Arlington Baptist Society, as other sources had contributed gifts and undoubtedly would continue to do so in the future. Finally the system of raising money by rented pews was abandoned. Attempts had been made as early as 1878 to raise money by voluntary subscription. In 1899 voluntary subscriptions through a weekly envelope system was instituted. After Deacon Hobbs resigned in 1866 the number of deacons increased eventually to six. One attempted change was unsuccessful. Efforts to combine the Church and the Society in 1899 failed. Although individual communion cups were endorsed in 1900 they were not installed until later. In 1893, the old parsonage occupied by Baptist ministers for seventy years and increasingly expensive to maintain, was sold, and Dr. and Mrs. Watson moved to 26 Academy Street. The church voted on December 4, 1903, to

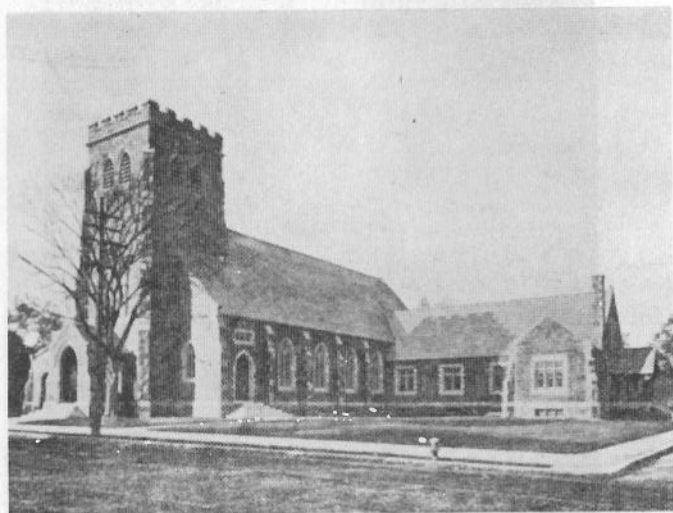
change the name to the First Baptist Church of Arlington, Massachusetts.

Efforts to remove the badly peeling sanded surface of the church building with the use of a torch, a method recognized as a fire hazard by some of the older members of the Society, resulted in a fire that consumed the entire building on July 25, 1900. Once again the members rallied, contributing time, energy, and money to rebuild their church. Deacon E. Nelson Blake had returned to the church after a twenty-six year absence. He was, wrote William Wood, "a powerful factor in the work of restoration, and was, by far, the heaviest financial contributor, donating about \$15,000 towards the \$75,000 needed beyond the insurance money." Deacon Blake became chairman of the Building Committee. Of the forty-six new members who joined the Society in the period immediately following the fire, several were women, who, by their attendance at Society meetings, were breaking the men-only tradition. Under Massachusetts law, women had not been



allowed to be voting members of religious societies until the 1870's. What appeared to be a custom had originated in law.

The old lot was too small for the new Gothic style church building, designed by architect Charles B. Dunham of Boston. The amended lot, enlarged by purchase of additional property, by lot line adjustments with abutters, and right of way acquisition over Willow Court, was registered in the Massachusetts Land Court, under the Torrens System of Registration. This registration eliminated any potential title dispute that might have originated prior to the date of registration.



The new church edifice was far removed architecturally from its small frame predecessor at 21 Appleton Street. The new building, constructed of seam-faced Quincy granite, with trimmings of Nova Scotia limestone, and roof of green-grey slate, bore little relation to the New England beginnings of the Baptist Society itself. Although the massive proportions of the structure, its tower, and the cathedral windows lent dignity and elegance, both the exterior and the interior with its heavy hammer beam trusses of ornamental Gothic design, and the marvelous organ, recalled the ecclesiastical art of Europe, not that of Early America. As Deacon Wood observed, "the architectural taste and education of both Dr. and Mrs. Watson was most influentially stamped upon all details of the handsome stone edifice." Thus, the First Baptist Church of Arlington was entering the early

years of a new century with a magnificent new physical structure, and an equally magnificent membership of over three hundred. The church was dedicated November 4, 1902.

The new century witnessed the continuing metamorphosis of Arlington from a predominantly farming community to a metropolitan suburb. But, to Mrs. Nathan E. Wood, the wife of the next pastor, Arlington was still a country town and First Baptist a "country church." Dr. Wood had been pastor of Chicago, Brookline, and Boston churches, and for ten years he had been



president of the Newton Theological Institution. When William Wood represented the church in extending the pastoral call to Dr. Wood, Mrs. Wood "brought all of her Greek scholarship and most earnest opposition to bear to prevent her husband taking 'a country church' at a salary of one half what he had received at the First Baptist Church of Boston, and other large churches before becoming president of Newton." Nonetheless, the Woods came to First Baptist and stayed for ten years.

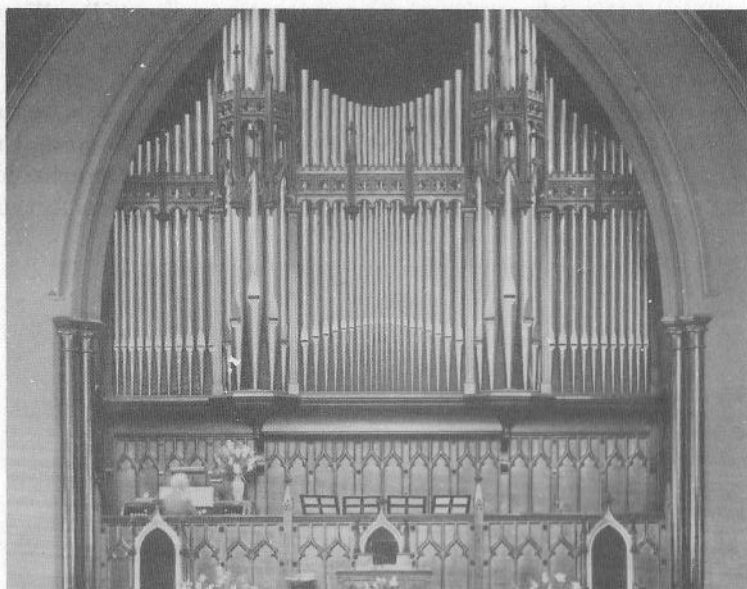
This period saw the resumption of Sunday evening services, the organization of the Young Men's Social Union in 1910, and the formation of the Philathea Society of Young Ladies in 1911. The Boys' Brigade was encouraged by Dr. Wood, who attended all

meetings of the suborganizations to give his support. Dr. Wood took a deep interest in the Sunday School, and his business management abilities were applied to the development of departments in the Sunday School organization. The Men's Class, begun in 1910 with an object of promoting religious interest among the men of Arlington, sponsored a variety of social and philanthropic activities. The Clare Class was organized in 1917 with Mrs. Arthur E. Clare as teacher.



The prewar era was one of rapid growth in the town, and a time of prosperity and harmony, before the eruption of Europe into war. In this period Symmes Hospital was built, the new Town Hall dedicated, St. James Catholic parish and Calvary Methodist established, an addition to the Crosby School built, and the new high school completed.

Missionary work accelerated, as did involvement with some of the social issues of the day. On October 14, 1912, Church notes related that "The Young People's Christian Endeavor Society gave a temperance concert in the Boston Baptist Bethel tonight." One of the students for the ministry, Joseph M. Burt, made the temperance address. The plight of the immigrants was reviewed at a December, 1915 evening prayer meeting at which Deacon Watkins lectured, with stereopticon views, on immigration in Massachusetts and the condition of immigrants on and after ar-



rival here. At the end of the meeting, "Deacons Watkins, Stevens, and Brother Stackpole were selected as a committee to prepare resolutions to present to the church for adoption, requesting our Representative in the Massachusetts legislature to aid in securing needed legislation for the better protection and assistance of the immigrants coming into Massachusetts from foreign countries."

Both town and church rallied with the outbreak of World War I and America's entrance into the war. The town formed a Committee on Public Safety, which sponsored activities that supported the soldiers fighting overseas, and promoted the welfare of those at home. Sixty Baptist men and women served their country in the first World War, through the armed services and the Red Cross. Two were decorated for heroism; three gave their lives.

At home a serious epidemic of influenza closed the doors of the church for three successive Sundays in 1918, the first time in the history of the church. Although the wisdom of this was indisputable inasmuch as the sickness had ravaged entire communities, the writer of one Society entry could not refrain "from entering these words found in God's word of his promises: There shall no evil befall thee, Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

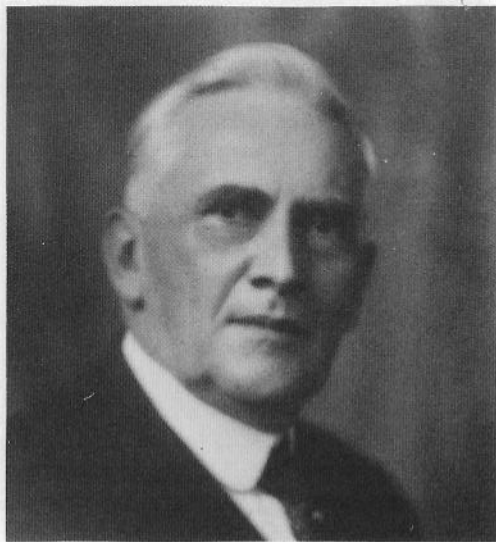
On November 11, 1918, the Baptist bell rang out with the bells of other churches to celebrate "the glad news that Germany had ac-

cepted the terms of the armistice proposed by the Allied Nations. We have so much to be thankful for. "Our God is a consuming fire."

In 1919 Deacon William E. Wood was honored for fifty years of service as organist. That same year, Pastor Nathan E. Wood, who had been preaching for fifty-one years, including ten at First Baptist, read his resignation at the morning service of June 15.

Disaster struck First Baptist again on the morning of Friday, October 24, 1924, when fire damaged part of the interior of the church, including the memorial window given by the Swaim family, the Rawson clock, and the great organ which bore the plate recording the fifty year service of William E. Wood as organist. The bell survived, as did most of the chapel. Other churches were prompt to offer both condolences and the use of their facilities. As in the past, fire served as a unifying factor. People unite in hardship to work for common goals they all can share.

Charles B. Dunham, the architect of the original building, served as architect for the reconstructed church. The exterior remained substantially the same, while the interior changed partially. Convenience suggested the inclined floor in the main auditorium, the more elevated baptistry and organ loft, and the renovated church and chapel basement, which was equipped for a banquet hall, kitchen, and Sunday School rooms. Since the pastor Dr. Henry Potter, himself was a competent organist, he paid diligent attention to the rebuilding and installation of a new organ.



Since the 1840's when the Society voted to allow land at the rear of the church for the construction of a row of horse sheds, these sheds, built and owned by the people who used them, served as a gathering place before and after services for lively discussions about various church and community issues. In 1863 a "Committee on Horse Sheds" presented a resolution adopted by the Society. Based on that resolution, the Society in 1878 declared that although it was not obligated to do anything toward repairing the foundation of the sheds, it would, nevertheless, allot a sum of money not exceeding \$100 for the purpose of repairing the foundation of the sheds. By 1924 the sheds were an anachronism; however, regret and nostalgia accompanied their removal after the fire. Services were finally resumed in the reconstructed church on February 21, 1926.

In the twenty-five years from 1897 to 1922, Arlington had nearly tripled its population, from 6,515 to 18,646. This great population increase made necessary the conversion of the old open town meeting form of government into a representative town meeting form, and the construction of new schools, fire stations, and churches. The church membership reflected that growth. During the seven and a half year pastorate of Dr. Henry Potter, from 1919 to 1927, the church increased an astounding 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %. When he resigned, the enrollment of the church was six hundred and ninety-eight.



Through the pastorate of Dr. Grady D. Feagan, from 1928 to 1944, which spanned the depression and part of the second World War, the church continued to grow in size and in the wealth of social and religious activities it offered. The Sunday School flourished in this period. Whereas in other historical eras, the welfare of the church reflected the welfare of the community as a whole, this principle did not apply to the same extent in the 1930's. For in spite of the economic hardship suffered by many, the First Baptist Church was in a period of unprecedented growth.

Work in the Sunday School grew to such an extent that by 1938 the Board of Deacons was asked to undertake an extensive study on the possible enlargement of the Sunday School facilities. Quite simply, they needed more space to accommodate the ever-expanding programs for children, young people, and adults. First Baptist has been blessed with gifted teachers and leaders from its membership. Caroline Higgins was one such talented teacher, who formed the Win-One Class in 1928. By 1936 there was a Win-One Class, Junior Win-One Class, Clare Class, Men's Bible and Social Union, Philathea Society, Missionary Committee, Senior and Intermediate Christian Endeavor, and smaller groups under the Women's Missionary Society such as the Pleasant Street, Mysticside, and Arlington Heights Group.

All kinds of organizations proliferated in Arlington in the 1920's and 1930's. Such organizations as The Friends of the Drama, The Lions, The Arlington Philharmonic, The Garden Club, The Tower Mothers, The Ladies Lodge of the Sons of Italy, the Zonta Club, Rotary, Florence Crittenton League, and Church Women United provided for a populace with varied social and civic interests.

The pastor himself was active in a number of community organizations. Rev. Feagan was such a popular speaker that he was honored by positions in a number of organizations. He was chaplain in Hiram Lodge, President of Graduate Alumni Association of Boston University, President of the North Baptist Educational Society, and a member of the Arlington Rotary Club.

During the Depression when the Robbins House gave out food stamps, food and clothing, and medical help, and the Old Town Hall housed a group who made clothes for children, an unemployment committee which gave out work for the town at a pay of \$3 a day, and a special welfare department completely subsidized by the town for people who did not qualify for other kinds of relief.

the First Baptist Church prospered, grew, and served as a strong united family church, a center for community and religious life.

On the occasion of its 150th anniversary the First Baptist Church held a community celebration in the Town Hall with four hundred people attending. John Nicol Mark, pastor of the Unitarian Church gave the opening prayer, as a symbol of interdenominational co-operation. The celebration closed with a banquet and music. On Thursday and Friday evening, May 7 and 8, 1931, the Women's Union performed the historical pageant, "The Rainbow of Promise," which was written by Mrs. Grady Feagan and coached by Miss Caroline Higgins and Mrs. Ida Hunt, and performed by a cast of two hundred. The auditorium was packed both nights.

Letters written to the Massachusetts Baptist Convention recorded the growth of the membership, the steady increase in church and Sunday School attendance, and often record-breaking attendances at Men's classes, special Easter services, and evening Easter pageants. The church managed to pay its bills during these financially troubled times. The church did make concessions to the economic necessities of the time by voting in 1933 to close the church building on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. A letter to Boston North Association stated, with justified pride, that the church had exceeded by \$350 the missionary giving of the previous year even though they had raised the salary of the young people's director and added a pastor's secretary. This took place in a time of national economic depression. In 1939 the total membership was 1,047; the total attendance at two Easter Sunday services was 1,065.

When government threatened to intrude on the financial life of the church in 1939, the Baptist Church responded quickly to defend both principles and finances. At a February church service "it was unanimously voted that the Church go on record as opposed to pending legislation which would impose taxes upon churches in behalf of Old Age Benefits or Unemployment Insurance, and that the Church Clerk be instructed to convey that message to our Massachusetts Senators, Congressman, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee with a copy sent to the Northern Baptist Convention."

When the world erupted into war once again, many Baptist men and women served in the armed forces and the Red Cross. On July 22, 1943, the members were notified that "owing to the reputed shortage of chaplains in the Army, our Pastor, Dr. Grady

D. Feagan, several months ago, patriotically volunteered his service to his country and applied for the position of Chaplain in the army." When Dr. Feagan received his commission the church granted him a leave of six months, beginning September 1, 1943. On February 27, 1944, at a special meeting, the resignation of Dr. Feagan was accepted with regret.

Church members who stayed at home during the war organized a War Service Committee. Their duties included the distribution of literature and gift packages to church and congregation members serving in the armed forces.

The postwar era reunited families who had been separated by war. The pastorate of Nathan W. Wood, 1944-1955 was a period of growth in the size of the membership and the size of the church facilities. Church attendance reached a record-breaking height of 1800 on Easter Sunday in 1947. This upward trend continued throughout Rev. Wood's pastorate. The church, with its multiplicity of Sunday School and other programs, stressed the active participation of every member of the family in the life of the church.

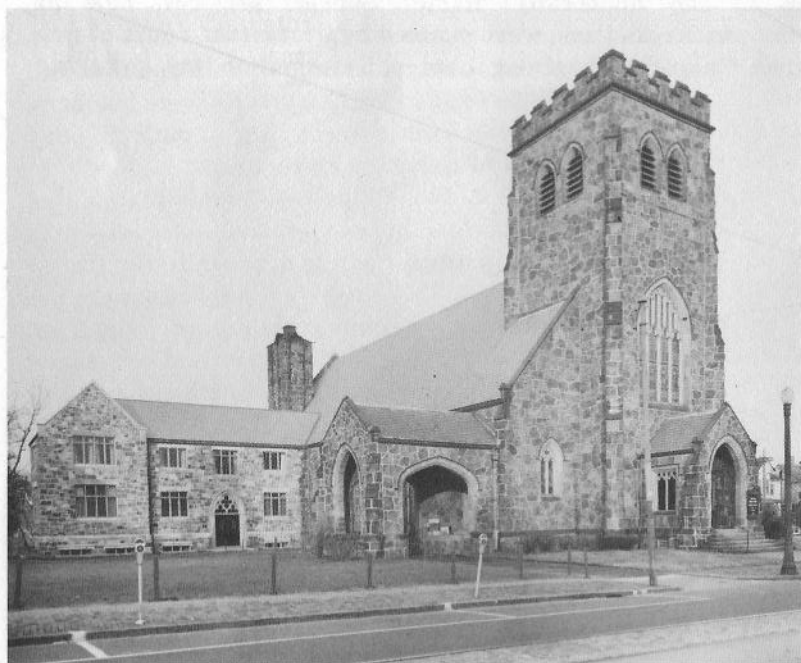
At the same time that the importance of family life was emphasized, the church expanded its involvement with other churches in the community. Easter Sunrise services, held at Menotomy Rocks Park, were planned by Protestant Youth of Arlington. Union Thanksgiving, Lenten, Reformation Day, and other



special occasion services were well attended by participating churches. A community leadership training school was a joint undertaking with other churches.

The beginning of the second half of the twentieth century brought the culmination of a three-year building fund drive in the construction and dedication of a new Memorial Wing. The need for larger Sunday School accommodations had long been obvious. Construction of new or enlarged church facilities had always served to unite the church people, and to represent for them an investment in the future. Society notes observed the beginning of the wing construction with a hopeful entry: "A dream became reality; our new Memorial Wing was started and will soon stand complete—a symbol of our faith and hope. In these days of doubt, confusion and fear, it proclaims our belief in those things that endure forever." The new Memorial Wing was formally dedicated on December 9, 1951, with the unveiling of a memorial tablet with the names of the honored dead of World Wars I and II from First Baptist Church. (William Patterson, Caroline Higgins, Rev. Nathan W. Wood).

To underscore the importance of the family to the church, several Sundays were designated as Family Sundays, on which





families were invited to worship together. In an effort to help unite church and church school, on specified Sundays church school classes were invited to attend church and sit together as a group in reserved sections of the sanctuary with their teachers. The annual observation of Youth Week and Youth Sunday became an important part of the church program.

A marked feature of Rev. Wood's pastorate was the joining with other community churches for co-operative enterprises. In 1948 and 1949 the Church participated in a Crusade for Christ which comprised three projects: winning the Children for Christ, a religious census, and a ten-day co-operative crusade with Baptist churches in Belmont, Weston, Watertown, and Waltham. Church Census Workers, a project of the Arlington Council of Churches sent ninety-five workers out into the community to make 1400 contacts.

Missionary work continued. Annual Schools of Missions provided forums for speakers to relate the ongoing work in the mission field. In October, 1951 the church welcomed a family from Germany, whom it had agreed to sponsor as part of the Displaced Persons program.

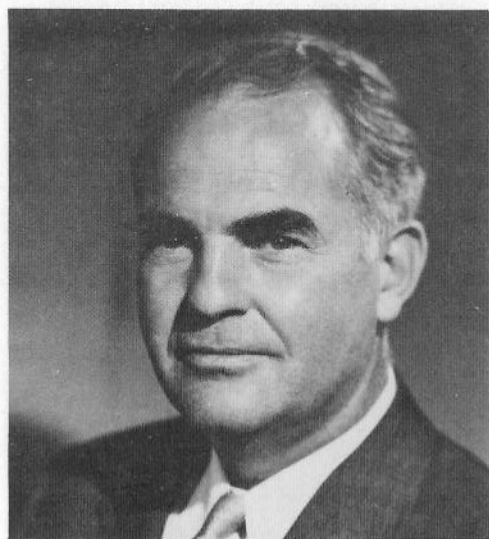


In 1952, the first full year of work in the enlarged facility, Miss Eda Knowlton, Director of Religious Education for nine years, resigned. Rev. Rollin I. Tingley became the new Minister of Christian Education and Assistant Pastor. Mr. Donald Marshall succeeded Mr. Harvey Davies who had been organist and choir director for twelve years.

Young people's activities were supported, for a strong young people's program was perceived as insuring a strong future for the church. Junior High, Senior High, and Youth fellowships were popular, and a newly developed recreational program for Junior Highers was in operation in 1953. The Couples Club, organized in 1952 for young married adults, proved to be a source of teachers for the vacation church school, and the nursery, kindergarten, and church school programs. A church school class for college and business young people formed; the Shepherding Committee reorganized as the Friendship Committee to promote Christian friendliness among the people of the church.

In 1955 the church was saddened by the resignation of Rev. Wood, but in June of that year they were able to rejoice in a consecration service and reception which was held for Miss Margaret Clare Alsen who was entering the field of missionary work and is still serving in Zaire, Africa.

On June 29, 1955, Dr. Francis W. Thompson, President of Bacone College in Oklahoma, was given a unanimous call as the



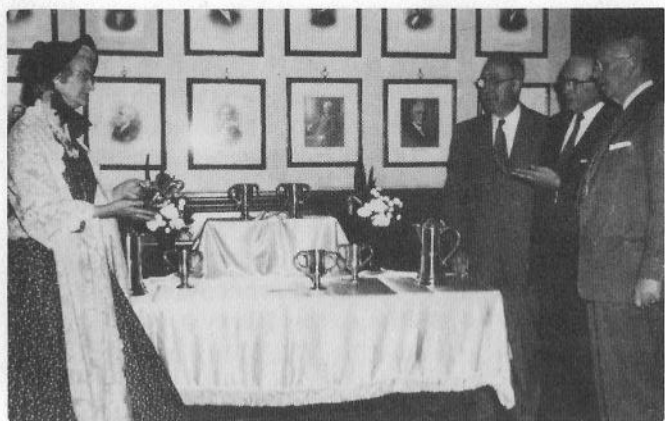
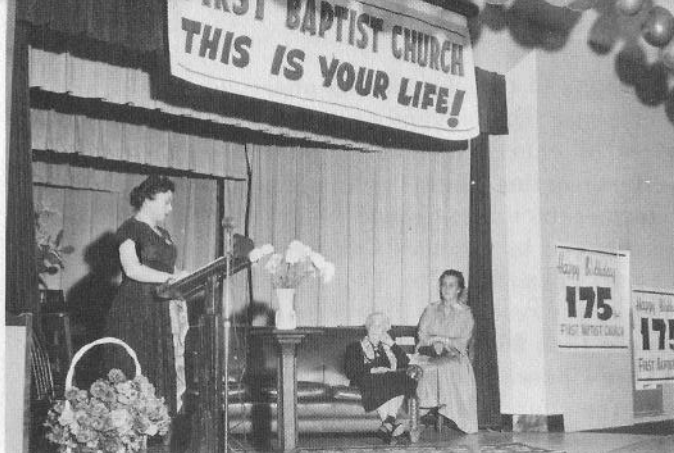
next pastor. With the inauguration of each new pastor, the church has had an opportunity to rededicate itself to the best traditions of the past, and to consecrate itself to growth and renewal. The church historian's notes illumined this sense of hope and optimism.

"Dr. Thompson began his work with us on September 11 and from the very first we have felt that our faith in the Pulpit Committee had been fully justified. Dr. Thompson has brought renewed vigor and spiritual vision to our church, together with the courage to attempt new and greater things for Christ."

Some of the new ideas introduced into church routine were the establishment of two Sunday services, fellowship dinners, calendar listings of sick and shut-in members, the appearance of a red rose on the altar signifying the birth of a baby in the home of members, publication of a church paper (called Smoke Signals), copies of the Pastor's sermons made available on request, and the attendance at the second service each week of one of the church school departments. This writer vividly remembers the laying of the red carpet down the center aisle of the sanctuary, and the introduction of square dancing in the basement of the church.

A service of recognition honored Rev. and Mrs. Rollin I. Tingley for their four years of service when they left First Baptist. Rev. Donald Menzel became Director of Christian Education and Assistant Minister on January 1, 1957.





The 175th birthday of the church was observed in 1956 with a week of celebrations. On November 3 the Birthday Banquet featured movies of church members and the performance of Frank Lane. Homecoming Night was held on November 10, at which many former members joined in a "This Is Your Life" presentation arranged by Frances Caldwell. Historical displays and pageants and an address by Dr. John Brush of Andover Newton comprised the rest of the anniversary program. Birthday gifts totaled more than \$6,000.

During 1956 the Church and the Society had appointed a committee to study the church organizational set-up and once again to explore the possibility of merging Church and Society. In 1957 the merger of the Arlington Baptist Society and the First Baptist Church was finally accomplished, together with the adoption of a new set of by-laws.

Mr. Robert Ball began his musical service as organist and choir director in September of 1956, and Loretta Thompson, the pastor's wife, became the director of the Junior Choir, a position previously held by Mrs. Tingley. This she subdivided into four new choirs: Alpha (Primary); Temple (Junior); Chancel (Junior High); and Antiphonal (Teen). Mrs. Thompson had a beautiful singing voice and the ability to convert the croak of a frog into the warble of a nightingale, as this frog recalls.

Dr. Thompson once referred to First Baptist as a "sleeping giant" that needed to be awakened. Scarcely had he awakened the Baptist behemoth when he was called to be Vice President and Director of Development of the University of Redlands, Redlands, California. Rev. Menzel became Interim Pastor in October, and he was assisted by Mrs. Morrell Edgerly, Superintendent of the Church School and an experienced Christian Education Director.

Dr. and Mrs. Robert Slaughter and their family came to First Baptist in 1959 for an eight year pastorate. Some of the first changes were aimed at making the Sunday service more devotional. The meditation of the day and week, the sermon, and the music were all on one theme, thereby achieving a more harmonious service. The church recognized eleven special Sundays that year, and presented a total of fourteen guest speakers, some of whom preached at the Sunday service, others of whom addressed youth groups, Sunday School, and other functions.

The historical highlight of 1960 was the Harvest Supper and Mortgage Burning Service attended by 375. Many new features



of the year included church planning conferences by the three major boards, a monthly newsletter, institution of coffee hours and fellowship for college age young people home for the holidays, a new youth lounge, and Group Dynamics Classes held by Rev. Donald Menzel. The church co-operated with the Council of Churches in Pulpit Exchange Sunday, Visitation Program, Vacation Church School, Union Summer Services, Good Friday Services, and Reformation Sunday. The leaders of the 90th Observance of the Women's Mission Society included Charlotte Gilmour, Ruth King Reid, Edith Wyman, Elva Bolton, Beulah Foye, Helen Alsen, Pauline Miller, Marie O'Day and Nellie Alsen.



Family unity was fostered during the 1960's, and the young people were served through a variety of social activities: family night dinners, young people's socials and dances, coffee hours and picnics for older young people, church school suppers. Concentrated Bible study was available through Bible classes for men and women. Lenten breakfasts and discussion classes, a School of evangelism and weekday Christian Education classes for high school juniors and seniors.



Rev. William Marsell became Associate Minister after Rev. Donald Menzel resigned to become minister of the Federated Church of Norfolk and Chaplain of Pondville State Hospital. In that year land was taken from church property by eminent domain for the widening of Massachusetts Avenue. The church property was completely re-evaluated for insurance purposes, and found to have an approximate value of \$800,000.

Between 1960 and 1962 the church welcomed three families through the refugee program as part of its commitment to worldwide Christian concerns.

Comprehensive and intensive planning, fundamentals of good business practice, had come to characterize the practical operations of First Baptist Church. In May, 1962, the Review and Research Committee had been appointed to make an extensive study of the church, its programs, needs and opportunities. A final report presented in 1965 suggested three major mission projects for work in Haiti and the Congo, and projects in building and grounds improvement. A church meeting authorized a financial

campaign to raise \$171,000. At a Loyalty Dinner held on December 1 to start off the drive, it was announced that \$87,900 had already been pledged. Part of the recommendations for remodeling were that the present chapel area be remodeled to include a chapel for the seating of one hundred people, which would be used for weddings, funerals, and any service or meeting of a religious nature. Such a chapel was eventually dedicated in 1971.



Church members come together to celebrate; they come together to mourn. There were occasions for both in 1963. In September many members of the church and congregation took great pleasure in organizing a surprise party in honor of Dr. and Mrs. Slaughter's twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. (Robert Crawford, Dr. & Mrs. Slaughter and Francis Tufts). In November, the church was open all day for anyone wishing to enter and meditate when our President John F. Kennedy, was assassinated. A special service of memory was held the Sunday evening following the assassination.

The activities of the Christian Social Concern Committee in the 1960's reflected the expanding involvement of the church in a wide range of social and political issues. The church had representatives on the Arlington Peace Committee and the Arlington Committee on Civil Rights, and participated in distributing material on Candidates' Nights. In the election year of 1964 the Newsletter printed material helpful in assisting members in

choosing a President. The Committee looked for ways in which they might best serve the needs of the elderly of the church and the community. A Calling Corps was re-established as a cooperative effort with the Circles of the Women's Missionary Society.

Increasingly the church was becoming a center that sought to provide for the continued intellectual growth and social awareness of its members. 1962 was the first year of the College for Christians which provided a series of lectures, usually by professors from local schools of theology and eminent church leaders. The University of Life program, also sponsored by the Arlington Council of Churches, was inaugurated in the late 1960's. Focus 69, a jointly sponsored ten-week program, focused on such topics as: A Laymen's Guide to Protestantism; The Church: Its Nature and Mission; Teenager in Arlington; Black Power and White Christians; and Christian Dynamics.

Annual historian's reports lauded the unfailing good humor, kindness, devotion and service (above and beyond the call of duty) of Dr. Robert Slaughter. The church was stunned when he accepted the call of the Board of Directors to become the Executive Director of the Greater Worcester Area Council of Churches. His resignation was accepted at a business meeting called December 18, 1966, "with regret and prayerful good wishes." Rev. Alexander Henderson was called as Interim Pastor.

The spirit of ecumenicism came alive in Arlington. In 1967 First Baptist joined in worship services planned by the Arlington Ministers to observe a week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Services were held at St. Agnes, St. James, and St. Camillus Catholic, St. Athanasius Greek Orthodox and at some Protestant churches. At the October 29 installation and dedication of the new minister, Rev. William B. McGinnis, the Curate of St. Agnes Church, the Rev. Myron Bullock, read the Scripture. First Baptist united with the Arlington churches in an Ecumenical Thanksgiving service at St. Agnes Church. In 1970 the Church Council voted to become active in the Arlington Ecumenical Association of Churches and of the Covenant Committee representing the six churches "who are working together to express their common faith in life." A comment made by a child was indicative of the growing spirit of understanding. In 1970 a fifth grade class from St. Eulalia's Church attended the Baptist worship service and later attended the fifth and sixth grade Sunday School class. One of the visitors remarked, "You learn the same things we do!"



Francis Ennis, Church Historian at the time, wrote of 1968 that it was a difficult year for the church, that the people were not attending or making pledges, and that the work of the church had to be cut drastically. A general upheaval took place in 1969 which divided the church family. Rev. William B. McGinnis read his resignation at the close of the morning services on January 5, 1969.

Rev. Alexander Henderson served as Interim Pastor through November. Rev. William J. Phillips was elected as Associate Pastor, and he served as Interim Pastor after Rev. Henderson's departure and until Rev. Joseph R. Sweeny, officially became the next pastor on September 1, 1970. Rev. F. Kingsley Emerson, Jr. served as Associate Minister from October, 1971 to January, 1975.

Dr. Sweeny's pastorate spanned the decade of the 70's, a time of turbulence in our national, community, and individual lives. The Civil Rights protests of the 1960's had been followed by anti-war protests and the quagmire of Vietnam. Watergate, the ero-



sion of traditional moral values, minority rights, the women's movement, changes in family structure, and the growth of the drug culture are some of the issues that have confronted and challenged all of us. Throughout his pastorate, Dr. Sweeny brought the message of the gospel to the world of the 70's, addressing the social and political issues of the time.

There were many "firsts" for First Baptist in the decade, as well as the continuation and expansion of traditional activities and programs. Meetings called "Conversations" were held in members' homes as get-acquainted opportunities for the pastor, members of the church and congregation, and other friends and neighbors. The Women's Mission Society sponsored its first "Country Fair" in the fall of 1971, a profitable event which they repeated through the decade. The church engaged a lawyer to see if any of our donated funds prohibited use of church facilities for other than religious purposes. When no restrictions were found, the church gave permission to the Arlington School Department to use the kindergarten facilities for the Menotomy Pre-School, an early childhood education project of the high school. Groups such as AARP, the Women's Club, and others used the facilities on occasion. Several innovative worship services were held in the Chapel on Sunday evenings, begun early in the 1970's as an experiment suggested by several members of the congregation who wished to worship more informally. Coffee and conversation after



the morning worship service provided an opportunity for fellowship and a comfortable place for parents to await their church school youngsters.

Music as worship and music as celebration has enriched the life of the First Baptist Church for most of its two hundred years. During the 1970's Robert Ball as organist and choir director, Ruth Bowlby as soloist until her resignation in 1977, and the Chancel Choir provided the mainstay of the music of First Baptist. The Sunshine Choir continued the tradition of teaching the children to worship through music. Many groups have brought joy with their musical offerings: Adam's Ribs, Joyful Noise, Good News, Gloritones, Lord's Blessings. The Messengers have spread their Christian tidings through song wherever and whenever they could, while the youth group, God's Horizons, has represented the church on many concert tours. For several years various music groups produced Strawberry Festivals and Pops Concerts, the proceeds from which went to the Organ Renewal Fund.

Much of the strength of First Baptist has been in the devotion and dedication of its lay leadership. Every detail of church life has in some way involved the time, effort, and loving care of many workers. Baptist members have played every role in the operation of the church, from occupying the pulpit on laity Sunday to filling the Sanctuary with flowers. Some of the services performed have changed through the years, as the needs of people in a changing world have changed. But others have remained the same. Raymond Anderson became lay visitor in 1975. While the pace of life may be considerably faster than it was when Deacon Richardson went about his errands of mercy in a horse and carriage, the human need for comfort and caring is as urgent now as it was 100 years ago.

First Baptist began to plan ahead for its Bicentennial Year celebration when it formed a committee in 1977, headed by Errol Jacobsen. The opening event of the Bicentennial Year festivities was "Homecoming" weekend, October 18-19, 1980. Special guests

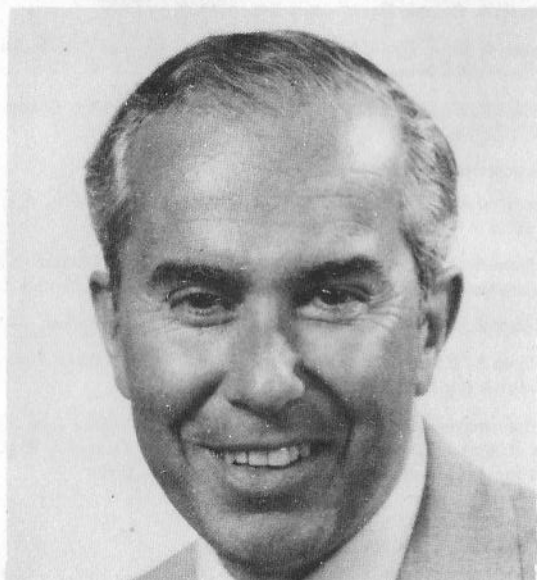


included Dr. and Mrs. Robert Slaughter and Dr. and Mrs. Grady Feagan, our beloved former pastors and their wives. Many past and present friends of First Baptist made the sentimental journey "home" for the weekend of "fun, food, and fellowship."

Dr. Joseph R. Sweeny concluded ten years as Pastor in September, 1980, and on October 26 his letter of resignation was read. "I have endeavored," wrote Dr. Sweeny, "to declare the gospel with clarity, to enter into the sufferings and pains of the people, and to offer effective leadership in helping the Church move forward."

On November 23, the Church elected Dr. Victor F. Scalise, Jr. to serve as Interim Pastor. In his contribution to the Annual

Report of 1980 Dr. Scalise reminded the church people of the many resources of the First Baptist Church: the size, warmth, and friendliness of the congregation; the talent and commitment of the staff and the people; the excellence of the Sunday School classrooms; the beauty of the Sanctuary. We must, in this Bicentennial Year, remember this, and honor what we are and what we have become. For birthdays are a time for stocktaking, a time for looking at where we have been, for regarding where we stand now, and for planning where we shall go, through the Grace of God, in the years to come.



The First Baptist Church of Arlington, Massachusetts, is celebrating two hundred years of life, a life that took form as the new American nation struggled into existence. Both the Baptist Church and the young Republic survived the difficult years; they survived despite conflict and division, despite acts of nature and acts of man, despite threats from within and threats from without. But the Church, like the Republic, endured. Those early Baptist men and women would be amazed at what they wrought, at what would come to pass in two hundred years. Every member of the church, every devoted member of the congregation, and every minister of God throughout the history of First Baptist is part of the fabric of the church today. Our heritage is what they gave to the church: their hopes, their faith, and their hard work. We look with wonder and gratitude at the legacy of our past; we look with courage and consecration to the promise of our future.

CREDITS FOR THIS BOOKLET:

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Technical School, Lexington, Massachusetts

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BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS (1781-1981)

"Homecoming": October 18-19, 1980

Chapel Services: November 28, 1980

January 25, 1981

February 22, 1981

March 22, 1981

April 26, 1981

Musical Celebration: April 12, 1981

Anniversary Dinner and Ball: May 2, 1981

Founders' Service: June 7, 1981

Dr. LeRoy Johnston, Jr.

Rev. Nathan Wood

Rev. Edward Johnston

Dr. Arthur M. Foye

Rev. Allen Goss

"Worthy Is The Lamb" (Wyrzten)
Combined Choir with other Churches

Mr. & Mrs. Club

BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE: Mrs. Norman Jacobsen, Chairman; Miss Elizabeth
Bradbury, Mr. Rodman Dickie, Mrs. John Finlayson, Mrs. Robert Dolham, Mr. Arthur
Garland, Mrs. C. Wesley Johnson, Mrs. William Megow, Mrs. Doris Relf, Mrs. Paul Smith, Mr.
Robert Swanson

BICENTENNIAL PATRONS

Mr. & Mrs. Haig Adamian
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph O. Bates
Miss Elizabeth Bradbury
Mr. & Mrs. Gilbert H. Crane
Mrs. Thelma Sorenson Crosby
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur O. Davidson
Dr. & Mrs. David L. Davidson
Mr. & Mrs. Edmund L. Frost
Mr. & Mrs. Clinton Haig
Mr. & Mrs. LeRoy N. Johnston
Mr. Leslie Jones
Mrs. Marie & Miss Dorothy Lansil
Mrs. Sara E. Macdonald
Dr. & Mrs. Robert E. Slaughter

BICENTENNIAL SPONSORS

Mr. & Mrs. Carroll Abbott
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Adams
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Anderson
Anonymus
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Aulenback
Mr. & Mrs. George H. Bolles
Mrs. Elva T. Bolton
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bowby
Miss Jeannette M. Briggs
Mr. & Mrs. Chester G. Brown
Mr. & Mrs. Gardner Bullard
Mr. Walter D. Bullock
Mrs. Betty Hayden Bullock
Mr. & Mrs. Walter E. Bullock
Miss Marilyn E. Bullock
Mrs. Sylvia Bullock DiPlacido
Mrs. Ann Chambers
Miss Marion Chapman
Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Clark
Mr. & Mrs. Walter L. Clark
Miss Alice Cole
Miss Myrtle Cole
Miss Frances West Converse
Mrs. Fae Crawford
Mr. & Mrs. John S. Crosby
Mrs. Alice G. W. Daniels
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Davis
Mrs. Catherine DeVries
Mrs. Edith Dickie
Mr. & Mrs. Rodman L. Dickie, Jr.
Mrs. Doris Haley
Miss Barbara Dickson
Mr. & Mrs. William Dickson
Mr. & Mrs. Karnig S. Dinjian
Mrs. Hazel A. Donaldson
Mr. Marchant Eldridge
Miss Isabel Finlayson

Mr. & Mrs. V. Robert Gagosian
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Garland
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Gendron
Mrs. Ann Gorton
Mr. Lane Gorton
Mr. & Mrs. W. Gardiner Goss
Miss Judith I. Harvey
Mrs. Sally K. Harvey
Miss G. Irene Hayden
Mr. & Mrs. William Hepburn
Mrs. Evelyn Hiscox
Mr. & Mrs. Earle R. Hopkins
Mrs. Mildred Humphrey
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth I. Hunt
Mr. & Mrs. Norman R. Jacobsen
Mr. & Mrs. C. Wesley Johnson
Mrs. Marion Johnston
Mrs. Persis Judd
Mr. & Mrs. Carl F. Katila
Mrs. Dorothy Linekin
Mrs. Gladys Locke
Miss Doris G. Lorentzen
Mrs. Constance Maartmann-Moe
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph MacConachie
Mrs. Myrtha Martin
Mr. Charles Mellen
Mr. John Mellen
Miss Viola Michaels
Mr. & Mrs. George Miller
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph McKown
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond A. Minzner
Mr. & Mrs. William H. Mowat
Mrs. Edith M. Moxham
Mr. & Mrs. Donald R. Patnode
Mr. & Mrs. William Patterson
Mr. & Mrs. John Pepper
Mr. & Mrs. K. Gordon Platine
Mr. & Mrs. Albert R. Porteus
Mr. & Mrs. Charles V. Porter
Mr. & Mrs. W. Calvin Robinson
Mrs. Jean K. Rogers
Mrs. Laura & Miss Laura Jean Rood
Miss Kathleen A. Rounds
Mr. & Mrs. William Rumberger
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph W. Sexton
Mr. George Sharkey
Mr. & Mrs. Harold A. Short
Miss Clara P. Stryker
Dr. & Mrs. Joseph R. Sweeny
Mr. & Mrs. Donald True
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Welsh
Mr. & Mrs. Ewing Wing
Miss Vivian L. Wood
Miss Florence E. Worthington