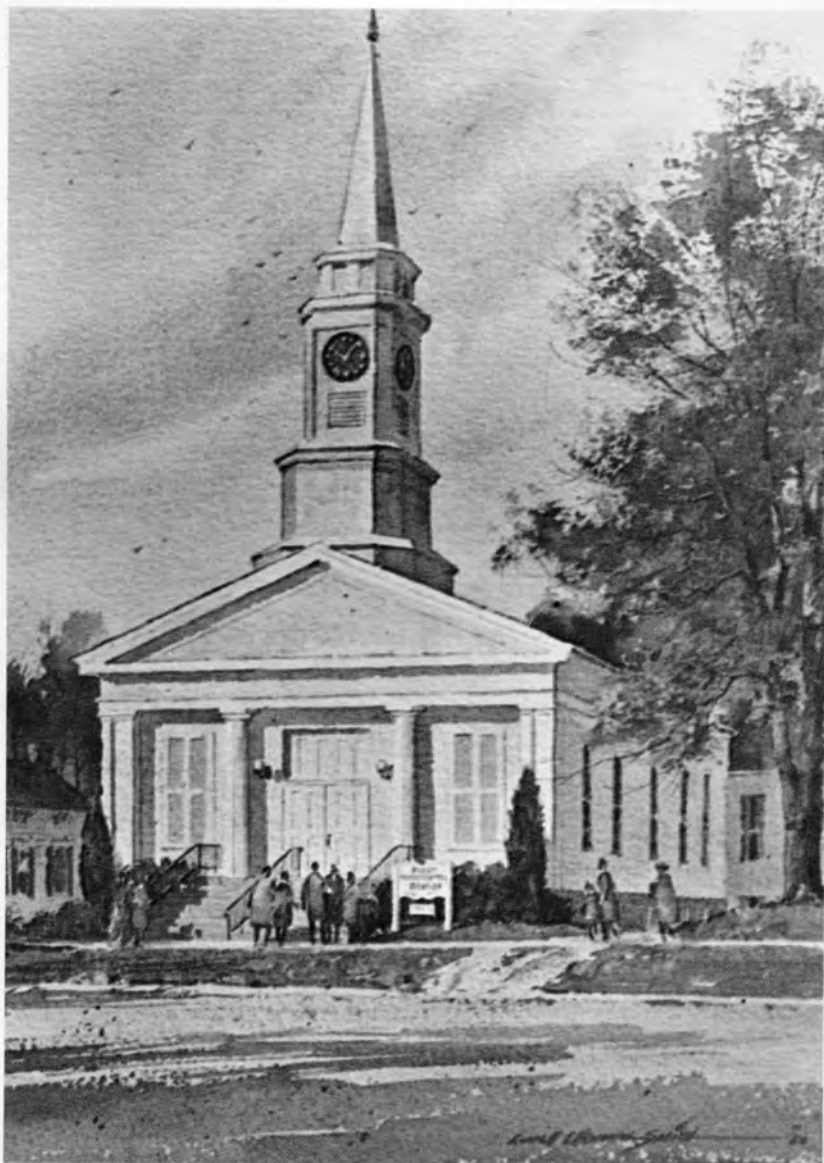


**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Twinsburg, Ohio**



Erected 1848

**Organized August 23, 1822**

To.

December. 25. 1967

Mrs. Mada Nichols.

A Christmas Remembrance.

The Board of Deacons.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

of Twinsburg, Ohio

ITS HISTORY

Compiled from

Its Original Records

1822 to 1967

*The picture on the cover was painted by Mr. Lowell Smith, Hudson, Ohio, in 1966. The original was presented to Mrs. Mabel Culhan as a token of the church's appreciation for her more than forty years as church organist.*

## FOREWORD

Too much effort cannot be made to impress upon the congregation of the First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ) of Twinsburg the great privilege it has of enjoying the complete records that are available to it. The Clerks' records of both Church and Society cover completely the affairs of this church since 1822 to the present. The principal sources of the facts given in this booklet are these original and legibly handwritten reports; their authenticity cannot be questioned.

S. M. Riley  
1967

## P R E F A C E

Every liberty we enjoy has been bought at the cost of martyrs' blood! Every achievement of the race made at the cost of incredible toil. We drink every day from wells that we have not dug; we live by liberties we have not won; we are protected by institutions we have not set up. No man has ever been independent; every man has leaned upon the past. Our privileges and opportunities are products of other men's sacrifices. No man liveth unto himself; all the past has invested in him.

- - - Roy L. Smith

We are custodians of a great heritage. It is a serious matter for a people to make the same mistakes over and over again by reason of simple ignorance. Therefore, we should learn history and learn from our present-day perspective, how and where our ancestors made mistakes and also made their successes. The mistakes of one generation become the calamities of the next.



Miss Sarah Riley has long been interested in history, especially the history of this segment of the Western Reserve. Her recent retirement from the real estate business has given her more time to devote to this avocation. In 1962 Church Council authorized her to review the records of nearly a century and a half which fill to overflowing a filing cabinet in the church office, and to compile from them a history of our church. The pages which follow are the result of her many months of research and writing.

"Penmanship was a virtue" which many of the early church record keepers possessed, reports Miss Riley. Page after interesting page of history marches before your eyes as generation after generation rises to leadership and then steps back to let the next generation take the reins. At times the records are very good, but at others they are quite poor and sketchy and made her job a difficult one. In spite of the difficulties involved, Miss Riley has produced an interesting and very readable history of our church.

The Riley's arrived in this section of the Western Reserve in 1807. Settling first in Aurora they moved to Twinsburg in the early 1840's. At one time the family owned and operated the farm at 9577 Liberty Road. Prior to her entry into the real estate business, Miss Riley was employed as a secretary to executives in several area companies, in Philadelphia and Cleveland, and she spent 1½ years in the W.A.C. During World War I she was a student at Oberlin College and finished business training at Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1919.

John W. Bruce, Pastor

April 1, 1967

## BEGINNINGS OF CONGREGATIONALISM

Any discussion of the Congregational heritage must, by necessity, turn back the pages of history to the late 16th Century when the Separatist movement boiled up in England. In 1523 the English Government had broken its tie with the Church in Rome. A period of great confusion followed, during which groups of dissenters sought to reform the English Church, to be free of all reminders of the Roman Church, and to practice true Christianity. Our interests are in two of these groups -- the Separatists who believed each Church should govern itself and the Puritans who thought to reform the Church from within.

One Separatist group met at Scrooby (in Yorkshire, about one hundred fifty miles from London). This group was made up of farmers, craftsmen and teachers from small hamlets in the area. After persecution by the Crown, which still considered itself head of the Church, they managed a harrowing escape to Holland in 1609 and eventually settled at Leyden. Here they were welcomed heartily. The eleven years they spent in Leyden covered the only years of peace Holland had enjoyed for many years, before or after. Holland had just fought for forty years for its freedom from Spain, a struggle which made the American Revolution look like a tea party. We like to think it was the guiding hand of Providence that brought these English yeomen, full of yearning for independence, to this place during its years of peace, when its democratic way of life was able to function normally.

Here William Bradford, the young man who later became leader of the group, observed the methods of democratic government, the secret ballot, religious liberty, freedom of the individual and the rights of man. For some reason, many of our histories say these ideas came from England; perhaps so in a way, but Holland had been making these principles work for many generations. These ideas did not become operative in England until many years later.

This group in Leyden bought a house for their pastor and a meeting place. Meetings were held Thursday evenings and all day Sunday with sermons of four or more hours in length. The children listened too. There is no evidence that any child was permanently harmed by this treatment.

Holland's twelve-year truce with Spain was nearing an end; at the same time the continuing struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism threatened to destroy Europe. Apprehension amongst our group led them to consider a new country where they might find freedom of worship, a democratic government and satisfaction of their land hunger. America became the "Promised land."

After almost unbelievable suffering and disappointing financial losses, they sailed to England; then after more delays all transferred to the ship Mayflower and were on their way; one hundred and two passengers and thirty crewmen under the sponsorship of the London Company. They reached Plymouth Harbor on December 21, 1620, after a voyage made under the most primitive of living conditions. So far as we know, the name "pilgrims" was bestowed on the group by Bradford after they arrived in the New World.

Nine years later the Puritans settled on the shores of Massachusetts Bay. They were well-to-do Church of England upper-middleclass people. They quickly organized a Church in Salem and invited the Pilgrims to extend the "right hand of fellowship" to the newly formed Church. Thus began the practice of association between Churches as now evidenced by councils, associations, state conferences, General Council and, lastly, by the new United Church of Christ. Early Congregational Churches were established by law. This condition continued to Massachusetts until 1833. They were maintained by public taxation; the town meeting influenced the selection of ministers and their salaries.

However, about 1785 the Puritan ministry took over the "old Plymouth

Colony." A more democratic group drew away and settled in the Connecticut Valley, becoming a different variety of Congregationalism. From this group came the early members of the Ohio Churches.

From the first, many Presbyterians were found in the colonies. They too fled to America for safety as did the Puritans and Pilgrims. They joined the Congregationalists with whom they shared a love of freedom but kept their separate form of Church government. Some local Churches were given the name of "Presbyterian." They were strong workers for national independence and a representative form of government.

Their common cause with the Congregationalists received impetus in 1640 when the English Parliament, then under control of Puritans who accepted Presbyterian principles, became curious about the activities of the New England churches and demanded reports. New England leaders sensed danger to their freedom and requested a council of Church representatives be called. The council met first in 1646 in Cambridge. When Cromwell became the leader in Parliament, the danger appeared more remote so the meetings turned their attention to working out a basis of unity for protection from an overthrow of the beliefs and practices of the original New England Congregationalism. This unity emphasized two great principles of Congregationalism; first, freedom of the local Church to manage its own affairs; and second, that independent Churches should work out bases for co-operation in those matters of common concern.

In 1767, led by the Connecticut Association, the Congregationalists of New England worked out a Plan of Union with the Presbyterians of Pennsylvania and New York whereby missionary Churches could affiliate with either a Congregational association or a Presbytery. This united effort operated to fight the establishment of the Anglican Church in America.

The Congregationalists grew strong in New England in the government, the Churches and the schools, but the Revolutionary War was hard on the Churches especially. Because of the wide-spread destruction of property by the British, high prices, low income and unstable monetary system, the Yankee Migration westward began along the trails to New York and Ohio by foot, by oxcart, by horse-back and covered wagon.

The first settlement in Marietta started the first Ohio Church in 1796. Baptists went to Cincinnati; French Catholics went to Gallipolis; Methodist circuit riders traveled the whole area. The Moravians made their second try at Youngstown and westward to the Indiana State lands.

The second Church was at Austinburg, Ashtabula County in 1801. The third Church was started in Hudson in 1802.

In 1798 the Connecticut Missionary Society, under the Plan of Union, began to find money and missionaries to send westward to the frontier areas in order to aid the formation of Churches such as the three mentioned above.

## THE EARLY YEARS IN TWINSBURG

For the first five years after the settlement of Twinsburg in 1817, religious services were held in private houses and in the upper part of the grist mill at the falls, near the intersection of Old Mill Road and Ravenna Road. Lewis Alling, Sr., (father of Ethan Alling, the 16-year old lad who led the first settlers to Twinsburg in 1817), usually led the services when there was no regular preacher, alternating some of the time with Asa Upson. In 1821 Asa Upson became one of the organizers of the Methodist Church in Twinsburg.

Early in 1822 Rev. John Seward, pastor at Aurora, Ohio, preached once in four weeks alternating with Rev. William Hanford, pastor at Hudson; other itinerant ministers preached occasionally. These pastors worked under the direction of the Portage Presbytery, which represented the Connecticut Missionary Society in this area.<sup>1</sup>

On August 23, 1822, Rev. Seward and Rev. Hanford led in the organization of this church in the school house erected that year on the public square. The Articles of Faith, the Covenant and the Rules of Practice were those recommended by the Portage Presbytery. They appear in the Appendix of this booklet and should be read with compassion for and understanding of the earnest commitment they represent.<sup>2</sup> It is appropriate to record on the following pages the minutes of this first meeting.

1. Twinsburg was a part of Portage County until 1840.

2. Pages - 34 to 36

“Twinsburg, August 23, 1822 --

Agreeably to previous notice a meeting was held at the center schoolhouse to attend to the formation of a church in this place. The Rev. Messrs. John Seward and William Hanford, Missionaries from the Missionary Society of Connecticut, were present. After prayer the following persons presented themselves as candidates to be organized into a Church, viz.

Juliaann White, wife of Wm. White;  
Robert Hurd and Mary, his wife;  
Belizur Beech and Rachel F., his wife;  
Hervey Kelsey and Fanny, his wife, from the Church in  
North Killingworth, Conn.;  
Lewis Alling and Comfort Nicols, wife of Noah P. Nicols,  
from the Church in Hudson;  
Luman Lane, Hanford White, John A. Wells and Irena  
Thomas, non-professors, presented themselves as  
candidates for admission.

After examining the above mentioned persons on doctrinal, practical and experiential religion, it was resolved to organize them into a Church. In the afternoon a sermon was delivered by the Rev. Wm. Hanford and the persons before mentioned assented to the Confession of Faith and Covenant and declared to be a Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and charged in His name to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called.”

With such a dedicated beginning, it is evident that this Church was organized in an atmosphere of great courage, great conviction, great hope and deep appreciation of the foibles of human nature.

The log schoolhouse on the Square was used for a time; later a two story frame school and church was erected, but Township Trustees ordered it removed when it was determined that no building could legally be erected on the Square. These thirteen “charter” members chose deacons and committees, held meetings more or less regularly, and made periodic reports to the Presbytery at Mantua, Ohio. Organization of this Church represented a step forward in the life of the five-year old community. The formal name was “The Presbyterian or First Congregational Church in Twinsburg.”

On Christmas Day, 1823, Irena Thomas became the bride of Luman Lane. These two charter members became the ancestors of two of our present (1967) members, Mrs. Marion Wall Peterson and Mrs. Gertrude Chamberlin Walton. Mrs. Walton is also a descendant of Hervey and Fanny Kelsey. Thus 1967 has direct lines back to the beginning in 1822. For many years Luman Lane was Clerk of the Church and he often led the Church services. The minutes of many meetings are in his handwriting. The membership grew very slowly.

Seven of the charter members brought letters of transferral from the Congregational Church in Killingworth, Connecticut, whence twenty-three members came later on. The Killingworth Church could almost be called our “mother church.” Ours was a Congregational Church, as plainly appears from the records; but, under the Plan of Union between Presbyterians and Congregationalists which then prevailed in the west, it was associated with Presbytery and was often

spoken of as a Presbyterian Church.<sup>1</sup>

Excerpts from minutes of April 19, 1826 (not a Sunday) -- “This day was observed as a day of fasting and Prayer by this church.”

The earnest endeavor to abide by the Covenant to “watch over the members of the Church and, if necessary, reprove them with christian meekness and brotherly love” is evidenced in the following excerpt from the minutes of October 26, 1827 -- “At a church meeting ‘legally warned’ held on Oct. 26, 1827, a complaint was brought against Bro. \_\_\_\_\_ and Bro. \_\_\_\_\_ for falsifying the truth and using abusive language.” The cases were continued to December 1st at which time they were dismissed because the charges were not substantiated by sufficient evidence.

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The Methodist Church in Twinsburg also had its beginning in the group that met in the grist mill at the Falls. In 1821 Asa Upson led a group which, for a time, met in the school house on the Square. This group formed a Methodist Episcopal Class that met more regularly in Asa Upson’s home, which stood near the east corner of the Wilcox School grounds. At times the meetings were held in his brother Solomon’s house which stood behind the new Professional Center Building at 10580 Ravenna Road. The Twinsburg Class became part of the Cuyahoga Circuit, so-called because it served the valley of the Cuyahoga River and its tributaries. Even with two preachers assigned to this Circuit, it took at least six weeks to cover it. Each of them might average nine sermons a week, each at a different place. Transportation was usually by horseback, hence the term “circuit rider.”

1. In 1801 an attempt to end duplication and overlapping of efforts by Congregationalists and Presbyterians in the rapidly expanding West was made. Under this “Plan of Union” both churches and ministers would have relationships with both denominations. Proposed as an ideal solution to the demands of the westward moving population for churches, the actual operation of it led to many disputes. With the exception of the Western Reserve Area, a large percentage of the churches established under the “Plan” ultimately became Presbyterian. Nationally the “Plan” fell into disrepute and was ended in the 1850’s. Twinsburg dissolved its relationship with the Presbyterians in April of 1861. At that time the church joined the Puritan Association of the Congregational Church. It maintained connections with this group until 1963 when the Western Reserve Association of the United Church of Christ came into being.



Rev. Samuel Bissell  
1797 – 1895

## THE BISSELL ERA 1828 to 1843

For nearly six years the church had no regular pastor. In the winter of 1827-28 revival meetings were held every evening, which resulted in a committee seeking the Aurora (Ohio) teacher Samuel Bissell, aged thirty and a Yale graduate, to become their minister; his salary the first year was to be \$150 (only half was ever paid him). In 1834 the salary was raised to \$300.

Mr. Bissell began his ministry in 1828 preaching seven Sabbaths on trial, for which he was paid a good log house worth \$28.00. (This log house stood at the site of the "house on the hill" now known as 2497 East Aurora Road, Twinsburg.) He remained as pastor for seven and one-half years. In that time he received 141 members.

Dec. 11, 1828, the church "met agreeably to appointment" and after examination accepted for membership Fanny Bissell, bride of Samuel Bissell, from Darwinton, Connecticut, where he had studied for and received his license to preach.

Feb. 22, 1829, the church voted to hold communion service once in three months, each communicant to pay 12½ cents for support of "the communion plate". At the same meeting it also voted that the common oath shall be administered to all persons giving testimony in cases of discipline; and voted that, in case of public offence, confession shall be made to the Church and congregation (this meant at Sunday morning service.)

A few months after the above vote, two members were appointed to investigate reports about Widow Huldah Wilcox (widow of Moses Wilcox, one of the twins from whom Twinsburg got its name). Her membership was held at the North Killingworth Church. The next February, accordingly a report was made in regard to Mrs. Wilcox to the Church in Connecticut. The minutes made no mention of what was in the report. (Perhaps she had violated the rule that new, non-members were required to get letters of transferral within a year, in order to be allowed to take communion.)

In December, 1830, the First Congregational Society was incorporated to hold title to the Church property. Its officers (later referred to as "Trustees") had to do solely with the temporal affairs of the Church.

In 1832 a church and school building, 30 x 60 feet was erected on the east side of the 'north and south road' facing the East side of the Square, for \$700.<sup>1</sup>

The same year a tract of 25 acres was given the church by W. W. Woolsey, of New York City, through the efforts of Rev. Bissell. This land was located on the Ravenna Road opposite the intersection with Route 82. Income from its rental added to the church funds for many years. It seemed as though the Trustees were always "fixing the fence on the Society lot."

In 1833 a powerful revival resulted in fifty conversions.

Minutes for Oct. 23, 1833 -- The Church meeting examined Betsy Southworth, who "could neither give her consent to observe the Sabbath as more holy than other days of the week, nor to the mode and subject of baptism as believed and practiced by this Church." Examination was not sustained. --Signed by S. Bissell, Modr.

On the first Sunday in 1834 thirty five persons joined the Church.

1. About 1948 this building was torn down. The cross now hanging above the communion table was made by Charles F. Crouse from one of the old timbers.



The Methodist Episcopal Church built a church in 1831. It stood near the site of the Kollman Store parking area. It was used for 18 years; then sold and moved a number of times, finally coming to rest on Robert Herrick's lot at 9909 Ravenna Road, as a barn.

In December of 1834 about twenty members claimed for themselves the name of the First Calvinistic Congregational Church of Twinsburg. They wanted the privilege of forming their own rules and regulations and of disciplining their own members and ministers!! Evidently they were simon pure Congregationalists. They did not succeed in forming a new Church and gradually were restored to the good graces of the original membership.

In August of 1836 Rev. Bissell was dismissed by Presbytery at his own request and that of the Church, even though a few months before the Church had voted "That we will try to be more faithful in providing for his support and pledge to raise Three Hundred Dollars." At the same time they voted to raise subscriptions to employ a teacher of sacred music!

In June 1837 after dismissing Rev. Bissell again and disturbed by the discord that had existed for two years, the Church voted that all who wished to withdraw and form a new Church might do so. On the next Sunday a new Church of fifty members was organized, over which Rev. Samuel Bissell was installed by Presbytery in May 1838. He remained as their pastor until the Churches re-united in May 1843. There is some evidence that the discord was based on opposition to the methods of furthering the temperance cause, besides the larger objections to Rev. Bissell's teaching in and conducting a school. They seemed to have differences of opinion, also, as to the virtues of Presbyterian principles of Church government in contrast to Congregational principles.

April 1838 the Society voted to procure funds to obtain a bell which may be the bell we are still using.

Very full Articles of Faith, Covenant, etc., were adopted by the Second Church. The records, in a book by themselves, are preserved in our files. Most of them are in the neat hand of Rev. Bissell.

During the period of separation several ministers preached for the first Church, which was left with a membership of eighty to ninety. Among these ministers were Rev. Samuel Hair, Rev. Joseph Treat, Rev. Ebenezer Ward and Rev. Chester Chapin.

Early in 1840 a revised form of the Confession of Faith and Covenant was adopted. This revision was recommended by Presbytery. In it the wording was greatly changed, but the meaning remained quite similar.

The society records of May 15, 1841 show subscriptions in the amount of \$199.88 were obtained for the new bell, said bell "to weigh not less than 400 lbs." A few months later the Society paid \$149.38 for the bell; \$20.92 for material and labor to hang the bell; and \$18.00 for "yoke" to hold the bell. At the same time, it was voted to hire someone to ring the bell.

The bell was used to announce church meetings, fires and deaths. In case of a death, after a few tolls, the bell was struck once for each year of the life of the deceased. In this small community, the listeners could easily identify the deceased.

In March 1842 the Second Church of 41 members asked the old Church to join them; nine days later the old Church said "you join us and we will support Mr. Bissell's school." The new Church said "no."

In April 1843, a year later, the old Church sent word that on candid reflection they had not acted with the spirit of Christ, which they regretted. The next day the new Church responded favorably and three days later voted for union, on condition that there be unfeigned cordiality towards Mr. Bissell; that they sus-

tain their Articles of Faith, and that they adhere to the order of our Churches as expressed in First Corinthians 14:34 and 35; in which St. Paul forbids women to speak in church. This may be a hint that the women had something to do with the discord. The old Church accepted and on May 30, 1843, Presbytery met here and united the two Churches with a membership of 128. They have been "one" ever since.

Shortly after the re-union, the plans for a new meeting house were started. After considerable argument as to site, the present location was selected and the lot purchased from Zeno Parmelee for \$200. At the time he had a blacksmith shop on the front of the lot.

In July 1843, Rev. Robert C. Learned was called as pastor at a salary of \$400. When he resigned in 1846, he complained that they had reduced the salary by one-eighth and had not paid half of what even then was due; and that the strained feelings from the separation were still evident. Rev. Learned's son, Dwight, became a very prominent missionary in Japan and was highly honored by the Emperor for his services.

At this time, the average number of members was about 140, and it appears from the records that many members were disciplined for "back-sliding", profanity, use of spiritous liquors, conversion to Spiritualism, marital discord, and failure to attend church and communion services regularly. In these connections, numberless "trials" were held by the church in which persons were questioned as to their beliefs and as to their actions.<sup>1</sup> If their statements and answers were deemed unsatisfactory by the examining committees, they were dropped from church membership. After a flurry of these trials it was deemed wise to remind all members of their obligations and the following Resolutions were adopted: --

1. That the great importance of a proper observance of the Sabbath and the tendencies to its desecration demand the special attention of this church;
  2. That whatever is done on the Sabbath from motives of mere convenience, pleasure or gain, is a desecration of the day.
  3. That unnecessary travelling, cheese making, visiting the Post-Office (apparently a popular meeting place of undesirables), and transactions of a similar nature on the Sabbath are to be avoided, as desecrations of the day;
  4. That this Church regards slavery, as it exists in the South, as one of the greatest evils and sins of our Nation; and that it ought immediately to be abolished.
- (These Resolutions were re-affirmed in similar wording in March 1856).

1. A transcript of one of these trials will be found on pages 36-39 of the Appendix.

## THE NEW MEETING HOUSE

In April 1848, as the new meeting house was in process of erection, Rev. Horace W. Palmer was installed at a salary of \$380. In 1852 he resigned on account of poor health. He was so tall the boys called him the "high priest." The Church parted with him reluctantly. During his ministry, the congregation filled the church sanctuary.

The present building was dedicated in November 1848. The cost was \$3300.<sup>1</sup> The upper part was to be used for religious meetings only. A printed copy of the dedication sermon by Rev. Hopkins of Troy (Welshfield), Ohio, is in our records.

The money was raised by sale of "slips" or pews. The forward pews seemed to be the most desirable; at least, they cost the most. (In modern times it appears the rear pews are the most popular!) As a result of this plan each family occupied the same pew every Sunday, and woe to the stranger who took a seat in the wrong one. Gradually the membership changed and the original members passed away so that their pews were occupied by others. The pulpit platform was considerably smaller than it is now so that there was room for a number of pews at right angles to those in the body of the church.

In the new church the people rose during the singing of the hymns and faced the gallery where the choir was seated. Before this it was the custom to stand for the prayers and sit for the hymn singing. Zeno Parmelee led the singing for over 20 years (to 1844). He was also church Clerk for many years, and the minutes are in his handwriting. His advancing years are clearly apparent in the gradual worsening of his penmanship.

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A new meeting house was also built by the Methodists in 1848, on the Clark lot facing the southwest corner of the Square, at a cost of \$3,000. This cost was met by subscriptions. There must have been considerable competition in the collections of funds for these two church projects.

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On July 13, 1855 a revised Confession of Faith and Rules and Regulations were adopted. A Compendium of the Rules follows:

### RULES

1. Standing Committee to supervise the prudential concerns of the Church.
2. Prospective members to be examined in presence of the Church.
3. Male heads of families to read daily scriptures, lead in prayers and sing hymns.
4. Male heads of families instruct and govern their children.
5. Parents to be held accountable to Church for above religious training.
6. No Sabbath collecting of hay or grain; no making of sugar; no visiting of friends and no travelling.
7. Officers to be elected by ballot for one year.
8. In case of public offense, members shall make confession before the congregation.
9. Objections against any new member shall be investigated.
10. Abstain from making, using or vending of ardent spirits.

11. Continue to hold the relationship with Portage Presbytery.
12. Communion to be observed once a quarter.
13. Collection for communion coverage for relief funds.
14. Dispense with labors of agents in collections for various benevolent societies.
15. Annual meetings to be first Friday of March.
16. Regular meetings first Friday of each month.
17. Affirmation of witnesses-no oath.

In 1856 or 1857 our steeple blew off and was repaired at an expense of \$210.

In Feb. 1855 a boundary dispute between Bro. S. G. Redfield and Bro. Joel Parmelee was brought to Church meeting. This quarrel went on for two years; finally, through influence of the Deacons, the two attended communion together, although Bro. Parmelee still insisted he was right. In March of 1858 (three years later) the Deacons recommended the services of a licensed surveyor and refused to hear this case again. Five years later, in March 1860, the Church voted to expunge the records of this case.

Rev. James H. Scott was pastor from January 1853 to April 1859. At one time he suggested the morning service be closed with congregational singing. The resulting furor caused him to reconsider and withdraw the suggestion. Then he resigned. In his resignation he spoke of a "divided church, of worldliness and downward progress under his and two preceding pastorates." He implied that covenant-breaking was tolerated and the Church was ruled by an oligarchy. At this time the number of members dropped down to 106.

In 1859 the Deacons were instructed to use pure grape juice for communion.

Early in 1856, Ethan Alling (the first settler of Twinsburg in 1817) asked for permission to take communion. Permission was granted because he was judged a Christian, although "he had been baptised by immersion."

In 1858 the choir was put under the direction of Mr. Fessenden, a teacher of music at the Bissell Institute. (He was the grandfather of our Mrs. Marguerite Waugh).

In November of 1856 it was voted to sustain weekly prayer meetings in the district school houses. In 1857 the total membership was 111; contributions amounted to \$176.30 for benevolent purposes. A new pulpit Bible was purchased for \$5.00.

Under date of Friday, Oct. 23rd, 1857, the church records contain a transcript of a trial of a member who had been accused of Covenant breaking. A copy of this transcript will be found in the Appendix pages 40 - 44. The reader cannot help being impressed by the deep commitment of these people to the Christian life, as they endeavored to apply it to everyday life and to follow the rules they believed so necessary.

In 1859 the horse sheds were built at the rear of the church lot, by individuals who desired protection for their horses and rigs during Church services. (When automobiles came into general use, these sheds were boarded up and used for storage. In the middle 1920's they were torn down. The Christian Education unit - built in 1954 - now occupies that space.)

<sup>1</sup> The Congressional Library in Washington has on file a complete set of plans for this building which were prepared by the WPA during the depression years of the 1930's.

## THE CIVIL WAR ERA



**Luman Lane**  
1796 – 1879



**Ethan Alling**  
1800 – 1868



**Zeno Parmelee**  
1801 – 1862



**John W. Fessenden**  
1821 – 1899

Rev. Sidney Bryant was pastor from 1860 to 1867 at a salary of \$600 per year. During these Civil War years the membership dropped off and the financial support became very weak, although the town records indicate 1860 was the most prosperous year in the town's history, before or since, in proportion to population.

During Rev. Bryant's pastorate Mrs. Lewis Alling willed her home and three acres to the Church for use as a parsonage. The Alling house was used as the parsonage for many years. Not changed too much in appearance, it stands next west of the present parsonage at 2633 E. Aurora Road.

During this pastorate the Church withdrew from Presbytery and joined the Puritan Association of Congregational Churches, organized in 1853, in the mid-eastern portion of the State of Ohio.

From a source other than the Church minutes, namely a biography of Dr. Edward W. Morley, it was learned that in September, 1868, Rev. Morley came to preach on trial from his home in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The trial period was not made definite, but it was tacitly understood it should extend over several weeks and gradually merge into a regular pastorate, if both parties were satisfied. In this biography are two letters, one to his sister written by Rev. Morley the day after his arrival and the other to his parents five days later. These letters will be found in the Appendix, pages 40-41 and are self-explanatory, a case of seeing ourselves as others see us.

He continued preaching here for several months until Rev. Sharp was installed. In Hudson, Mr. Morley began his climb to fame as the discoverer of the atomic weight of nitrogen, a basic fact used by all chemists ever since. Dr. Edward Morley became one of the immortals among the scientists of this country. His name is not mentioned in the church records. Thus, unrecorded, genius touched us in passing.

Rev. Andrew Sharp was pastor from January 1869 to May 1872 at a salary of \$700 and parsonage. During this time a wing was added to the parsonage, for a study.

In August 1872 the fiftieth anniversary of the organization of the church was celebrated. A program of the services is preserved in the files.

In 1869 the "Dime Society" was organized by the women of the church. In the Appendix is a copy of a report made in January 1932 by Mrs. Charles E. Riley (Oretta Parmelee, granddaughter of Zeno Parmelee) of her recollections about the activities of the Dime Society, later known as "Women's Society" and now the Women's Fellowship.

At the Annual meeting in 1870 Edward Crouse, father of our own Charles Crouse, Sr., was elected Treasurer. Later he became a Deacon and served thus until his death in 1907. For many years he also served as caretaker of the Meeting House. He was a cheerful, devoted Christian.

All through the early records careful mention was made of every communion service and its "preparatory lecture" delivered on a week-day before. Here is a sample of the wording of the record -- "God's people sat down to remember Christ by partaking of the emblems that represented His broken body, spilt blood for their sins and sins of the world."

Rev. Aurelian H. Post, from Boonsboro, Iowa, was pastor from October 1872 to April 1882 at a salary of \$800 and parsonage. The tradition of the excellence of his preaching lingered on in the Church as long as any of his parishioners remained alive.

In 1877 it was voted to have a roll call meeting the second Tuesday in October. This became an annual event for more than thirty years. Each member



**Soldier's Monument  
Old Congregational Church  
Old Academy Building**



**Church Street Early 1900's**



**Oldest House in Twinsburg**

responded to his name with a verse from the Bible. It was sort of a combined Thanksgiving and Reunion, with a big dinner in the middle of the day.

In January and February 1878 Rev. Rowland, pastor of the Methodist Church and Rev. Post held union, revival meetings every night for six weeks, with extra services in the afternoons. The Congregational Church was filled at every meeting. Over 140 persons were converted and joined one or the other of the three churches in the community; the Baptist Church was the third in this group.

In 1887 the young people of both the Methodist and Congregational Churches organized the Young Peoples Society of Christian Endeavor. This organization met Sunday evenings. (Oh, those Sunday night dates!) In 1893 the Methodist young people organized their own group into what was known as Epworth League.

Rev. Charles Lemmon from Fostoria, Ohio, was pastor from October 1889 to February 1895. One of his sons, Will, has made it a practice to visit us sometime during the summer for many years. During his pastorate, Rev. Lemmon preached in Macedonia Sunday afternoons, where a branch Church of about 34 members was formed in July of 1891. In 1899 this Church disbanded and by 1905 all its members' names had been dropped from our membership.

Under date of October 24, 1891, we find the first record of a Church dinner in the church "parlors" at which "chicken pie and other good things" were served. About one quarter of the basement level had been finished off into what was known as the "prayer room." The balance of the space still had the original clay floor; here were the range, kitchen tables, utensils and the furnace.

In February 1891 a letter of transfer was granted Harriett F. Parmelee, a daughter of Joel Parmelee, one of our early members, to the Church of Christ in Japan. There she did missionary work for many years.

In May 1892 the Trustees voted to pay Charles F. Crouse \$5.00 for the two years he had pumped the organ! At the same meeting Isaac Jayne was appointed a committee of one to keep order at Sunday evening meetings!

In October of 1892 it was voted to purchase new windows for the sanctuary at \$17.00 per window. (Apparently, the windows we now have.) "The Dime Society voted in secret session to assume payment of said window expense." (No indication of the reason for secrecy.)

At the Annual Roll call in October 1893, "Rev. Samuel Bissell led in Prayer." -- still a stalwart member of the Church.

Rev. Lemmon resigned in 1895 and went to the Collinwood Church in Cleveland. At this time the church membership was about 140 with a Sunday School attendance of 162.

Rev. A. Wilmer Swengel was pastor from April 1895 to October 1898. In September 1895 the tower clock was given to the church by Mrs. Lorenzo Riley. Set to running on October 12, 1896 on sun time, it was wound by a hand crank on a large cogwheel weighted by a huge block of castiron. The hours were struck on the bell, purchased in 1841 and moved to the new meeting house in 1848. There was always a load clatter of gears just before and after the clock struck each hour, much to the amusement of the old timers and the startled surprise of strangers at church services. Although the clock was the property of the church, because it was considered a public benefaction, the township trustees assumed the obligation of its maintenance and operation for many years.

Rev. Joseph Wolfe was pastor from January 1899 to April 1902. He was followed by Rev. Arthur T. Reed who was recommended to the church by the Bureau of Church and Ministerial Supply at Oberlin, Ohio. His salary was \$1000 per year, \$200 of which he was to secure in evangelistic work. During his pastorate the church building was entirely redecorated and painted at a cost of \$245.00. In May 1906 an offering was taken to help the California earthquake sufferers; amount received \$6.99.



Chauncey B. Lane  
1844 – 1927



George E. Crouse  
1825 – 1907



Mrs. Lorenzo Riley  
1823 – 1899

Rev. Walter R. Blackmer, from the First Church in Marietta, Ohio, was pastor from June 1905 to November 1911. His administering of the communion service was very impressive and moving; something to be remembered for a long time. His systematic methods of conducting the affairs of the church were very helpful and, in many instances, became more or less standard usage for years afterward. He passed away in June 1965 at his old home in Massachusetts.

During this pastorate, a new Pilgrim Hymnal was purchased. In December 1906 first mention is made of Christmas "Exercises" held in the church, although there must have been many Christmas observances before this. This program was prepared by Rev. Blackmer and was probably quite different from those held before. In the same year the Articles of Faith, which had been used for so many years, were replaced by the Congregational "Creed of 1883". A new organ was purchased for the "prayer room." A new order of worship, recommended by the National Council of Congregational Churches, was adopted.

In 1907 it was estimated that about \$200 a year were required to maintain the finances of the Church, apart from the minister's salary. As usual there was difficulty in raising all of the minister's salary; but the Dime Society spent \$114.50 for new table linen and silverware for the dining room. That summer the pastor began a series of stereoptican lectures on the Bible and Bible Lands, on Sunday evenings. Mimeographed orders of worship were prepared each Sunday by Christian Endeavor members.

In January 1908 a week of prayer meetings in union with the Methodist Church was held.

Mention is made of a study for union being made by the National Councils of the Congregational, Methodist Protestant and United Brethren Churches. Apparently nothing came of this research at that time.

After Rev. Blackmer's departure to the church at Arcadia, New York, Rev. Fraser, from the District Office in Cleveland, supplied the pulpit very successfully until Dr. Roselle T. Cross became our regular pastor in 1912 at a salary of \$900 and the parsonage. In 1913 twenty-nine people joined the church from the Sunday School as a result of a "Decision Day" program instituted by Dr. Cross. He was the first to include a Children's Sermon in the morning worship service.

At the annual meeting for the year 1915 it was reported that (1) one-half of the parsonage roof was shingled for \$27.50 and donated work; (2) the Women's Society sent two barrels of fruit and vegetables to Schaufler Training School; (3) that the average church attendance was 79; (4) that evening union services, with the Methodist Church, fell off to an average attendance of 15; and (5) that prayer meetings had an average attendance of 9.

Dr. Cross suggested his retirement by September 1, 1916, or until a new pastor was secured. With the approval of the church he had spent considerable time during his pastorate preparing the Genealogical section of the Twinsburg History for publication in 1917, the Centennial year of the Township. He became pastor emeritus and preached often after that and rendered many services to the church through his unusual talents and great wisdom. As a young man under the American Board of Missions, he had started a number of new churches throughout the West; most of them are still in existence.

During Dr. Cross' pastorate, through his leadership new projects were undertaken and accomplished with considerable success. The basement rooms were entirely renovated and dedicated December 1913 at a cost of \$1,750. At this time church membership was 134. At the annual meeting in January 1914 investigations were made in regard to the possibility that the Church and Society organizations be combined; this discussion went on for a number of years. The Sunday School adopted a constitution for the first time.

In January 1915 the Dime Society paid the bill for new carpet and new paint in the sanctuary in the amount of \$712.67. About this time a new roof was put on

the church building. These two projects cost almost as much as the original cost of the building.

In the fall of 1915 a formal invitation was extended to the Methodist Church members to worship with us whenever they had no services of their own.

A history of the Women's Missionary Society and of the Dime Society should run concurrently with this record of the church. While most important to the life of the church, their stories deserve separate treatment. However, it is of interest to note that Schauffler Training School at 42nd Street and Broadway, Cleveland, is mentioned often in both records as a recipient of gifts and subject of much concern.

During 1916 committees from this church and from the Methodist Church met to consider the advisability of a community church. After a thorough canvas of the community, it was decided not to go forward with the idea at the time. Apparently it was concluded that the community was not ready for such a program.

During the winter of 1916-17 a number of pastors came as supplies. Rev. Bagley, a seminary student from Oberlin; Rev. Snow, a former Unitarian pastor who had become a business man; Rev. Rice and Rev. Russell, retirees; and Rev. Charles Jones, a former Twinsburger.

One Sunday a gospel team of students from Oberlin conducted the service. (One of these students became the pastor of a large western church for many years; another just retired as a vice president of a Cleveland bank and has been one of the leaders in our church's state and national councils.)

## WORLD WAR I YEARS

In May 1917, Rev. J. L. Conant was called to be our pastor at a salary of \$1000 and parsonage.

In December 1917, for the first time, union Sunday evening services were discontinued for the winter. Attendance had dropped to 15. They were renewed in the spring by our church only. Special efforts were made to build up the Christian Endeavor Society to take the place of evening church services.

In 1918 a Boy Scout troop was organized by Rev. Conant; and the choir "advertised" for a tenor. One hundred new hymnals were purchased. During his pastorate Rev. Conant was active in War Work Council, both in Summit County and local programs. In the fall of 1918 many services of the church were cancelled because of the flu epidemic, as were many schools and colleges.

After holding the Woolsey lot for 80 years, it was sold in 1918 for \$1,000. (In 1959 this parcel of land was under option for development for the rumored amount of \$48,000.) The same year five lots from the parsonage property were sold, leaving the house and 1½ acres.

By vote at the annual meeting the number of Deacons was increased to six. In 1919 the Puritan Association meeting was held in this church; its programs covered two days of most interesting and worthwhile talks and discussions. Mr. Conant resigned and Dr. Cross preached until Rev. Wm. C. H. Moe began his pastorate in November 1920 at a salary of \$2,000 and parsonage.

In April 1920 a Resolution was adopted to invite the local Methodist Church members to join our church "inasmuch as it was understood their organization is about to disband." Easter Sunday, March 27, 1921, forty-seven from the Methodist Church united with our church in addition to forty-seven by confession and ten by letter, total 104. In the Clerk's words "The coming of our brothers and sisters from the Methodist Church has brought a Christian fellowship into our community as never before."

Early in 1922 Dr. Cross recommended action to restrict use of the sanctuary to religious purposes only.

In May 1922 plans were started for a Church Centennial celebration, which was held August 20th to 23rd, with programs of commemoration and celebration. Thus began our Second Century with much hope and enthusiasm. In November the Trustees discussed the question of adding Sunday School rooms at rear of the church. Later, in January 1925 a committee was appointed to study plans for an addition to the church building.

In February 1925 Rev. Moe resigned and Rev. J. M. Allison was called to begin his pastorate in September.

In 1926 the Trustees were still discussing new Sunday School rooms.

On July 6, 1927, it was voted to build a new parsonage on the vacant lot next east of the old parsonage at a cost not to exceed \$8000. Actual cost was \$9,228! The old parsonage and one-half of the land was sold for \$4500, which was used toward the cost of the new house. The Allisons were the first occupants.

Easter Sunday, April 28, 1928, twenty new members joined the church.

In September 1929 Rev. Allison resigned and moved to Berea, Ohio. Rev. W. A. Mulder was called and began his pastorate in February 1930. He was followed by Rev. Thorley Johnson in May 1936. Rev. Wm. H. Longworth came in January 1939.

On a national basis in 1931 a merger of Congregational and Christian Churches was effected. The Christian Church was of distinctive American origin. It had its rise from the same impulses as brought about our republic. Liberty was in the air the last half of the 18th century. Three separate movements originated, unknown to each other, and later came together from North Carolina, New England and Kentucky, only to spread their influence into every state in the union. Rather loosely blended into one Church, they merged into the group known from then on as the Congregational-Christian Church National Council.

Locally, our Trustees became safety conscious and had the outside doors in the church building rehung to open outward. A few months later a wrought iron hand-rail was installed on the front steps; the latter in memory of Mrs. Charles E. Riley (Oretta C. Parmelee). She had recommended these changes in a letter dated January 7, 1932, which will be found in the Appendix, pages (42 - 44).

In April 1936 there was discussion of a plan to sell the parsonage and purchase the house and lot next south of the church. A motion to that effect was lost and nothing was done.

During 1936 Rev. Johnson preached Sunday afternoons at the Sunday School sessions in Glenwillow. This Sunday School had been started several years before by this church as a mission project.

Sunday evening September 8, 1940, a new Wurlitzer electric organ was dedicated by Vincent Percy, organist from the Euclid Avenue Congregational Church of Cleveland, with Marjorie Ford, soloist.

On April 10, 1944, Rev. Longworth passed away suddenly. He was followed by Rev. L. A. Lippitt who came from the church in Austinburg, Ohio.

In 1944 after a three-year campaign to raise the funds, the sanctuary and Sunday School rooms were redecorated; total cost about \$1,000.

In 1945 forty-seven new members were added to the church roll. Plans were made to reorganize the choir and select a director of music. This year a separate building fund was reported by the Treasurer, to be added to each year.

In 1946 thirty-three new members came into the church and many of the World War II veterans returned from military service. A 36% increase in Sunday School attendance was reported.

In 1947 twenty-three new members joined the church. At Christmas time the church was illuminated and music broadcast from the Tower by Hal Mortus, all

as a token of appreciation from the Rotary Club for use of the church dining room as their meeting room. At the annual meeting plans were discussed for the celebration of the Centennial of the dedication of the church building in 1848. A revised Constitution was recommended for study.

After full publicity on the subject, the church members met after services on March 7, 1948 and approved the proposed merger, on a national basis, of the Congregational Christian Church and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. On Easter Sunday the Youth Fellowship conducted sunrise services at the church. On April 18th the pastor and the choir appeared in new robes as gifts from individual members of the church and as a result of money raising efforts of the choir.

In the summer of 1948, the first church building was torn down. From a piece of its wood, Charles F. Crouse fashioned the cross which hangs upon the dossal.

On July 14, 1948, plans were sketched out and committees organized to carry out the centennial celebration of the dedication of this church building in November 1848. On November 7th, a beautiful fall day, the re-dedication program took place. Programs and clipping are preserved in the Clerk's book.

In 1949 the Township Trustees reported they could no longer, legally, be responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Tower clock. About the same time the Rotary Club, which uses the dining room for its weekly dinners, was granted permission to flood-light the Tower nightly. Our lighted steeple can be seen from all main roads entering the Village and brings visual evidence of the Christian message to the community.

During 1949 special emphasis was put on the campaign to build up the Second Century Building Fund. During October and November considerable repair work was done on the church tower and clock.

During Holy Week in 1950, the Vigil of Maundy Thursday was observed for the first time here. This impressive service is now an annual event and has become one of the most meaningful worship services of the year.

The year of 1950 was dedicated as a Great Recruiting Year by the Protestant Churches of America.

At the Annual Meeting for 1950 a committee reported on the poor condition of the Wurlitzer Organ and made recommendations for purchasing another. The committee was authorized to search for a satisfactory organ and spent many months visiting other churches and listening to different makes of instruments. On December 31, 1951, the church voted to purchase the Minshall-Estey electronic organ which had been installed for trial use.

1951 turned out to be a big musical year for us. On March 4th Rev. Lippitt and the choir journeyed to Akron to broadcast a service from the WADC radio station over Columbia Broadcasting System. It was rebroadcast over Voice of America. Letters were received from every state in the Union, from interior Africa and from Europe. Then at Christmas time the choir joined the Christian Church choir of Mantua for two concerts, one here and the other in Mantua.

June 11, 1952, at a special church meeting consideration was given a proposed Constitution under which the Church and Society would be merged and be known as First Congregational Church of Twinsburg, which would be incorporated under Ohio law and authorized to assume title to all church property. The two groups approved the change and all legal steps were taken to make a merger effective and according to business procedures. This meeting was the last of separate meetings for Church and Society after a period of 130 years for the Church and a period of 122 years for the Society.

The annual meeting of January 7, 1953, became the first meeting of the merged organization. Total membership was 421. In March of 1953 Rev. Lippitt resigned to take a church in Radnor, Ohio. Dr. C. E. Atkinson, Registrar at Kent State University, filled in quite regularly until Rev. Wm. R. Stevenson was called

and began his pastorate in March 1954. Through Dr. Atkinson's effective conduct of our services, the attendance and interest of the congregation did not fall off, as is usual when there is no regular pastor. To our delight Dr. Atkinson has helped us out many times since, often on very short notice.

In May 1954 the Second Century Building campaign for \$40,000 was launched. Charles F. Crouse built a miniature model of the church building, as part of the publicity program. Construction of the educational annex was started one evening in April when Howard Holt pushed over the old chimney on the rear wall of the church -- he reached through a gable opening in the attic and pushed! (Not too safe a procedure). Sunday School classes began in the new rooms December 5, 1954. In the meantime services were held in the Twinsburg School.

Total cost of the addition was about \$56,000 plus what the Women's Fellowship put into kitchen equipment and new furnishings for the dining room. Cash on hand and pledges totalled \$42,000. Under refinancing arrangements with the Twinsburg Banking Company, completion of the payments was spread over a number of years.

During 1954, Rev. Stevenson began publishing a small monthly church newspaper, known as the "Tower", with the help of Alice Hoon. Its publication continued under the "editorship" of Mrs. Donald Gilbert; currently the editor is Mrs. Janet Adams. It has received honorable mention by the Akron Beacon Journal at its "Religious Newspaper" workshops.

The same year, the Church voted to pledge \$1200 to the National Church Building Society, payable over three years. This organization makes loans for church buildings throughout the United States.

1954 ended with 379 active members, 227 of whom pledged \$32,000 over three years for the Building Fund.

In 1955 the Council voted to sponsor the Boy Scout Troops and discussed the possibility of purchasing the property next south of the church for \$15,000. The Easter Sunrise Service at Crown Hill Cemetery was conducted by the Junior Pilgrim Fellowship. Later in the summer they entertained the Puritan Association Pilgrim Fellowship for an afternoon and evening program.

In the summer of 1955 negotiations were completed with the School Board to rent space for three third-grade classes in the new addition. The rent money helped in paying off the building debt.

In the fall the Women's Association adopted the name of "Women's Fellowship."

At the Annual Meeting in January 1956 the Church voted to establish the "Living Memorial" Plan, with a permanent board to administer funds given the Church for memorial purposes, and to maintain a list of suitable projects for such investment.

During 1956 efforts were made to establish discussion groups amongst Church members. A group of laymen from the Church in Cuyahoga Falls met with us to stimulate discussion subjects and programs. Soon after, the Deacons conducted visitation programs to renew interest in church attendance. The Senior High Fellowship was very active under the sponsorship of Mr. and Mrs. Zahniser. The School Board again rented the rooms in the annex.

The highlights of events in 1957 were headed by renewal of Rev. Stevenson's contract. The School Board rented the school rooms for another year. The Senior High Pilgrim Fellowship was again very active and busy. They contributed much to the Church's influence in the community under the sponsorship of Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Gandee.

In 1958 the Deacons organized a Laymen's Fellowship. Their activities included repair on the church and parsonage properties, such as painting and landscaping. Both Junior and Senior Pilgrim Fellowships were very active and productive.



Late 1940's



Late 1950's



1967

In August 1959 Rev. Stevenson resigned. Again Dr. Atkinson came to our rescue alternating with Rev. Lippitt, who was spending his retirement years here in Twinsburg.

In 1960 Rev. J. W. Bruce was called and began his pastorate in August. During this year the Christian Enlistment Program was adopted; one item was the conduct of the annual fall financial campaign. Honorary title of Pastor Emeritus was conferred on Rev. L. A. Lippitt.

In 1961 the Council asked Future Plans Committee to make recommendations for or against participation in the survey to be conducted by Akron Council of Churches in February 1962. During this year the Church approved the Constitution of the United Church of Christ. Thus we became a part of the national organization which resulted from the merger of Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed National group. Two services a Sunday were conducted during July and August; this proved to be a successful endeavor as to attendance and cash receipts. At a special meeting of Council, the Future Plans Committee made its preliminary report. Its most important suggestion was to acquire the properties adjoining the church on the south and on the north.

1962 was a busy year for all. At the Annual Meeting the Church voted to buy the Culhan property next north (now known as the "Church House"), because it offered better facilities for our present needs.

At the same meeting it was voted to raise an additional \$10,000 over the cost of the Church House to be used for remodeling the Sanctuary, exterior repair, painting and carpeting. In August the proposed plans were approved. With the guidance of an architect who had a special interest in the restoration of Early New England Churches, the remodeling resulted in a beautiful and functional sanctuary for reverent worship.

In February the Council appointed Sarah Riley as historian, and suggested a review be made of the Clerks' and Treasurers' records with Gaylord Best to assist.

Council contracted with Rev. Ormund Schulz to direct the Christian Stewardship Project with particular emphasis on the financial campaign for the sanctuary remodeling, purchase of the Culhan property, and the annual in-gathering for the year's expenses. This Project proved to be notable for its involvement of so many more members than usual.

The Women's Fellowship opened the Ethan Alling Shoppe in the Church House on November 3rd. Its purpose was to deal in "nearly new" articles obtained by donation or by consignment. This has been a worthwhile project due to the devotion of its directors. Twinsburg's first settler, Ethan Alling, had a store and residence on the same site in the 1840's.

The organ chimes have been reinstalled in the Tower as a joint gift from Mrs. Mabel Culhan and the M. E. Culhan Memorial Fund and add much to our musical programs.

Rev. Bruce organized a Wednesday morning breakfast seminar for local businessmen. This has proved most meaningful for the participants.

In 1963, at the Annual Meeting, Rev. Bruce's contract was renewed.

Inasmuch as the Puritan Association was to be disbanded, the Church voted to join the Western Reserve Association of the United Church of Christ, which covers the Northeastern portion of the State with headquarters in Cleveland.

The job of Director of Christian Education was created. Mrs. Joan Ford was brought into the church office as Secretary-Director, with the result that the Church School is becoming more effective with the more concentrated attention she is able to give it. Vacation Bible School met for two weeks with 66 in attendance.

The Deacons contacted forty or more prospective members. About twenty of them joined the Church. The Deacons also arranged a service honoring members



having fifty years or more of service.

The Christian Enlistment Committee reported an active campaign with good results.

In 1964 an up-to-date membership list was published and distributed. The list was so well received it was decided to do the same each year.

Under the planning and supervision of the Christian Education Committee the main part of the church basement was partitioned off to make additional Sunday School rooms. Time and labor was donated by many people for the project.

A "Growth and Development Committee" was set up as a successor to the former "Building" and "Future Plans" Committees. The Christian Enlistment campaign was handled by mail and by special visitations with gratifying results.

Repairs, remodeling and maintenance of the Church House became one of the principle projects of the year, with a few jobs left over for 1965. The financial condition at the end of 1964 was considered good. Junior Church services were instituted for ages above nursery school to age 10. Vacation Bible School was held for two weeks.

The Missionary and Stewardship Education Committee continues to present programs of worship and information about mission activities here and abroad in addition to Lenten meetings, fellowship dinners, etc.

The Junior Choir continues to improve in its fine contribution to our services. The Senior Choir has been an inspiration in the morning services.

Of necessity any history is relative and incomplete. Our history of the church ends mostly with the names and faces and events of 1964. Happenings since then and even many of them recorded in the closing pages of our story are too much a part of us to be properly evaluated. It remains for other writers of the church's story to set them in their proper context.

As we reflect back on our history we can see times of success in the attempt to be God's people; too, we can see times of failure. There have been moments in which we lived up to our potential of being a "little lower than the angels" and times when devil has ruled the roost. Perhaps we can from our past learn and find guide lines for the future; perhaps we can as a sage of old suggested

*"Take from the past the fire and not the ashes."*



Mr. Charles Crouse

Rev. John Bruce

April 9, 1967

On the occasion of special recognition of Mr. Crouse's 80 years of church membership.

## A P P E N D I X

### THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Our church is now a part of the United Church of Christ. The denomination came into being with the merger of the Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Conversations concerning the merger of the denominations began in 1941; completion of the task took almost 25 years. On the national level the Church began functioning in 1957; state and local reorganization was completed in 1963.

At the present time the United Church of Christ is the 7th largest Protestant body in the United States. It has more than 2,000,000 members in over 7,000 churches.

Local activities of the United Church of Christ are assisted by the Western Reserve Association with headquarters in Cleveland; statewide efforts, by the Ohio Conference in Columbus. National headquarters for the church are located in New York City.

The preparation of this review of our Church's records has spread out over about four years and was done at the suggestion of the Church Council. It has been an experience I'll never forget.

Each succeeding page of these patiently, hand-written, legible records shows evidence of advancing change, advancing slowly and relentlessly to some fear-some crisis. In the early years, the members committed themselves to the Christian life to a degree so painstaking that most of us cannot understand it. At times, the agony of making it work was heartbreaking. Faith seemed to give them courage to keep trying.

In the light of present day, worldly interpretations of the Ten Commandments, the ways of our ancestors appear mildly amusing. When it is recalled that without them and their hard work and deep commitment there would be few churches in America, it is time to forget the ridicule.

Perhaps it is later than we think! New challenges are arising to the very existence of the American Churches, as we know them. Some of these challenges are recited by Rev. J. Archie Hargraves, of the United Church of Christ in a pamphlet entitled "Stop Pussyfooting Through A Revolution." Here is a shortened list --

1. The worship of the false god of status quo.
2. "Suburban captivity", or the flight from deteriorating areas, also known as the retreat from community-action projects to a country club atmosphere.
3. Re-conversion of the church members.
4. The church fails to nurture the spiritual growth of its members. Bible study classes rise and fade in short order.
5. The first churches were built in the market places not in the residential areas; that is, in the areas where the population lives and works, not in the places where it sleeps!

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*"Blessed is the man whom thou dost chasten, O Lord, and whom thou dost teach out of thy law to give him respite from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked.*

*"For the Lord will not forsake his people; he will not abandon his heritage; for justice will return to the righteous, and all the upright in heart will follow it."*

- Psalms 94:12 - 15

Sarah Riley - 1965

August, 1822	Rev. John Seward of the Aurora Church and Rev. Wm. Hanford of Hudson Church arrived to help organize a church in Twinsburg as representatives of the Missionary Society of Connecticut.
April, 1828	Rev. Samuel Bissell of Aurora installed as our first pastor.
December, 1830	First Congregational Society of Twinsburg incorporated.
November, 1831	Dedication of meeting house on east side of Village Green.
November, 1848	Completion of the present church building.
November, 1865	First parsonage and three acres of land donated by Mrs. Huldah Alling.
October, 1896	Town clock installed in church, a donation by Mrs. Sarah M. Riley, widow of Lorenzo Riley.
March, 1921	Welcoming members of former Twinsburg Methodist Church.
August, 1922	Centennial observance of church founding.
January, 1927	Completion of present parsonage.
September, 1940	Memorial pipe organ installed.
November, 1948	Centennial observance of present church building.
November, 1949	Tower rebuilt.
February, 1950	Clock electrified.
June, 1952	New Constitution adopted, effective January 1, 1953. New electronic organ installed. New front steps.
1954	Addition to the church.
1963	Purchased the Culhan Property. Remodeled the Sanctuary.

## PASTORS OF OUR CHURCH

- August 23, 1822 date of organization, Rev. John Seward and Rev. Wm. Hanford, missionaries from the Missionary Society of Connecticut, alternated with services.
- 1827 - 1828 Luman Lane, Philo M. Mills, and Robert Hurd appointed to lead the Sabbath Meetings.
- 1828 - 1835 Rev. Samuel Bissell.
- 1835 - 1843 Rev. Samuel Hair, Rev. Joseph Treat, Rev. Ebenezer Ward, Rev. Chester Chapin filled in during the period when the church divided.
- 1843 - 1846 Rev. Robert C. Learned.
- 1848 - 1852 Rev. Horace W. Palmer.
- 1853 - 1858 Rev. Joseph H. Scott.
- 1858 - 1860 Pres. George E. Pierce and Prof. Henry B. Hosford of Western Reserve College in Hudson filled in.
- 1860 - 1867 Rev. Sidney Bryant.
- 1869 - 1872 Rev. Andrew Sharp.
- 1872 - 1882 Rev. Aurelian H. Post.
- 1882 - 1884 Rev. Charles M. McNulty.
- 1884 - 1889 Rev. William Haynes.
- 1889 - 1895 Rev. Charles H. Lemmon.
- 1895 - 1898 Rev. A. Wilmer Swengel.
- 1899 - 1902 Rev. Joseph Wolfe.
- 1902 - 1905 Rev. Arthur T. Reed.
- 1905 - 1911 Rev. Walter R. Blackmer.
- 1912 - 1916 Rev. Roselle Theodore Cross.
- 1917 - 1919 Rev. John L. Conant.
- 1919 - 1920 Rev. R. T. Cross supplied.
- 1920 - 1925 Rev. Wm. C. H. Moe.
- 1925 - 1929 Rev. J. M. Allison.
- 1930 - 1935 Rev. W. A. Mulder.
- 1936 - 1937 Rev. Thorley Johnson.
- 1938 - 1939 Various supplies, one of whom was Rev. H. L. Torbett.
- 1939 - 1943 Rev. William H. Longworth.
- 1944 - 1953 Rev. L. Austin Lippitt.
- 1954 - 1959 Rev. W. R. Stevenson.
- 1960 - Rev. John Bruce.

## VICTORIAN RECOLLECTIONS

written and presented

by

**Letella Fessenden Baker**

for the Dedication of the New  
Organ which occurred September  
8, 1940, in the Congregational  
Church of Twinsburg, Ohio.

Friends of the Congregational Church and Community:

It is to be deeply regretted that there are no records of the happy events and interesting activities of this church fifty or more years ago - for today we would like to roll back the curtain of memory and talk about some of the things we used to do. But alas! There are so few of us left who might remember. Standing here, I feel as if fifty years is a long, long time. Voices of the Past are around me, Unseen Faces are before me. In the beautiful memories that I have, of my girlhood spent in this beautiful old church, I feel that I have a heritage beyond price.

As I remember, the church was composed of a loyal, earnest, happy people. Every seat in this church was filled every Sunday; perhaps people in the church were more spiritual, fifty years ago - most families kept family worship. The midweek prayer service was always well attended, interesting and helpful.

Music in those days was the principal amusement, really fine and worthwhile, and also one of the most important vocations. The singing school was to the young people, what the movies are today as amusement and past time. Everyone loved to sing and there was plenty of splendid talent. In the history of the town, it speaks of Mr. Luther Prentiss as having started the first singing school about 1823 and also conducting the singing at the dedication of the first church here in Twinsburg. Mr. Prentiss was the grandfather of the Prentiss girls in Twinsburg.

No records having been kept, there is very little known about the music in earlier years. Mr. Samuel Bissell realized the value of music as a feature in his school and called Mr. John Fessenden as a teacher of music. Mr. Fessenden taught the rudiments of music and inspired many to adopt musical careers. Classes were free and many residents of the town availed themselves of his instruction. He came to the Bissell Institute in 1845 and remained until 1860. For a long time Mr. Fessenden had charge of the choir in the Congregational Church and under his direction it had the reputation of being the best country church choir in the Western Reserve.

My own first recollection of the choir, probably I was five years old, was being in the gallery and watching everybody turn around to face the music. I remember watching Uncle Samuel Bissell and his five pews of students, among them several Indians, slowly rise and turn. I always seemed fascinated when they raised their eyes to the gallery. My sister Allah played the organ, both my parents were there, but of all that choir, I can recall but two people distinctly. Willie Redfield who had red hair, sang tenor and to me it seemed angelic, and Elisha Herrick who sat near me and gave me peppermints every Sunday. You see my family were all in the gallery, so I had to be there too.

Reverend Chapin came as pastor and the choir was moved down to the south side of the pulpit. When the pipe organ was installed, about 1887, the choir was again moved to the north side. Carrie Hull was the first organist. Letella Fessenden and Emma Chamberlin followed, then Carrie Lane, and Cleora Lane. From that time probably Mable Culhan and Gertrude Walton have been the only ones to carry on. The music of the choir was always excellent and the order of exercises fully observed. Mina Munroe, the adopted daughter of Wallace and Emma Chamberlin, was a member of the choir and had a beautiful voice. As I remember the choir, the following persons sang at that time: Flo Yost, Katie Hanchett, Retta Riley, Kit Chamberlin, Lottie Mills, Mina Munroe, Lizzie Nichols, Mrs. McManus, Letella Fessenden, Hosford Hull, Hosmer Lane, Abner Lane, Harrison Dunchee, Will Parmelee, Elisha Herrick, Seth Hanchett, Isaac Jayne and Evelyn Parmelee.

Zeno Parmelee and Mr. Fessenden led for many years; later Elisha Herrick - then Luther Nichols, Hosmer Lane, Abner Lane, Frank Lane, Arthur Dunscomb and Mrs. Lister.

When Flo Yost came to Twinsburg to live, her mother having married Newton Herrick, life really began. Many of you probably remember her lovely voice and charming personality. It seemed as if we took a new interest in our music. Many of you recall the Queen Esther Cantata which we gave.

Right here I would like to speak of my mother, Mary Fessenden. She was much loved in the church and community, very active in Temperance work - a help in the music of the church - and a poet of no mean ability. She was always ready and willing to put the events of the church into rhyme; was always sent as a delegate to the church conferences, for she always brought back a clear and interesting account of events. She was ninety-five when she passed quietly away - but every night of her life she sang her favorite hymns before going to sleep.

As electricity was unheard of at that time for the church we had to get the boys to pump the organ. Some of them were Dwight Hull, Charlie Crouse, George Dodge and Frank Maunder. Frank went to sleep one hot drowsy Sunday and had to be awakened for the last hymn. There were many others probably; I am sorry to miss any of them.

There are always faithful ones in every church. Mabel Culhan who has given her time and talents and energy so generously for many years; Gertrude Walton assisting whenever needed and Stanley Rankin, a fine musician and leader of the present choir. The following are members of the choir: Mrs. Sadie Twerell, Mrs. Swartz who is a great help in all the music of the community, Miss Runk, Miss Ola Twerell, Mrs. Elliot, Mrs. Ford, Mrs. Melling, Eloda and Effie Holt and several younger members, Mr. Dudley Twerell, Charles Weimer, Mr. Roby and others whose names I am not familiar with. There must be plenty of talent among the young people of this church. Our young men should begin to take an interest in singing - the church choir is one of the best places to get a start, for one of the very nicest things in college life is the Glee Club. It is fervently desired that now we have this fine instrument the choir will take new interest in the music of the church - for it not only is an inspiration for the congregation to listen to good music, it is an uplift to the minister to have an active dependable choir, and besides that, it is grand to sing.

*"God sent his singers upon earth, with songs of sadness  
and of mirth,  
That they might touch the hearts of men and bring them back  
to Heaven again.  
Our lives are songs, God writes the words and we set them  
to music at pleasure,  
And the song grows glad or sweet or sad, as we choose to  
fashion the measure."*

**ARTICLES OF FAITH, THE COVENANT AND RULES OF PRACTICE**  
adopted August 23, 1822

**Articles of Faith**

**Article 1.** You believe there is one God the Creator, Preservor and Governor of the universe, that he is self-existent, independent, unchangeable, infinite in mercy, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

**Article 2.** You believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God; that they contain a complete and harmonious system of divine truth and are the only perfect rule of religious faith and practice.

**Article 3.** You believe that there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; that these three are in essence one and in all divine perfections equal.

**Article 4.** You believe that God governs all things according to his eternal and infinitely wise purpose so as to render them conducive to his own glory and the greatest good of the universe and in perfect consistency with his hatred of sin, the liberty of man and the importance of the use of means.

**Article 5.** You believe that God at first created man in his own moral image consisting in righteousness and true holiness; that he fell from that holy and happy state by sinning against God and that since the fall of Adam all mankind came into the world with a disposition entirely sinful.

**Article 6.** You believe that in reference to the fall of man God did from all eternity appoint the Lord Jesus Christ his only and well beloved son Mediator who assumed our nature and made atonement for sin; that God can now consistently exercise mercy towards sinners and that he will pardon all those that repent and believe the gospel.

**Article 7.** You believe that as all men in their natural state reject Christ, God did from all eternity choose some of the human race to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth and that all those whom he has thus chosen he will renew and sanctify in this life and keep them by his power through faith unto salvation; and that all those whom he has not thus elected are left to pursue their own chosen way and suffer the punishment due to their sins.

**Article 8.** You believe that Christians are freely justified by grace through faith, but that although they are freely justified still the laws of God as a rule of duty remains in full force and that all men are under obligation perfectly to obey it.

**Article 9.** You believe that personal holiness is the certain effect of the renewing operation of the Holy Spirit, and affords to believers the only \_\_\_? \*\_\_\_ evidence of their justification and title to the heavenly inheritance; that you have been thus renewed and that you exercise faith in Christ.

**Article 10.** You believe that men are free and voluntary in all their conduct, that the requirements of God are perfectly reasonable, and that sinners are inexcusable for \_\_\_? \*\_\_\_ and unbelief.

\* an illegible word

**Article 11.** You believe that the visible church of Christ consists of visible saints, who publicly profess their faith in him, and that baptised children so belong to the church as to be under its care and instruction.

**Article 12.** You believe in the divine appointment of the christian sabbath and of the sacraments of the New Testament of baptism and the Lord's supper which are all under obligation in the exercise of faith to observe; and that it is the duty of parents to dedicate their children to God in baptism and train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

**Article 13.** You believe that the soul is immortal and that the last day Christ will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness; that all who die impenitent will go away into endless punishment and the righteous be received to heaven to enjoy eternal felicity.

**Covenant**

You believing yourselves subjects of special divine grace do now, in the presence of God, angels and men renounce service of sin and choose the Lord Jehovah to be your God and eternal portion, the Lord Jesus Christ your only savior and the Holy Ghost to be your \_\_\_? \*\_\_\_ and comforter. You promise to take God's holy word for your directory and by divine Grace comply with all its injunctions. You solemnly engage duly to observe all the injunctions of the gospel.

You promise to encourage family prayer and instruction; the seasonable dedication of children to God in baptism; and to govern and restrain from vitious practices and company all who may be in your care; you promise daily to maintain secret prayer; stately to attend on the Lord's supper, and to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

You promise to refrain from unnecessarily associating with the vitious and from vain conversation and finally to watch over the members of the church and, if necessary, to reprove them with christian meekness and brotherly love to submit to the watch and discipline of this church endeavoring in all things to promote its prosperity and to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called relying on divine grace, thus you covenant with God and this church.

We then the members of this church do cordially receive you into our communion and fellowship. We welcome you as members of the body of Christ and as fellow travellers to his rest. We promise by the grace of God to watch over you with meekness and love and by council and prayer to help you \_\_\_? \*\_\_\_ on the way to heaven, and we pray God that we may live together as bretheren and glorify human earth and finally join the church triumphant in heaven there to unite in the praises of God and the Lamb.

\* an illegible word

**ARTICLES OF PRACTICE**

**Article 1.** This church shall have a standing committee chosen from among their members consisting of not less than two and not more than seven whose duty it shall be to take cognizance of public offences and manage the prudential concerns of the church.

**Article 2.** All persons applying for admission into this church either by letter or otherwise shall be examined in the presence of the church and if they give satisfactory evidence of their christian character they shall in ordinary cases be publicly propounded at least two weeks before their admission.

**Article 3.** This church deem it inconsistent with duty to admit members of distant churches residing in this vicinity to occasional communion in ordinary cases for a longer period than one year.

**Article 4.** This church consider it the duty of male heads of families and when circumstances do not render it improper for females to read daily the scriptures and pray in their families. They also recommend to heads of families to sing praises to God when it can be performed with propriety be considered a part of family worship.

**Article 5.** This church consider it an important duty of heads of families to instruct and govern their children and all under their care agreeably to the word of God endeavoring to restrain from evil practices and vicious company and directing them by parental authority to attend whenever circumstances will permit catechistical lectures appointed by the pastor or the church.

**Article 6.** This church consider it their duty to pay special attention to their baptised children and agree that parents and others who are members of this church having the more immediate care of such children shall be accountable to the church for their religious instruction and government so long as they continue members of their families and for any evident neglect of these duties shall be as liable to discipline as for any offense whatever.

**Article 7.** This church consider the collecting of hay or grain on the sabbath or attending to any part of the business of making sugar, the visiting of friends except in cases of sickness and the prosecution of journies on that day without special necessity of violation of christian duty.

**EXERPT FROM CHURCH RECORDS**  
(example of the type of trials often held)

Friday, Oct. 23rd, 1857

The church met according to the call of the Modr. Bro. Luman Lane, one of the Standing Committee presented a paper of which the following is a copy.

"I present the charge of Covenant Breaking against Bro. H. for neglecting to walk in fellowship with this church in endeavoring in all things to promote the peace and spiritual welfare ---

Specification 1st. Not supporting the Gospel Ministry -

Spec. 2nd Not attending stately the public Worship of God with this church -

Spec. 3rd Not duly observing the Lord's Supper -

Spec. 4th Neglect to attend the business meetings, such as the annual meetings of this church.

"I conversed with Bro. H. alone upon the above specifications on Sept. 5th; and not obtaining satisfaction, I took Bro. W. W. Southworth with me Sept. 11th and conversed with him upon the same specifications again, and obtained no satisfaction.

"I name as witnesses on the 1st Spec. Bro. Zeno Parmele, J. M. Hart and Rev. J. H. Scott. On the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Bros. George Stanley, Lewis Alling and Dea. Josiah Redfield.

Twinsburgh Oct. 23, 1857

Signed - Luman Lane

(Footnote - The time covered by the complaint was stated to be 2 years)

"The complaint was received by the church in order to its being acted upon. The Clerk was directed to cite Bro. H. to appear before the church to answer to the above charges on Friday, the 30th inst. at 10:00 o'clock A.M. Also to cite the witnesses named to be present at the same time and give their testimony in the case.

"Bro. Luman Lane was appointed to conduct the trial as prosecutor in the case.

"It was resolved that the rule of the church requiring the common oath to be administered be rescinded, and the Presbyterian rule (Book of Dis. Chap. 6, Sec. 9) be adopted in its stead; which is this - 'The oath or affirmation to a witness shall be administered by the Moderator in the following or like terms - You solemnly promise in the presence of the Omniscient and heart-searching God that you will declare the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the Great Judge of the quick and the dead.'

"Bro. G. Stanley, one of the Stand. Com. reported the result of a visit to Bro. J. Root and wife in Macedonia; that they indulged the christian hope and endeavored to lead christian lives, but have no regular place of worship. The Church then adopted the following, which the Clerk was directed to forward to Bro. Root.

"We call the attention of Bro. Root and wife to the following rule of the Church -- 'That we consider it irregular for members of our church who remove out of this place to remain more than one year, in ordinary cases, without taking letters.' And in view of it we would recommend to Bro. and Sister Root that while they remain in Northfield they connect themselves by letter from this church with the Presbyterian Church in Northfield if they can cheerfully do so. But if they do not choose this connexion then we would urge upon them attendance here when practicable especially on the Communion Sabbath - the first Sab. of Jan., Apr., July and Oct. And when they cannot worship with us, then with such other evangelical denominations as may be most accessible.

"Adj'd. till Friday, the 30th, 10. o'clock A.M.

J. H. Scott, Pastor."

10 o'clock

Twinsburgh, Oct. 30th, 1857

"The church met according to adjournment, and was opened with Prayer. The Modr. enjoined upon the members of the church to bear in mind their solemn and responsible position as judges of a Court of Jesus Christ. The church made choice of D. W. Richardson as assistant Clerk. The Clerk then made the charges professed against Bro. H. Whereupon the Modr. asked him whether he admitted their truth or not. He pleaded not guilty. The witnesses for the Prosecution were qualified, Rev. Mr. Barton being in the chair during the time of the Pastor's examination.

"1st specification -

"J. M. Hart witnessed that he was treasurer for 1855 and also the present year - 1857 - He received nothing from Mr. H. to his knowledge in '55 -- nor any the present year.

"Z. Parmele testified that he was treasurer for the year '56 and that he had received nothing from Mr. H. that year for the support of the Gospel.

"J. H. Scott, the Pastor, said that he had examined his papers and could not find anything received from Mr. H. since 1854.

"Second Spec.

"Geo. Stanley said that he was uniformly at church on the Sabbath. He should think Mr. H. was not present more than 1/2 of the time - and in the forenoon not more than 1/3 of the time.

"At this stage of the proceedings Mr. H. stated that he had obtained no witnesses and wished that citations might now be issued for those whom he named. The church acceded to his request and directed the Clerk to issue citations for J. G. Stevens, D. Bissell, S. H. Bishop, H. Taylor, G. G. Dodge, J. N. Higley and O. Looker.

"Took recess for one hour."

1. o'clock P.M.

"The church came together and joined in prayer. The testimony in proof of the 2nd Spec. was resumed.

"L. Alling said that he could not tell how constantly Bro. H. had attended worship: should suppose that he had not been present more than one third or one half of the time.

"3rd Spec.

"Dea J. Redfield said he thought Mr. H. had been present at communion not more than one half of the time.

"Lewis Alling said he could not tell whether Mr. H. had been at communion one third or one half of the time.

"4th Spec.

"Dea Redfield said that he had not seen Mr. H. at any of the business meetings of the church for the two past years.

"L. Alling stated that he had not seen Bro. H. at a business meeting during that time; that he (Alling) was generally present though sometimes absent.

"The testimony on the part of the Prosecution being here ended, the witnesses for the defence were introduced and qualified.

1st Spec.

"Mr. H. commenced his defence by saying that he had not for the past 2 years paid any thing for the support of the Gospel. The reason that he had not paid anything was that the course pursued by the Pastor was not for the good of the church.

"He asked J. G. Stevens as a witness if he did not think so. Ans. - I have uniformly paid for the Pastor's support and have no wish that he should leave --- suppose that our present difficulties may be settled and yet retain the Pastor.

"G. G. Dodge was asked his opinion of the Pastor's conduct. Ans. - He could say nothing but that it was a mere matter of opinion. He had paid for Mr. Scott's support until the present year. He was not prepared to decide whether he should pay anything this year or not.

"3rd Spec.

"G. G. Dodge said that Mr. H. was some times at the communion, sometimes not. He has been absent less for the past two years than before that time.

"Mr. H. here gave an account of his attendance at the Communion during the last year, saying that he was there 3 times out of the 4 and the 4th he was either sick or out of town at Green Bay.

"4th Spec.

"Mr. H. asked J. G. Stevens, do you attend the Regular Meetings of the Church? Ans. - I have generally intended to be present but circumstances have

some times prevented.

"G. G. Dodge said that he had not seen Mr. H. at a business meeting of the Church for the last 2 years.

"H. Taylor said that he had not attended the business meetings of the church. He had been absent a part of the time, and a part of the time had been in the employ of others.

"S. H. Bishop said that he had not attended a business meeting of the church before the present.

"The testimony of the defence here closed. Mr. H. having the progress of the case confessed to the truth of each charge except the 3rd. Bro. L. Lane summed up the case on the part of the Prosecution, after which he left the church as also did the Defendant.

"The vote was then taken upon the question whether the charges had been sustained, the vote being taken upon each Spec. separately. The 1st Spec. was sustained by a vote of 15 to 1: viz - J. G. Stevens, G. G. Dodge, W. W. Southworth, Wm. Porter, Geo. Harris, F. Sheldon, J. R. Parmele, L. Alling, D. W. Richardson, G. Stanley, J. Redfield, Z. Parmele, L. Riley, J. M. Hart, J. Lane - sustained.

D. Herrick - not sustained.

The 2nd Spec. was sustained by the same vote.

The 3rd Spec. was unanimously voted. Not sustained.

The 4th Spec. was sustained by the first vote of 15 to 1.

"The following Resolution was then presented -

"Whereas Bro. H. has been guilty of a Breach of Covenant with this church in not supporting the Gospel Ministry, in not attending stately the public worship of God with this church and in neglect to attend the Business Meetings of this church, as has been proved by witnesses and also confessed by Bro. H. himself before this church; and

'Whereas Bro. H. having been labored with according to the Gospel Method shows no signs of Repentance but justifies himself in his course;

'Therefore Resolved that he be suspended from the communion and fellowship of this church, until he shall show appropriate signs of Repentance and Reformation.'

"This Resolution was adopted by a vote of 13 to 3: viz - Ayes -- J. H. Hart, W. W. Southworth, Wm. Porter, Geo. Harris, F. Sheldon, J. R. Parmele, L. Alling, D. W. Richardson, G. Stanley, J. Redfield, Z. Parmele, L. Riley, J. Lane. Nays - J. G. Stevens, G. G. Dodge and D. Herrick.

"The Clerk was directed to communicate this sentence to Mr. H.

"Adjourned with prayer.

J. R. Parmele, Clerk

J. H. Scott, Modr.

"The following Resolution was passed --

Twinsburgh Dec. 11, 1857.

'Process in case of scandal shall commence within the space of one year after the offence shall have been committed, or become known to the person making the complaint.

J. W. Scott, Pastor"

## DR. EDWARD W. MORLEY PREACHES IN TWINSBURG

Dr. Morley is best known for his work in physics, especially for the experiments with Albert Michelson which led to accurately measuring the speed of light. In 1868, he did, however, occupy the pulpit in Twinsburg. This fact is not recorded in our records, but rather in his biography. He was not too impressed either by the town or the church.<sup>1</sup>

### RECEIVES OFFER FROM TWINSBURG, OHIO

When Morley decided to again try to find a church he ran a series of advertisements in some of the church papers setting forth his desire and his qualifications. This appeal to the churches seems to have elicited little attention in the East, but an inquiry finally came from an unexpected source. The Congregational Church at Twinsburg, Ohio was looking for a minister. Twinsburg was a long way from Massachusetts, and so the ordinary procedure of having a minister come to the church for a trial sermon seemed out of the question. It was therefore decided that he should make the trip to Twinsburg and accept a sort of trial appointment. The length of the trial period was not made definite, but it was tacitly understood by both parties that it should extend over several weeks and should gradually merge into a regular pastorate if both parties to the agreement were satisfied.

And so, quite unexpectedly to him and to his friends, he found himself boarding a train for that new and more or less uncouth country vaguely known as the West to which he had thought he would never care to go to live. He left his home in Pittsfield on Thursday, September 24, 1868. His first stop was Hillsdale, where Miss Birdsall was expecting him. The young people undoubtedly talked over the new opportunity and what it would mean to them and their plans for the future. Morley left Hillsdale on Friday the 25th, got to Buffalo about midnight, and arrived in Cleveland at 6:30 Saturday morning. He arrived at Macedonia at 9:30, thence the two and a half miles to Twinsburg by horse drawn conveyance. The following morning, Sunday September 27th, he preached his first sermon in Twinsburg. The next day he wrote to his sister as follows:

"They have a good looking church which can seat four hundred, five hundred according to their story. They have a melodeon that is eight or ten years old and is not to be commended. The congregation was small, about eighty in the morning and a hundred and twenty in the afternoon. It is worthy of remark that very few young people, especially young men, go to church. I judge that they have had ministers who neglected all care for them and had no interest in them, and I am afraid that the church will have but uphill work for a long time. They find it very hard to get ministers out here, it is very different from New England in that respect. But their ideas of the needs of a minister's family, and a minister's library, and of the way to treat a minister are rather crude. Their ideas as to salary are on the low basis. The parsonage is neat, but of only one story, as are most of the houses in the town. I infer that their expectations or rather their demands are excessive. They want a minister to be around among them a great deal; they want him to draw in the young people. They want him to make the prayer meetings interesting so that the young people shall go to the Congregationalist meeting in the evening and not to the Methodist; and they do not want unwritten sermons. A good many people were introduced to me yesterday; most of them want me to call on them during the early part of this week.

1. Williams, Howard R.; Edward Williams Morley; His Influence On Science In America; Easton, Pennsylvania: Chemical Education Publishing Company; 1957. Pages 107-110. Used by permission of the publisher.

I have been to one of the cheese factories of the town.<sup>1</sup> The profits from cows in the town are more than sixty thousand dollars a year. I do not know how I shall like the place."

It is probably safe to say that the last sentence in the above letter is a rhetorical one. There is little in the letter to indicate that he was going to like the work at Twinsburg. The physical equipment, church building and parsonage, was the only encouraging aspect of the place. Things ecclesiastical were not as they were in New England.

### WESTERN RESERVE COLLEGE OFFERS PROFESSORSHIP

He was not forced to make any decision as to whether or not he was going to like Twinsburg. Scarcely had he arrived when he received a visit from some of the faculty members of Western Reserve College located at near-by Hudson with the suggestion that he pay them and the college an early visit. He accepted the suggestion and made the visit the next day or the next but one. He wrote to his parents about it as follows:

Twinsburg, Ohio  
October 3, 1868.

Two or three days ago, two professors from Western Reserve College came over here and invited me to visit them. I went over there yesterday, and found that they wanted me to go there as a professor of chemistry, botany, mineralogy, and geology. The president is out of health; the new professor is to supply the chapel pulpit until the president is better, until April or July, and is not to be required to teach until he is relieved of preaching. The number of students in the college is 67 and in the preparatory department about 40. The audience at the chapel is about 120. It is a quite small room.

I do not like the preaching. It would take time which otherwise I could spend in preparatory study. It might be too hard, as, though I have eighteen sermons, I should not have more than half that number fit to preach at Hudson, and I do not know whether I can write as many as would be necessary. The professors offer to help some, and say that it would be by no means undesirable to exchange somewhat.

I do not like botany or mineralogy. Geology is rather better. Chemistry I like. They say I can perhaps make some change with Prof. Barrows, who has mathematics, natural philosophy, and astronomy. They now pay \$1100, and hope to raise to \$1200 another year. That seems to be worth more here than it is at the east. Coal is \$6.00, beef 17¢ instead of 25¢, and so for other things. They have no houses for the professors. The village is a pleasant one, on the Cleveland and Pittsburgh railroad, say twenty-five miles from Cleveland. I do not see but that it is a tolerable opening for me in a direction better suited to me than some others. Prof. Barrows, son of the Andover professor, first spoke of me, and they wrote to Chadbourne, Treat, Hopkins and some others, with such result that they have made an informal offer to me. I got them to write to Prof. Phelps in addition.

Let me hear soon. I shall write to Uncle Treat also.

There are some interesting and revealing statements in this letter. It will be recalled that this work has previously suggested that Morley was not thoroughly and completely imbued with a love for the ministry to the exclusion of every-

1. It is quite probably that "town" was used in its New England sense which would mean a township in Ohio.



thing else. It has been frequently suggested that some phase of scientific work was nearer to his inner desires than preaching ever was. In support of this theory, we have his own statement, "I do not like the preaching." Of course, he did not mean that he disliked preaching. He meant that of the two aspects of the new opportunity he liked the preaching part of it less. Later in the above letter he said, "I do not see but that it is a tolerable opening for me in a direction better suited to me than some others." What others had he ever considered but preaching? No, it would seem that he was, at last, ready to admit, even to himself, that his first love had always been science and not theology. What a release this must have been for his energies, what a relief to his peace of mind! He was at last free to follow, unhampered by any false sense of duty, the life for which his abilities and his desires had fitted him.

He asked for the advice of his parents, his friends, and his former professors to help him make the most momentous decision of his life. He probably placed especial weight upon the advice of E. P. Barrows of Andover Theological Seminary because Barrows had been professor of Sacred Literature at Western Reserve College from 1837 to 1852. Their concensus seemed to be in favor of his accepting the offer. He continued to preach at Twinsburg for the remainder of the fall. Then he returned to his home to take another momentous step.

Following is a letter, written by Mrs. Charles E. Riley, two months before her death, to the Womens Association.

Twinsburg, Ohio, Jan. 2nd, 32.

Friends and Co-workers:

As I sat at my desk balancing the Treasurer's books, I fell to musing on the progress this society has made since my acquaintance with it, and I wondered if you ladies would like to take a trip with me backwards and ramble along over some of the high spots.

First, let us take a look at the familiar faces that were with us at that time. Mrs. Anna Bissell, Mrs. Carrie Hull, Miss Sabra Dodge, Mrs. Loretta Dodge and Mrs. Carrie McManus. There were many others, but this is all I could call to mind.

We had a constitution in those days, which was very strictly adhered to. Every one had to pay an annual fee of 25 cents, to be a member. As this was optional, it soon got so there were a very few who were willing to join. Then twas thought advisable to reduce the fee to ten cents, but that did not make very much difference in our membership. You understand that each one who became a member was expected to open their home some time during the year, for a social and furnish a 10 cent lunch. In a few years we could only get 5 or 6 members, which made the load rather heavy for a few of us. At a business session the constitution was amended to read that every lady in the church should be considered a member, which seemed to be the best plan as it still stands that way. Our annual income then was from \$40.00 to \$60.00, as compared to \$800.00 this present year.

And now let us take a little side trip, and take note of the progress we have made.

The first time I entered this room I saw an ice cream and strawberry festival in progress. There was a dirt floor, with loose boards scattered here and there for walks. This particular evening (was two or three years before I united with the Society) there were small tables scattered about, just about filling the room. Of course it was not nearly as large then as now. There were three great heating

stoves and everything else that goes with them.

Every Thursday P.M. you would see the farmers from every street trundling along to town and Prayer meeting. One Pastor we had had a fashion after meeting of asking some one "Well how many were here to-day?". I heard one party answer him like this, "Thirty nine and the Preacher." I often wonder if he ever quite forgave them for not counting him. One thing I am sure he never forgot it.

By this time we could afford a new cookstove, and more dishes and table cloths. We got along nicely with this equipment for several years and felt quite proud of ourselves.

An article in our constitution read, "All money raised by this society must be spent on the interior of the church." About this time the barn at the parsonage needed shingling. Well, the trustees were willing to do the work, but how were they going to pay for the shingle. Someone had the brilliant idea of borrowing it of the Dime Soc. After a heated discussion the ladies told them "Yes - they would loan the money but it would be necessary for them to give their note for it." And they did so. The amount was \$40.00, I believe. We held that note several years, and received no payments on it. So we finally made the trustees a present of it.

So far we have failed to mention the numerous carpets we purchased for the Auditorium. I can remember three at least. The walls decorated every few years; new cushions; shades and chairs for the platform. I think, as I look over our checks, that our constitution has expanded to the far corners of the earth.

Perhaps now we had better consider ourselves back home again. And here we find two families from the city located in our midst. Attending church and making themselves one of us. They were very much interested in the progress of the church and were not afraid to put their shoulders to the wheel and help carry the load. One of these men was an engineer, the other one a financier. Through their combined efforts the money was raised and the work superintended of renovating our basement into a church parlor and juvenile S. S. rooms.

The old floor had become rotted through in places and had to be torn out. The space under the vestibule was a veritable junk pile. It was all cleared out. First a cement floor was put in, then the boards above that, which makes it much better than it ever was. A furnace was installed; a model kitchen built, etc. And this meant silverware, more dishes, more chairs, more tables had to be provided and that is where our society helped.

Some of our ladies were so proud of our improvements they used to mop this floor before every social function we happened to be sponsoring, and then mop it again after it was over. I am sure there are some of us here today who helped do it.

And here we find ourselves today. As good and convenient as we are there is still room for improvement. I wonder how many of us ever stop to think of the fire trap we have on our hands? Last Sunday there was reported 79 scholars in our Juvenile school, and I feel the church is responsible for their welfare, while they are here. What might happen in case of fire? Every one of the exits have doors swinging the wrong way. The stairs are too narrow. We all know there is a law governing all this. And I often ask myself where is the Fire Marshall? Let's get busy. A hand rail on the front steps would be a welcome addition to some of us older ones.

O Yes, I believe in missions and all that. But I also believe in looking after our own by keeping them comfortable and safe.

Will you pardon me if I say a few words of a more personal nature! This Association has always been a pet hobby of mine. You probably wonder why. Well, I'll tell you. I never could speak, or sing, or pray in public. But I could

work in the kitchen and help prepare a place for the church to worship in. We are told in the Bible story of Mary and Martha and how Mary chose the better part.

But I must confess I have always been a great admirer of Martha, and often wished our society might have been called "The Marthas." For what kind of a place would Our Savior and Mary had for their worship if Martha had not been cumbered with her household cares? I believe it takes both to make a whole. The church as Mary and our association as Martha.

I cannot close without telling you how much I have enjoyed the associations of the ladies in our society. Especially since the younger ones have taken the reins in their hands. Every moment has been a pleasure. Entering into the plans and arguments of the younger ones made me forget my white head, and that I belonged to a generation past and gone. But, believe me, my interest is still with you.

With love and the best of wishes for the future of your association, I thank you.

Oretta C. Riley

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

WASHINGTON D.C.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE  
HISTORIC BUILDING

KNOWN AS

THE TWINSBURG CONG. CHURCH

IN THE COUNTY OF

SUMMIT

AND THE STATE OF

OHIO

HAS BEEN SELECTED BY THE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE

HISTORIC AMERICAN  
BUILDINGS SURVEY

AS POSSESSING EXCEPTIONAL  
HISTORIC OR ARCHITECTURAL  
INTEREST AND AS BEING WORTHY  
OF MOST CAREFUL PRESERVATION  
FOR THE BENEFIT OF FUTURE  
GENERATIONS AND THAT TO THIS  
END A RECORD OF ITS PRESENT  
APPEARANCE AND CONDITION  
HAS BEEN MADE AND DEPOSITED  
FOR PERMANENT REFERENCE IN THE  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

ATTEST

*M. A. B. ...*  
District Officer



*Harold G. Pehars*  
Secretary of the Interior

The framed original of this governmental award may be seen in the church auditorium . . . a high tribute to those men and women of vision who builded so well one hundred years ago. The building itself, the spirit of our church and the good things for which it stands are indeed worthy of our most watchful preservation.