women. Through the years this Fidelis group has averaged from twenty to thirty members, willingly participating whenever called upon in various departments of church and Sunday School. A few of the original group are still in the class; many have died, moved away, or married. But through all these years the teacher first chosen is still teaching. Ethel Spreng, daughter of Bishop S. P. Spreng, herself says: "They have endured with admirable Christian grace the same teacher for lo these many years, from the beginning even unto this day." Other members of the class acknowledge her as the hub which holds the spokes together.

The first project of the class was a pledge of $250 to the Building Fund for the Educational Unit. The first large White Gift was a wheel chair for Charlotte Marous of the Little Flower Shop, one of their own group. This cost $100 at a time when that meant a lot of money. Part of their White Gifts were often sent to missionary friends such as Marie Gocker and Lois Kramer.

Program of the Dedicatory Services of the First Evangelical Church at Naperville, Illinois, February Twenty-First to Twenty-Sixth, Nineteen Hundred and Twelve.

PASTOR—W. A. SCHUTTE

WEDNESDAY, 7:30 P.M. ..... English Sermon
REV. W. B. RILLING
Presiding Elder Naperville District
THURSDAY, 7:30 P.M. ..... German Sermon
REV. F. F. JORDAN
Presiding Elder Chicago Division
FRIDAY, 7:30 P.M. ..... Sacred Concert by the Choir
SUNDAY, 9:30 A.M. ..... German Sermon
BISHOP S. P. SPRENG
SUNDAY, 10:30 A.M. ..... English Sermon
PRESIDENT L. H. SEAGER
SUNDAY, 2:30 P.M. ..... English Sermon
BISHOP S. P. SPRENG
SUNDAY, 7:30 P.M. ..... Mass Meeting
Address by Rev. L. C. Schmidt
Sermon and Dedicatory Services by Bishop Spreng
MONDAY, 7:30 P.M. ..... Organ Recital
Mr. William E. Zeuch, Chicago

Encouraged by the sound financial background and by the success of both private and public solicitation, the congregation finally decided in 1923 to erect the badly needed building. They chose a large building committee of sixteen members, with Professor M. E. Nonnemaker as chairman. They made two requests of the Illinois Conference of that and the following year: first, for permission to buy adjoining land for the building site; second, for permission to mortgage the church property to cover a loan of $20,000. Both requests were grant-

ed. Pledges for the new addition amounted to $31,500 in 1924. Perhaps part of the success of the fund-raising campaign can be attributed to the publication and distribution of a small pamphlet, "Story of a Sunday School," in which the author (Beulah Tillitson Dwinell) pictured for the primary and children's departments a crowded environment where "the walls are dark, the air is damp, the light is artificial, the floor is uncovered cement; everything but the children seems lifeless!"

Mrs. Dwinell, Superintendent of the Intermediate Department, and Mrs. Thomas Finkbeiner, Superintendent of the Primary Department, did not come into the new building. Mrs. Finkbeiner, who had spent endless hours in the planning of the new building once said, "Like Moses, we led them to the Promised Land, and then let someone else take over."

The building of the new unit meant the enlargement of all phases of Sunday School work. Instead of having to meet in the kitchen, in a curtained-off area of the dining room, or the furnace room, each department now had a beautiful assembly room and individual classrooms to accommodate the nearly 1,000 pupils. This plant was one of the most modern and advanced Church School units (note use of the progressive term, *Church School*, rather than the time-honored *Sunday School)* in the entire denomination, and visitors came daily to look over the facilities.

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Professor M. E. Nonnamaker was the General Superintendent when the new unit was dedicated in 1925 by Bishop S. P. Spreng. Other officers included: August Ritzert, August Muench, the three Broeker brothers—Lester, Milton and Willard,—Albert Klingbeil, Professor Heinmiller (Missions), Mrs. E. N. Himmel (Temperance), F. Theiss (Home Department), Naomi Manshardt and Mary Lenz (pianists), Esther Tarnoski (orchestra), H. C. Urbaurer and Floyd Shisler (ushers), Miss Edith Smith (Senior), Reverend Carl Heinmiller (Young People). Professor H. R. Heininger, Superintendent, and Floyd Bosshardt, President (North Central Students), and Professor J. S. Stamm (Adult).

The opening services for all Church School classes above intermediate age were held in the sanctuary. Orchestra, pianists, and ushers were all an essential part of this adult "opening" program. The assistant superintendents of the Church School took turns in preparing the opening devotionals.

The younger children of course were happily meeting in their own individual departments. The superintendents who began the work in the new building were: Mrs. Amelia Umbach (Cradle Roll), Mrs. E. E. Rall (Beginners), Mrs. E. E. Domm (Primary), Mrs. J. S. Stamm (Junior), Mrs. D. W. Staffeld (Intermediate).

Many people had contributed hours of labor in decorating and furnishing the rooms. The ladies had made all the drapes by hand. Dr. Schloerb, Mrs. Rall, Mrs. Freda Druschel, and Mrs. Domm were delighted to go into Chicago to Lyon and Healy's to buy pianos for the Sunday School rooms. The chairs and tables were designed to fit

each age group. Ample blackboard space in each classroom produced an excellent teaching situation.

Miss Laura Libutzki, who was one of the college librarians, liked to tell a story about the use of the blackboard in her classroom. One Sunday when the children were "wiggly" and inattentive, she said, "I can't understand what is the matter with you boys and girls today. Last Sunday you were unusually good. Today you are creating a big disturbance."

A second-grader raised his hand. "Miss Laura," he explained, "last Sunday you wrote on the board:

'Be still and know that I am God'.

Today you wrote:

'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord,' and that's what we're doing!"

Bishop Seager loved to tell stories on himself. One of his favorites concerned an experience as a young preacher officiating at a wedding. Evidently the people waiting to witness the ceremony had decided to amuse themselves by singing. Just as he came through the door at the head of the wedding procession, they were chanting: "See the hosts advancing, Satan leading on!"

During this period, Professor E. E. Domm, head of the Bible Department at North Central College, took over the Religious Education work of the Church School, and many of the most modern concepts of teaching and lesson planning were put into effect. New superintendents replaced those who moved away and the work continued in a most satisfying manner.

One of the vigorous growths took place in the Intermediate Department. Mrs. Willard Muehl, who had been appointed superintendent, had great ability at organization and a real vision of what would attract Junior High pupils. The department was named J. O. Y. (*J*esus first, *O*thers next, *Y*ourself last). The department theme song was the lively and singable, "For there is joy, joy, joy down in my heart." There was a coordinated morning and evening program. This antedated by many years the unified type of program which our General Church advocated at the merger.

As there was no Junior Choir at this time, the J.O.Y. donned white surplices and served in that capacity as needed. An orchestra, original playlets, and the giving of well-planned teas and programs for such times as Mother's Day, kept the creative young minds functioning. These activities were all worked out in committee sessions, and youth participation was at a maximum. An excellent teaching staff made the Sunday morning programs stimulating and challenging.

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Contributions and pledges had come readily for the new building.

In 1927 the Ladies Auxiliary gave $400 for the Building Fund. Contributions from 929 others (including 179 college students) amounted to $13,648.69. In all, a sum of $14,048.69 was applied to the reduction of the building debt that year.

All of which is an important reminder that a necessary part of any organization is the treasurer or committee or board that looks after the financial affairs. Back in Zion Church in 1908 a Committee on Stewardship was appointed, with W. W. Spiegler as chairman of the eight men. He must have been a good business man, for he held the position through the union with Chapel congregation, through the building of the new church, and through the additional building project in the early 20's. Then under the tenure of Reverend Schloerb, a Board of Stewards was organized with John E. Manshardt as First Steward. Under his guidance, "counting teams were established, a new set of books was ordered, and the Every-Member Canvass was begun." The giving of envelopes to children was adopted at this time also and received wide support.

An outside problem which was to grow to such immense proportions on "Piety Corners" that today there is no possible solution to it, began to raise its head already in 1927—The Parking Problem! This was discussed frequently in trustee meetings. Also, the day of automation was at hand, and the purchase of a mimeograph machine was debated.

A Weekday School of Religion was begun in Naperville in 1927 and First Church enrolled 110 pupils and contributed $2085.00 toward its support.

The church was prospering and enjoying a great feeling of unity and spiritual completeness when the sword of the seven-year rule fell. Many plans were developed to try to change or circumvent the Church dictum which said that seven years was as long as a minister might serve one congregation. Some of the plans offered (publicly and privately) were: insist that First Church is legally the College Church and therefore exempt; have Big Woods join our congregation and then there would be a different form of organization; start an Eola mission church and let Dr. Schloerb serve both churches; or just plain refuse to abide by the rule and insist that Conference return him to First Church. With the clear-eyed, above-board candor and integrity which had so endeared him to his people ,Dr. Schloerb said, "Either I am returned because Conference wills it or I shall have to go. There will be no subterfuge or evasions." Since Conference did not deem it possible to make an exception of First Church, Dr. Schloerb answered a call to the Hyde Park Baptist Church of Chicago. He served this church with great distinction and became one of the eminent churchmen of America.

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With the going of Dr. Schloerb, the search was on for someone to fill his place. The Reverend William E. Grote, who had served successful pastorates in Illinois and one briefly in California, was appointed in 1928. He was serving in Kankakee at the time and that congregation was greatly perturbed at losing Mr. Grote.

The personality traits of thoughtfulness and concern for people

which had enriched the lives of members of former congregations were evidenced many times and in many ways during Depression Days.

The horror of hungry children stalked across the land, and Naperville was not spared. A "Soup Kitchen" was established in the old Electric Light Plant on River Street in 1929 and First Church members contributed generously—heaping supplies of vegetables from their gardens, small gifts of money for soup meat (even small gifts could well be called generous in those days), and hours of time. The children sat at long clean tables and ate their bowls of soup at the Electric Light Plant, and then in little tin buckets carried some home. Mr. Grote gave himself unstintingly to this relief work.

Later, the closing of the banks came as a shock to many in the congregation, but to one couple who were momentarily expecting the arrival of their second child, there was an added element of fear. Not one word had been said to the minister, but on the Sunday evening after the declaration of the bank moratorium, Reverend Grote arrived at the home of his young parishioners. He took from his coat pocket a handful of change and a few bills and laid them on the dining room table.

Would you like to know why the attendance in Immanuel Class soared to an average of seventy every Sunday in the 1930's? The class was divided into eight teams and the captains of each group would call their members each week, urging their attendance on the following Sunday morning!

"This is all there was in the loose offering," he said, "for most of our congregation had very little money on hand, but I feel that your need is greater than anyone else's right now."

No counting. No saying, "Pay it back as soon as you can." Complete trust and understanding. A few months later the healthy boy who was baptized by his "benefactor," had an "E" in his name which was the same "E" as in W. E. Grote!

Sunday evenings after the church service, families liked to "drop in" at the Grote home. Big bowls of hot buttered popcorn served by Mrs. Grote, a most gracious hostess; games devised and toys supplied by parsonage daughters, Nancy and Lois, to amuse the visitors' children; and the warm, hearty welcome and good conversation supplied by Reverend Grote, made these Sunday evenings memorable. Money was in short supply but love and good fellowship abounded.

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During these days the church budget was radically reduced. Earlier when the stairway to the parsonage was reported unsafe, the Church Council had decided to build a new parsonage. Now, partly because of the Depression and partly because many people saw beauty in the old building, the funds for this purpose were discontinued.

Despite the terrible shortage of money, however, the indebtedness on the new educational unit was somewhat reduced. By 1933, the Ladies' Auxiliary had given $4500 toward the Building Fund.

The pastor's study, which had been in the small room upstairs behind the pulpit, was moved to the room at the east end of the south corridor on the first floor. There was no church secretary. The mimeograph machine had been purchased and the Sunday bulletins were now being mimeographed at the cost of about $7.50 a week. The work was done by high school girls.

In spite of economic difficulties, however, weddings were still going on. Among the church weddings performed by Dr. Grote was that of Reverend John R. Bouldin and Miss Grace Byas, daughter of the District Superintendent, A. H. Byas. The Superintendent's home in Naperville, which is located next door to First Church parsonage, was the home of the bride. Interestingly enough, Grace Byas Bouldin is at the present time again living in the "D. S.'s" house, this time as the wife of a (now called) Conference Superintendent. Dr. Bouldin is serving the Northern District of the Illinois Conference.

The German service had continued through the years but now the pastors who had been conducting the services had either died or become unable to serve. As there were still quite a number of older people, however, who wanted to worship in the German language, Dr. Grote took over this early morning service. The place of worship was changed from the sanctuary to the large room with the stained glass windows across the hall.

Much material and labor were donated during these years. August Ritzert refinished the pulpit furniture—the huge, solid square chairs and pulpit—to match the woodwork. George Wicks donated wood veneering to cover the balcony front. The sanctuary was redecorated at a cost of $1723 and for three Sundays the services were held in Pfeiffer Hall. The Ladies Auxiliary gave $750, which with the Rally Day offering of $835 nearly covered the cost of decorating.

When Rev. F. F. Jordan introduced newly acquired members to his congregation, he would often say: "Now Mr. R .... is a good carpenter; Mr. W..... would do a good plumbing job for you." Just a friendly gesture, as the good man was really concerned for his parishioners.

The Church School classes were serving in many ways. The Sheal Class had for a number of years taken care of the choir robes. The Work-to-Win Class provided facilities for the production of plays in the basement of First Church. The Bereans had an acoustican system installed. A new class for young women was formed called Sigma Omega Sigma, in the good Greek tradition. The letters, S. O. S., stood for "Smile, Obey, Serve." The officers elected were Marian Quantz, President, Wilma Hofert, Vice-President, and Helen Lueben, Secre-

tary-Treasurer. Dr. Riebel, General Superintendent, reported a general Church School reorganization was in progess in 1935.

Money during these years was exceedingly scarce, but members of First Church were not denied the privilege of hearing the great leaders of this era. These were the years when the bond between the college and the church was very close, and all the college programs were listed in full on the church bulletins. Even the regular chapel services were given much space. Some of the speakers at Pfeiffer Hall were Reinhold Niebuhr on "The Crisis in Western Civilization", Kirby Page, Sherwood Eddy, "Dad" Elliott, Dr. Edgar Goodspeed, and Dr. L. M. Sweet.

The Mayers brought the insight and breadth of their vision to the missionary program of First Church. The Woman's Missionary Society, Young Woman's Missionary Circle, and The Mission Band all benefited from the concepts of the indigenous church which Dr. Mayer was already forseeing. A week's special services were conducted by Dr. Mayer, three days of which were in Grace Church. Later, upon his return to Japan, Dr. Mayer became active in the Kingdom of God Movement in Japan, of which the world-famous Kagawa was the leader.

Ethel Spreng told us of a later incident in connection with the Woman's Missionary Society and Dr. Mayer:

> Reverend Eder received word that the Paul Mayer family, missionaries in Japan, would soon be coming home on a year's furlough and would like to make Naperville their headquarters. Could a house be found for them? Mr. Eder at once took up with the "ever-ready" women of the WMS, and they went to work right away. They found that the district house next to the parsonage would be vacant that year. So an invitation was given to the women of the Grace Church WMS to join us in the project. They readily agreed. An SOS was sent out through both societies for good used furniture, beds, tables, chairs, rugs, dishes, kitchenware, curtains, drapes, and everything needed to furnish a house. The response was heart-warming. Women from both societies were enlisted, and the enthusiasm was catching. With much scrubbing and cleaning and painting, in an amazingly short time there arose before us a beautifully furnished house, with everything for good housekeeping and comfortableness. It was most inviting. Some of the women thought it was nicer even than their own homes. And the real joy of all working together can hardly be expressed.
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> Needless to say, Dr. and Mrs. Mayer and their family were indeed delighted, and both Grace and First Church felt that the Mayer family belonged to us all.

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In 1934, the General Conference of the Evangelical Church saw fit to remove entirely the seven-year limit, but since it did not become

effective until October, 1935, it was too late for Mr. Grote to stay on at First Church.

At the farewell party for the Grote family in May, 1935, many members remembered with tenderness the kind and often unconventional and warmly human relationship with their pastor. In the minds of President and Mrs. E. E. Rall was a picture which Mrs. Rall described with vividness more than thirty years later:

"As I remember it, Edward (the Rall's twelve-year-old son) was quite ill with nephritis when his age group joined the church. Later, when Mr. Grote was ill for some length of time, my husband and I were visiting him and we spoke of Edward's missing the service. He suggested we bring Edward to his house and he would have the service there. So Edward joined the church in Mr. Grote's bedroom. Just Ed, Edward, Mr. and Mrs. Grote and myself. It was a sweet, simple and impressive service."