our Financial Secretary for fifty years. We congratulate him for his record and uniqueness of service. We are confident that he has been richly blessed in the doing of his work. We want him to know we are grateful."

Another person who has made a great contribution to the financial structure of the church is Joyce N. Lehman. As Church treasurer for twenty years, he has questioned or recommended various propositions, always with a vision of operating "in the black."

An interesting attitude of the congregation toward its budget has been strikingly illustrated twice—once during the depression and once in 1962. In depression days a motion was made in congregational meeting to have our lay delegate ask conference for a reduction in our apportionment from $2700 to $2430.00. The motion was lost because a majority didn't want such a request to be made! In 1962, when the pledges did not completely cover the proposed budget, it was suggested that some of the mission funds be allocated to balance the budget. This too, was defeated. The congregation has a definite "Let's get busy" policy rather than a "Let's cut the budget" one! Individual gifts and special offerings nearly always fill the gap.

One of the special offerings which has always been meaningful to the congregation is the traditional White Gift offering. The gifts have been used for projects which are as diverse as the needs of people at home and abroad. Although several suggestions are usually given to the congregation as a whole, such as CARE, special mission projects, orphanages, old people's homes, Red Bird Hospital, and others, yet each Church School class may choose the destination for its gifts. The rising and falling status of our economy is typified in the amounts given. In the 1933 depression the gift was $292.71. Steadily the amount moved upward until 1945, when, for the first time, the thousand dollar mark was crossed—$1048.80. In 1946, the amount was more than doubled and $2881.38 was raised. In 1947, the two thousand dollar goal was again exceeded, but from then until 1957, it was not reached.

A beautiful family tradition was begun in the middle forties in connection with the White Gift Offering. At the Christmas program a representative of each class brings the envelope bearing the gift and lays it at the manger where the Holy Family is being portrayed by the family of the congregation having the newest baby boy. Some members of the original planning committee worried lest the baby cry and "spoil" the climax of the Christmas program. Others felt that the touch of realism would in no way detract, and the idea took root. (The babies have behaved marvelously well!) The family which probably started the tradition was Mr. and Mrs. Lester Stover and Bruce. Some of the other families who have had the youngest son in the congregation when Christmas rolled around were: the Samuel Foemmels, Walter Klasses, Richard Koehlers, Weston Spencers, Elwin Yoders, John Bells, Richard Winters, Robert Gridleys, James Swallows, Wesley Wilsons, and William Lankenaus.

The traditions which are so meaningful to families and churches are harder to establish today than in bygone days. Already in 1957,

Mr. Washburn commented on the mobility of our congregation. "The present membership is 993. In the past five years 330 members have been received, but our gain in membership is only 132. This means that we must receive five members to gain two members . . . ."

In January, 1962, when the total membership had risen to 1,081, Mr. Washburn wrote in his annual report, "The parade of persons through our congregation continues . . . . We must be more diligent at winning persons. We must be more diligent at assimilating people. We must be more diligent at dialogues of spiritual significance with people while they are with us. We must send people on their way with a genuine sense of continuing to belong to our fellowship . . . ." To make vivid what he had in mind, Pastor Washburn presented Mr. and Mrs. William Kilgus (who were moving away after having served First Church in many places of leadership) to the Annual Meeting as "Mr. and Mrs. Parade." They personified the continuous coming and going of our members.

But while the membership becomes more and more fluid the building itself stands solidly on the corner of Franklin and Center as it has for fifty years. The trustees, however, are always aware of the need to keep the building in excellent repair, and to modify and remodel as the times and needs change. At a special meeting of the congregation on February 13, 1956, it was voted to have the church fiscal year coincide with the calendar year and to approve a number of major changes in the interior of the building. All proposals won easily except that for the building of a Prayer Chapel. This was approved by such a narrow margin that the trustees brought new propositions to the Board later. This time their suggestions were accepted by a sizable majority. On April 8, 96 men went out to raise $20,000 toward the improvement fund. The men and their wives held a Victory Dinner at the church that evening.

It was a "man's world" on the trustee board at First Church for over a century, but since 1950 five women have served on the board: Mrs. Willard Muehl, Miss Ruth Gamertsfelder, Mrs. Lester Schloerb, Mrs. Elmer Koerner, and Mrs. Obed Albrecht. In 1962, Mrs. Allie Stehr was elected Lay Leader (often called Class Leader), the first woman to hold this office in First Church's long history.

The dedication was set for November 25, 1956. The proposed changes had been made and the areas outside the sanctuary took on a beauty which was comparable to that of the sanctuary.

The church kitchen was made modern in every respect; the library was established in the old location of the pastor's study; part of the old parlor became a suite of church offices consisting of a reception room, a work room, the assistant pastor's study and the

minister's study (all conveniently located immediately to the right of the weekday entrance to the church); an unusually warm and attractive social parlor was designed by a professional decorator; and a prayer chapel was made beautiful through simplicity of design and richness of symbolism.

The creation of the Prayer Chapel made possible the beginning of another church family tradition which so enriches both church and family. During the advent season, each Sunday afternoon at the Vesper Hour, 4:30-5:30, families may kneel at the chancel in the chapel while their pastor offers individual prayers for each member of the family and then serves them communion as an act of devotion to Christ who is the center of Christmas. The first "family sacrament" in the new chapel will remain forever a blessed memory to one family, for it was the last time they had the privilege of kneeling together at the altar as an unbroken family unit.

Two pages in the Book of Remembrance deal with the memorial gifts given to the Prayer Chapel. They read as follows:

> THE PRAYER CHAPEL was dedicated TO THE GLORY OF GOD November 25, 1956, graced with ALTAR given in memory of Mrs. S. J. Gamertsfelder; CROSS AND CANDLESTICKS given in honor of Mr. and Mrs. John Manshardt; BIBLE AND BIBLE STAND given in honor of Mrs. Elizabeth Wahl; PRAYER RAILS given in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Philip Pope; CLERGY SEATS given in honor of The Reverend Charles Rodesiler; HYMN BOOKS given in honor of The Reverend H. Creighton Powell; LECTERN given by friends; LECTERN ANTEPENDIA given by children in the kindergarten; ALTAR VESTMENT AND BAPTISMAL BOWL given by The Reverend and Mrs. Theodore Rockwood.
>
> THE WINDOWS OF THE CHAPEL, four in number, presenting events in THE LIFE OF OUR LORD were dedicated November 25, 1956. The NATIVITY WINDOW was given by Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Shisler. THE BAPTISM WINDOW was given in memory of The Reverend and Mrs. William Albrecht. THE CRUCIFIXION WINDOW was given in honor of The Reverend and Mrs. E. D. Riebel. THE RESURRECTION WINDOW was given by friends of the church.

In 1962, Professor W. H. Heinmiller and his family added Chapel Bibles in loving memory of Mrs. Heinmiller. The window lighting was given by the Reverend and Mrs. Leslie Gabel.

That same Christmas, 1957, when the "family sacrament" was begun, First Church sent a large part of the White Gift Offering to CARE. A letter which reached the church in March said that the gift purchased almost eight tons of food for the needy people of the world. Food was distributed equally among Berlin, Colombia, Greece, India, Italy, Pakistan, and Germany. The letter stated, "Yours is a most tangible expression of brotherhood and will carry with it a message of hope to those assisted."

In 1958 the Committee on Social Action appealed to the congregation again: "After World War II we were happy to gather clothing for the destitute people of the world. That was in 1946 and 1947. The clothes given them are long since in shreds . . ." Since that time one or two big clothing drives a year have meant tons of clothing going on their way to the needy of the world. The spring and fall drives for 1961 had Mr. Frank Singer and Dr. J. Ruskin Howe as chairmen. Professor Allen Buck is Chairman of the Social Action Committee.

The six persons who have held membership in First Church for the longest period of time are:

Mr. Judson Gamertsfelder (longest continuous membership), 1901
Professor Thomas Finkbeiner, 1893
Lula Wagner Reik, 1894
Bertha Schutz Shisler, 1899
Frohnia Fink Stoner, 1899
Mary Brown Feucht, 1899

The world relationship ties are kept taut in Naperville. In 1959 the Denomination purchased a much-needed apartment house for missionaries home on furlough. On August 23 the new five-apartment brick building on the corner of Washington and School Streets was dedicated to Bishop Epp, with ceremonies attended by many members of First Church. This George Edward Epp Hall is a fitting tribute to Bishop Epp, who is one of the outstanding leaders in the field of missions in the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

In the local congregation, in the same year, a tribute was paid to Dr. Washburn for his twenty-five years in the ministry. The congregation gave him a sterling silver bowl and many personal expressions of appreciation. In 1960 the congregation, which had begun the support of Mr. and Mrs. John Dennis at the Inter-American University in Puerto Rico, sent the pastor to get first-hand information on the project. Gratefully he returned to share with members of his congregation the new and enriching experience which had been his, and to give them visual and verbal accounts of the work.

This desire on the part of the congregation to have intellectual and spiritual enlightenment go hand-in-hand has been in evidence all through the history of First Church. The building of the modern Church School unit, the careful choosing of superintendents, department heads, and teachers all bear witness to this. The plans for a full-time director of Christian Education had been on the books for a long time. Quentin Lansman had served part-time in 1958, Mrs. Howard Mueller was full-time Educational Assistant from September

1959-1961, and in September, 1961, Mrs. J. Ruskin Howe became full-time Director of Christian Education.

Mrs. Howe is extraordinarily well-prepared to handle this position. Her work includes the total educational program of the church at all age levels. Mr. Henry Moy, who had twice been elected Church School Superintendent and had a thorough knowledge of the workings of the entire school, served as the competent first chairman of the newly organized Board of Christian Education. Dr. Arlo L. Schilling, who became President of North Central College during the Centennial year of 1960-61, is now serving as the Chairman of the Board. His ability as an educator and administrator makes him particularly well suited to this work.

Mrs. Howe's vision of Christian Education places it within the context of the church. She says, "Through Christian Education we communicate the Christian faith. We think and plan in terms of the wholeness of personality. The church provides for the Christian nurture of individuals. We want our Christian Education program here at First Church to be such that it is always possible for the pupil, whatever age, to be confronted with God, through Christ, and to be given the opportunity to respond." This background will serve them in good stead as they grow older, for the Sunday morning services at First Church are real experiences of worship.

Mechanical devices and material aids are merely adjuncts to the main purpose of the service and are used as inconspicuously as possible. The flowers on the altar always add beauty to the service, never detract; for their arrangement is done with skill and artistry by the Altar Guild, Mrs. Adam Keller, chairman. The men who serve as ushers are friendly and dignified.

In speaking of the ushers, it is interesting to note a change in the philosophy of ushering. For many years, the church advocated the use of one team of ushers. During the pastorate of Dr. Schloerb, the ushers were organized and dressed uniformly in conventional English morning garb. With boutonnieres in place, they were an impressive addition to the service.

There have been only three head ushers: Mr. George Wicks, Mr. William Ritzert, and Mr. Floyd Shisler. Mr. Shisler tendered his resignation as head usher on January 4, 1962. He had served as an usher in First Church for nearly fifty years and as head usher since 1935. In a letter to Mr. Shisler the church expressed appreciation for the skillful handling of the ushering staff. They are all well trained in the gracious greeting of guests and careful seating of regular members. Mr. Shisler worked with the men from the time of the original ten to the latest arrangement of team ushering, where 70 men are involved. These teams function with captains and co-captains. During 1961 five teams of ushers worked: one for early service and the other four alternated for late service. At the present time the co-chairmen are Gilbert Meyer and Willard Muehl. Mr. Willard Broeker has served faithfully as captain of the first service since its beginning. Other team captains are Melvin Gabel, Marvin Hartwig, Oliver Kreimeier, Walter Schall, and Paul Uebele.

Another change over the years is in the serving of the communion. All communicants came forward and knelt at the altar until 1927. At that time it was voted that they might stand at the altar instead of kneeling. During the pastorate of Reverend Grote it was recommended that the communion symbols be passed through the congregation. The Ladies' Auxiliary bought a new larger table and a new communion set. In 1931 communion cup holders were installed in the pews.

Caring for the communion cups and preparing the emblems have become acts of loving service, and many hands have shared in this preparation. At the present time Mrs. Joseph Beever is chairman of the Communion Stewards.

The Communion at one time could be served only by licensed ministers, but that rule has been changed within recent years so that laymen may also serve. Communion is a solumn ritual of remembrance. The pastor, the assistant pastors, and the servers of the emblems are so much a part of the service that the thoughts of the worshipper may be fixed only upon the meaning of the memorial act.

The young men who have served as the assistants to the ministers of First Church have added much to the morning worship service. Their willingness to become a true part of the congregation and its life has been a rewarding experience to the members of the church and to the young men themselves. At the present time First Church is enjoying its first intern minister. Brian Bender is regularly on the church staff for a year and is not attending Seminary during this time. He worked as an assistant pastor last year, and has been welcomed gladly by the congregation. One of his many diverse duties is to assist in the worship service.

The robed ministers; the chancel with its high altar, eternal light, and liturgical hangings which follow the church calendar; the lighting and extinguishing of the altar candles by an acolyte; the beauty of anthem and organ—all these become a part of Divine Worship on Sunday morning. The sermon adds strength and inspiration to the worshipper.

The preaching ministry of Pastor Washburn has been an outstanding one. His appeal to his congregation is to accept the Divine Presence so completely that their humanity is permeated through and through with the love of God. When this happens, their relationship to their fellowmen becomes one of understanding, love and goodwill. Human beings are of this world, but they are also capable of being instruments of the love of God.

Dr. Washburn's sermons have both spiritual and intellectual depth. He, like some other ministers of First Church, is an avid reader and interpreter of contemporary theological thought. His sermons reflect the wealth of reading and contemplation he has done. To preach to a congregation in which there are perhaps a retired bishop and several ministers, a conference superintendent or two, college and seminary faculty and students, a laity with varied interests and talents but with unusual perception, has been a challenge through several decades to many of the ministers.

Not only have these ministers been good preachers, they have

been good pastors as well. They have been close to their people because they have had the "open door" policy to their parishioners. Day or night, winter or summer, on vacation or at home, the people of the congregation have felt free to call their pastor. In these last years, pastoral counseling has taken on a new signficance, and Mr. Washburn has added much of this to his schedule.

To the aged, the sick, the bereaved, the pastors of First Church have offered comfort and solace beyond the mind of man to comprehend — only with the warming of a despairing spirit at the fire of their God-given empathy can this have meaning.

Perhaps the pastors have been close to their people, also, because they have all been human, even as their people are human. They have worked beyond their strength many times. They have known disappointment, discouragement, sorrow. They have become involved in too much work at conference and at home. They have taken on too many committee chairmanships, just as their people do. And yet the bond of serving to the utmost binds pastor and people together in common understanding.

When Miss Mary Washburn became Mrs. Ronald Smith in 1958 at the altar of First Church, she was the first daughter of the parsonage to be married by her father in the present sanctuary.

This feeling that service must go beyond the bounds of our own doorstep is typified by Mr. Washburn. He is widely involved in the general church and conference. Some of his involvements include—

In the general Evangelical United Brethren Church:
- the general Council of Administration
- the Commission on Church Federation and Union (Executive Committee)
- the Board of Trustees of Evangelical Theological Seminary (Executive Committee)
- the Board of Trustees of College-Seminary Library
- the Board of Directors of North Central College Alumni Association.

In the Illinois Conference:
- the Council of Administration (Executive Committee)
- the Board of Trustees (President)
- the Committee on Public Relations with Colleges and Seminaries (Chairman)

The designation of Mr. Washburn's position on the Commission on Church Federation and Union is a sign that the Evangelical United Brethren Church (which has been a great "uniter" as this history shows) is not through yet. The ecumenical movement is gaining momentum daily, for a united Church must bear witness to a world which is wavering morally, atomically, and spatially. There must

be solidity somewhere—and the united Church must furnish it. Jet planes make it possible for Mr. Washburn to go far and to attend many meetings, but the purpose is the same as that which creaked along with Bishop Seybert in his old wagon more than a century ago.

Meeting, praying, preaching, dedicated men have inspired the congregations of First Church. The cultural patterns have changed and the church has been a part of this cultural development. From the day of prolonged evangelistic endeavor with emphasis on personal salvation, through the spread of the powerful social gospel, to the present emphasis which comes to focus in the preaching of Pastor Washburn, First Church is still searching for the way God speaks to man, and how man must respond. The sermons-in-series of Mr. Washburn illumine this search with themes like:

Dialogues and Worship—sermons to vitalize worship
Involvement in Crucifixion—sermons on the atonement
Involvement in Proclamation—sermons on mission
The Revelation of St. John—sermons on a Biblical book
The Church Apart—sermons on the uniqueness of the Church
Born for What—sermons on the incarnation
The Celebrating Church—seven sermons emphasizing Communion, Baptism, Confirmation, Matrimony, Ordination, Requiem, and Worship as Celebration

* * * *

With the realization that the thinking of a congregation is molded and brought to spiritual fruition, in part at least, through the thinking of the preacher, there can be no better way to epitomize First Church today than to close this history with a portion of one of the sermons preached by Dr. Washburn. This is a tribute of appreciation from his people to their pastor:

THE ALLURING CHRIST - VI

Introductory portion of 6th sermon in series)

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday
and today and forever.
Hebrews xiii . 8
Revised Standard Version

Introduction —

The Sunday mornings of this early autumn have found us witnessing a parade . . . a parade of declarations about our Lord Jesus Christ . . . a parade of declarations made by men with a mind to adore Him. The parade of declarations comes to conclusion this morning with a line from the letter to the Hebrews. The line is the eighth verse in the thirteenth chapter. It reads,

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday
and today and forever.

Before turning to this magnificent declaration, I want to speak, and I will speak . . . in brief compass, to be sure . . . my personal testimony about our Lord Jesus Christ. For purposes didactic . . . and for purposes poetic . . . my testimony is arranged in alliteration.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a present. We have not earned

him. We have not deserved him. He has come to us . . . all unmerited . . . all unexpected . . . a gift from God. He is a present.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a presence. He was in eternity before the foundations of the world. He was in Palestine once in time. But since His resurrection He is in every faithful situation as a presence. He said, "Lo, I am with you always" and I take him at his word. He is a presence.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a pretender . . . a claimant for the throne from which our lives are governed. While he does not violate our right to resist him, he is constantly laying claim to his right to govern us as citizens of his kingdom of grace. He is a pretender.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a pressure. With loving scrutiny he judges us. His judgments pressure us. With lovingkindness and tender mercies he constrains us in all our thoughts . . . in all our words . . . in all our deeds. His lovingkindness and tender mercies pressure us. He is a pressure.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a primate . . . the person ranking first in his one holy catholic church. He expresses himself through the congregations where he is the first person. He has so arranged his primacy that where he is not the first person there is no church. He is a primate.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a problem . . . a problem because we do not know him fully. We can be sure, however, that what we will yet find in him will not be contradictory to what we have already found.

All this Christ is to me . . . a present from God . . . a presence here . . . a pretender for authority over me . . . a pressure upon my thoughts, words, and deeds . . . the ranking person in his church . . . and a problem. These are my thoughts when I own him as savior and Lord. And such is he when he

> . . . is the same yesterday and today and forever.