

The Centennial of Westminster Church

1874-1974

The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. on the Campus of The College of Wooster

OUT OF THE PAST

Although from the 1840s on there had been talk among the Presbyterians of Ohio about a college of their own, nothing got beyond the stage of wishful thinking until after the Civil War had ended; and even then, with some tentative plans taking shape, no location for the desired college was settled upon, until at a meeting of the Ohio Synod held in Wooster in 1865, the Rev. James A. Reed told of his almost visionary experience on a nearby hilltop. Great things often come by what seems chance; impressed by his eloquence, the Synod went out in a body to see and approve the site. Soon the land was given, an endowment fund begun, a building for the college undertaken. On September 7, 1870, the institution formally opened with thirty-four students registered.

One of these students, Jonas O. Notestein, was fifty years later to write: "One great fact ... is that the church sprang up out of the college and for the college." At first no church per se was contemplated. In the six-story college building there was a large two-story assembly room, soon to be called Kauke Chapel, with plenty of seats and eventually such adjuncts as a carpet and an organ. Here it was assumed that daily chapel services would be held and on Sundays a more dignified service, with one of the several ministerial faculty members preaching. This Sunday service was to be in the afternoon, so that townspeople if interested could come too. And they came, in increasing numbers as summer waned into fall, glad to hear what was being preached at the new college. Meanwhile, students were welcome if they took the long walk downtown to attend morning service at the First Presbyterian Church on Walnut Street or at any other town church.

But the students, few though they were, were not satisfied; to use an expression popular today, they wanted to become more involved. One third of the men of the earliest classes were looking toward the ministry as a vocation; during the first week of the infant college the boys organized the Brainerd Missionary Society, with 28 of the 34 students (they accepted girls too) enrolled, to consider "the problems of Christian living in college." They started Sunday Schools downtown and in the country. Before long they felt that they needed a real church on the campus, such a church as they had known at their homes and expected to work in after college.

The primary drive for the organization of Westminster Church came from the students, though they received sympathy and aid from the faculty.

Certainly, tact and diplomacy are needed when a group of members within a church decides to withdraw and form another congregation, and here was the role of the faculty who were members of the First Presbyterian Church of Wooster. So well was the change handled that we are told no resentment or jealousy ensued. Four faculty families were the nucleus of the new church, along with three other families from First Church who lived near the budding campus and would find it convenient to avoid the long trip downtown. It was not a large company that met on May 10, 1874, to establish Westminster Church. Thirty-two persons were received by letter of transfer, and four students on confession of faith. (Students active in their home churches obviously preferred to keep up those connections, though maintaining their interest and labors in the new organization.) The opening membership of 36 had grown by June to 88, and continued to grow. And the students attended; as early as May 20 (1874) the minutes of the Session record a practice that was later to be called "affiliate membership": "Resolved that we keep a note of those students who belong to churches elsewhere, but who want to put themselves under our care during their sojourn here, without bringing a final dismissal to us."

It is not likely that the first members, or at least the younger ones, realized the many details of organizing a church. Elders, of course; a Presbyterian church must have elders-and four were elected at that initial meeting, two members of the faculty and two not. (The idea of student elders would not arise for many years.) Three of the newly elected were installed at the same meeting, the fourth delaying ordination for a short time. So here was the nucleus of a Session. It was decided to dispense with a Board of Deacons, as the membership believed that if any cases of need arose among them, they could be cared for individually; indeed, it is only in comparatively recent years that Westminster Church has had a diaconate. As for Trustees, for some fifty years the church was not legally constituted, having no charter or board of trustees.

Then the acquisition of a piece of property (to be "College Hall" on East Bowman Street) away from the campus made it necessary that these deficiencies should be remedied, and a charter was secured, a Board of Trustees was elected. To quote the Clerk of the Session, writing much later, in 1924: "As the Session, which had from the beginning handled the temporalities as well as the benevolences, appeared reluctant to surrender this prerogative, the new trustees were for some years only so many names on paper, without any definite work to do. They had names to live, but were, figuratively speaking, dead. Becoming tired at last of this fictitious existence, they all resigned but one, and it is only within a few years that a new Board of Trustees was re-elected . . . and Westminster Church became at last a legally constituted and fully operating church."

Going back to 1874, there was the minister to be considered. At first, however, it was apparently taken for granted that the president of the college (at that time A. A. E. Taylor) should be the regular preacher, though he disclaimed the office of pastor. When Dr. Taylor was succeeded as president by Dr. Sylvester F. Scovel (1883), again there was no one chosen as pastor of the church, Dr. Scovel consenting to act as both preacher and pastor. But in 1889 the

burden became too heavy for the overworked president. Dr. T. K. Davis was then regularly selected as the minister of Westminster Church. He was to hold the office less than a year, later becoming the college's first librarian. The church pastors who have followed (plus, of course, "interim pastors" when the church was seeking a new minister) have been Edgar W. Work, 1890-1895; Oscar A. Hills, 1899-1907; John L. Tait, 1909-1910; William F. Weir, 1912-1916; George N. Luccock, 1917-1927; Curtis R. Douglass, 1929- 1943; C. John L. Bates, 1945-1951; James R. Blackwood, 1952-1961; Beverly A. Asbury, 1962-1966; Raymond H. Swartzback, 1967-1972; and J. Barrie Shepherd, 1973-.

One point that has never been clearly defined is the relation of these ministers to the academic faculty. At times in the past the minister has taught a regular college class and is of course then considered a member of the faculty. But shall he have the dubious privilege of going to faculty meetings and there voting on academic matters? Where does protocol place him in the academic procession? Such questions bring us again to the relation between church and college. This relation has been somewhat vague at times. Now Westminster Church is independent, but the college contributes generously in money and services, and also through the activity of many of its administrators, faculty, and students as duly elected members of its own administration. In turn the church considers its special mission to be to the students. The music for Westminster's services was from the first supplied by the college, the choir being composed of students, and its direction the responsibility of the "School of Music," as it was called at first. During the first few years a pipe organ was installed in Kauke Chapel-to be destroyed by the great fire of 1901. The director of the School of Music had charge of the Sunday programs. Fortunately, at the time of the fire a new chapel, a gift to the college from several donors, hence known as Memorial Chapel, was being built. It was dedicated March 5, 1902. Here for many years would the church hold its services.

For one of the noticeable things about Westminster Church is that it has never owned its house of worship. From Kauke Chapel, the two-story auditorium of the original building, through the years of ivy-draped Memorial Chapel to the present wide spaces of McGaw (dedicated October 24, 1971), the church edifice has been college property. To be sure, a great many colleges, large and small, have a chapel building on their campuses; but it is unusual to find the chapel also an organized church with a resident congregation. There were advantages, of course, in that Westminster was without many of the expenses which most churches must meet; who, for instance, must pay for repairing the roof after a storm? The college, of course. But there were also drawbacks. As church organizations, essential ones such as Sunday School and prayer meeting, developed, where were they to hold meetings? For many years they shifted about to college classrooms, dining halls, or dormitory lounges. About 1890 the students were talking about a Y.M.C.A. building, and even began a campaign for funds; but money was needed for too many other things, and nothing happened. It was not until September 26, 1965, that a new Church House was dedicated. Built on land leased from the college, to be sure, but paid for by subscriptions collected by and through Westminster Church, it contains the church offices, rooms for group meetings, a pleasant lounge with books and fireplace, a large assembly room which can also be a dining room, a fully equipped kitchen. Everything goes on here, from

weddings to memorial services, from church school to Boy Scout meetings, from music recitals to church suppers; it is one of the busiest places near The College of Wooster.

No historical sketch of Westminster Church could properly omit some mention of the part played by the students after, through their initiative, the church was founded. The Brainerd Missionary Society of the early days developed into the Y.M.C.A.; as the number of women students increased, a similar organization for them became the Y.W.C.A. Then came the Christian Endeavor, which most students had belonged to at home; it met on Sunday evenings.

For a time these three societies were called the "Big Three," though after the manner of campus life there came to be many others, religious and secular. One demands special notice: the Student Volunteers, organized in 1886, composed of students who intended to find their life work in the foreign mission field. Many fulfilled their intention, going to the far corners of the earth with their hopeful slogan, "The evangelization of the world in this generation." The effect on Westminster Church has been great. Mature and experienced missionaries have come back here for furloughs or final residence, adding immeasurably to the life and outlook of the church. And the following generation, the "missionary children," who were sent back here for schooling, as described in another section, were far more cosmopolitan and self-reliant than their peers from the average towns and churches of the time, and were good for the whole community.

There is a kind of sadness accompanying a retrospect such as this. One cannot but think of how many enthusiasms have withered, how many noble projects been forgotten. But invigorated by our history we still sing with conviction "New occasions teach new duties."

Mary Rebecca Thayer

WESTMINSTER AND THE MISSIONARIES

To many people in the past, and indeed even today, the word "missionary" created a chasm hard to bridge. Many "business men" defined "missionary" as a troublesome person given to treating "the natives" as equals and to giving them the idea that they were of some importance. The comfortable churchgoing elite "at home" thought of the missionary as a frumpy character who turned up occasionally with uncomfortable reminders that there were people on the earth who needed help. The devout in-home churches put a halo on the head of the missionary and thought of him as a person bound straight for heaven. To all there was something queer and incomprehensible about these people who would leave the homeland, live for years in cultures alien to them, - and be happy doing it!

On whichever platform of appraisal, he was placed, whether one of blame or praise, the missionary "home on furlough" or "retired" found himself set apart from others in his native land. No wonder then that missionaries flocked to Wooster and Westminster Church where they were welcomed as persons, neither saints nor sinners, but a bit of both, with human problems and joys, with hopes and fears, in need of acceptance and understanding.

Westminster started early on her career as a home base for missionaries-indeed before she was a duly constituted church. Miss Lucy Crouch, a junior with the Class of 1875, took special courses at the college which would fit her for work abroad, and went to China with the blessing of the Brainerd Society and with a Bible on the flyleaf of which was the Great Commission, copied in Greek from the New Testament. The following year when the Women's Missionary Society was organized, it undertook part of her support through its gifts.

The Class of 1875 seemed to be especially missionary minded, for Lucy Crouch was soon followed by four of her former classmates: Henry Kratz, who went to Mexico in 1874; Milton Caldwell, John N. Wright, Carrie Elder Alexander, and S. Hall Young, who went respectively to Puerto Rico-Colombia; to Iran; to Egypt; and to Alaska. Before 1885 others had joined them in the "foreign field": Fred and Ida Coan in Iran; U.S.G. Jones in India; Edmund and Mary McDowell in Iraq; D. G. Collins in Thailand. It would be interesting to know how many Wooster graduates have worked in mission fields, both in the USA and abroad. In a paper written by Dr. J. Harry Cotton in 1941, when Westminster was 67 years old, he gives the figure of 272 men and women in Africa, Asia, South America, and the Islands of the Seas. This number has been substantially enlarged in the past years despite the fact that the number of missionaries sent out since World War II has steadily diminished. With each of these "sent" went the affection and prayer and personal interest of Westminster, so it might well be said, "Her lines have gone out to all the earth and her words to the end of the world."

But the missionary tide did not go out only. It returned again and again as former students came to spend a furlough year in Wooster, or as other missionaries whose children were students in the College came to spend the precious months of home leave with them. For those who were sons and daughters of Wooster and Westminster, this meant the renewing of old ties; for those who came for the first time it meant new and understanding friendships; and to all it meant the inspiration of living in a college community and joining in the worship of a church with thought-provoking ministers and marvelous music - a true renewal for tired spirits. Aside from those who went and came, and went and came again, there were those who stayed. Some of these were missionary wives or widows who settled in Wooster for the education of their children. The first of these was Mrs. Harriet B. Myers of India. Mrs. D. N. Lyon spent many years here while her large family grew up. Mrs. Good and Mrs. Gault of Africa, and Mrs. Eddy of Syria were among other early comers. There were also the "retirees" such as the Wishards and Wrights of Iran, and the Wisners of China, who settled in Wooster before World War I. As the tide of returnees grew more numerous between the two World Wars, furnished houses were provided for them by the Board of Foreign Missions. Some were occupied by those on home leave, others by those who retired in Wooster. For many years these homes were under the care of a committee of Presbyterian women who spent endless time, energy, and love in maintaining the houses in good condition, and in helping the occupants in many other ways. Notable among the chairwomen of this committee were Mrs. John G. Wishard, Mrs. S. M. F. Nesbitt, and Mrs. Robert N. Wright. The occupants of these homes, as well as the retirees who had their own homes in Wooster, entered gladly into the life of Westminster Church. The names of the women appear on every page of the Women's Missionary Society and Women's Association Minutes. Dr. Wright for many years taught an adult Sunday School class. Among

present retirees Dr. Lyman Cady has often acted as pastor when Westminster was without a minister. The names of many are to be found on the roles as elders or deacons; one served for six years as assistant to the pastor before returning to the foreign field; others have become members of the college faculty for varying periods.

Another group of "stayers" was younger. Before World War I there were few schools overseas which could prepare missionary children to fit into American schools and/or colleges. Often the parents of these children had no relatives or other friends in the USA who could assume the responsibility for the care of the children. So there developed in Wooster two institutions known as the Boys' and Girls' Inkies (Incubators) where children of high school, and even sometimes grade school age, could live. These houses were supervised in the beginning by Mrs. Scovel, Mrs. Elias Compton, and Mrs. Bennett. Throughout the years Mrs. Compton remained a constant, watching with wisdom, patience, and prayer over the growth of the transplants entrusted to her care. In fact, it is said the lower step of her back staircase was worn thin as she knelt to ask for guidance in dealing with the lively, innovative, and independent youngsters come from the ends of the earth and now adjusting to life in the USA. In a way the Inkies were a valuable transition program. They not only gave the young people a place to stay, but provided them with built-in companions who "spoke their language," who understood their backgrounds and problems, and the older of whom could help the newcomers. But in another way, it set these young people even more apart from their fellow students in high school and college, and accentuated their feeling of not being wholly a part of the community. So as better schools developed abroad and children were able to stay near their parents through the high school years, the Inkies were disbanded and college students were housed in dormitories with other students. Westminster Church House now stands on the ground where once the Boys' Inkie stood, and the First Presbyterian Church on the site of the first Girls' Inkie-later moved to Westminster Hall on Beall Avenue.

Whether or not the continuous presence of so many missionaries and their children in her midst through the years has been bane or blessing for Westminster Church depends somewhat on who is talking. A recent graduate of the College said their presence had given him a sense of the continuity and concerns for the world which church and college had, and aroused an interest he had not had previously. Others think "all those missionaries" sitting so faithfully in the pews Sunday morning pose a problem to the pastor. Some think the missionaries talk too much about the needs of far-off folk when Westminster should be looking after its own; others appreciate the wider and sympathetic knowledge of other peoples and places which the missionary has brought them, and feel their presence has enriched the life of Westminster. But missionaries, speaking for themselves, say they are deeply grateful for what Wooster and Westminster have done for them throughout the years. Here they have found refuge in times of storm, solace, and companionship in periods of grief, inspiration in times of discouragement, and, with few exceptions, a true home.

Sarah Wright McDowell

THE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

In November 1874, six months after Westminster Church was organized, the women formed a missionary society. The nine members and four gentlemen honorary members had at first no organized program. They met simply "for prayer and the gathering of their contributions for the cause," as Mrs. Jonas O. Notestein, a charter member, states in her review of the society's first fifty years. After requesting from the Superintendent of Missions in Missouri the name of a needy home missionary, the women began making clothing which they sent out, along with \$55. Then toys were sent, one doll being contributed by Tommie Flattery, then a child. This generosity continued three years, "and all for Missouri," adds Mrs. Notestein. For many more years this type of service was consistently maintained, reaching high peaks under the chairmanship of Mrs. H. N. Mateer and that of Mrs. J. W. Olthouse. By the 1920s clothing was being sent to many destinations, no longer by the box, but by the barrel.

In 1875 the women initiated evening mite-box meetings without refreshments. Gentlemen were invited to enjoy with them "some musical or intellectual entertainment." Each person was "to put ten cents into the society basket as an equivalent for a pleasant evening in pleasant company." The fund thus acquired went to the Board of Foreign Missions. Before long, this group was aiding the school in China founded by Miss Lucy Crouch, an alumna of the College. The society's first president was Mrs. O. N. Stoddard, wife of the first professor of Natural Sciences at the College. Mrs. A. A. E. Taylor, whose husband was president of the College from 1873 to 1883, was the recognized leader in all women's work, although not usually the presiding officer, says Mrs. Notestein. When Dr. S. F. Scovel succeeded Dr. Taylor, his wife brought with her much experience, having been a leader in women's work in Pittsburgh and a member of the Executive Committee of Home Missions. She urged the formation of two societies, arguing that twice as much would be accomplished. Her advice was followed and the two societies flourished until they merged in 1922. Each society met once a month, the one devoting itself to Home Missions, the other to Foreign. Besides participation in these meetings, the women attended a mid-week prayer meeting in the College president's classroom. Members were also asked to pray at chapel time, in those days of daily chapel, so that "all hearts [may] unite in prayer for the college." Mrs. Elias Compton once said, "It is not so hard to pray as it seems. We have only to talk with Him"

Of the women whom Mrs. Notestein mentions for their outstanding leadership, some were faculty wives like Mrs. H. N. Mateer and Mrs. W. H. Wilson; some were missionaries like Mrs. Good, Albert's mother; others were ministers' widows living in Wooster to educate their children. One of the latter was Mrs. Nannie Platter, treasurer of one society for twenty years. Of the missionaries Mrs. Notestein writes: "The influence on this church of the missionaries who have spent their furloughs here cannot be estimated.... As one looking toward the light is lightened, so the roll of sisters belonging to Westminster Missionary Society may well feel a thrill of joy in having lived and worked with this noble company."

Minutes of the united society give evidence of the long service of many of its members. Notable were Mrs. M. H. Frank (the former Mrs. Wilson), first president of the united society, who was to serve in one way or another for fifty-nine years, and her friend Mrs. Mateer, who served for sixty-one years. The term of Mrs. George N. Luccock's membership was not so long as these, but her Christian devotion was so exceptional that she merits a place here. During her husband's pastorate she was only an ex officio member of the Executive Committee of the society. As president in 1929 she exemplified the motto of the year, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," reminding members that prayer, Christian service, and gifts to God should always be given first place, admonishing them to glorify God by bearing much fruit and to give sacred literature first place in their Sunday reading.

From 1922 until January 1924 there were still two meetings a month, with alternating programs. Foreign Mission programs featured Africa, India, China, and Iran frequently because so many missionaries from these countries furloughed in Wooster. Home Mission programs often dealt with the American Indian, immigrants, and the Negro. In April 1922 Miss Hatfield, who had taught black pupils for many years, made this observation: "With education and training, the Negro is capable of becoming an expert in his line of work. The progress made by the colored people in the past fifty years has surpassed that of any other race. Above all, the Negro needs a square deal."

Programs were sometimes provided by members of Westminster Guild, Agnes Scott Circle, and the Coan Mission Band, all missionary societies for girls from college age on down to grade school level. Later the Anne Hart Auxiliary presented a program once each year. This enthusiastic group was first organized in 1918 for the young women between the ages of the girls' missionary societies and the older women of the two established societies. In 1925 they became the Anne Hart Auxiliary in memory of one of their members who had recently been killed in a tragic automobile accident. In 1948 they reluctantly lost their identity in a general merger. Each autumn for several decades there was a special college program. At this meeting in 1922 the Dean of Women, Miss Florence K. Root, had this to say of "The College Woman": "In spite of what some call a dangerous, reckless generation, there has never been a more capable crowd of young people. In ability, initiative, and resourcefulness they are splendid." Talks on stewardship occurred several times a year, on occasion illustrated by charts showing where money grants actually went. There was always music at the meetings; and playlets and the dramatization of missionary scenes enlivened many programs. In 1946 and 1947 several meetings were devoted to ecumenicity, a word the women were urged to learn. Mission Reading Circles were formed in 1926, a Mission Study Class in 1927. By 1933 interest in the latter was so strong that the average attendance was 70, necessitating plural sections of the class. During Dr. Bates's pastorate it became the practice to hold series of suppers, after which he would review the mission study books, aided by memories of his boyhood in Japan as the son of missionaries.

Meetings were usually held in lower Kauke, made available by the College with all dishes and kitchen equipment rent-free. The women met also at times in Taylor, Scovel, or Holden Halls, in members' houses or gardens, and even in the grove behind Kauke. During World War II lower

Galpin was the usual meeting place. For some years the February and November praise services were held in the home of Mrs. Oscar A. Hills (now known as the Crandell House) or with Mrs. C. F. Wishart. Minutes of the last meeting held in the Wishart home on Beall Avenue, November 1928, refer to it as "a house that had sheltered many presidents, and been a haven for valiant souls who first organized the Westminster Missionary Society." After the regular meetings were reduced to one a month, a supper usually followed the program. Then this supper was replaced by a more elaborate dinner, attended by as many as a hundred and fifty people. Later, dinners alternated with teas. In January 1943 all refreshments were discontinued for the duration of the war.

The College was a major, but not the only local interest of the women. Inspired by the tireless enthusiasm and work of Mrs. A. K. Miller and Mrs. A. L. Palmer, members and students served the Italian community at College Hall, which these two women founded. It was located on the southwest corner of Bowman and Palmer Streets. Manual training was taught, and there were preaching services, a Sunday School, and a Christian Endeavor Society.

The temperance cause was warmly espoused, and when a state amendment favoring the sale of liquor in Ohio failed, the women rejoiced at this answer to their prayers. In October 1923 Mrs. Palmer urged the women not to fail in their Christian duty and obligation in using their franchise, "even if it was a privilege [they] had not desired."

Westminster and Livingstone Houses were also a concern. In the 1940s the Social Education and Action Committee occupied itself with the Wayne County Children's Home, worked to secure an additional religious education teacher in the public schools, was active for a new hospital, and tried to create better understanding among races.

In 1948 representatives from Anne Hart and the Missionary Society drew up plans for an organization that would include all the women of the church. The last meeting of the Missionary Society was held on December 10, 1948. All funds were transferred to the new Women's Association, whose first president was Mrs. Howard Yonders. It met once a month as a whole, and once a month in smaller groups for study, work, and prayer, supporting the same causes as before. It was affiliated, through the Presbyterial and Synodical Associations, with the National Organization of Presbyterian Women. This hierarchy still prevails. The all-important goals of unity and understanding were expressed in the motto: "Together We Seek." What about finances? The budget has normally been met by pledges and voluntary giving. The budget adopted by the forty-nine members present at the first union meeting in 1922 is a clear indication of where the major interests then lay: Foreign Missions \$1140, Home Missions \$895, Freedman \$250, Christian Social Service \$15, Emergency Fund \$2. There were of course all sorts of ways for raising money, devices known by instinct to all church women. Only one is recorded as a failure, the proposal that each woman give for kitchen supplies, during the month of her birthday, a sum equivalent to her age. Large sums were raised in other ways to meet special needs. A Kitchen Equipment Fund grew until in 1964 it had amounted to \$11,287 and was turned over to the Church Building Committee for the new Church House. For years the custodian of this fund was Mrs. Harland Mosher. To help pay for the replastering of Memorial

Chapel, money was earned by selling thousands of tea sandwiches and cookies made by Mrs. L. C. Knight, Chairman of the Hostess Committee for fifteen years. Bequests were received from Miss McClelland, Mrs. Luccock, and Mrs. Wishart. A Memorial Fund was started in 1957 by a gift from Mrs. U. L. Mackey in honor of her sister, Miss Helen Palmer. This fund was augmented by gifts honoring Mrs. John D. Overholt, Mrs. Charles Lamale, Mrs. Charles Hurd, Mrs. W. T. Davidson, Mrs. Walter Painter, and Mrs. Marie Tolk. Interest from this fund is used for charitable purposes.

To meet a need for better communication among the increasing members, the Women's Association began in April 1953 a one-page mimeographed paper, the Westminster World. The first editor was Miss Marian Loehlin, an instructor of the College. The paper has had its ups and downs, but it is still alive and now represents the entire church. The women's organizations too have had their ups and downs. The former Missionary Society had a higher percentage of the women of Westminster than the present Women's Association ever has had, for nearly all the women of the church formerly were enrolled in it or in the Anne Hart Auxiliary. At present many women of the church hold jobs or find a satisfactory outlet for their energy in The American Association of University Women or The League of Women Voters. Mothers with small children today are less free now that domestic help has dwindled almost to non-existence here. In spite of handicaps, in 1973 Westminster women had a good record of service, learning, and worship. In the second century of the Women's Association there is still a challenge. Activities and prayers in 1974 will center around the theme "Fullness of Life for All," with the hope that each woman of the church will find some part of the total program to help her to serve God.

G. Pauline Ihrig

WESTMINSTER AND THE STUDENTS

"We don't play church here." This statement, made by Ray Swartzback several years ago, best summarizes the reason why Westminster Presbyterian Church has played such a significant role in the life of many College of Wooster students. Quite often incoming freshmen are either bored with the meaningless details of their formal religious experience or are disillusioned by the hypocrisy they see in the institutional church. Upon coming here, they find that Westminster Church does not fit into the typical church mold.

The presence of Westminster on campus is one of complexity and diversity. Physically, it is difficult, if not impossible, to walk across campus without passing in view of McGaw Chapel. Spiritually, the services of worship show students the importance that the church can play in their lives. Academically, the ultimate religious questions posed are continually forcing the student to confront them, and therefore adding to a true liberal education. At a time when many college churches are finding it difficult to appeal to students, Westminster Church continues to attract a sizable part of the student body. The innovative liturgy and worship service show the student that the church can be both meaningful and exciting. A friend

of mine summed it up most appropriately when he told me that this was the first time in his life that he actually enjoyed getting up on Sunday morning. The music program provides even more opportunities for experimentation and participation by the college community. Members or participants have a chance to express creativity in an area sometimes occupied by rigidity, inhibition, and tradition.

Another aspect of Westminster Church that the student notices is the diversity of the congregation and the variety of programs. It would require a lot of effort to find another church anywhere in the nation with such a wide range of age, occupation, and beliefs. In many situations this diversity could work against community and could actually be disastrous, but students quickly see that Westminster channels this variety into a positive centrality. It forces people to confront the issues which so often Christians run away from. The Church helps the student to learn to honor the convictions of others and to respect their rights to disagree without violating the unity of love in Christ. Even a simple greeting in the passing of the peace during the worship service demonstrates this oneness.

One of the more important facets of Westminster Church to many students is the willingness to speak to the social issues of our time. The institutional church's record in this area is woeful and embarrassing. At Westminster, however, social concerns do not take a back seat to fear and apathy. It is not, in the words of a former Wooster student, a "hot air church." At a time when many churches were acting as if they were unaware of a Southeast Asian war, a significant number of Westminster members, both students and townspeople, were actively working to stop the killing. This confrontation of injustice did not end with one issue; it continues to play an active part in this church which recognizes that Christian love is relevant to justice. Richard Bender is quoted in "Risk and Commitment" as saying, "The church must be wherever persons are involved significantly with the issues of life. In higher education the church may meet and serve the work in strategic ways." Westminster Presbyterian Church plays this important role in our educational experience. May it continue to do so for another 100 years!

Stephen Montgomery

THE CHURCH SCHOOL

For all but nine of its ninety-two years Westminster Church School could best be characterized, "Community gathered - Community scattered." Like juvenile nomads, successive generations of children in this church went from college building to building Sunday morning, year in and out until the present Church House opened its doors in September 1965.

No known record of a Church School exists before 1882, and even then, only sketchy references to "Christian teaching," "Sunday School," or children's classes come to light in the records. It does not matter. Nine decades are sufficient to record the spirit and quality of the Church School; the adjective best keynoting it must be "persistent," because lacking roof, facilities, or comforts the Church School has marched through the years with a peculiar devotion and

energy. From its earliest roots Westminster Church School enlisted women and men who believed in educating children toward their faith; with a kind of fierce zeal they refused to be frustrated by the splintered quality of the physical setting of the school.

In rereading early records, one almost flinches at the remarkable single-minded purpose of the early teachers in the church. They believed that "Christ is Lord," and they went about their task of "obtaining witnesses for Christ" with a stubborn optimism. In the Semi-Centennial History covering 1874-1924 little mention is made of the Church School, except in the context of adequate housing. However during these early years the name of Mrs. Alanson L. Palmer recurs as one talks with older members of the congregation. Mrs. Palmer led a long line of teachers in the basement of Memorial Chapel; Sarah Painter and Florence Painter Griffith recall that when the children sang the familiar, "Hear the Pennies Dropping, Listen as They Fall," and marched around the room doing just that, Mrs. Palmer always kept a supply of shiny coins for the children who had forgotten to bring their own.

Taylor Hall was for some years the scene of a large Church School gathering with hymns, Scripture, and appropriate message; this was attended by all the classes before they departed for individual sessions and was directed by Prof. J. H. Dickason. Dr. Winford Sharp, professor emeritus of the college, writes from Salem, Oregon: "In 1931 I was appointed Director of Religious Education. We met in Taylor Hall in the Little Theater and many a Sunday morning, after a Saturday night show, I found the place in disarray and had to make it presentable. Mr. Douglass and I worked in fine harmony through the many years of his pastorate." Mrs. John D. McKee, Mrs. Martin Remp, Mrs. William Westhafer, and Mrs. Howard Yonders also taught young children in the Chapel basement amid the choir robes, hymn books, and Sunday morning preparations for the eleven o'clock service.

In succeeding years rumbles to put the children under one roof began to be heard more audibly. On the seventy-fifth anniversary of Westminster in 1949, the Rev. C. John L. Bates voiced a plea that the congregation begin to think seriously about a building which would house both Church School and other expanding activities of the church. At a time when the college was enlarging visibly, and buildings were popping up on the drawing boards one by one, John Bates said, "I too have a dream for the children of this place, a Church House where they may find a home of their own on Sunday morning." It was to be another sixteen years before John Bates's dream was realized, and two other ministers, the Rev. James R. Blackwood and the Rev. Beverly A. Asbury, were to puzzle head and heart over where to house the children and the working projects of a lively campus church.

A little insight into the reasons for this growing concern: in 1948-49 the United Presbyterian Church launched a program of Christian education which brought a new dimension to church school teaching. Called the "New Curriculum" it was an elaborate plan, widely publicized in the national press as well as in local Synods and Presbyteries. When it was introduced it was a radical philosophy in the teaching of religion to young children. If the years before 1948 were "Bible-centered" the ensuing years were "child-centered." The New Curriculum asked, How could the church reach children in a language they understood? How could the image of the Sunday School be changed to be more palatable to its consumers, the children themselves?

Could the modern church school design a plan which would be "age-appropriate," would lead a child gently and joyously from one phase of religious understanding to another until a mature faith undergirded him?

The New Curriculum was designed to do just that; inspired by leading theologians of the forties and with men such as the Rev. William A. Morrison (interim pastor, Westminster, 1972) in offices of authority in the Witherspoon Building in Philadelphia, the plan was a shot of life into church schools. Westminster teachers, Session, parents responded with a spontaneous enthusiasm, with John Bates adding his own insight into the actual introduction of the program. Church School classes with teams of teachers started using the attractive textbooks and magazines, designed to unite home and church classroom in a way previously unexplored. Parents were judged important and necessary in the implementation of the ideas; church and home were to work together in the Faith and Life Curriculum. Westminster's Church School began to grow from the small classes which had nourished young children in the congregation for so many years. Borrowing John Dewey's philosophy that children learn best by doing and not by listening, teachers started activity-centered experiences. Music, art, drama flourished from the kindergarten upward; faculty from departments of music and speech added their talents generously for the education of the children.

Those who criticized that the Curriculum did not "stay with the Bible" had never studied it; every activity had a Biblical base, but the emphasis switched from forced memorization to gradual understanding of Scripture texts. The writer recalls one Sunday morning in Memorial Chapel when a class of some twenty little boys from Miss Harriet Knight's creative primary group marched down the center aisle. Carrying the Ark of the Covenant, splendid with much gold paint and hand-made seraphim, the children were completing a study of the Old Testament prophets. At that time Ralph A. Young of the department of religion said, "If this keeps up, we will soon get students at the College who really know something about the meaning of the Bible." Hopefully it did, and does.

Impetus to using the Curriculum came to Westminster in still another way. The National Presbyterian Laboratory School, taught by teachers and editors from the Philadelphia office, came every summer for twenty-five years to Wooster and First Presbyterian and Westminster Churches. Its staff brought a professionalism and joyous spirit which transferred readily to local teachers who participated in the programs; moreover, one actually saw the plans come to life in the activities of the local children attending the school. Thus, when fall arrived the excitement generated in the steamy July weeks had a revitalizing effect on the entire church school.

Gradually the numbers of children grew. Requests for a Church House began to be heard frequently in Session meetings, congregational affairs, wherever Westminster parents and teachers gathered. The predicament of a young family moving to Wooster and choosing Westminster as a church home was almost ludicrous. One adviser directed the high school students to a room in the geology building, the seventh and eighth graders to Taylor Hall, the

juniors to the Little Theater, primary and kindergarten children to the basement of Kauke, and nursery age youngsters to the basement of Galpin Hall. Not infrequently the multi-child family looked about in dismay and moved on.

It was a time for action. James Blackwood took on an architect's hat and spent long hours over a drawing board trying to work out a feasible plan. Howard Lowry met with committees, Robert N. Wright, M.D., Wilson Compton, Donald MacKenzie, Donald Brown, and many directly concerned with the Church School program. An architect designed a building to be placed between Memorial Chapel and Galpin Hall; after consideration it was discarded as too expensive and too apt to destroy the vista of that part of the campus. Another plan came up and went down, designed by an architect who thought of church school in minuscule cubbies, complete with blackboards, chairs, and tables.

Finally, the issue became intense; Kauke Hall took on a new look in complete renovation, and the Church School in it had to move out of the cavernous basement to Myers House on College Avenue. By this time there were so many younger children they filled the rooms on two floors and literally hung out of the windows. It was feared some of them might fall out, or even through the fragile staircase which had to be reinforced twice during the two years of occupancy by the school.

During the ministry of Beverly Asbury the work of Bates, Blackwood, and countless laymen came to tangible form. Schafer, Flynn and Associates of Cleveland designed a functional, and, for the conservative campus architecture a stark structure; it fit into the long, narrow lot occupied for so many years by the Boys' Inky at the corner of College and Pine. In 1964 ground was broken, and the building began to take form. The Freeman Construction company men reported that never had so many individuals taken such a personal interest in the progress of a building. "No Trespassing" signs had to be erected to prevent energetic Presbyterian women from breaking their bones. The Wooster Women's Civic Club Nursery School, founded by Mrs. C. John L. Bates in the basement of Memorial Chapel in 1947, was included in the allocations of the new building and found space in the west wing with full-length windows and ground level setting.

The new Church House was dedicated September 25, 1965; the Rev. E. B. Welsh gave an informal, human history of Westminster. Howard Lowry described the "achievement of space" in the new building and the three primary functions it would promote: the center of family life of the church, a place for the children complete with room for their "Christmas Star and Manger," and the stimulus to the growth of the mind in Christian intelligence and knowledge. Beverly Asbury led the congregation in the act of dedication concluding, "For the blessed hope of a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

If buildings have shape, they also shape those who use them. The wildest anticipations of the planners of the Church House could not have predicted the popular reception of this building. However, amid myriad activities dotting the calendar in Pauline Boston's office, one priority has remained over the past eight and a half years. Sunday morning is reserved for the Church

School, and anyone strolling down Pine Street can see repeated the weekly tableau. Lights turn on in the large-windowed rooms, cars arrive with teachers and their supplies; shortly after nine a.m. children run up the street from Bever or Beall, and cars arrive depositing youngsters for the morning session.

Can one say they are always enthusiastic or delighted? Even in a new building this would be an overstatement, because there is a built-in block for some children about Church School. Many inherit these feelings from their parents who remember an earlier, no-nonsense kind of religious instruction. For other children Sunday morning television is a powerful rival of the Church School; cartoons require no creative response or even active participation.

For those who do come, and in the past five years their number has been from one hundred to one hundred fifty on a given Sunday morning, there are certain rewards. The staff believes the children are entitled to an introduction to their church and Christian ideas in ways that are honest, creative, and joyous; no one needs to cloud the picture of the living God in either superstition or pious jargon.

Teachers who "gladly teach," as their predecessors before them, are the backbone of the church school hour. They have enthusiastic assistance from College of Wooster students who give their talents joyously and in turn have a beginning in-kind service for future careers with children. Together older and younger teachers use music, drama, secrets of the natural world, and the beauty of art and design to help children understand the basic facts of the Old and New Testaments; Wilma Russell exemplifies this kind of modern teacher who stresses constantly the importance of each child, the "I" quality so vital to his healthy development. These teachers make his welcome to his first church home simple and natural; they know the child is confused by modern semantics but will watch with an uncanny eye the generous act, natural smile, ways of acceptance. In times of genuine tragedy and deep sorrow the church school teacher has often been an auxiliary support to a hurt child who may not understand what is happening to his family or to himself.

The staff feels that if, in their earliest years, children see basic generosity they will in time find their own way into service and love. Acceptance, love, service have been sound watchwords. Since 1951 children in the Church School have adopted UNICEF as their own project, learning how "children can help children" in practical, day-to-day projects. In the "One Great Hour of Sharing" again the kernel of outreach or altruism is implanted; who can say how early this feeling of responsibility for someone else should be nourished in a child?

Happy times of celebration in the Church House have united generations in a special way. When Margaret M. Wright completed thirty-three years of teaching Westminster children in a selfless, beautiful way, parents and children raised funds to buy a grand piano in her honor to use in Mackey Hall. An Art Exhibit by Westminster contributors filled all the rooms of the Church House with paintings, from nursery-age hands to mature artists, pottery, sculpture, hand-works of embroidery and knitting. When Ernest (Red) Weaver retired after taking care of the Chapel and Church House for thirty-five years, Mackey Hall was again the scene of a special tribute to a faithful caretaker.

At Christmas some plan almost magically evolves each year which brings the familiar story in some special way to old and young. How many teachers will ever forget the project involving the life-size cardboard animals which the children made to illustrate "The Friendly Beasts"? Or Jane Morris in red velvet rocking away with a small child in her lap as she read William Blake's ageless "Little Lamb, Who Made Thee?" Over the hall that night fell a hush of beauty and acceptance, a rare moment to be cherished by all who were present.

From smallest toddler to lengthy Westminster Fellowship student, the Church House has meant a sheltering home. The congregation scattered has become the congregation gathered. Hopefully the Church School will, as Beverly Asbury pointed out, "seek an imaginative, creative understanding of what it means to be the Church in the age of the laity." It is the special hope of this writer that those who teach in the Church School will always do their work with that definition in mind of their rare profession expressed by Robert Louis Stevenson, "a good teacher needs 'courage, gaiety, and a quiet heart.'"

Clare Adel Schreiber

BOY SCOUTS AND WESTMINSTER CHURCH

A young instructor at the College, Perry Daniel Strausbaugh, applied to be the first Scoutmaster for Troop 1 in July 1913. He stated he was interested in the Scout Movement, 'because I believe it will make better men by developing in the boy a strong, manly spirit, making him self-reliant, decisive, and thoughtful.' Louis Holden, President of the College, and J. H. Dickason signed to charter the Troop. In 1914 the College YMCA sponsored Troop 1, and from 1915 until now it has been sponsored by Westminster Church, and has met in practically every classroom building on campus. It is now Troop 61. Some of the Scoutmasters are John D. Overholt, 1921; Donald E. Dickason, 1924; Frank Isely, 1925; Charles Archie Crandell, M.D., 1928; Frank Crandell, Earl Ford, Dick Bryan, Leonard Snyder, Elwood A. Seamen, Paul Liggett, Willard Dye, 1942-46; Archie Strunk 1946-50, Louis J. Grosenbaugh 1950-55, Robert Wheeler 1956-74.

The Scouts spent early days in hikes and camping along the Killbuck in the vicinity of Peewee Hollow. Good turns included providing guards at Color Day and Commencement and guarding streets for coasting. Some Scouts registered in the first troop were Albert Dix, Charles Palmer, and Donald Dickason. Local boys registered with the troop are Harold Freedlander, Howard Armstrong, Marion McGrew, Dean Hopkins, Jack Perkins. Many names familiar in the church and college keep recurring in the roster through the years: Dickason, Wishart, Spencer, Westhafer, Cady, Munson, Stoneburner, Douglass, Parmelee, Ferm, McDowell, Bushnell, Frank, Eberhart, Craig, Taggart, Schreiber, Tausch, Comin, and Wright. Besides Boy Scouts, boys of other ages have been included. Cub Scouts, involving Den Mothers and boys of 9-11, were started here in the early 1940 s. This pack is now meeting in Mackey Hall after many years in Kauke basement. It serves in part as training and preparation for the Boy Scouting years, now of 11-18.

After World War II an Explorer Post for older boys, also called 61, was established, with Charles Moke and Ted Danner in charge. Over the years it has done Indian dancing and high adventure outdoor camping. The present Troop 61 has great strength, first in its leaders including among many others A. F. Schmitthenner of over 10 years' experience, recently named Scouter of the Year in Killbuck District. Second, Troop 61 has many promising boys; over 50 have been registered annually.

For the last 11 years the Troop has taken its long-term summer camp by making a canoe trip for one week on a river in Michigan. This has been the highlight of the scouting year for boys. It is a great drawing feature for many of the fathers too, without whose donated transportation and leadership the trip would be impossible.

Over 25 boys have reached the exalted rank of Eagle: 4 sons of Clyde Smith, 2 Craigs, 2 Taggarts, and many others including William Schreiber, Edward Eberhart, Donald Comin. As the campfire fades, there are others who have played a part and should be acknowledged here: Forest Evans, Al Kley, David Marr, Bill Martin, Ed Myers, Dean Vaughn, Martin Remp, and David A. Taggart.

James W. Taggart

THE SOUND OF PRAISE

"Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love Throughout the years, Beethoven's Hymn to Joy has been sung by members of this church. It is in the spirit of this hymn that the choir directors and organists of this church have given of their talents and love of music to the members of the congregation and choir.

The singular relationship between the Department of Music of The College of Wooster and the church during the one hundred years of our existence has helped reveal to all the "Well-spring of the joy of living." For those who have sung in the choir or lifted their voices in congregational singing, the names of such men as Professor J. Lawrence Erb, Professor Neill O. Rowe, Dr. Richard T. Gore, and Dr. John R. Carruth bring back a myriad of memories and a kaleidoscope of sounds.

For over thirty years, Professor Rowe gave not only musical direction but also shared his love of music with the congregation and choir. Dr. Gore's tenure led to an ever-deepening appreciation of the music of Bach and the great masters of choral music. The musicianship and force of leadership of Dr. Carruth carried forward the great tradition. The musical heritage of the church is now being carried on by Mr. and Mrs. Chester Alwes, the first husband and wife team to serve the church in this capacity. Chester, a member of the Department of Music at the College, is director of the choir; and Martha is the organist. The choir directors and organists of this church bring to us the joy of singing and hearing music of all ages: the Gregorian Chants of old, the clean lines of Buxtehude, the various moods of Bach, the rich, lush music of Brahms, and

the musical works of our own time. Down through the years these men and women have adhered to the principle that all music performed at Westminster services shall be of high musical worth and of clear devotional value.

One of the main factors in providing Westminster Church with superior music has been the fact that the choir has been composed primarily of students, many of them studying in the Department of Music. This has made possible a level of ensemble sound not often found in volunteer church choirs. Westminster Church has always deeply appreciated the skills and dedication of its choir directors, organists, and choir members, who together are proof that "Joyful music leads us Sun-ward In the triumph song of life."

Marlene and Carl Zimmerman

A LOOK AHEAD

"New occasions teach new duties," Miss Thayer has reminded us in her history. As we move into the second century of Westminster Church, we can be sure that there will be plenty of "new occasions" up ahead.

Next year we enter the final quarter of this twentieth century. From all forecasts it will be a time of dwindling resources and increasing needs; a time when, if we are fortunate and skillful enough to avert the threat of nuclear warfare, we will still have to face more than our share of crises. This will certainly be a time of "new duties" and new opportunities for the church of Jesus Christ. The challenge will be to minister to the desperate needs of the world, and to maintain a lively, dynamic, creative faith in God in the midst of trial and turmoil.

The future life, or death, of Westminster Church will be determined by the way in which it responds to these new challenges. In the past, this church has been unusually blessed: by its association with an institution of academic excellence; by the constant stream of dedicated young people who have become a part of the life of the church during their college years; by the commitment and courage of generations of members, ministers, missionaries who have served their Lord through the work of Westminster. In the years ahead we will continue to need these blessings of intellectual honesty, youthful zest, and lifelong commitment.

We will also require, perhaps more now than ever before, an openness to the new, to the creatively innovative, to the radically different forms which the gospel and the Christian life will take in the era of accelerated change we now enter. And yet, this is exactly the kind of freedom for the future which our faith provides.

Confident in the love, the forgiveness, the sustaining grace of God, we believe that the future is in his hands, that he creates the future. Prospects ahead may be dim and uncertain; one thing we know, and that is all we need to know. The God who has brought us thus far will be with us in the years ahead, guiding us, troubling us when we go astray, strengthening us when we are

in the right. In this faith we can enter the future open and unafraid, ready for whatever "new duties" may be asked of us in his name.

Centennial

*One hundred
rotund rosy number
replete with double 0
round century of torn
jagged edges
healed
in grace and gratefulness
and giving*

*Heavy years
full of moments
songs, sorrows, challenges,
commitments, persons
kneeling, clasping, marching
somehow moving in
the way of one
who calls.*

J. Barrie Shepherd