HISTORY
of the
FIRST CHURCH IN MARLBOROUGH
(Congregational)
United Church of Christ

on the occasion of its
THREE HUNDRED and FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY
Marlborough, Massachusetts
1666 – 2016
Updated to include 2016 celebrations
“New” Church with Bulfinch belfry after the 1938 hurricane
Sources of information used in compiling this History: old records of First Church; *History of First Church in Marlborough*, written in 1859 by the Rev. Levi A. Field, then Pastor of the Church; *History of Marlborough* by Charles Hudson, dated 1862; *History of Marlborough* by J. A. Pitman, then Superintendent of Schools in Marlborough, dated 1905; *Historical Reminiscences of Marlborough* by Mrs. Ella A. Bigelow, dated 1910; and the previous *History of First Church* by this same Historian on the occasion of the two-hundred seventy-fifth anniversary in 1941.

This History is dedicated with appreciation to all those ministers, officers, and loyal worshippers who from the beginnings of the Church to the present time, three hundred years later, by their courage, loyalty, and diligent perseverance, have made First Church one of the largest and best in this community.

Hazel O. Warren, Historian

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HISTORY OF FIRST CHURCH IN MARLBOROUGH

(CONGREGATIONAL)

As the history of the town and of the early church are closely interwoven, it is necessary to outline briefly the historical events preceding the building of the first church.

The Indians who occupied this land were of the Natick and Wamesit tribes, whose principal possession was upon the Merrimack, near the confluence with the Sudbury or Concord River, the site of the present city of Lowell. The land in Marlborough had been settled early and the "planting field" on the hill appears to have been cultivated for a considerable period of time. These Indians were generally peaceable, and were disposed to live on good terms with the English. A Dr. John Eliot was devoted to the Indians and worked among them. He learned their language and in 1663 translated the New Testament and two years later the Old Testament into their native tongue. This Bible bore the title "Mamusse Wunmeetupanatamwe Up-Biblum God naneeswe Nukkone Testament kahwonk Wusk Testament". The Indians had their services and were known as the Praying Indians. The first church built by Dr. Eliot was in Natick. There were seven towns of these Praying Indians: Natick now the town of that name; Pakemitt, now Stoughton; Wamesit, now Lowell; Ockoocangansett, now Marlborough; Hassanamisett, now Grafton; Nashobah, now Littleton; Magunkook, now Hopkinton. The Indians of the Ockoocangansett had as early as 1643 put themselves under the protection of the Courts, and had the assurance that they should enjoy the lands in their actual possession, and be protected in their rights.

In May, 1656, thirteen inhabitants of the town of Sudbury petitioned the Governor, Magistrates and Deputies of the General Court assembled in Boston to grant them eight square miles lying westward about eight miles from Sudbury to make a Plantation. This petition was granted at a meeting of the General Court assembled in Boston on May 14, 1656. It was then found that part of this land was included in a grant to the Indians of Ockoocangansett in 1654. The matter was again taken up with the Court and it was finally settled with the grant to the Indians of 6000 acres including three or four acres of meadow land, the Indians to have the hill on which they were then settled, and the balance to be laid out in a Plantation. This Indian Plantation was in the north-easterly section of the present township and included the Hill back of the old Meeting-House Common and the Common on which the Meeting-House was later built. The Indian Planting Field was about one hundred acres and was near the site of the old Boston and Maine Railroad. The English Plantation was situated to the South and West of the Indian Plantation and was known as Whipsufferadage or Whipsuppenicke. In 1660 this Plantation was incorporated under the name of Marlboro, later changed to Marlborough.
First Church in Marlborough

After having built their homes, the people of Marlborough began to think about having a minister. At a meeting of the inhabitants held on September 20, 1660, it was ordered that each person should pay among other taxes "three pense an acre for each acre of their House Lotts to the Minister". In the same meeting it was ordered "that there bee a rate made for Mr. William Brinsmead, Minister, and bee collected of the inhabitants and proprietors of the town (for six months) at the rate of four pence per acre upon House Lotts, and three pence per Pound upon cattle". This tax was renewed in 1661.

In April, 1661, Obadiah Ward, Christopher Banister and Richard Barnes, agreed with the town "to build a frame for a minister's house every way like that Mr. John Ruddocke built for himself, to be a girt house, 26 feet long, 18 feet wide, and 12 and one-half feet high between joints; the studs standing at such a distance that a four-foot and a half clapboard may reach three studs, and be of floor-joice, and four windows on the foreside, and two windows at the western, and two gables on the foreside, and eight feet square, with two small windows on the foreside of the gables. And they are to fell all the timber, and bring it in place, and do all that belongs to the frame, only the town is to help raise the aforesaid frame; and all this work is to be done, and the frame raised, within a fortnight after Michael tyde; and this being done. the town of Marlborough doth promise and engage to pay to them the sum of fifteen pounds in corn, within fourteen days after the House is raised -- the one half of it -- and the other half sometime in March, the whole pay to be one-third in wheat and one-third in rye, and the other third in Indian corn; the half in wheat and rye is to be paid fourteen days after the house is up, and the half in rye and Indian corn sometime in March; wheat at four shillings and sixpence a bushel, rye at four shillings a bushel, and Indian corn at three shillings a bushel; to be paid at Sudbury, between Peter King's and Sarjent Wood's house in the streete".

This House stood not far from the first Meeting-House on the southwest side of the Indian Planting Field. It was built after the fashion of the house of John Ruddocke, one of the wealthiest and most learned men in the place, and was considered to be of good architecture. This house was completed, and in November 1662 the house and the lot on which it stood was given to Mr. Brinsmead for his use as Minister of the Town.

At this same meeting a tax was imposed on the people of twelve pence per acre on their house lots for the purpose of erecting a House of Public Worship. The site chosen for this Meeting-House was on the Old Common, near the present Junior High School [Walker Building 2016], and was within the limits of the Indian Planting Field, which was one source of hostile feeling on the part of the Indians. On April 4, 1663, Anamaks, Indian of Whipsuppenicke, deeded this land "to John Ruddocke and John Howe of the Town of Marlborough, in the County of Middlesex, New England, to the proper use and behoof of the said Town of Marlborough, this land yt the Meeting-House of the said town now stands on, and also the land from the
highway on the foreside of the Meeting-House, and on a square ten feet round about the said Meeting-House”.

The Meeting-House erected was a small one-storied building with oil paper in the windows for light, and thatched with straw or a kind of tall grass taken from the meadow, since called from that circumstance Thatch meadow. In 1664 a further tax of 3 and one-quarter pence per acre was made on the people for the purpose of finishing this Meeting-House.

Mr. Brinsmead was ministering to the needs of the people as early as 1660. Following some trouble in the Town, he left Marlborow and was preaching in Plymouth when he received the call to become Pastor of the newly erected Meeting-House, which was known as the Church of Christ of Marlborow. He returned and was installed on October 3, 1666 at a salary of forty pounds. A Church was instituted, according to the custom of the times, on the day of his ordination, and this is the date which we take as the date for our anniversaries.

Mr. William Brinsmead was a native of Dorchester, and a son of William Brinsmead of that town. He was educated at Harvard College, but never took his degree. In consequence of the college term being lengthened from three to four years, the class to which he belonged did not graduate until 1648; but he, with sixteen others, left in 1647. Mr. Brinsmead is represented as being a good scholar and a man of ability. He preached the Election Sermon in 1681, a distinction which shows the high esteem in which he was held by the leading men of the Colony. The sermon was printed. He was greatly loved by the people of Marlborow with whom he labored for nearly forty years. A manuscript journal kept by him from 1682 to 1695 in which he carefully noted his public labors on the Sabbath and on days of Public Thanksgiving and Fasting, and also his sermon texts, was beautifully written, a goodly share of it being in Latin. He also notes in the Journal the discourses he delivered at the houses of his principal parishioners; for it appears he did not confine his labors to the Sabbath, nor his preaching to the House of God. The Journal also contains notices of occurring events, such as the choice of deacons, admissions to the Church, and burials. This manuscript is in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Mr. Brinsmead never married and tradition says that he uniformly refused to baptize babies who were so irreverent as to be born on the Sabbath. I might say, also, that Mr. Loring of Sudbury followed this same custom until the advent of twins in his own family, born on the Sabbath, which was instrumental in changing his opinion on this subject.

Mr. Brinsmead was an able and faithful minister and did much toward building up the town and the church. During those years, there were bitter controversies, when brother was arrayed against brother, sister against sister, and it was a great blessing to the people to have one kind counsellor
to whom they could turn with confidence -- one spiritual guide whose ardent desire was to lead them in the paths of peace and righteousness.

In 1671 the people of Marlborough wanted to enlarge their territory and looked forward to the time when they could push the Indians out of the land. As the Indians were friendly they had no cause for apprehension from them. However, Philip, the bold and daring Chief of the Wampanoaga was plotting the extermination of all the English colonies. With a sagacity which we cannot but admire, he foresaw that if the English were permitted to multiply on these shores, the fate of the Indian tribes might be a question of time, and he, therefore, conceived the bold design of ridding his native land of what he considered its spoilers. He enlisted most of the subordinate tribes in his cause and secretly secured the powerful Narragansets in his interest even though they were at the time the professed friends of the Colonists. Marlborough was centrally located and was in the central line of attack. Garrisons were set up in various houses in the town. It was on Sunday, March 20th, 1676, during the morning service, that the cry came "The Indians are Upon Us." The people all fled to their garrisons safely. Most of the houses, including Mr. Brinsmead's and the Meeting-House, were burned by the Indians. Tradition has it that the Indians did not set fire to the church but that it was ignited by flying embers from the other fires.

I might say in passing that Philip was later killed by one of the friendly Indians in a swamp in Connecticut.

After this outbreak, the people left the town to a great extent, but during the following year twenty-seven families returned to reestablish their homes. In 1677 a new Meeting-House was built on the same spot as the former House, and like the former was small, with thatched roof, one-story, and oil paper in the windows for light. It was unheated. There was no bell and the people were called to meeting by the beating of a drum. This building was left in the unfinished state and lasted but a few years. In 1680 an unsuccessful attempt was made to enlarge and repair it. In 1688 a much larger and more commodious House was erected. In 1689 this Meeting-House was valued at ten pounds and the pulpit at four pounds. This new Meeting-House was erected near the site of the other two churches.

The following is a copy of the First Covenant of this Church, called the Brinsmead Covenant. (Editor's note in explanation of the spelling in this Covenant: the y stands for th so that ye means the; yt means that; yir means their; wn, when; yy means they and so on).

"Marlborough Church Covenant as it was Renewed October ye 15th 1679.

We whose names are hereafter subscribed, Inhabitants of ye Town of Marlborough Knowing yt we are very Prone to offend and Provoke God ye Most High both in Heart and Life, through ye Prevalency of sin that Dwelleth within us, and manifold temptations from without us; for which we have great Reason to be unfeignedly Humbled before God from day to
day; Do in ye name of our Lord Jesus with Dependency upon ye Gracious Assistance of His Holy Spirit, Solemnly Enter into a Covenant with God and one with another according to God as followeth:

1. That having Chosen and taken ye Lord Jehovah to be our God; we will fear him and Cleave to him in Love, & serve him in Truth with all our hearts; Giving up ourselves to be his People, in all things to be at his Disposal & sovereign Direction, that we may have and hold Communion with Him as members of Christ's mystical Body, according to his Revealed will, to our Lives End.

2. We also Bind our selves to Bring up our Children & Servants in ye knowledge and fear of God by his holy Institutions according to our Best Ability, and in special by ye use of Orthodox Catechism that ye True Religion may be maintained in our families whilst we Live; yea & among such as shall Live when we are Dead & gone.

3. We furthermore Promise to keep close to ye truth of Christ Endeavoring with affection towards it in our Hearts, to Defend it against all opposers thereto as God shall call us at any time thereunto; which that we may do, we Resolve to use ye Holy Scripture as our Platform; whereby we may Discern ye mind of Christ and not ye New Found Inventions of men.

4. We also Engage ourselves to have a careful Inspection over our Hearts so as to Endeavor by ye Vertue of ye Death of Christ, ye mortification of all our Sinful Passions, worldly frames, Disorderly affections, whereby we may be withdrawn from ye Living God.

5. We moreover oblige ourselves in ye faithful Improvement of our Ability & opportunity, to worship God according to all Particular Institutions of Christ for his Church, under Gospel Administrations; as to give Reverend Attention to ye word of God, to pray unto him, to sing his praises & to hold Communion with Each other in ye use of both the Seals; Namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

6. We likewise Promise, that we will peaceably submit unto ye Discipline appointed by Christ in his Church for offenders; obeying them that Rule over us in ye Lord.

7. We also Bind ourselves to walk in Love one towards another, Endeavoring our mutual Edification, Visiting, Exhorting, Comforting as occasion serveth; And warning any Brother or Sister which offends, not Divulging Private offences Irregularly, But heedfully following ye several Precepts Laid down by Christ for Church Dealing; Matt. 18th; 15, 16, 17, willingly forgiving all that manifest unto judgment of Charity that they truly repent of all miscarriages.

Now to ye God of Peace that Brought again from ye Dead our Lord Jesus ye great Shepherd of ye sheep through ye Blood of ye Everlasting Covenant; make us all perfect in Every good thing to do his will, working in us that
which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be Glory for Ever & Ever."

This Covenant, with a few verbal changes, was used by the Church until 1837.

In the year 1661, the General Court "expressed their desire and order for the convening" of a Synod to meet at Boston, to give their advice respecting the Half-Way Covenant. The Synod met the following year and adopted propositions which approved that Covenant, though not without opposition on the part of a small but learned and able minority.

This Church has the following record in regard to this Covenant.

"At a meeting of ye Church of Christ in Marlborough on ye 2d of ye 7m 1701; it was proposed unto consideration wt was necessary to be done in order to admitting of Persons to ye ordinance of Baptism yt were not in any way in Church Fellowship. After a very deliberate and friendly debate, it was unanimously and jointly concurred in & agreed to, yt al such Persons as shall offer ymselves or yir children to this church for ye seal of Baptism, shall be received, provided yy are not scandalous in conversation and are orthodox in religion and will submit to ye Discipline of Christ in this Church, and do engage, and bind ym selves to bring up yir Children & Servants in ye Fear and Knowledge of God by Holy Instruction according to yir best abilities; and in special by ye use of Orthodox Catechisms yt ye, true religion may be maintained in yir families while yy live, yea and among such as shall live wn yy are dead and gone."

Some of the people of good moral character brought their babies forward for christening, and, as their conscience was then clear, forgot their obligations to the church. On May 14, 1794, the matter was again brought before the church, to see if any change should be made in the terms on which persons might be admitted to Baptism for themselves and their children, but this was left without any action. This "Half-Way Covenant" was eliminated by the advent of the Church Committee and examination.

The first settlers of Marlborough were very severe in their punishments and were very rigid regarding religious observances. Some of their punishments were as follows: Men were publicly whipped for shooting birds on Sunday; also for idleness and intemperance. They were fined for lying and for disorderly living. The tongue was put into a cleft stick as a punishment for cursing and swearing. For being intoxicated, a man was made to stand in the public highway with a paper pinned to his back bearing the words, "A Drunkard." In one case a man had his ears cut off for speaking against the Church and the government.

They were very simple in their dress, and both men and women were forbidden to wear anything but the very plainest of clothing. For instance, "The Court taking into consideration the great superfluous and unnecessary expenses occasioned by some new and immodest fashions, as also the
wearing of silver, gold, and silk laces, girdles, hat bands, etc., hath therefore ordered that no person, either man or woman, shall hereafter make or buy any apparel, either woolen, silk, or linen, with any lace on it, under the penalty of forfeiture of such clothes. Also, that no person, either man or woman, shall make or buy any slashed clothes, other than one slash in each sleeve, and another in the back; also all cut works, embroidered or needle work, caps, bands, and rayles, are forbidden hereafter to be made or worn, under the aforesaid penalty; also all gold or silver girdles, hat-bands, belts, ruffs, beaver hats are prohibited to be bought, and worn, under the same penalty."

Among the officers deemed of the highest importance by our forefathers were the "Tythingmen." In Marlborough, as in the other towns, some of their best and most respectable men held, from time to time, the dignified place of tythingmen. They were considered "religious police" whose special duty was to see that the Sabbath was duly observed and that the boys and others behaved in orderly fashion at religious meetings. They were usually posted in the meeting-houses so as to have the whole congregation in view in order to detect any indecorum. Especially was it required of them to see that no impropriety was committed at noontime by the young people who remained about the place of worship.

Connected with the duties of the tythingmen were the "stocks" which were regarded as an important town institution and as a terror to evil-doers. This was the law of the land, and this church had this emblem of justice. Towns were often fined for not providing stocks. These stocks were generally located near the entrance of the church, and in the later church were located under the stairs leading to the gallery, and as they were generally attached to the building, constituted a sort of prison where the disorderly could be confined and punished.

The services at the Meeting House were long. The sermon was usually one hour in length, one in the morning and one in the afternoon with a short intermission, and was measured by an hour glass placed on the pulpit. Carriages were unknown and those who rode went horse back with pillion for wife or daughter, who dismounted easily by aid of the horse block near the Meeting House. No man ever went unarmed.

After Mr. Brinsmead's death in 1701, the town was without a minister until October 25, 1704, when Mr. Robert Breck was ordained minister of the town at a yearly salary of seventy pounds, a year's supply of wood annually, and a settlement of one hundred pounds.

In September of 1701 and again in March 1702, Rev. John Emerson, a native of Ipswich, was invited to become the minister, but on advice of several distinguished ministers, including Cotton Mather, and of two Ecclesiastical councils, he declined the invitations.

The letter from Rev. Cotton Mather is given here.
Dear Brethren,

It is, and it should be a principle of order in the churches of the Lord, that where a church labours under want of light or peace, the help of a Council should be called in, as an ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ. This hath been the Belief and this the practices of the churches in the wilderness, and the Lord hath owned then to it.

For the Division of Marlborough, we have great thoughts of Heart. We know not the particulars of your case, but this we know that you want both light and peace. There is extreme hazard lest your divisions produce the most lasting and fatal consequences, if they be not specially cured. We perceive that a majority of your holy Flock hath been strongly disposed into ye settling of one, in the Evangelical Ministry among you, who is very much discouraged by the differences that yet remain in the place, which we cannot wonder at. We perceive, that the dissenters are a party so considerable that it will be an uncomfortable way of proceeding for ye majority to strain upon them with the advantages which our Law may give unto them to do so. What can you do now?

Truly Brethren, the ministers met at Boston from several parts of the country, this day concurred that the church in Marlborough should be advised, to Agree in calling a council of churches, to Advise them what steps they shall take, to obtain a good settlement of the ministry among them, and Resolve that laying aside all Differences relating to any former motions among them, (about Mr. Morse and Mr. Emerson) they will with all Christian unanimity follow what shall thereupon be declared unto them, to be their duty in this weighty matter.

And they directed me, the unworthiest of their number, to signify so much unto you, in their Name; which accordingly I now do. Humbly praying that the good spirit of the Lord may incline you to unite in the ............... of your peace, and that the God of Love and peace may be with you. Thus I subscribe,

Honored Brethren

Yours in our Common Lord

Cotton Mather

Mr. Robert Breck was born on December 7, 1682, graduated from Harvard College in 1700, and was ordained October 25, 1704, when only twenty-two years of age. During his ministry of twenty-seven years, two hundred and eighty-six persons were admitted to the church and one thousand and twenty-seven received the rite of baptism. He was well versed in the Languages and used a Hebrew Bible in reading to his family. On September 8, 1707, Mr. Breck was married to Miss Elizabeth Wainwright of Haverhill, by whom he had a family of four daughters and two sons.
In 1711, at the close of Queen Anne's War, things were running smoothly in the town and church, and steps were taken to finish the inside of the Meeting-House which up to that time had been only partially done. Another thing which had not been done and which proved a trouble maker in most towns, was "to seat the meeting-house". In some cases the phrase was used "to dignify and seat the meeting-house", or in other words to seat the people according to the rate age and honor of the inhabitants. To show that dignity was not entirely lacking, the good people of Marlborough voted that the front seats in the gallery should be next in dignity to the second seats below and that the fore seats in the gallery should be next in dignity to the third seats below. They also empowered their committee to "grant any places for pews around the meeting-house to such persons of 'quality' as they shall see cause; they that have them to build them at their own cost". This seating arrangement was to be made every five years. Those people living at a great distance from the church were given the use of the school house Sabbath Days, "leaving the fires safe".

On November 19, 1719, the town was divided and the westerly part was formed into a separate town which, from its geographical position, was called Westborough. In the early days several grants for farms were given to Mr. Charles Chauncy, President of Harvard College. This farm land was taken by the town, as it was in their grant from the Courts, but the name Chauncy was retained. This farm included a lake. Hence the name of the Pond or Lake Chauncy is retained to the present time. In 1724 this new town built its own church and Rev. Ebenezer Parkman became their first minister.

In 1727 the town and church was again divided, this time in the southerly part of the town. This new township became known as Southborough.

On the 20th of October, 1744, Westborough was itself divided into two precincts, the northern portion taking the name of Northborough.

I have given the above statistics of the separation into townships so we may readily see that, whereas the Marlborough church is the daughter of the church in Sudbury, it is the mother of the Westborough and Southborough churches and grandmother to the church in Northborough.

On June 5, 1725, the Marlborough Association was formed at the house of Mr. Breck. This consisted of six or eight ministers from the neighboring towns. It was voted that "Marlborough, ye central Town, be ye Place of our ordinary meeting, unless upon ye Desire of any particular member, the Association shall see fit to meet elsewhere". The object of the Association was to consider cases of dispute, settle questions of difficulty in church discipline, and in fact to give advice and counsel in all disagreement in the churches. "That we will consider any cases that shall be laid before us by any member of us, or by other persons which shall be thought worthy thereof. And if there be opportunity therefor, each member shall deliver in
his order, Concionem and Clerum; unless it be then judged proper some question be spoken to, being proposed ye meeting before, and as many persons to make answer to it as were appointed thereunto". And accordingly, the early Records are mostly made up of some cases of conscience, and questions of difficulty in church discipline, or matters of disagreement, between the parties in a church, or between pastor and people, which were laid before this body for advice and counsel. The Association was dissolved Oct. 14, 1814.

In 1728 Mr. Breck preached the Election Sermon, which was published. On June 15, 1720, he preached the first sermon ever preached in Shrewsbury.

September 1st, 1730, it is recorded that the Association met at Framingham and that "Rev. Breck was prevented from attending by a grievous sore in his mouth, which afterwards proved the sorrowful occasion of his death". On October 15, 1730, the Association met at Benjamin Wood's, by reason of Mr. Breck's "being under Salivation". This meeting was changed to a fast, on account of Mr. Breck's dangerous illness. Rev. Mr. Prentice of Leominster preached in the morning, and Rev. Mr. Swift of Framingham in the afternoon.

Mr. Breck died on January 6, 1731 and is buried in the Spring Hill Cemetery near Mr. Brinsmead. A handsome monument erected above his grave bears a lengthly inscription in Latin. It is a beautiful tribute to his memory and contains a just representation of his character. Given below is a translation into English of this epitaph:

"Beneath this stone are deposited the mortal remains of the truly Reverend Robert Breck. His Immortal part hath ascended to heaven, to join the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect.

"He was by nature a man of acute intellect, capacious mind and sound judgment, together with singular mental resolution. As to his attainments, he was eminently skilled in the learned languages, familiar beyond the common measure with polite literature; and what to others was difficult, he by the power of his mind and close application to study, accomplished with ease. Thoroughly versed in every department of theology, and truly orthodox in sentiment, he was a Scribe in every respect instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven.

"The duties of the pastoral office in the church at Marlborough, over which the Holy Ghost made him overseer, he discharged faithfully and assiduously, in peace and with great reputation for twenty-seven years.

"He was a skillful and able asserter of the doctrines of Revelation, and of the worship and discipline of the New England churches. He
was a counsellor in cases of difficulty, both public and private, of distinguished uprightness and consummate prudence. He was a sincere lover of his friends, his country, and the whole church of Christ.

"In a word, he was a model of piety, and every social virtue, and of moderation in regard to earthly things.

"In the severe pains of his last sickness, his patience had its perfect work; and his departure, if not in triumph, was full of hope and peace.

Born December 7, 1682 -- Died January 6, 1731

"Even the prophet do not live forever."

After the death of Mr. Breck, the people seemed destined to trouble and disappointment in their ecclesiastical affairs. The choice of a successor kept the town in a state of excitement for two years. They found it difficult to agree on a candidate, and more difficult to find one who would accept the call. On August 21, 1733, Mr. Benjamin Kent received the call from the Church and town which he accepted. The Town granted him a salary of one hundred and eighty pounds per annum in passable bills of public credit, to rise and fall according to Silver, which was then current at twenty shillings an ounce. For settlement he was to be allowed four hundred pounds, two hundred to be paid within six months from the day of his ordination, and the other two hundred within one year from the time of the first payment.

Mr. Kent was ordained October 23, 1733. He was a graduate of Harvard College, class of 1727. Soon after his ordination, strong doubts arose respecting his orthodoxy. Benjamin Woods, one of the leading members of the church, charged him with being "a professed Arminian" and said his orthodoxy had made "a great noise almost over all the Province." Also Mr. Woods claimed that the "nearest neighboring ministers refused to assist in his ordination;" and also charged him with contradictory statements. The Council met on February 4, 1735 to investigate the matter and give their advice. Besides the above charges, he was also charged with using "profane and scandalous conversation", and that "he held and vented unsound and dangerous opinions with respect to the great and important Scripture doctrine of the Trinity;" "That Jesus Christ hath not made full satisfaction for all our sins;" "that there were several answers in the Assembly's Catechism which had not a word of Scripture to support them, particularly that respecting the Decrees;" "that he denied an absolute Election, and asserted a conditional one on the foresight of good works;" "that he said in his preaching that if God dealt with Adam as a moral agent he could not have hindered his fall or his sinning against him;" "that infants came into the world free and clear of original guilt." He also had said in his preaching that the fundamentals of religion were plain and easy. There were many other charges of a like manner. They also charged him with using "profane and filthy expressions" and "expressions relating to ye neighboring
ministers which are indecent and injurious reflections upon them". The Council judged and advised that the Rev. Mr. Kent be suspended from preaching the word, or administering the Holy Sacraments until the 27th of May next. "And if as we earnestly wish, it shall in mean time please the God of all grace to give him that light and conviction which may dispose him publicly to retract his errors, and own the truth as it is in Jesus, it may give occasion to restore him in the spirit of meekness and with joy. To that time the Council will be adjourned, and will then stand ready, (God willing) to give this church our further advice."

Mr. Kent evidently did not repent, as he closed his ministry with this decision of the Council, and as far as the records show, he never regained his standing as a minister of the Gospel. He withdrew at once, leaving the church in a divided state. He brought action against the town to recover the sum of four hundred pounds which was voted to him as a "settlement", and the case, after a prolonged litigation, was finally decided in his favor. He later took up the practice of law in Boston where he became known for his eccentricity and wit. He got in trouble with the authorities, fled to Halifax as a refugee and died in 1788 at an advanced age.

As the town and church were in a divided state, it was voted at a town meeting held on June 26, 1735, to set aside a day of fasting and prayer to guide them in the choice of a minister. The ministers of the surrounding towns assisted in this day of humiliation and prayer but no minister was found who suited both the town and church. Another fast day was held on May 18, 1737 but with no results.

On September 9, 1736, a group of twenty-nine young men of the town entered into a Religious Association. The records do not show how successful this Association was or how long it was in existence, but as the Covenant was copied in 1740, and new names subsequently added, it was inferred the Association was in existence for several years. Their meetings were held every Lord's Day in the evening, and on the evening of Thanksgiving and all Fast days and were for Religious Worship, Prayer, and to sing His praises. From the service they went immediately to their homes for further meditation, "and nothing but what is Extraordinary Shall Divert us therefrom". The closing section of their Covenant read "That we will not whilst together, But at all times, in all Company, Endeavor by the grace and Help of God to regulate our Conversation with that Christian Prudence and Sobriety as Shall give no occasion to others to Speak ill of us, nor of the Religious Design we have now engaged in. Finally for the Performance hereof we will rely upon the Divine Grace and Seek for God's Blessing upon and with us."

Aaron Smith was ordained the fourth minister on June 11, 1740, at a salary of eighty pounds a year, in bills of credit of the new tender, or two hundred and forty of the old "provided he prove sound in the faith upon examination, and give in a confession of his faith, agreeably to the
Confession of Faith of the Congregational Churches of New England, so long as he shall continue of such faith and of good conversation; reasonable allowance being made upon said bills being of more or less value." He was also to receive a settlement of four hundred pounds "provided he continue qualified as aforesaid". One hundred of this money was to be paid within six months after his ordination, and one hundred a year from said first payment, till the whole sum be paid.

Soon after Mr. Smith came to Marlborough, the town became agitated on the question of a proposed division of the town into East and West sections, each to have its own church. This plan was however rejected.

1740 marked the year of "The Great Awakening" throughout the country but there is no record of any great interest in Marlborough. There is a record that on October 14, 1740 the celebrated preacher, George Whitefield, preached on the Common in front of the Meeting-House, because the use of the House was denied him. Appointments were often made in advance, without consulting the wishes or convenience of the Ministers, and this in many cases awakened strong opposition to his course. It is supposed to have had some influence in this case. In his letters he referred to his visit to this town as follows: "His heart was dead at first, and he had but little freedom; but before he finished, the Word came with such demonstration of the spirit, that great numbers were melted down. Here he found Gov. Belcher, who went with him through the rain, that night to Worcester." In the private Journal of Rev. Ebenezer Parkman of Westborough, mention is made of special meetings in this place, but nothing that indicates any general interest. From the fact that the Marlborough Association drew up and generally signed a Testimony against Mr. Whitefield and his conduct, it may perhaps not unjustly be inferred that Mr. Smith had little sympathy with the Great Awakening.

The 15th of June, 1749, was observed as a day of "public Fasting on Occasion of the extreme Drought" prevailing at that time. Rev. Mr. Smith preached two sermons from Lev.26: 3,4, on "Some Temporal Advantages to Keeping Covenant with God." These sermons were printed, "At the earnest Request of His Hearers," and a copy is preserved with the Church Records.

The following extract is taken from the Appendix:

"The Heat and Drought daily increased until not only the Ground was chapt, but the Corn which clothed the Valleys was fainting, and on the point of sinking into the Earth. The Trees languished and died; The Brooks dried up; the small Fish so perished that the Rivers Stank: yes the Air by a long stagnation became so putrid and unfit for Respiration, that Mankind were in Danger of becoming suffocated. In this last Extremity, When every countenance gathered Paleness, for all Things appeared dark and dismal, and in Consternation, Men stood gazing one on another, wisely inquiring, Wherefore God's Anger burned towards them in such a tremendous Manner! I say in this very critical Juncature, the Lord wrought graciously for
his People on the 6th of July; that memorable Day Almighty God compassionated our desperate Case, and called us to behold his great Power in relieving us, when reduced to the lowest Ebb New England ever saw. 'Twas in the very Instant when all Hope was ready to fail; that the Father of Rain sent plentiful showers, and so refreshed the parched Earth, and recovered the perishing Fruits, and destroyed the Insects; And the Earth yielded more than a competent supply for the Necessities and Comforts of Life."

In 1756 the subject of taking down the old meeting-house and erecting two new ones, was again brought before the town. But instead of entertaining the proposition, the town voted "to repair the present meeting-house on the foreshore and the two ends, by making new window-frames and casements to slip up and down, and glaze it with sash glass, set in wood, and to new clapboard the foreshore and the two ends, and make new doors and steps at the doors". I might explain that the kind of glass used at that time was a small light, about four by six inches, set in lead, with bars crossing the window to hold the lead in its place. The form of the lights was that of a rhombus, or an equilateral rhomboid, its greatest diameter being placed perpendicularly in the window. Such, undoubtedly, was the glazing of the meeting-house up to 1756.

The young women of the town immediately petitioned for permission to make improvements in the internal arrangement of the house. It was then voted "that Mary Ward, Elizabeth Harrington, and Dorothy Burnap, and others whom they shall admit, may build a pew in the front gallery where a seat now is, and set in it during the town's pleasure".

Other improvements made on the Meeting-House in the next year or two included the erection of porches, glazing the back side and even "colouring" the house to make it attractive. These improvements were sort of a back-fire to the movement of the westerly part to be set off as a separate town, or to have two houses erected.

In 1758 the following warrant for a Town Meeting was issued, and as it concerns the Meeting-House, I am giving it in its entirety.

"Middlesex ss. To Mr. John Barns Constable for the Town of Marlborough in said County, Greeting.

In His Majesty's name you are Hereby required forthwith to warn all the Freeholders, and other Inhabitants in your Part of this Town, Qualified as the Law Directs to Vote in Town affairs, to meet att the Meeting-Hous, in said Town, on Monday the Third Day of April Next, att one of the Clock after noon, to act on the following Articles.

1. To chuse a moderator for sd meeting.

2. To See if the Town will give order by a Vote, that the Persons that now own the Present Pews shall take up the Seats in the body of the Meeting hous and the floar, and Lay another floar upon the Sells
with new Sleeppers, and with using the old boards for the under floar, and new boards for the upper floar, and to Put the Seats up again upon the said Persons Cost.

3. To see if the Town will take down the Present Pulpit in the meeting hous, and take away the table, and build a new Pulpit and a Deacon's seat before the Pulpit, and cut the minister's Pew and the women's Pew, to make Room to build two Seats more, one on the men's side, and another on the women's side, before the Present fore seats.

4. To see if the Town will grant Liberty to any Person or Persons that may appear to Do the work, he or they having the Women's Pew, and the ground that may be spared where the Pulpit stairs now are, to build a Pew on.

Hereof fail not and make Return of this Warrant with your doings thereon to the Select men on or before the time of sd meeting:

Dated at Marlborough the twenty-fourth Day of March in the thirty first year of his Majesty's Reign, A.D. 1758 by order of ye Select Men.

J. Warren Town Clerk

In 1775, a terrible epidemic of dysentary prevailed in the town with great loss of life. In three instances, four persons were buried in one day and nineteen in one week.

The years under Mr. Smith's ministry were successful and in 1767 his church numbered 164 members, 79 males and 85 females. In 1771 his health became impaired and the people were becoming dissatisfied with his preaching. In November of that year, an article in the town warrant called for a committee to be chosen to ask him to resign the ministry. This vote was not carried, but in January 1778, he asked a dismission on account of ill-health, which was granted on April 29th and he removed to a church in East Sudbury where he died in 1781 at the age of sixty-seven. He was buried in the Old Wayland Cemetery.

A singular event in Mr. Smith's history occurred in the year 1777. Tradition says that three men went to his house at night and fired a gun into the window of his study. And in the Records of the Marlboro Association, August 19th of this year 1777, it is recorded, "that certain topics were the subject of conversation, together with what Mr. Smith had lately met with at Marlborough; several guns having been shot into his study at midnight, as if aimed to take away his life, but he survived unhurt." It is not believed the intention was to kill Mr. Smith but simply to alarm him and induce him to leave the place. He was regarded by many as being a Tory. The Rev. Aaron Smith house was recently taken down to make way for the new Coldwell Funeral Home at the corner of West Main and Pleasant Streets.
In the next several years invitations were sent to three ministers, but all declined until in 1785, Mr. Asa Packard of Bridgewater, a graduate of Harvard College in the class of 1783, accepted. He was ordained on March 23, 1785. The snow on this day was so deep as to cover the tops of the walls and fences, and sleighs could pass over the fields in any direction without difficulty. Long years afterwards, a household standard of comparison would be "The deepest snow we have had since Mr. Packard's snow storm."

Mr. Packard, at the age of sixteen, had enlisted in the Revolutionary War as fifer. In an engagement near Harlem Heights, a companion seized his fife, and handed him a musket in exchange, and fled to a place of safety. Surprised, but not undaunted, young Packard engaged in the conflict, received a wound that nearly proved fatal, with a ball entering his back just above his hip. After a severe illness, he left the Army, returned home and commenced his studies at college. The ball remained in his back the rest of his life.

Tradition has it that Mr. Packard advertised for a wife in 1790. Miss Nancy Quincy, sister of Josiah Quincy, Jr., the patriot, answered the ad. They were married on July 2, 1790. This proved a happy marriage and six children were born to them.

The town voted to give Mr. Packard for a settlement, "three hundred pounds, to be paid, one half in one year from the day of his ordination, the other half in two years from said day; and a salary of one hundred pounds, and twenty cords of good marketable oak wood, cut and brought to his door, at his dwelling house in said Marlborough, annually, so long as he remains our Minister."

A day for the ordination of a minister in Marlborough was an important event. The people gathered from far and near, with the ministers from the various towns in attendance. There was always the ordination feast, with plenty of cider and punch given out free of charge, and generous bowls of flip and toddy warmed many a body in honor of the ceremony, all at the expense of the hospitable society.

The following will give an idea of the working of the early church. These votes were taken from the records of the church in 1803:

"That members of other churches resident in this town, shall not enjoy occasional communion with this church more than eighteen months, without giving to the Pastor a satisfactory reason for not removing their relation".

"That every communicant shall pay his annual assessment for providing the Element, before the yearly Fast in every spring, and that a list of such members as shall not have paid, previous to the first lecture after the Fast, shall, after the exercises of that Lecture, be read from the Church, that suitable steps may be taken to close the Collection".

The following year, 1804, after the lecture, it was voted "to suspend reading the list for certain reasons till the next communion Lecture, and
then to make some further provision for obtaining the Elements”. It was finally settled with each male member paying one shilling to the Deacons to buy the Elements for communion for the remainder of the year, and every member to pay one shilling six pence each succeeding year.

On account of the depreciation in currency, Mr. Packard found his salary inadequate for the needs of his large family, and on November 8, 1804, he sent a lengthy communication to the church in which he outlined a plan whereby he asked them to pay him what they judged to be equivalent to $333.33 in March 1785. On receiving this he would give the Treasurer a receipt for one year’s salary, and would make no claim on the town for compensation or depreciation previous to 1804. In December, a committee was chosen by the town consisting of seven, to consider and report on this matter. This committee, after conferring with the pastor, reported unanimously in favor of his proposition; but the town would not adopt the report. Mr. Packard then asked for a dismission from the church, and requested them to unite with him in calling a council for that purpose; but the request was denied.

In 1796 the subject of a new Meeting House was agitated but nothing was done about it until 1801 when the Town voted to build a new house. The people of the West part wanted the House on the Common where the old Meeting-House had stood for many years; the East part people claimed this was not the most central place and demanded it be built about one-half mile to the east of the Common. Finally a committee was chosen to measure all roads and find the most central spot. This was done, and on January 7, 1805, it was voted to build the Church on Spring Hill on condition that certain individuals appointed on that day, and bonded to the amount of three thousand dollars, would prepare the ground, purchase materials, erect and complete the House and sell the pews at public auction, in consideration of and exchange for the old Meeting-House Common, or the value of the same in money, placed in the hands of the Treasurer of the Town of Marlborough. The old common itself could not legally be given, but only the value of the same. This common consisted of two and a half acres and seventeen rods, worth about one dollar and fifty cents a square rod, or a value of about six hundred and twenty-five dollars. Four lots were set aside by the town for this new Meeting-House and grounds.

The town chose as their building committee, Mr. Uriah Eager, Dea. Abner Goodale, Joseph Brigham, Jr., Mr. Micah Sherman, Mr. John Loring, Mr. Enoch Corey, Capt. Jonathan Weeks, Mr. Lovell Brigham, Capt. David Brigham, Capt. Lovell Barnes, and Capt. William Wesson. The ground was prepared by the members of this committee and was accepted by the town in November, 1805.

On the passage of the vote by the town to locate the Meeting-House on Spring Hill, the inhabitants of the westerly part of the town held a meeting and voted to separate from the inhabitants of the easterly part and to form a
distinct religious society, precinct or town. A committee was chosen to find a suitable location for their meeting-house. A petition was made to the town to allow them to be set off "with all those privileges and immunities which appertain to towns within the Commonwealth". This was refused. They then appealed to the Legislature to be set off as a town, but were again refused.

In the meantime, they requested a meeting of the town to reconsider the building of the meeting-house on Spring Hill, but at the meeting they were informed it was too late as the contract had already been placed with Mr. C. Kendall and the plans called for a church large enough to accommodate the entire town. The committee chosen refused to reconsider the plans and build a smaller church even though the West part people were determined to build their own meeting-house and the work on the building was pushed along as rapidly as possible.

In the warrant calling for a town meeting on May 26, 1806, appears the following article: "To see whether the town will consent that Messrs. George Williams, William Boyd, Stephen Felton, Phineas How, and others as may join with them, shall be incorporated into a religious society, by such a name as the Legislature of the Commonwealth may direct". This vote was 125 to 76 that the request should not be granted for the following reasons:

"1st. The town has been at great expense to obtain a measurement of the town, and find the center East and West is near where their new Meeting-House now stands according to Gen. Holman's Report.

"2d. The north part of the town had a just claim to have the house carried nearly a half a mile farther north, as appears by said Report, but gave up that right for the sake of keeping the Town together, and being united in one Society.

"3d. This central spot on which the Town have erected their Meeting-House, does accommodate a majority of 64 families, better then the old common would have done.

"4th. The Town has not injured those Petitioners in the location of their new Meeting House, but have given them more than their right, as will be seen by the Plan of the Town.

"5th. This spot has been fitted by individuals at an expense of nearly $4000, for the sole purpose of keeping the town together in one Society.

"6th. The House built by the Town is sufficiently large for the reception of the whole Town.

"7th. Should they be set off, the Town would be left in a very bad situation; the inhabitants being obliged to travel to the edge of the Parish, and at the same time, obliged to maintain the Minister".

In the meantime, subscriptions were taken among the people for the West end church and some five thousand dollars had been raised. The
House at Spring Hill was raised in the week commencing Monday, June 24, 1805, and the raising of the house at the West end occupied nearly a week, commencing Wednesday, August 14, 1805. Both these houses were opened for public worship on April 27, 1806.

The people of Marlborough were not wealthy and the cost of the two meeting-houses was a great tax on them from which some never recovered financially. The West part people were obliged to pay their share of the cost of the Spring Hill Meeting-House which was not far from twenty thousand dollars exclusive of the cost of preparing the site. The cost of the land preparation was nearly four thousand dollars, all of which, with the exception of the six hundred twenty-five dollars received for the old common, was borne by the individuals. The bell itself cost $585.78 and weighed 1348 pounds.

The West end church cost some eight thousand dollars, which had to be entirely by subscription.

Disputes arose between the two churches and finally the members of the Church of Christ (East Church) asked for an Ecclesiastical Council to help them settle matters pertaining to the separation. This Council made up of pastor and delegate from the churches at Shrewsbury, Northborough, Stow, Acton, Concord, Berlin and Weston, met on October 22, 1806 and drew up recommendations which were in part as follows: that each branch of the Church of Christ in Marlborough have full liberty, without any offence to the other branch, to attend upon and enjoy all the ordinances of the Gospel and to exercise all the powers of a regular Christian Church in separate and distinct bodies, at such times and places as each branch should choose for itself; that in case of actual separation, the minor part of the inhabitants of the town should be legally incorporated into a distinct society to be known as the West Church in Marlborough; that that branch of the town with the majority of the inhabitants should be incorporated as the East Church in Marlborough; that there be an equal division of the property of whatever name or nature, except the Church records which should be assigned to that branch of the church united with the majority of the town.

These recommendations were accepted with thanks by the Church of Christ and that branch of the Church connected with the majority of the town was incorporated as the First Parish in Marlborough and became known as the East Church. At that time the number of active male members was forty-seven. Of these twenty-four belonged to the West branch and twenty-three, including all the Deacons, belonged to the East branch.

The West part of the Town obtained an act of incorporation as the Second Parish of Marlborough on February 23, 1808, and was organized on March 5th of that year.

Mr. Packard had remained pastor of the first, and in fact the only parish in Marlborough for about twenty years and the people were happy under his ministry. During the controversy in regard to the separation he maintained
neutrality, although he was a resident of the West part and naturally his sympathies were with the people of that part of town. He was asked to take a leading part in the dedication of the East Church. His reply, dated February 7, 1806, to Deacon Goodale, Chairman of the Committee of Dedication, was as follows: "While the society remains in this tempestuous state, it appears to me, a compliance with your request would naturally be followed with consequences seriously injurious to both parties, in a social, temporal, and spiritual view. I never covenanted with my people to assist them in injuring themselves".

Mr. Packard was in rather a delicate situation. He had been elected minister by the town and of course had to serve both parishes after the separation. The matter was brought before the Marlborough Association on March 6, 1806, who, after due consideration of the whole subject matter, decided unanimously, that the town have a reasonable and legal claim to the services of Mr. Packard in the new house, but they added: "As there exists a respectable minority, amounting to nearly one-half of the church and town, who appear determined not to assemble at Spring Hill, and have taken decided steps to become a corporate society, these circumstances have suggested conscientious scruples to Mr. Packard's mind, of the propriety of taking the lead in the dedication of said meeting-house, and of attending his services there in future, and have induced him to ask a dissolution of his further pastoral relation to the church and people of Marlborough. The Association, while they sincerely lament the occasion of it, both on their own and the people's account, cannot but acquiesce in his determination.

"The Association are of the opinion that their Rev. Brother Packard has uniformly manifested a deep and tender concern for the peace and best interests of the church and people of the town, and are fully convinced, that in all his conduct respecting the parties in town, and of all his representations to the Association, he has acted in sincerity and with honest intentions, and has conscientiously endeavored to be impartial in his statements and behavior towards the parties, notwithstanding any suggestion to the contrary".

Mr. Packard's request for a dismission from the town was granted and he was installed as pastor of the West Church on March 23, 1808. He remained there until May 12, 1819, when he removed to Lancaster where he resided until his death on March 20, 1843, at the age of 85.

Mr. Packard was a man of talent and was noted for his readiness rather than his profundity. He had great conversational powers and was remarkable for his eccentricity. His sermons were practical, rather than doctrinal, and were distinguished for happy descriptions of life and manners, rather than being based on gospel truth. He seemed to have no definite doctrinal beliefs. In Mr. Frield's History, he said, "When Mr. Packard was settled in Marlborough he was called an Arminian, but after his removal to Lancaster he united with the Orthodox Church then in
existence in the town of Bolton. After that had become extinct, many of its members united with the church in Lancaster, and he aided in the establishment of that now flourishing church, and was a cheerful supporter of it until his decease. It is due to him to say, that he never was a Unitarian, and when he heard of the first minister who denied the doctrine of Atonement, he remarked with tears, that without it, the Bible was to him a dead letter."

After the separation, the East Church was without a pastor for two and a half years. Rev. Edward Payson supplied the pulpit for thirteen weeks. He was an earnest Christian but few of the people were in sympathy with his doctrinal views. Mr. Payson was licensed to preach on May 20, 1807 and on May 24th preached his first sermon. In his Journal he had written, "Was favored with considerable fervency, life, and sense of dependance, this morning. Endeavored to cast myself wholly on the Lord for support. Felt thankful it was rainy. There were very few people at morning; and I just got through without stopping. Spoke too fast and too low. Was a good deal depressed after meeting. In the afternoon, did a little better, but still bad enough. Was very much fatigued and almost in a fever; but enjoyed some comfort after the meeting."

Mr. Payson gave abundant indications of his superior abilities and faithfulness as a preacher. A number of conversions took place and several regarded him as the instrument of leading them to Christ. However, a large part of the hearers did not sympathize with his doctrinal views and his style of preaching so he never received a call. His last sermon was preached from Luke 19: 41,42.

At about this time an important transition in the history of this Church was made. The Church was composed then, of those persons who had made a public confession of faith in Christ. The property, land and houses, were held by the town as a parish. With the building of two new houses of worship it meant the division of the town property and a separation of Church and State. Looking towards this separation of municipal and church interests, the following law was passed by the General Court on June 28, 1786:

AN ACT REGULATING PARISHES AND PRECINCTS
AND THE OFFICERS THEREOF.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That the bounds and limits of precincts and parishes, as they have been formerly settled, be and hereby are confirmed and established, until they shall be otherwise ordered by the General Court.

Section 2. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That assessors of precincts or parishes shall be empowered to manage their prudentials, unless a committee shall specially be appointed for that purpose, which any precinct or parish is empowered to choose if they think
proper; and the aforesaid committee, where any such shall be chosen, and
the assessors, where no such committee shall be appointed, shall have like
power and authority in all respects for calling parish or precinct meetings as
selectmen by law, have for calling town meetings; . . .

Sect. 3. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the
qualified voters aforesaid of any parish or precinct, at the annual meeting in
March or April, or at any other parish or precinct meeting regularly notified,
at least seven days before holding thereof, may grant and vote such sum or
sums of money as they shall judge necessary for the settlement,
maintenance and support of ministers or public teachers of religion; for the
building and repairing of houses of public worship, and all other necessary
parish or precinct charges, to be assessed on the polls and property within
the same as law provides.

And the inhabitants of each respective parish or precinct are hereby
declared to be a body corporate, and as such may commence and prosecute
any action or suit to final judgment and execution, in any court proper to
hear and determine the same, and also defend any action or suit that may be
brought against them, for which purposes they may constitute one or more
agents or attorneys, in the same manner as town may constitute and appoint
agents; and the evidence of their appointment may be determined in the
same manner.

Sect. 4. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that when
any town or district, consisting of but one parish only, has been or hereafter
shall be divided or made into two or more precincts or parishes, any
engagements or contracts entered into by such town or district, before such
division, of a precinct or parochial nature solely, shall not by such division
be considered as released, cancelled or extinguished; but the same shall
remain in full force, and be obligatory on the inhabitants residing, and the
estates lying within the limits of the first parish or precinct of the same town
or district, who shall be deemed and taken as successors to the town or
district, so far as relates to precinct or parochial agreements and contracts,
to every intent and purpose whatever. . .

Sect. 5. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in all
such towns or districts where one or more parishes or precincts shall be
regularly set off from such towns and districts, the remaining part of such
town or district is hereby deemed, declared and constituted an entire, perfect
and distinct parish or precinct, and shall be considered as the principal or
first parish or precinct.

Under this law the Church fathers acted. In the Act of Incorporation of
the Second Parish dated Feb. 23, 1808, both Parishes are recognized as
follows:

Sec. 2. Be it further enacted, that any of the inhabitants of the said town
shall at all times hereafter have full liberty to join themselves with their
families to either of the parishes in said town; provided, they shall signify in
writing under their hands to the clerk of said town some time in the month of March, annually, their determination of being considered as belonging to the parish to which they may join themselves, as aforesaid.

Sect. 3. That the members of each respective parish and their families shall be deemed and considered as continuing members of their respective parishes, with their estates, for the time being, until they shall signify their determination to the contrary, as above expressed in the second section.

The First Parish, separate from the town, called their first parish meeting on March 10, 1808, and it was at this meeting that they became known as the Church of the First Parish. With them remained the archives of the Church from its earliest history.

Mr. Asa Packard was the last minister who had to be voted on by both the church and town. After the separation of the two churches the town no longer provided for the support of the minister or paid the expenses of the meeting-house. Burial grounds and training fields remained with the town.

On November 2, 1808, Rev. Sylvester F. Bucklin was ordained as the sixth minister of the Church of Christ, and the first of the East Church. Mr. Bucklin was born in Rehobeth in the year 1784; he was graduated from Brown University in the class of 1805. His salary was $450.00. He was well liked and many important branches of the church were started during his ministry.

In the year 1810 he established a meeting for prayer and religious conference, held semi-monthly, at private houses in the parish. The people looked upon these Prayer Meetings with alarm. The great argument was that "six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work." However, no great harm came to the people from these services of prayer and in 1827 they were established by vote of the church. These prayer meetings continued to be held each week until about 1940.

The first Sunday School was held in connection with the church on May 31, 1818 in the old school house a few rods southwest from the Meeting-House, with David Goodale as the first superintendent. The enrollment was forty-four scholars, eight boys and thirty-six girls, the oldest being thirteen years of age. The books studied were Cumming's Questions on the New Testament, Emeram's Catechism and Evangelical and Familiar Catechism. As a reward for committing passages of Scripture or hymns to memory, the pupils were given tickets to the value of three, six, twelve or fifty cents, according to the amount memorized. When a sufficient number of these tickets were obtained, they were turned in for a book or some other useful article of a like value.

In June, 1818, a subscription paper was put in circulation asking the people for annual contributions "for the encouragement of those children in Marlborough who will commit to memory their Catechism, hymns or portions of the Sacred Scriptures, and will devote their little earning in this
way for the education of a heathen child in Ceylon, to be named Sylvester Fuller Bucklin". This was the first instance of contributions for the foreign missionary cause, as far as the writer has been able to find.

The Sabbath School was under the direct control of the church until 1853 when the Church by vote, allowed the school to make its own nomination for superintendent. This has been continued to the present day, but the name of the superintendent is voted on at the Annual Meeting of the Church.

In May, 1818, the Church voted to choose a Committee of three to examine candidates for church membership as to their doctrinal beliefs and religious experiences, and in January 1827, it was voted that those coming from other churches should also appear before the Church Committee for examination. Previous to 1818, to join a church, a person expressed his wishes to the pastor, usually in writing. This was read before the church and the person was received.

Early in his pastorate, Mr. Bucklin discouraged the baptism of babies unless the parents dedicated themselves to the church. At that time they had in the church the "Half-Way Covenant" by which persons of good moral character might bring their babies forward for christening. Frequently, however, they then forgot their obligations to the church. The "Half-Way Covenant" was eliminated by the advent of the Church Committee and examination. The Church had no Articles of Faith, and of course, no standard of doctrine except the one contained in the Covenant.

In May, 1809, the Prudential Committee was authorized to lease those pews in the Meeting-House which were unsold; and in March 1812 it was voted to sell at Public Auction all the unsold pews in the Meeting-House belonging to the First Parish with the exception of all the pews on the lower floor that remained unsold which were wholly below the pillars that supported the front gallery and the wall pews which "a line drawn with the back of said pillars Pews, shall intersect". Pew eighteen was always reserved for the minister's family. Many of these pews brought as high as one hundred dollars.

The first mention of the ringing of the bell and of the care of the Meeting-House was in March 1812 when one of the members was chosen for this position. His duties were to ring the bell on Sabbath, Lecture and Parish Meeting Days, and to toll the bell as a notice of death. He was to sweep the House at least six times during the year, and the day following the sweeping to wipe all the furniture with a cloth or dusting brush. He was also to clean the snow from the steps of the House if it was to a depth of more than two inches.

For his services, the janitor received twenty-five cents from each person not a member of the parish for each tolling or ringing of the bell except for the funeral service when he received not more than fifty cents.
This fifty cents included announcing the death, tolling for the funeral, and also tolling while the procession moved to the grave.

There were few references to Sacred Music in the old records of the Church. In 1793 the church voted to follow its usual custom of reading the Hymns or Psalms, line by line. In 1807 a Committee was chosen to report on "what regulations are proper in regard to singing on Sacramental occasions; who shall perform and what tunes?" After Mr. Bucklin accepted the call to Marlborough the Parish voted to hire Master Sanger for one week to teach the singers in the Parish, previous to the ordination. Singing School was started for which the sum of $40 was appropriated, $36 for instruction and the other $4 for the board of the teacher. In place of the organ, which was not purchased until 1836, all kinds of musical instruments were used.

In the Ella Bigelow Historical Reminiscences of Marlborough, there is a description of the musical phase of church life in this early church. "Capt. Proctor occupied the singing post of honor. He kept time by the rising and falling of the hymn book in his hand. The tunes were few and the noise not always in accord. The choir made ready to sing by the pitch and then gave in advance the time. Cold tho' it was, it had a kindling influence on emotion and sentiment and when the whole force was out, singers and players, one said there was an uproar of sound which could be heard almost to the West Parish. There was the trombone, clarinet, 'cello, and the bass and the double bass which even while the minister was praying would be sounded for pitch. There was a melodian to fill in, and above all the determined spirit of the singers, for it was the strength of voice rather than the perfect tone or correct ear for music which always took the palm those days, would make the choir a place of great distinction."

The pews were large and square with hinged seats. These box pews extended on three sides of the gallery and were occupied by the young men and boys. At that time everyone stood for the long prayer, and it was their great delight with the final amen from the minister to let the hinged seats go down making a noise like muskets.

The pulpit was high and the gigantic sounding board hung over it from the ceiling. Mr. Bucklin climbed the winding stairs with great dignity. His style was courteous and solemn and the services very lengthy.

The Meeting-Houses were unheated in those days until by vote on March 17, 1827, two stoves were purchased. Up to this time it had been the custom for the worshippers to bring a small tin box of live coals with them which gave them quite a little warmth.

Several religious organizations were formed around 1818-1820. One of these was the Female Benevolent Society, organized on January 1, 1818 to "alleviate the misery and enlighten the ignorance of man". It embraced three objects: "1. To aid the Female Education Society of Boston in their benevolent exertions; 2. To benefit our own town by circulating books and administering relief to such objects of charity as fall within our notice; 3. To
improve our own minds by conversation and reading and thereby become better acquainted with means and motives for doing good. The members shall regard each other with tender affection and cultivate a spirit of harmony and love; and they shall endeavor to cover each other's failings with the mantle of charity and never mention them but when in the sincerity of their hearts they think they can do it from motives for doing good." The yearly dues of twelve cents proving a handicap to some of the members, an amendment was passed that the annual dues be dispensed with and that any lady might become a member by annually paying the sum of five yards of straw braid. One record shows that 700 yards sold for $4.40.

In 1828 the Society joined the Middlesex South Association, and the name was changed to its present name, The Ladies' Benevolent Society, and the dues were changed to one cent a week. This is the oldest religious society in the church or city. It is still a "going" organization and is the Missionary Society belonging to the Women's Fellowship.

In 1819, when two young theological students at Andover consecrated themselves to missionary work in the Sandwich Islands, the young ladies to whom they were engaged, at once broke their engagements. This constituted a serious obstacle to their nearing departure in a few weeks, for in the infancy of missions the departing missionaries never expected to return to this country and unless married when they sailed might be condemned to enforced bachelorhood for life. The Missionary Society of the Seminary held prayer meetings and discussions and finally sent Rev. William Goodale on horseback to visit two young ladies whom he knew in Marlboro to try to persuade them to become the bride of Rev. Asa Thurston.

He called on one of the ladies who promptly refused. He then made his way to a lonely schoolhouse, where Miss Lucy Goodale was teaching, and repeated his offer. She agreed to meet Mr. Thurston and after meeting her family and talking all night, they became engaged. It was obligatory that they sail in two weeks. In order to do this, the ladies of the church rallied to the occasion. They met in the church and furiously cut, basted, stitched, boned and overcast the dresses and garments for the trousseau.

Massachusetts laws required the publication of three banns. By using the Church doors twice and the Town Hall once, the banns were published, they were married and were able to sail on the appointed date. Theirs proved to be a happy marriage and one beautiful daughter was born to them. As she grew to womanhood, she was sent back to the States to be educated at Mt. Holyoke Seminary. On arrival of the ship in New York she was taken ill and died. She was brought to Marlboro for burial. Mrs. Thurston lived to an advanced age and is buried in Hawaii. Her brother, Warren Goodale, was a teacher in Hawaii and taught English to the King.

Another of the "mad fanatics," as the missionaries of that age were called, was Rev. Edward Warren, who in the year 1819 sailed as a missionary under the American Board to Ceylon. He died three years later
in Cape Town where he had gone to recover his health. There is a stone
erected to his memory in the Warren lot in Spring Hill cemetery.

The South Middlesex Conference of Churches was formed on August
20, 1828, and the East Church joined on October 8th of that year. On the 5th
of October the following resolutions were adopted by this church: "1st.
Resolved, that this Church approve of church conferences, and when rightly
managed, believe them to be well calculated to promote practical piety".
"2nd. Resolved, that this church request a union with the South Middlesex
Conference, which is to meet at Framingham the following Wednesday".

On July 11th, 1830, the church voted "that they approve of the change
taking place in the community with regard to wearing mourning apparel on
funeral occasions; and that they engage for themselves, and to use their
influence with their families to induce them also, to dispense with it on such
occasions".

In 1831 friends of the pastor suggested to him that some of the people
of the church desired a change in the ministry. Mr. Bucklin asked for
dismissal which was granted by the Ecclesiastical Council on June 20,
1832, he retaining all the immunities and privileges of a christian minister.

His was a successful ministry. During the twenty-four years, he took
one hundred twenty-two into church membership and baptized four hundred
and seven. He was earnest in his work, never took a vacation and was
absent from services but two Sundays. Many of the organizations which we
have today, or had until recent years, were inaugurated during his years as
head of the church -- the Sunday School, Prayer Meetings, Church
Committee, and the Missionary Societies. It was also during his ministry
that the custom so generally prevailed of holding what were termed
"Protracted Meetings", which were then thought to be productive of great
good, but which later were regarded as of doubtful expediency. Meetings of
this kind were held by the Church during the year 1832, and several were
hopefully converted.

In 1818 a group of the people became dissatisfied with the ministry,
especially the pulpit exchanges with Orthodox ministers; they withdrew
from the Church and formed the Universalist Society. They built their own
Meeting-House in 1829 at the corner of Ames Place and Main Street.

About this time in 1818, a committee was chosen to "converse with
and admonish, if circumstances required, those members of the church who
walk disorderly." During these years, the church was very strict and several
were excommunicated for intemperance, for stealing, for absenting
themselves from the Communion Table, or even for making untrue remarks
about the pastor.

In 1827, it was voted as wrong for Christians to partake of the
amusement of dancing or to encourage dancing schools by sending their
children.
It was at this same meeting they voted that persons accepting the office of Deacon should receive a charge from the pastor. This custom was in vogue until about 1950 and was usually observed at the first communion following the deacon's election to office.

Immediately after the dismissal of Rev. Mr. Bucklin, differences of opinion began openly to manifest themselves, which resulted in the division of many churches in this Commonwealth. The question was whether the Church should seek a pastor of Liberal or Orthodox faith. The party demanding the thoroughly Evangelical ministry was in a majority in this church but a minority in the parish. On January 18, 1833, twenty-four of the male members voted in the future to worship with the First Evangelical Congregational Society. There were but five male members left in the East Church and this number included one member who was confined to his home with age and infirmity as well as Rev. Mr. Bucklin. These few continued to worship with the First Parish in the Meeting-House with Mr. Bucklin as their pastor, while the Evangelical Society worshipped in Cotting Hall until 1834 when permission was granted for them to worship in the Meeting-House.

Immediately after the separation, forty-nine of the women of the East Church signed a paper in which they expressed a desire of worshipping with the men and to be considered as with them in all concerns of the church. The First Parish and remaining church members by law held the Meeting-House.

Rev. Charles Forbush of Upton, a graduate of Amherst College, was ordained on August 21, 1833 as Pastor of the East Church then worshipping with the Evangelical Society, and Minister of the Evangelical Society.

In December of 1833 efforts were made to unite the First Parish and the Evangelical Society, but as no agreement could be reached, an Ecclesiastical Council was called early in 1834. The main questions which they considered were if the Society should unite with the Church or the Church with the Society and what should become of the property belonging to the Church at the time of Mr. Bucklin's dismissal.

The Council embodied the substance of their result in these words:

"The Council cannot advise the Church connected with the Evangelical Society to go back to the House of the First Parish, because, as they believe, it is not expedient to make it a house of worship for any Society. And should it be altered and repaired, it may still be the property of the First Parish, and, as such, be under its unlimited control. But we do recommend that the Church connected with the Evangelical Society shall receive into fellowship those members who worship with the First Parish, on such terms as the said church shall deem consistent with the principles of truth and harmony".

The property owned by the East Church at this time was:
1 silver Tankard
3 Brittania do
1 Table Cloth
1 Trunk
Church Records
Funds $202.34.

The First Parish demanded the dismissal of Rev. Mr. Forbush and pledged themselves to favor the settlement of any man for whom two thirds of the Evangelical Society should vote.

The decision of the Council did not satisfy either Church or society. They did not decide if both branches were true churches, or only one. They did not help them in the questions which were coming up all the time. One of the difficulties was that a member had been received from a Unitarian Church and had been promoted to the office of Deacon, which was not sanctioned by the other society. The Deacon offered to resign his position on condition that a union be effected.

Mr. Forbush resigned early in 1834, and he was dismissed by a council on March 21, 1834, with a recommendation. Later he settled as pastor of the Northbridge Congregational Church.

Another Council meeting was called on March 14, 1834 at the request of the two societies, together with the members of the Churches worshipping with each, to give advice and to help adjust their difficulties. Their decision was that both branches were churches, although they did not sanction all the steps, or approve all the circumstances of the separation. It was recommended that Articles of Faith be drawn up for the members of both churches to sign; and as the Deacon above mentioned had resigned his office on condition a union be effected, the remaining Deacons should be considered the officers of one united church. On March 18th, both churches met in convention and "voted unanimously to accept the advice and result of the Council". They then presented the "Articles of Faith, eleven in number, which were read and acted upon one at a time, and every article was acted upon and signed just as presented". Thus the two branches of the church were now united into one church. It was then voted at this meeting to apply for Articles of Incorporation under the name of Union Society of Marlborough. This was granted on March 4, 1835.

A little earlier I gave a brief description of the inside of this early church. I spoke of the pews as large and square with hinged seats and doors. I might add that some of the well-to-do people had carpets in their pews and matching cushions on the seats, but these were considered luxuries. Instead of the boxes of live coals mentioned earlier, some of the people brought small footstools filled with live coals, which were passed from one to another in the pew.
On April 24, 1836, the name of the Church was changed to Union Church in Marlborough to correspond with the name of the Union Society with which it was connected. The members at the time of the union numbered 106, 35 males and 71 females. It might be said here that, although the church name has since been changed, the Common in front of and owned by the Church still retains the name of Union Common.

In October 1834, a call was extended to Rev. Joseph Fuller to become Pastor, but he declined. The church was without a pastor until May 4, 1836, when Mr. John N. Goodhue of Salem was ordained as the first pastor of Union Church, at a salary of six hundred dollars. Mr. Goodhue was a graduate of Amherst College and studied Theology at Andover and at Yale.

In the Spring of 1836, the Society voted to take down the large Meeting-House built in 1806, and to build another House on or near the place of the present building, and when completed to appraise the pews and the appraisal "shall be equal to the expense of the House, and the said pews shall then be sold at auction to the highest bidder above the appraisal". Difficulties immediately arose as the Town claimed the Meeting-House was owned by the Town, not the Church; the pew holders claimed it because they had property invested in it, and lastly the Society claimed it because they had control of it. By a law passed in April 1834, the old method of meeting Ministerial and Parish expenses was abolished and the Parish system was established with the raising of support by taxation. According to the provisions of this law, it was found that the Meeting-House belonged to the Parish, not the Town, and the pew owners had the only claim on it. Each pew was therefore appraised, and the value of the same was returned to the owner in the presence of witnesses. In this way the Society came into complete control of the Meeting-House with full liberty to remove it according to their earlier vote.

The new Meeting-House was dedicated on September 15, 1836. This was a much smaller church than the former building. The pews were sold at auction subject to a tax of 10% of their appraised value. Buyers were given deeds exactly the same as we receive a deed on property today.

On October 21, 1836, it was voted that "candidates for admission to the church, after having been examined by the Committee and approved by them, shall be proposed to the church as soon as convenient; and if no objection is offered they shall be publicly propounded to the church two weeks previous to admission, and be voted into the Church at the Preparatory Lecture, as Church members, after having assented to the Articles of Faith, and having taken upon them the Covenant".

It was also voted that the Deacons of the Church should be ex-officio members of the Examining Committee.

In the year 1836, a bequest was received from the will of Hon. Job Goodale of Bernardston, Franklin County, a former native of the town and a former member of this church. The bequest runs as follows:
"I give, bequeath and devise to Jonathan Hapgood, Ezekial Bruce, and David Goodale, Deacons of the Trinitarian Congregational Church of Marlborough, and to their successors in said office, the Temple Farm so called, lying in the easterly part of said Marlborough, containing about one hundred acres; also about six acres of land, lying southwesterly about one hundred rods from the same, which I bought of Heman Stowe; to be held by said Hapgood, Bruce and Goodale, and their successors in said office of Deacons forever, in trust to and for the use and support, so far as the income of the same will go, of a stated, settled, Orthodox minister of the Gospel in said Parish and Society".

In November, 1836, this farm was sold to Richard Hemenway, of Framingham, for $1600, and a mortgage was given for security. In December of that year, the Church voted that the money arising from the sale of this farm be kept as a fund and that it be called the "Goodale Fund". In May, 1837, David Goodale offered to give the Church a Warrantee Deed of the place he bought of James Woods and for which he gave fifteen hundred dollars, if the Church would give him for it, the obligation they held against Richard Hemenway consisting of a note for, and a mortgage of the Temple Place, which Judge Goodale gave the church. This exchange was made for the purpose of having a Parsonage for the minister. This Woods Place, located on the present Ames Place, was sold in 1844 and the original Fund is invested in the present Parsonage.

This Goodale Fund was the second received by the Church. During the ministry of Rev. Mr. Brinsmead, in 1695, Bethia Woods, 16 year old daughter of James Woods, left a legacy to the Church of five pounds for the deserving poor. This sum was put on interest and almost forgotten. In 1802 some circumstance recalled it to mind. Some of it was used to defray some church expenses leaving only thirteen dollars and fifty-eight cents. This sum suggested the idea of raising a Fund for the relief of indigent members, and the Fund was increased by church members to one hundred fifty dollars. At the division of the church into the East and West Churches this Fund was divided between them. In 1891 the amount was increased to $100.00 by subscription.

On September 1, 1837, we have the following Record: "Our Pastor and Rev. S. F. Bucklin, having been previously appointed a Committee to revise the Church Covenant and By-Laws, and to prepare a copy of the Articles of Faith for the Press, presented their Report, which was accepted; The Covenant and By-Laws being voted in, one by one, the Articles of Faith having been previously adopted in the same way". The Brinsmead Covenant, with a few verbal changes, had been used from the formation of the church until this time; but this church had no Articles of Faith until March 18, 1836. This form of the Covenant and Articles of Faith were in use for many years. It must not be supposed, however, that because the church had no distinct Articles of Faith, it had no standard of doctrinal belief. The Covenant refers to the Catechisms as the system of doctrine
which the church adopted; and all its members bound themselves to instruct their children out of these orthodox standards.

Rev. Mr. Goodhue died on September 13, 1839 at the age of 29, after an illness of three weeks with typhus fever. His ministry was short lasting only a little more than three years. During this time he was very popular and much beloved by his people. He was considered as one of the most learned and ablest ministers of his time. He was a thorough Christian and was always about his Father's business, caring for the sick, the aged and infirm. His last sermon was on the subject, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest", taken from Eccl. 9:10. There were three services that Sunday and he preached this sermon the three times. His only apparent error in his pastoral work was the common error of attempting to do too much at once. He is buried in Spring Hill Cemetery near Mr. Brinsmead, and the Church and Society erected a monument to his memory.

The following Resolutions will show the views of the Church in regard to the Reforms of the day:

October 28, 1836, "Voted that in future, candidates for admissions to the Church, shall pledge themselves to abstain from the use of distilled spirit, except as a medicine." This was incorporated into the Rules adopted April 1, 1837.

February 20, 1840: "Resolved, 1st. That regarding Slavery, in all its forms, and under all the circumstances in which it is at this moment upheld and practised in our country, as a sin of awful magnitude in the sight of God -- as in most direct opposition to the precepts of our holy religion -- as a tremendous obstacle to the spread of the Gospel of Christ, and as having a direct and powerful tendency to corrupt the purity, disturb the harmony, and destroy the influence of the Church, we will not knowingly suffer a slave-holding minister to enter our Pulpit, nor a slave holding professor to sit at our Communion Table".

"Resolved 2d. That the cause of the slave is entitled to the sympathies, the contributions and the prayers of all, and we hereby add the Massachusetts Abolition Society to the list of Benevolent Societies to which we have pledged our countenance and support".

In regard to this Slavery question, I might say that in 1777, before Rev. Mr. Smith was dismissed, he sold a negro servant or slave, Dill Oxford, to Joseph Howe, Sr., for sixty-six pounds. The Constitution of 1780 made all such persons free. Dill, from choice, remained in the family of father and son until the day of her death and was always highly esteemed in the family and neighborhood. She was born in 1760 and was the daughter of a slave named Dinah.
At this same meeting a call was extended to Rev. Joseph Addison Saxton of Ellington, Conn., but he declined the invitation. On September 14, 1840, an invitation to Rev. George E. Day of New Haven, Conn. was accepted, and he was ordained on December 2, 1840. Mr. Day was a graduate of Yale College class of 1833, of Yale Divinity School class of 1838, and served as Assistant Instructor of Sacred Literature in Yale Theological College until he came to Marlborough.

On December 13, 1840, the Church voted to adopt the plan, recommended by the South Middlesex Conference of Churches, of having particular months to contribute to the various benevolences.

- October and November - Foreign Missions.
- December and January - Education.
- February and March - Domestic Missions.
- April and May - Bible.
- June and July - Tract.
- August - Sabbath School.
- September - Seaman's Friend.

In 1840 the membership of the church numbered 151, 45 males and 106 females.

Very little of importance happened during Mr. Day's ministry. The Society did, in 1841, appropriate seventy-five dollars for the expense of a singing school; and in April, 1843, voted to paint the meeting-house at an expense of one hundred fifty dollars, one hundred twenty-five dollars to be raised by subscription. Evidently they were unable to raise this amount as the church was not painted for several years.

In 1843, Mr. Day was granted a leave of absence of one year on account of ill health, and on December 26, 1847 he was dismissed to accept a call to the Edwards Church in Northampton. From that place he was called to a Professorship in Lane Theological Seminary where he remained for several years.

On February 29, 1848, a call was extended to Rev. David L. Ogden of Brooklyn, N.Y. to become pastor, with a clause in the invitation to the effect that the relationship could be dissolved by either the Church or pastor with a six months notice. Mr. Ogden was installed on April 26, 1848, and was dismissed at the request of the church, which gave the six months notice, on July 23, 1850. He went to New Haven, Conn. where he died on October 31, 1863.

Rev. George Denham, formerly of South Weymouth, was invited to become pastor for one year, on October 4, 1850 at a salary of six hundred dollars payable quarterly. He was preaching as a supply since Mr. Ogden had left in July. He remained at the church until April 1, 1853; then he went to Barre, Mass.

During the summer of 1852 the church was thoroughly repaired, a furnace and also an organ installed, at a cost of one thousand dollars. While the repairs were under way, services were held in the Universalist Church.
The Church was opened to the public for the preparatory Lecture on September 17th. A committee of three was chosen to take care of the organ and procure an organist, at an expense not exceeding seventy-five dollars. The same committee was to have superintendence of the Singing Choir.

Early on the evening of November 10th, the Church was entirely destroyed by fire. No reason for the fire was ever found, and it was believed to have been incendiary.

During the winter of 1852-1853, plans were made for the erection of a new Meeting-House, ten feet west of the old building. It was started in the Spring of 1853, and completed in August of that year at a cost of ten thousand three hundred dollars, including upholstering in the pews.

Deacon David Goodale took the old bell presented to the Society in 1806, which was badly damaged in the fire, and had it recast. This was at his own expense and the cost, including the changing, was five hundred fifty-six dollars and eighty cents. For this he received an equal value in pews in the new edifice. This is the original Paul Revere bell and inscribed on the bell are the words "I remind all of worship, liberty, burials and immortality" with the date 1806. This bell became cracked and was recast in 1892, the Goodale family again bearing the expense. This is the same bell which is in use at the present time.

In 1849, Mr. Nicholas B. Proctor again presented the society with a clock for the gallery. The clock in the vestry was presented by Deacon William Stetson. The ladies of the society gave a sofa, two chairs, table, carpet, Bible, and two hymn books for the pulpit, at a cost of one hundred fifteen dollars. The cost of the organ was raised by subscription among the members.

In April 1853, an invitation was extended to Rev. Levi A. Field to become the pastor of Union Church and Society, which was accepted. His Ordination and the Dedication of the new Church were held on August 31, 1853. At this time the membership was one hundred forty-eight, forty males and one hundred eight females.

Rev. Levi Alphesus Field was a native of Leverett and graduated from Amherst College in the class of 1846, and from Andover Theological Seminary in 1849.

In 1854, the School Department asked permission to build a District School on the Common. At the meeting it was voted that the Prudential Committee be instructed to oppose any further encroachments upon the common.

In 1855 plans were made for the erection of a parsonage for the minister. At this time, the horse sheds were across the street from the church, and it was voted to remove these sheds, purchase land of William Barnes on which to erect new sheds, to buy more land from Major Rice, and build the parsonage. Part of the money for this was raised by subscription, and sixteen hundred was borrowed from the Trustees of the Goodale Fund.
on a mortgage deed. In 1856 more land was purchased from a Mr. Holmes adjacent to the parsonage land. The Parsonage, which was built in 1855, is the one now in use although many changes have been made.

In August, 1855, efforts were made to improve the Common in front of the Church. Two stone posts were placed in the rear of the Meeting-House connected with chains. The Selectmen were asked at this time to build a road across the common in front of the church. This road was to extend from the end of the road near the residence of Charles A. Warren to the town road on the West side of the common.

After his dismission in 1832, Rev. Mr. Bucklin resided among the people of his first and only church and enjoyed the respect and affection of the entire community in which he lived. Although a retired minister, he always sought the best interests of the church, and his successors in the ministry always found in him a firm friend and an active and cheerful assistant. On November 3, 1858 the church and society celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination as their pastor. Mr. Bucklin preached an historical discourse which was published in the back of "The History of the First Church in Marlborough", written by Rev. Mr. Field early in 1859.

In this discourse, Mr. Bucklin told of the changes which had taken place both in the church and the town since he came there in 1808 - the advent of schools, scientific discoveries and inventions such as steam power, railways, telegraph. He spoke of those at his ordination who had long since passed away, and he said at that time there was but one member at the time he came to Marlborough who was still alive. After his discourse, a silver pitcher was presented to Mr. Bucklin as a token of the respect and affection of his friends and former parishioners. This pitcher had the following inscription:

To
Rev. Sylvester F. Bucklin
Ordained as Pastor of the
First Church and Society in Marlborough,
Nov.2d, 1808
Presented by his Friends and former Parishioners
Nov.2d, 1858

Mr. Bucklin died on May 25, 1860 at the age of 76, beloved and lamented by all who knew him. Throughout all the records of the church for the long period of years in which he lived in Marlborough, the names most prominent on all committees and in all offices of the church were those of Rev. Mr. Bucklin and of Deacon David Goodale, who passed away on October 17, 1858.

The death of Rev. Mr. Field preceded that of Mr. Bucklin by only seven months, he having passed away on October 22, 1859, at the age of 38. The following is a copy taken from the Church Records: Mr. Field was a man of great sweetness of temper and purity of life, and a rare pattern of
Christian modesty, equanimity and consistency. As a scholar he was diligent and thorough. A great lover of books, he watched the issues of the press that he might avail himself of everything new and valuable. As a preacher he was unpretending, but graceful, earnest and winning. In his intercourses with his people, he was always dignified, but so courteous and kind that all regarded him as a true friend. His ministry was one of unusual success. He loved his people and they loved and cherished him in return”. In 1859 Mr. Field wrote a book: *An Historical Sketch of the First Congregational Church in Marlborough, Mass.*

On April 29, 1860 it was voted to choose a committee of three to take charge of the organ and to procure an organist at an expense not exceeding seventy-five dollars; the same committee was to take charge of the other musical instruments and dispose of them if they thought it proper; the committee was also to have superintendence of the Singing choir.

In August 1853 it was voted that the Building Committee purchase forty settees for the vestry of the new Meeting-House and also voted that the Building Committee be authorized to furnish cushions and carpets for the Meeting-House.

In September 1860, a call was extended to Rev. George Nelson Anthony to become pastor. He accepted and was ordained on November 8, 1860. Mr. Anthony was born on November 27, 1823 in South Kingston, R.I. He graduated from Brown University in 1850, from Andover Seminary in 1855, and was pastor at Great Falls, N.H. from October 3, 1855 until his resignation to accept the call to Marlborough. His salary was $1,000 and the use of the parsonage.

On March 27, 1865 it was voted to appropriate one hundred dollars for an organist and choir for the ensuing year.

In 1865 and 1866 a few changes were made in the church property. A barn and shed were built on the parsonage land at an expense of four hundred fifty dollars. In 1866 the Church asked the town to build a road from High Street to Bolton Street and in the fall of that same year, the Society asked the town to discontinue the road leading from the elm tree at the corner near the house of Mrs. Loring along the easterly side of the enclosed common to Bolton Street and to layout a new road leading from Washington Street to Main Street on the westerly side of the common. With this new road, the old road was to be discontinued for public use.

At about this same time, the grounds around the Church wholly or in part were enclosed with a substantial fence and the passage ways around the Church between the ranges of the horse sheds were closed to public use. Deacon John E. Curtis offered to grade, ornament and fence the grounds between the Church and Main Street, and this offer was accepted.
In 1862 a concert was held for the benefit of the sick soldiers. This was considered very successful and $218 was raised. Clothes and jellies were also collected for the same purpose.

In June, 1866, for the purpose of a more thorough and systematic evangelization of the parish, it was divided into six convenient districts with one brother and one sister member in each district to meet with the pastor and assist him in securing due attention to strangers and to the sick, in bringing as many as possible under the evangelical ministry, in counselling with the young and inexperienced converts and in laying the claims of Christian benevolence before all the parish. Four Deacons were to be on the committee and they with the Pastor were to appoint the remaining members.

In 1868, changes were made in the Church auditorium. Up to this time, the "singing gallery" occupied by the organ and choir was in our present gallery. When the worshippers arose for hymns, they were obliged to turn to face the choir. At the Annual Meeting in March, 1868, it was voted to build on an addition to the church of sufficient dimensions for an organ and choir to be located behind the pulpit, to fit up the old gallery with pews and to provide suitable entrances to the same. To pay for these improvements or repairs, which cost about twelve thousand dollars, the pew owners were refunded the value of their pews, the pews were then appraised at a sufficient sum to cover the additional value, and then were sold at auction.

At the time the above changes were made it was voted to exchange the organ for a new and later make. This exchange was not completed until 1870. The cost of this organ was $2250 and with tuning and other expenses, the total was $2295.50. Five hundred dollars was received for the old organ and $1795 was contributed by Church members. In addition to this, the choir gave a concert and with the proceeds added a bassoon stop at a cost of $57.25.

A Church Manual was printed in 1867. This book outlined Congregationalism together with the Doctrines and forms for admission and for baptism. The Covenant used in the former Manual of the Church was retained but it was voted that this Covenant should conclude with the following Scripture

"Now may the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

Before this in 1855, it was voted that the people connected with this Church who have neglected its ordinances, having denied and rejected its Articles of Faith, and having refused to comply with its rules and regulations, be excommunicated. In looking through the books, several have been found who were excommunicated for the above reasons.
Mr. Anthony resigned as pastor and was dismissed by council on January 27, 1869. He later settled as pastor of the Congregational Church in Peabody. The nine years of his pastorate at Union Church were years of harmony. He was a thorough lover and student of the Bible, an able expounder of its principles, a conscientious, straightforward man, and was an earnest, self-denying, faithful minister.

On September 2, 1869, an invitation was extended to Rev. N. H. Eggleston of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, to settle as Pastor, but he declined to accept.

On December 12th a call was extended to Rev. Charles R. Treat of Boston, and this was accepted. Mr. Treat was born in Newark, N.J. on October 2, 1842, graduated from Williams College in 1863, studied at Lane and Andover Seminaries, acted as supply at Union Church for four months in the fall of 1869, and was ordained pastor on March 30, 1870.

It is interesting to note that in making the offer to Mr. Treat, they offered him the use of the parsonage at a rental of two hundred dollars per annum, he paying the taxes on the same and making such repairs as he deemed necessary. However, during the spring of 1870, a furnace was installed at a cost of about five hundred dollars, which was paid by the church, but the rent was increased to three hundred dollars. The Parsonage was not included as part of the salary until 1880.

When Mr. Treat came to the Church the number of members totaled 217, 63 males and 154 females. The members of the Sabbath School numbered 300, with an average attendance of 175.

In the Manual printed in 1867, among many other practices which this church felt were incongruous with the profession of godliness was "putting a stumbling block in the way of the weak or the erring by the use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage". Also "We further testify our conviction that the use of tobacco is baneful and greatly to be deplored".

Mr. Treat resigned to accept a call to the Second Congregational Church of Greenwich, Connecticut, and was dismissed by Council on June 1, 1875. Up to this time, it was the policy of the Church to have the minister act as Clerk. In resigning, Mr. Treat suggested that, as the work of the Pastor had greatly increased, they should appoint a permanent Clerk. This was done and Mr. A. F. Knight was the first permanent Clerk.

Not much of note occurred during the last two pastorates. However, in March 1875, they first started the taking of voluntary contributions to pay the expenses of the Society, and in March 1877 it was voted to use the envelope system. It was voted also that any one desiring seats should have them assigned by the Prudential Committee. In the same year, repairs and additions were made to the parsonage. The ell was raised, a stairway was built to the attic and three large sleeping rooms were finished off.
Rev. John Willard of Birmingham, Connecticut was installed as pastor on December 30, 1873. As a preacher, Mr. Willard had more than ordinary talent. He was a devoted and faithful pastor, studious and versatile in his Christian work and always ready with a helping hand for any moral reform of the day. However, after he had been here two years, the Church and Society asked him to agree to a two hundred dollar reduction in his salary, on the plea that the Church expenditures bore heavily on those of slender means. This he agreed to with the proviso that that amount would be used to help those of lesser means. This was not agreed to so he allowed the reduction if the Society would close the year "with courage and without debt". The next year, application was made for a like abatement, which Mr. Willard agreed to. However, the year following he was asked to take a greater reduction, four hundred dollars. He resigned and was dismissed by a council on June 10, 1879. In 1883, he accepted a call to a church in Decorah, Iowa.

Under date of July 7, 1880, the church voted to extend a call to Rev. Samuel E. Eastman, then Pastor of the York Street Congregational Church of Newport, Kentucky. This was to be for one year at a salary of fourteen hundred dollars, the use of the parsonage, and four Sabbaths vacation. He accepted and was installed by a council on September 1, 1880.

On May 20, 1881, Rev. George Day of the Divinity School of Yale College, and a former pastor, presented a memorial copy of the Revised English New Testament to the Church. This was inscribed on the cover, "The First Church, Marlboro, from its former Pastor, 1840-1847, George E. Day". This was placed on the desk in the pulpit for the pastor's use.

In 1881, new By-Laws and Ecclesiastical Principles were adopted. The most important change was in the Church Committee, especially with the Board of Deacons. Up to this time, the Church Committee consisted of the Pastor and four Deacons. With the new By-Laws, this Standing Committee consisted of the Pastor, six Deacons, the Clerk and the Honorary Deacons. At each Annual Meeting, one Deacon was elected for a term of six years. After three full terms of six years, the Deacons, by vote of the Church, became Honorary Deacons. It was not until 1883, that the first "Ladies Committee of the Church", or Deaconesses, were appointed. The number of Deaconesses was four until 1888 when the number was made the same as the Deacons. The first four Deaconesses appointed in 1883 were Mrs. E. G. Gibson, Miss Abbie Stone, Mrs. C. G. Whitney, and Mrs. S. B. Parmenter.

In 1888, six ladies were elected with duties similar to the Deaconesses, only not members of the Church Committee, who were known as Church Visitors. Also in 1888, a welcome committee consisting of three ladies and three gentlemen were elected to extend a greeting to strangers upon entering or leaving the services on Sundays.

Mr. Eastman had labored among the people for the year he had been hired. In July of 1881 the church voted to extend him a call to become...
pastor but he declined and on November 3rd he was dismissed to the Congregational Church of Canadaigna, N.Y. Mr. Eastman was well liked by the people. He early gained their love and confidence as a Christian friend as well as a tender and sympathizing spiritual guide and teacher.

The Church was without a settled pastor until May 7, 1882 when a call was extended to Rev. Albert F. Newton of Townsend. At that time the membership was 260, 189 females and 171 males. His salary was fifteen hundred dollars, the use of the parsonage, and four Sabbaths vacation.

In 1883, a committee was chosen to raise pledges to clear the Society of its six thousand dollar debt. Everyone helped to make the drive a success -- the members of the Society and of the Church, the children of the Sunday School, the rich and the poor. Great was their celebration when the entire amount was raised.

The safe which is still in use for the storage of old records of the Church was purchased in 1886 at an expense of thirty-five dollars, half of the expense borne by the Church and the other half by the Society.

At the Annual Meeting in 1887 with 150 members present, a report was given on the average attendance during the year. At the Sunday morning services, the average was 310, with 420 at Easter. The smallest number was on March 6th which was a very stormy Sunday, but 130 were present at the service. The average attendance at the Prayer Meetings, 50, and at the Young Peoples' Society of Christian Endeavor, 40.

In 1887 a new Creed was adopted. This was based on the one which had been in use by the Church for many years with such modifications and additions in language made to it by the Pastor, Rev. Mr. Newton, as was thought best. A new Manual of the Union Congregational Church containing this new Creed, the Covenant, the Constitution, a short History of the Church, the officers of the Church and a list of all the members, giving the date of admission, and other facts relating to the Church. The last Manual previously had been printed in 1867.

In 1887, the question of ownership of the Common in front of the Church arose in Town meeting. In March, at a special meeting, Theodore Temple, Deacon John E. Curtis and John Henry Maynard were chosen a committee to investigate the facts and report what claim, if any, the town had on the Common. The town appropriated one hundred dollars for this purpose. In July, at a special town meeting, a majority report signed by Messrs Temple and Maynard, claimed the town owned the Common, while the minority report signed by Deacon Curtis claimed the Church owned it. Neither report was accepted.

At a special meeting of the Church, a committee, composed of Deacon D. B. Goodale, John Chipman, Winslow M. Warren and Deacon John E. Curtis, was appointed to look after the interests of the Church. As no settlement could be reached, the matter was referred to the Professors of
Real Property in Harvard University and Boston University. After examination of the deeds and other documents, the Professors submitted their report that "in their opinion, the title to the Common in front of Union Church is now vested in said Society, and not in the Town".

The suit came up for trial and the plaintiff asked a continuance, which was opposed by the defendant, and at last it was specially assigned to be the first case at Cambridge at the September 1888 term. When the court convened it was supposed the case would come to trial, until the Saturday before when notice was given that the plaintiff could not go on with the case, and, when the matter came to court, the plaintiff's counsel stated to the judge that, having gone over the matter with Mr. Goulding of Worcester, who was associated with him as counsel, they had come to the conclusion they had not such a case as would warrant their presenting it to a jury. Thereupon the counsel of the Society moved for judgment which was ordered by the court, and judgment was entered for the defendant.

The following is a copy of the law applicable to this case as handed down by the Supreme Court in 1851:

"A town existing as a corporation, having the function both of town and parish, is divided, forming two distinct corporations, one municipal, and the other parochial. The general rule in this commonwealth to which it is believed the case of such double corporation of town and parish is peculiar, is that if land is specially granted to a town thus acting, in a double capacity, either for municipal or parochial use; or if such a town, specially by vote or significant act, dedicates and appropriates a portion of its own territory to either one or the other use and it so remains until the separation, it will rest in the town or parish respectively according as it shall have been originally so given or subsequently appropriated to parochial or municipal use."

In addition to the law above quoted, the facts in the case were these: In 1804, when the decision was made to build the new church on Spring Hill, the Town of Marlborough, through a committee of the First Parish, purchased four lots of land and gave it to the parish upon the condition that the parish should relinquish to the town all claim on the old common where the Junior High now stands, and which up to that time had been jointly occupied by the town and church. Ever since that time those four lots of land so purchased and of which the common in question forms a part, have been regarded as the property of the First Parish. This land is bounded and described as follows: Beginning at the south-easterly corner of the premises on the northerly side of Main St. and at land of Rowe Funeral Home, formerly the John E. Curtis property, and thence westerly by Main Street about eighty-one feet to a stone bound, thence in the same course by Main Street about eighty-six feet to a point at the junction of Main Street and Bolton Street, thence northerly by Bolton Street about three hundred and thirty-two feet to a point at the junction of Bolton Street and High Street; thence easterly by High Street about ninety-three feet to an angle at land of
formerly John E. Curtis, thence southerly by the John E. Curtis' land as the fence stands about three hundred and three feet to the place of beginning.

Early in 1888, special Evangelistic services were held, conducted by Rev. R. S. Underwood. The results of his many services of prayer and consecration were excellent and forty-two joined the church. Gospel temperance services were also held under the auspices of the W.C.T.U.

In the autumn of 1888, special American reformation services were conducted by Rev. J. D. Fulton, D.D., Rev. E. H. Walsh, and Rev. Charles Chiniquy. Very large congregations attended these services with all nationalities and creeds in the town well represented.

In November 1889, new hymn books were purchased for the Church entitled *Carmina Sanctorum with Scripture Readings*. These replaced the *Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book*.

Several of the members were dismissed in 1889 to help in organizing the First Congregational Church in Hudson.

Work was started in a French Mission which proved very encouraging. W. H. Parent of Hartford Theological Seminary preached for several months to very attentive congregations. When Mr. Parent resumed his studies in September, he was succeeded by Rev. Edward Pelletier of Montreal. He preached every Sunday and Thursday, and held a Sunday School every Sunday afternoon. In 1889 Mr. Samuel Boyd gave land on Lincoln Street with the understanding one thousand dollars would be raised by subscription for the building of a French Evangelical Church. Enough money was raised by the churches of our Conference to enable them to build the church during the year 1890. This had a capacity for three hundred. Services were held here for several years. At the present time this church is St. Anne's (Italian) Church. [*Holy Trinity Anglican Church 2016*]

In 1890 it was voted that the contribution boxes be passed each Sunday to procure money for church expenses.

On February 13, 1891, a meeting of the Church members was held for the purpose of organizing a corporation, under Chapter 404 Acts of the year 1887, for religious worship and christian instruction in accordance with the faith and polity of the Congregational Churches of the United States. The name of the Church was changed to The Union Congregational Church in Marlborough, Massachusetts. A new Constitution and By-laws were adopted. It was at this time that the Standing Committee was increased to five and the name changed to "Trustees," each elected for a five year period. The Act of Incorporation was dated September 28, 1891.

In 1889 it was voted to appropriate the sum of $150 to build a new fence around the parsonage grounds. Previous to this, in March 1883, an agreement was made with W. S. Frost to keep open the driveway built on the land between his property and the Parsonage land.
In March 1884, Town water "was introduced in the Parsonage" and also in the Church.

In 1891 several repairs or alterations were made at the Church. It was voted to purchase a new furnace. At that time the furnace was in the vestry. It was also voted to remove the front pew on each side of the middle aisle in the sanctuary, and move forward the pulpit platform and organ gallery about three feet. At this same meeting it was voted to petition the City of Marlborough to build a concrete walk on the East side of Bolton Street adjoining the Common, and to raise money to meet the Society's share of the expense.

Rev. Mr. Newton resigned on December 31st to accept a call to the Rochester Avenue Congregational Church in Brooklyn, N.Y. and was dismissed by Council on January 27, 1892. Mr. Newton was a man of ability, positive in his opinions and ways, earnest for the truth and right, firm in friendships, sound in the Faith. He was gifted as a speaker and devoted as a preacher of righteousness. His ten years as Pastor of Union Church were very successful. The Church membership increased with three hundred joining the Church. A debt of $6000 was paid off, and repairs to the church and vestry amounting to $4500 were made. Missionary contributions nearly doubled during the years. He delivered a number of lectures on temperance and European sketches. He later became pastor of the Union Congregational Church in Haverhill, Massachusetts.

The Rev. Burke F. Leavitt of Littleton was stated supply during a part of 1892 and the first part of 1893. On August 19, 1892 an invitation was extended to Rev. Almon J. Rackliffe of Skowhegan, Maine to become Pastor of Union Church. This was accepted, but soon after he became dangerously ill and his acceptance was withdrawn.

In September 1893 a call was extended to Rev. John S. Zelie but this was not accepted. On October 23, 1893, Rev. William F. Stearns of Hartford, Vermont was extended a call which was accepted, and he was installed by Council on December 14, 1893. The membership of the Church at that time was 342, a loss of two members over the preceding year.

At the Annual Meeting in 1894 it was voted to use the balance of the undesignated pledge money to start a library for the Primary Department of the Sunday School, the Directors of the Sunday School to have charge of the same.

Rev. Mr. Stearns resigned as Pastor on October 31, 1895 on account of poor health. In the short space of time while in Marlborough, Mr. Stearns endeared himself to all. He was a wise counsellor, an intelligent interpreter of God's Word, sympathetic at all times. In the summer of 1897, after a period of rest, he became pastor of the Congregational Church of Norfolk, Connecticut.
On February 6, 1896, a unanimous call was extended to Rev. Lincoln B. Goodrich of Bound Brook, New Jersey, and he was installed Pastor on March 18, 1896, with a salary of sixteen hundred dollars, with the rent of the parsonage and a vacation of four Sabbaths a year.

In 1896 the system of selling the pews at auction was given up and it was voted that the Prudential Committee, with the Treasurer, obtain possession of all the pews in the Church and that these pews should be rented to the members at a rental equal to one third of the valuation of the pew, to be paid weekly or quarterly, and that one pew be offered to the Pastor for the free use of his family.

In 1898 the horse sheds next to Bolton Street were removed and the fence around the church property was completed. Also the following year it was voted to remove as many of the horse sheds in the rear of the Church building as was deemed wise, if it could be done at an expense not exceeding twenty-five dollars.

In 1902 the first mention was made of leasing the Common in front of the Church to the City of Marlborough for park purposes, on a yearly basis, for an amount equal to the taxes on the same.

The Union Society continued to function until January 1, 1903 when Henry C. Curtis and Winslow M. Warren, in behalf of the Society, presented to the Church a deed of all the real estate held by the Society; also a bill of sale of all personal property owned by it. The Society held one meeting following the transfer and was then dissolved. It had functioned in harmony with the Church since its incorporation in 1835. At the time of this transfer it was suggested that two Auxiliary Trustees be elected annually from the congregation to assist the Trustees but not necessarily to have the power of voting with them. This was voted and two Auxiliary Trustees are elected each year to the present time.

One improvement made in 1901 was the introduction of a card system for members' names with index and also a file for the deceased and dismissed members; this was to go back to the time of organization in 1666. Up to this time there were memorials for deceased members. With the card system all pertinent information was listed on the cards, and the memorials were discontinued.

The first Music Committee of the Church was appointed at the Annual Meeting held on January 3. Those appointed were Miss Grace Greeley, Mrs. Mary T. Gibson and Loriman S. Brigham. Previous to this the music expenditures were handled by the Prudential Committee.

Mr. Goodrich was dismissed by Council on November 14, 1905 to accept a call to the Trinitarian Congregational Church of Taunton, Massachusetts. Mr. Goodrich was a genuine pastor, a true Shepherd of a flock that gladly followed where he lead. For four years he carried on sloyd work with the boys and girls; he took young men on tramps through the White Mountains and the younger boys on camping trips to Edgartown. He was equally helpful to the older members and was always ready to lend a helping hand wherever needed, rejoicing in the joys and consoling in the
sorrows of his people. He died in 1925 and is buried in Rocklawn Cemetery, Marlborough.

During the year 1906, the auditorium, vestibules and vestry were recarpeted and renovated and a new furnace was put in the vestry, at a total cost of two thousand nine hundred one dollars, the whole work being done through the efforts of the Home Workers, Miss Mary E. Curtis, Chairman of the Committee. In the summer of 1907, the kitchen was enlarged and the Library renovated, at a cost of four hundred fifty dollars.

Rev. Albert H. Wheelock of the Congregational Church of Pepperill, Mass. accepted a call to become Pastor of Union Church and was installed by Council on September 26, 1906, at a salary of fifteen hundred dollars. He also received one hundred for moving expenses, rent of the parsonage free, and the month of August for vacation.

In 1907 it was voted that the sums needed for church expenses be raised by pledge. Up to this time most of the money for expenses had been raised by the sale of pews. At this meeting in 1903 it was voted that those occupying pews owned by the church might continue to do so, and other sittings might be assigned by the head usher on request.

The Church building was painted during the year 1907 and a porch was added to the parsonage in front and also at the ell. The following year the parsonage was repaired inside and out and also repainted.

At a special meeting of the Church members held on March 28, 1913, the name of the Church was changed to "The First Church in Marlborough (Congregational)". At this time the membership of the Church numbered 420, with 393 qualified voters. At this meeting the total number of votes cast was 284 with 281 voting for the change in name. A certificate was received from the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts stating that all the provisions of the law had been complied with and that the name of the Church was officially changed to the First Church in Marlborough (Congregational).

In 1915, a new Austin organ was installed at a cost of approximately five thousand dollars, half of which was borne by the Home Workers. New Hymn books, *Hymns of the Centuries*, were purchased in the spring of 1915, and the old books, *Carmina Sanctorium*, were donated to the Congregational Home Missionary Society for use in such churches as they deemed best. A new Brussels carpet was also purchased by the Home Workers for the auditorium.

In January 1916, new Articles of Faith were drawn up and adopted. These Articles were as follows:

1. We believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, whose lovingkindness and tender mercy are over all his works.
2. We believe in Jesus Christ his Only Son, our Saviour and Lord.

3. We believe that Jesus Christ came to redeem us from sin and death by his perfect obedience in life, by the sacrifice of himself in death, and by his glorious resurrection from the dead.

4. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the inspirer and helper of men.

5. We believe in the Bible as God's Word to man through men, a revelation of his character and his will concerning us.

6. We believe that Jesus Christ instituted the Church, which consists of all true believers in him, whose duty it is to band themselves together for the maintenance of worship, growth in spirituality, the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, the realization of human brotherhood.

7. We believe that through Jesus Christ a way has been opened whereby life eternal is freely given to all who repent of sin, believe on him, and keep his commandments.

8. We believe in the observance of the Lord's Day as a day of rest and worship, that its sacred observance is vital to the welfare of the Church and the highest prosperity of every community. We believe in the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and in prayer as a means of strengthening the Christian life.

9. We believe in the coming triumph of Christ's Kingdom over all the world, in the life eternal, and in the righteous judgement of all mankind.

In March, 1916, Mr. Wheelock received a call to the Evangelical Church in Needham which he accepted. He was dismissed by Council on April 25, 1916 after a pastorate of ten years. During these years, Mr. and Mrs. Wheelock and their family made many friends in the church and community, and it was with regret that the ties were severed on the eve of the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the Church. Mr. Wheelock later accepted the pastorate at the Congregational Church in Auburn, and after a long and profitable service, retired and was made Pastor Emeritus. He attended the two hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of this church in 1941, but passed away soon after and is buried in Auburn. His son, Arthur, is also a minister and was settled in White Plains, N.Y. for some time.

An invitation was extended to Rev. Belvo Z. Stambaugh of Scituate, Massachusetts on September 20, 1916. He accepted and although his installation was not until December 5th, he was present for the Anniversary celebration. His salary was sixteen hundred and the free use of the parsonage.

The Two-Hundred-Fiftieth Anniversary of the Church was held on Sunday, October 29th, 1916 and was one long to be remembered by the participants. The Anniversary Committee consisted of Leroy M. Craig,
Deacon Edgar Weeks, Frank L. Gage, Henry C. Curtis, F. L. Claflin and Miss Mary P. Sanborn. The aim of the celebration was to have it the occasion of Home-coming or Reunion for those churches and individuals that have gone out from this old parish, and a time for the renewal of fellowship with sister churches.

The first service was held at 9:45 A.M. in the Old Spring Hill Cemetery, to do honor to the memory of our former pastors, deacons and missionaries who are resting there. Former pastors took part in the services at 10:30, 3:30 and 7:30. The daughter churches in Southboro, Northboro, Westboro, and Hudson, and the mother church in Sudbury, sent greetings.

The address in the Spring Hill Cemetery was by Mr. Elmer D. Howe. The march to the cemetery by the choir and congregation was lead by Mr. J. A. Woodward, Cornetist, with the processional hymn "O God, Our Help in Ages Past."

For the 10:30 service, Rev. A. W. Ackerman of Natick preached on the theme "Genesis and Development of the Congregational Church." At the 3:30 service there were addresses by former pastors -- Mr. Stearns, Mr. Goodrich and Mr. Wheelock, and a Historical Sketch by Mr. Henry C. Curtis. The 7:30 service was given over to greetings from the Mother and Daughter churches and from the local Churches.

During the year 1917, a Tablet bearing the names of the young men from First Church who served in World War I, was made by J. E. Warren and Samuel L. Churchill, and placed in the auditorium. During these long years of watching over its people, First Church has passed through many periods of War: King Philip's War, Queen Anne's War, the Revolution, the Civil and Spanish Wars, two World Wars, the Korean War, and has sent many of her young men forth to battle for the nation. Even at the time of writing this brief sketch our soldiers are in conflict in Vietnam. As in 1918 when the War Service Commission of First Church was formed with the object of placing the Church in position to comply immediately with the requests for help that were continually coming to the churches from the Government, First Church will be ready to do her part when and if any War is brought to our shores.

On November 11th the bells of the Meeting-House were rung in rejoicing over the signing of the Armistice, thus bringing to an end the four years of War in Europe, and special services of thanksgiving were held in the Church. Fifty-seven of our young men responded to the call of our country, and three made the supreme sacrifice: Herbert S. Akroyd, Edward W. Higgins, and William A. Howes.

On October 12, 1921, a Baptismal Font commemorative of those who lost their lives in the War was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies. To the above list was added the name of Harold W. Blake. The Font is of wood and was designed by Mr. Stambaugh, the carving being done by Mr. John Kirchmayer of Cambridge, who was regarded as the foremost wood carver in the country. A beautiful State flag, presented to the church by an unknown person, was hung in the Chancel.
Rev. Mr. Stambaugh decided to enter the Episcopal ministry, and on December 3rd he was dismissed by Council, the Church having acted on his resignation on November 19th, 1921. From here, he went to Detroit, Michigan, where he accepted the position of curate on the staff of the Cathedral Church. Later he became Rector of the Church of Our Saviour, Akron, Ohio. During the four years in this church, Mr. Stambaugh had labored faithfully for the best interests of the Church and community, not alone in the ordinary lines of pastoral duty but also in many ways incident to the World War and its resulting burdens. A farewell reception was given the pastor and his wife by the organizations connected with the church.

The year closed with a membership of 464, 286 females, 178 males.

Mention has been made of some of the missionaries who lost their lives in work for the Master. In 1918, Miss Florence Warren, daughter of Deacon and Mrs. William O. Warren, had her heart set on missionary work in South Africa. She was a Registered Nurse and a graduate of Gordon Bible School. The Congregational Board had no opening in the field in Africa at that time, so she applied to the South Africa General Mission and was accepted. A Church in Boston offered to pay her expenses if she would bring her letter to their church, which she did. She sailed to Cape Town and there met Rev. Andrew McGill, her future husband. He already had a mission in Ninda, Angola and later they founded a mission in Muye, where they worked for years. They learned the Mbunda language so as to teach the natives. Mrs. McGill died in Cape Town in 1942 of a tropical disease. She left two daughters and two sons. The daughters trained for nurses and went to Bible School to train for the mission field. Jessie went to Missao de Cotata, Seipa Pinto, Angola where she is head of hospital work for the natives. Kathryn married Ron Filby, and together they went to Portugal to study the language, then to a new mission in Luso, Angola. On the death of her husband, Kathryn went to Natal with her four children, and she is now matron and nurse at a new Christian Boys' School. I have given this information as Florence was one of the girls from First Church where she was active in the Church and Sunday School for many years.

A unanimous call was extended to Rev. Stanley H. Addison of the Trinity Congregational Church of Neponsett at a special meeting held on February 11, 1921. Although he commenced his labors here on April 10, he was not installed by council until December 13th of that year. The installation originally planned for November 29th had to be postponed on account of a severe sleet and ice storm which caused great damage and put all electricity and car service out of commission.

A garage was built at the parsonage in the summer of 1921 to replace the barn burned in 1920, and in 1922 a hot water heater was installed in the parsonage at a cost of six hundred forty-five dollars. At about the same time repairs were made to the parsonage roof, and the church roof and steeple at a cost of about one hundred seventy-nine dollars. In the fall of 1922 a new
furnace was purchased for the vestry of the church. During 1923 the church building was painted, and the sills, timbers and steeple that had become decayed were replaced and made strong.

At Easter, in the spring of 1925, surplices were first used by the choir members and in that same spring the acousticon with six ear pieces was installed in the auditorium. The Northfield Hymnal was purchased in the early spring for use in the vestry for prayer meeting and Sunday School.

REV. STANLEY H. ADDISON

At the Annual Meeting in January 1927, a Committee was chosen to have charge of extensive repairs to the Church inside and out and to raise money for the same by subscription. The Committee to receive bids for the work was composed of Mr. Henry N. Lowell, Mr. George F. Bond and Mr. Addison. To this Committee, to raise pledges and superintend the work to be done, were added the names of Mrs. Addison, Mrs. Henry N. Lowell, Mr. Samuel Churchill, Mrs. Elmer Holden, and later to take care of the secretarial work and to act as Treasurer, Miss Hazel Warren.

The auditorium was completely renovated, the pews, seats and backs, were upholstered, the vestibules retinted, and outside on the grounds, the horse sheds were removed and the lawns graded. Retaining walls were built with four stone posts surmounted by electric lanterns placed at the drive and at the end of the walk in front of the church. A small tool house was built in back of the church, and an iron fence placed around the church property. The cost of all these repairs and improvements was five thousand nine hundred and nineteen dollars and sixty-five cents. There was a balance of
First Church in Marlborough

one dollar forty-three cents over the amount needed which was turned in to the Church treasury.

To complete the renovations, the Trustees on authorization of the church, replaced the front doors and had new battleship linoleum laid in both vestibules and on the stairs. The Church also petitioned the City to construct a granolithic sidewalk on the East side of Bolton Street adjacent to the land on which the Church building stands. This was done at a cost of eleven hundred thirty-seven dollars and fifty-eight cents, including a City assessment of two hundred four dollars.

At the next Annual Meeting, the Church voted to transfer the income from the Horse Sheds Fund to the upkeep of the tool house which had been erected.

Much credit was due to the pastor and Mrs. Addison for these many changes in the Church property, as they were both members of the Committee which had it in charge. In May, 1928, Mr. Addison received and accepted a call to the Pilgrim Congregational Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and he was dismissed by Council on June 10, 1928.

Mr. Addison gave seven years of faithful service to the Church. During this time he labored unceasingly for the best interest of the Church and its work, in the lines of pastoral duty and especially in his care and consideration of those in sickness and trouble. He was a worker in the Young Peoples’ Society of Christian Endeavor and held national offices in this organization. Mr. Addison was a graduate of Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota and of Boston University School of Theology. From Cambridge, he went to California where he preached for three years in Mojave, before retiring in Claremont, California. He passed away in October 1955.

In January 1928, a Committee of five was chosen to revise our By-Laws and Roll of Membership. A book giving these new By-Laws, Polity, Creed, Membership Roll and an account of various funds was published as of January 9, 1929 at an expense of one hundred thirteen dollars and eighty-eight cents.

In October 1928 a call was extended to Rev. Albert E. Beaumont of Geneva, Illinois. This was accepted and he was installed by Council on April 9, 1929.

At the parade during the Tercentenary celebration of the City of Marlborough held in 1930, First Church was represented by a float depicting the first meeting-house, with several of the good people of the Church dressed in Pilgrim attire, as its worshippers. The float was designed by the late Samuel Churchill with Mrs. Beaumont, Miss Mary Witherbee and Miss Mary Sanborn as its worshippers. It won no prize but was highly praised by people throughout the city.

First Church observed the Tercentenary at its services on the following Sunday. A service was held at Spring Hill Cemetery, where several of the
early ministers are buried, followed by the regular Church service. During the year 1931, various repairs were made to the church and parsonage. A committee was chosen at the annual meeting in January of that year to raise money by subscription for the much needed painting of the Church. These plans materialized, and through the generosity of members and friends, we were able to have the work done at a cost of one thousand thirty-six dollars. Another large repair was the installation of a new coal and gas range in the parsonage at a cost of one hundred sixty-one dollars fifty-five cents. During the summer the Home Workers had a new stage built with beautiful curtains which added much to the appearance of the vestry. This necessitated the re-wiring of the vestry at a cost of seventy-five dollars. Other changes brought the re-wiring cost to ninety-five dollars eighteen cents, all paid for by the Home Workers.

The Junior Choir was organized in 1933 by Mrs. Raymond C. Blake who was assisted by Mrs. Beaumont. Robes were furnished by a devoted member of the church.

Union summer services with the Baptist, Methodist and Congregational Churches participating, were inaugurated in 1934. These continued for many years.

In the fall of 1934, the Pastor was taken very ill and passed away on January 6, 1935. The Church bells were tolled for the first time since the passing of Deacon Goodale in 1900. The Church was crowded with mourners at his funeral. Mr. Beaumont was born in Sheffield, England, October 12, 1880, received his early education in that place, and for four years received private tutoring under the University of Ministers of England. He later graduated from Bangor Theological Seminary and from the Chicago Theological School.

The Church went forward consistently and steadily during Mr. Beaumont's pastorate and he endeared himself in the hearts of not only his parishioners but of people of all denominations. He was sincere and earnest and sacrificed himself for others. Both Mr. Beaumont and his wife were greatly interested in the young people and the Comrades of the Way, which replaced the Christian Endeavor Society, was named in his honor. Both Mr. Beaumont and his wife, Katie, are buried in Spring Hill Cemetery.

The months following the illness and death of Mr. Beaumont were a critical period for the Church, but we found a true friend in The Right Rev. William Allen Knight, D.D. of Framingham. During the Pastor's illness he offered his services, which were gladly accepted. Following the death of Mr. Beaumont, Dr. Knight gave a challenge to the people; he would take over the duties of pastor until Easter without pay, if during that period of time, one hundred pledges of five dollars each, either individually or in groups, would be given, besides the pastoral salary, to clear the Church of debt, which was some over one thousand dollars. With the challenge he gave his prized gold headed cane. If at Easter, this contract had been successfully carried out, the cane was to be given back to him in public; if not, it was to be given in private. He filled the members with enthusiasm and on
Easter Sunday, the cane was returned to him by the Church Treasurer, George H. Cuthbert, during the morning service. In addition to its original inscription "Steady as you are", it now bears the inscription "First Church in Marlborough 1935".

Dr. Knight became endeared to all in the church. He stood by, a loving, helpful friend, until the election of a new pastor, and left the Church with the motto of the cane, "Steady as you are". Dr. Knight was the author of several books. One of these, *The Song of Our Syrian Guest* printed in 1904, had many reprints through the years with an estimated sale of four million copies. This book was based on the 23rd Psalm. Dr. Knight was also the author of the words for hymn #77 in our Church Hymnal, "Come, My Heart, Canst Thou Not Hear It?"

Rev. John Cummings of Tewksbury accepted the call to First Church, and commenced his duties on June 1, 1935. He was installed by Council on November 6th of that year. Mr. Cummings was born in Webster in 1894, and graduated from Bangor Theological Seminary in 1921 with the B.D. degree. He received the A.B. degree from Dartmouth in 1923 and the S.T.B. degree from Harvard in 1930.

Early in Mr. Cummings pastorate, the Christian Endeavor Society was disbanded and the "Comrades of the Way" Albert E. Beaumont Chapter, was formed for the young people. The Friday evening Prayer services were discontinued during the year 1937 and classes for Bible Study substituted.

On September 21, 1938, the country was swept by a terrible hurricane, and this city suffered great loss. Among the worst sufferers was First Church. The steeple with its huge bell toppled into the Church auditorium taking with it nearly the entire roof and partially demolishing the church. The only part not destroyed was the wing with the organ. Work was immediately started for the rebuilding and the raising of pledges to help cover the cost.
During the time work was in progress, services were held alternately with the Baptist and Unitarian Churches, and the Sunday School was held in the Washington Street School house. Early in December the vestry was made ready for use, and on Easter Sunday morning, services were held for the first time in the new auditorium. The new kitchen was dedicated in November 1939, the bell was installed so it rang on Christmas Sunday morning, and the Church itself was rededicated at a special service on its two hundred seventy-fourth Anniversary in October 1940.

Many changes were made in the new structure; the high steeple was eliminated and in its place a Bulfinch belfry was erected; in the rear an addition was built on for a new kitchen with stairs leading to the music room on one side and the pastor's study on the other side, and with two additional exits in the main auditorium. Furnaces with oil burners were installed in a new boiler room. In the vestry, the stage was pushed back somewhat, and a small room was built between the kitchen and vestry. The cost of all the building program was in the neighborhood of thirty thousand dollars. Everyone cooperated to make First Church a larger and better church, and much credit was given to Mr. Cummings for the hard work which he put in throughout the building program.

As stated above, a special service of dedication for the new church was held on Sunday, October 6, 1940, with greetings from the several churches in the city and neighboring communities. Rev. Stanley H. Addison, pastor from 1920-1928, took part in the service. Rev. Walter Amos Morgan, D.D., pastor of the Chestnut Street Congregational Church of Worcester, preached the Sermon of Dedication; Rev. Ralph M. Timberlake, D.D. brought greetings from the Congregational State Conference; Rev. Edwin B. Nylen of Hopkinton brought greetings from the Middlesex-Mendon Association of Congregational Churches, and Rev. Mr. Timberlake gave the Prayer of Dedication.

In the year 1941, First Church celebrated the 275th Anniversary of its founding. On September 28th, Home Coming Sunday was observed, with many of our former members present. On the birthday of the Church on October 3rd, a banquet was held followed by a candlelight service. On the following Sunday, the celebration ended appropriately with a Communion Service. Greetings were received from the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

On November 10, 1942, Rev. John Cummings was given a leave of absence to accept an appointment as Chaplain in the Naval Reserve of the United States during the Second World War. The work of the Church was carried by Rev. Alfred E. Wheeler of Fayville. Mr. Wheeler was born and educated in England, the son of a missionary. He held pastorates in London and Nova Scotia before coming to this country, where he held pastorates in West Acton and Framingham, Massachusetts, as well as carrying on the
work at the Fayville Baptist Church. He stayed with First Church until the return of Mr. Cummings on December 1, 1945.

In the Spring of 1944 United States and Church flags were hung on either side of the choir loft in the auditorium and an honor roll showing the names of the boys and girls from this Church in the service of our Country was hung on the East side of the front of the auditorium directly opposite the honor roll for World War I.

On November 5, 1945 the Church received a citation certificate from the Navy awarded to Churches as a service of recognition in allowing the pastor to go as a Chaplain.

A new organization of young ladies was formed in the spring of 1944. This was known as the Martha Mary Guild and its stated object was work for the Church. This Society was in operation until the consolidation of all ladies' societies of the Church into the Women's Fellowship.

At the Annual Meeting in January 1945, it was voted to give the auxiliary Trustees the power of voice and vote in the meetings of the Trustees. Up until this time they were in an advisory capacity with no vote. During 1946 the Church was painted and the walls pointed. A new Bulletin Board was purchased for the Common at the corner of Main and Bolton Streets.

In 1947 at the Annual Meeting it was voted that all card playing be banned in the Church, with a vote of 23 to 31. It was also voted that smoking be also prohibited, with a vote of 14 to 40.

Also at this same meeting a committee was chosen to look into the matter of chimes to be placed in the Church tower, this to be in memory of the three from this Church who lost their lives in World War II. These chimes were dedicated on December 28, 1947.

In 1947 this Church voted to support the School of Religious Education, provided the local pastors do the teaching and classes were held in the Church building. Also it was voted to extend an invitation for the School to meet here at First Church and to ask the other churches involved to pay their share of the expense.

In March 1948 it was voted that our Church register its decision upon the proposal to unite the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Church into the United Church of Christ in accordance with the Basis of Union dated January 22, 1947. The Congregation voted its disapproval, five approving and forty-four disapproving. It was also "Resolved that in the event of the consummation of the union, our Church hereby undertakes to continue the same relations with the United Church of Christ that it now holds with the Fellowship of the Congregational Christian Churches, 6 approving, 39 disapproving. Several meetings were held to vote on the merger but it was not until January 17, 1962 that the merger was consummated. The Church retains the
On June 27, 1953 the Church and City were shocked by the sudden death of Rev. Mr. Cummings. He was stricken with a thrombosis while mowing his lawn. A private funeral service was held but there was also a memorial service in the Church on Sunday afternoon, July 5th, which was largely attended. He was cremated and the ashes interred in Wayne, Maine.

Until a new Pastor was elected, Rev. Dr. Horace F. Holton of Wellesley became supply pastor. He was well liked by all and served the Church ably. Both he and his wife have now passed away.

A call was extended to Rev. Norman C. MacLean of East Weymouth and he preached his first sermon as Pastor on March 21, 1954.

In this same year, 1954, a clock was installed to control the tower lights given by Honorary Deacon Herbert Vining. Also, in 1954, it was voted to hold the Annual Meetings of the Church on the third Wednesday in January instead of the Wednesday following the first Monday in the New Year.

On June 22, 1955 at a special meeting of the Church members, plans were formulated for the erection of a Parish Hall. On December 7th of that year a Loyalty banquet was held at the Hildreth School and all members of the Church and Parish were invited guests. The start of the drive for funds for the building program was made at this banquet, all pledges to be for a three year period. The Wells Organization was hired to promote this drive, they to be paid five thousand dollars, plus one thousand for expenses. The first shovelful of earth was turned for this Building Program on Sunday, May 25, 1958 following the Church service. The building was dedicated on the afternoon of Sunday, April 26, 1959 with a service in the new auditorium. The building, besides the large auditorium or Parish Hall, has a kitchen, Pastor's Study, Sunday School rooms, Ladies' parlor, rooms for Church Youth groups, and rest rooms. With the furnishings it brought the cost to around one hundred thousand. Many gifts were given as memorials by the members of the church.

New By-Laws were adopted at the Annual Meeting in January, 1956. With these By-Laws, the office of Deacon and Deaconess were changed from six years to three years with two elected each year. Also the Board of Trustees was changed from five to six and the term of office was made three years as with the Deacons and Deaconesses.

In June of 1957, the women of the Church met with the idea of organizing a Women's Fellowship. This organization when formed included all the women's organizations of the Church - Home Workers, including all the Circles connected with the Home Workers, the Mary-Martha Guild, and the Ladies' Benevolent Society. However, this latter Society was not disbanded but became the Missionary part of the Fellowship. Mrs. Everett Angier was elected the first President of the Society, and Mrs. Elsie
Woodward, the President of the Benevolent Society. The Fellowship has carried on the good work for the Church which had been done for so many years by the Home Workers. More of this Society will be given under the head of “Societies of the Church”.

In 1957 the Church was very fortunate in obtaining the services of Mr. Robert Dana, a student at the Andover-Newton Theological School, who took over the work as Youth Director. He was well liked by all who met him and it was with great regret the Church accepted his resignation in 1958 to accept a pastorate at the South Congregational Church of Concord, N.H. Mrs. James Ridge accepted the place of Youth Director in 1959 and occupied this position until June of 1962 when she moved with her family to Ohio. Mrs. Virginia Hays, the organist, took over the duties of Choir Director in June 1962 and has continued to the present time.

In 1956 the exterior of the Church was painted at a cost of some over sixteen hundred dollars and the returns and ledges at the front of the Church were covered with metal flashing so that the pigeons could no longer rest there. The interior of the Church with the exception of the auditorium was also painted. In 1960 plans were formulated for the renovation of the Sanctuary. It was entirely redecorated with the seats painted white with red trim. The floor was repaired at a cost of three hundred. A new carpet was purchased mostly through the efforts of the Women's Fellowship. With a gift from one of the members, this carpet was extended through the Narthex. This was maroon in color to match the seat cushions and seat trim, was a Roxbury Whittall, Wilton grade, 256 pitch, 9 wire 1/4" pile height, all wool commercial grade carpet with no seam down the middle aisle, with a 40 ounce hair and felt padding. This carpet covers the entire Sanctuary, Choir loft, platform and pews. The cost, including the Narthex, was $5,880. This was in place for the rededication service which was held in the Church on February 19th. While these renovations were taking place, services were held in the Parish Hall and a Hammond organ was rented for the months of February and March.

During the spring and summer of 1961, the Choir was very active in raising money for new robes. They were very successful and on September 10 they wore them for the first time. The color harmonizes with the decor of the Sanctuary.

In the spring of 1961, very soon after the rededication of the renovated Sanctuary, the members were shocked when Mr. MacLean read his resignation to take effect in May. He had received and accepted a call to become Pastor of the Congregational Church in Dracut, Massachusetts. He conducted his last services on May 14th, with communion. A farewell Open House was held for Mr. and Mrs. MacLean and their family on April 30th when he was presented a sum of money and Mrs. MacLean a string of cultured pearls.
New Parish Hall.

Picture of the Church auditorium taken on Easter Sunday in 1961.
Mr. MacLean was born in Prince Edward Island. He first studied to be a teacher and at the time the boys of Hillside School were attending First Church, Mr. MacLean was one of the teachers accompanying them. He later studied for the ministry at Gordon College and Andover-Newton Theological Seminary. Much was accomplished during his ministry of seven years. Among other things was the building of the Parish House, the renovation of the Sanctuary and the consolidation of all the Women's Societies into the Women's Fellowship. Also he and his wife inaugurated the holding of the "Silent Luncheon" for the ladies on Ash Wednesday, followed by Communion. The Couples' Club was also organized during his ministry.

During the time the Church was without a minister, Rev. Raymond Cosseboom, Head of the Congregational House in Framingham, very ably supplied the pulpit and did the pastoral work. He was well liked by all who met him.

During the summer and fall, the Parsonage was entirely remodeled and redecorated, both inside and out. The ell was removed and also the porch on both the back and front. The cost of all these improvements amounted to twelve thousand seventy-two dollars. In the spring a new garage had been built on the Washington Street side of the house, as the old one was too small.

A call was extended to Rev. John Morrow, and he preached his first sermon at First Church on December 3, 1961. In the afternoon of that day a reception was given in the Parish Hall for Mr. Morrow and his wife, and also for Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Cosseboom.

Mr. Morrow was born in Des Moines, Iowa, the son of Chief Justice and Mrs. Arthur A. Morrow now of American Samoa. Mr. Morrow is a graduate of Punahou School in Honolulu, Hawaii and of Stanford University, Palo Alto, California in the class of 1952. In June 1955 he graduated from Yale University Divinity School. He was Associate Pastor of Pilgrim Congregational Church, Leominster, Massachusetts for a short time before accepting a pastorate at the First Congregational Church in Westminster, Massachusetts.

At the Annual Meeting held on January 17, 1962, it was voted to merge with the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Church and become a member of the United Church of Christ. Under this union First Church would retain all funds and property, and this would in no way be affected by the union. The following is the Preamble of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ.

**PREAMBLE**

The United Church of Christ, formed June 25, 1957, by the union of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches of the United States in order to express more fully the oneness in Christ of the Churches composing it, to make more effective their common witness in Him, and to serve his Kingdom in the world, hereby adopts this Constitution.
"The United Church of Christ acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of men. It acknowledges as brethren in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper of Holy Communion.

"The provisions herein define and regulate the General Synod and those instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ are recognized, established by or responsible to the General Synod, and describe the free and voluntary relationships which the local churches, Associations, Conference and ministers sustain with the General Synod and with each other. The pattern of relationships and procedures so described is recommended to local churches, Associations, Conferences and ministers, to enable them more effectively to accomplish their tasks and the work of the United Church of Christ."

Double services at the church were initiated on February 4, 1962. These are held at 9:30 A.M. and at 11:00 A.M. With the exception of Easter and Christmas the choir sings only at the eleven o'clock service, but at the 9:30 service there is either a soloist or Junior Choir to sing.

A secretarial office was opened in the Parish Hall in February. This was equipped with a new typewriter, the mimeograph machine which had been thoroughly overhauled, the addressograph, and all other things necessary for the accomplishment of the clerical load necessary in a church of this size. A new all-electric mimeograph was purchased and installed in January of 1965, as well as an addressograph machine and a folding machine. Mrs. Alice Heath has ably filled the position of practically a full-time secretary.

The Church newsletter "The First Church Crier" was first issued in July 1963 and has proved a great success. This is published ten times a year and gives an account of the activities of the different societies, the Sunday School, a helpful message from the Pastor, birthdays of the older members and shut-ins, and items of joy and sorrow among the members. The "Crier" Committee are Mrs. Fred Bearce, Managing Editor, to whom much of the success of the paper is due; Rev. John Morrow, Associate Editor; Mrs. Warren J. Heath, Associate Editor, Mrs. Ulderic Hurley, Special Assignments, and Miss Hazel Warren, Historian.
In 1964 a two inch mesh Anchor link fence was placed at the rear and side of the parsonage which greatly improves the appearance of the Parsonage grounds.

In July of 1964, a Memorial Fund was established. Where there is a death of a member of the parish, gifts may be made to this Memorial Fund in memory of the deceased, if such is the wish of the surviving members of the family. These gifts may be made in any amount, clearly designated if for the Memorial Fund, and a list of the contributors will be given to the family of the deceased, with the total amount given, not the individual amounts. These contributions are placed in the Memorial Fund until such time as a memorial for the Church is decided on by the family and Trustees. All such gifts are recorded in the Book of Remembrance. The repository is of colonial finish and was given in memory of Deacon Herbert Vining. It is placed on the outer Sanctuary wall in the Narthex, beside the main door. The Remembrance Book, which is in the Repository, was given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Jefferson, Mrs. Viola Issenhuth, Mrs. Estelle O'Coin, Mrs. Ruth (Standley) Coughlin, Mr. Leonard B. Laird, Mrs. Charles MacLeod, and Mrs. Ella Douglas.

Among the Memorial gifts is the carillon given in memory of Mr. Carroll Ellis, which has added much to the services. It has an extension speaker in the steeple.

A new amber oak finish piano for the Parish Hall has been given in memory of Mr. Leonard Laird; two hymn boards placed in the Sanctuary, one given by the Youth Fellowship, the other in memory of Merne Huntington given by her parents Mr. and Mrs. Walter Huntington. Also Memorial Boards were placed in the vestibule of both the main Church and the Parish Hall in memory of Deacon and Mrs. William O. Warren and Miss Carrie Warren.

Many other gifts have been made to the Church in memory of loved ones. As these were given previous to the establishment of the Memorial Fund, these gifts have not been mentioned here.

During 1965 many things were accomplished in beautifying the grounds and improving the Church property. A watering trough was placed in the Common near the centre walk. This was filled with flowers and looked very beautiful all summer. The flowers will be planted there each year. Vinyl run stair runners were placed on the back stairs of the Church; the stained glass windows were repaired, and two storm windows were placed over the windows in the Narthex.

During the summer the grounds at the front of the church on the High Street side were made into a parking area. It was paved, concrete bumpers were placed at a safe distance from the wall bordering High Street, a corner utility pole and underground cable was installed to bring electric power into the church in conjunction with the parking light, and exit was made onto Spring Hill Avenue and the parking area was marked for parking. At the
same time, beautiful shrubs were placed on either side of the entrance to the church.

A metal utility shed was erected at the rear of the parking lot to house the outdoor equipment -- the mower, snow blower, garden tools, etc.

In 1962, no mention was made of several improvements made by the Women's Fellowship. A carpet was placed on the stairs and front vestibule of the Church, and a new microphone system was installed in the Parish Hall.

In the fall of 1961 the entire outside of the Church Edifice and Parish Hall was painted at a cost of $2948.68. Included in this project was the iron fence along Bolton Street and the sign on the Common.

Several new additions have been made in the religious offices of the Church. The Stewardship Committee was formed during 1962 with its main function to assist the Pastor in teaching all members and friends of First Church the true meaning of becoming a Christian steward -- that of believing that all we have and all we are is a trust from God and in thanks to Him, we are duty bound to return a generous portion of our time, talent and treasure to His use. The group instituted the Family Worship Service and this has proved very successful. The Committee helps in the raising of the yearly pledges for the Church expenses and benevolences. Since the appointment of this Committee, the pledges for benevolences have risen to an all time high of $5800, an increase of $1600 over 1965.

The Christian Education Committee was formed on February 21, 1963. This is the Policy-making body for the educational program of the Church and is an aid to the teachers in the new Church School curriculum.

The Social Action Committee was formed early in 1963. Their object is to give help wherever needed. Through their efforts a group of volunteers go each Wednesday to Westboro State Hospital to bring a little companionship to the patients, and for the past two years a group has been giving monthly evening socials to the men patients at the Hospital. Three women serve on the Well Child Clinic which is held monthly by the Visiting Nurses' Association at the Recreation Center on Bolton Street.

One of the main projects of the group has been to bring much needed help to the Protestant Youth Center in Baldwinsville. They collected sheets, pillow cases, towels and wash cloths needed at the Center. With the Baptist, Episcopal, Methodist and Unitarian Churches, they made a pledge to the Center of two thousand dollars. Since then they have raised money toward the pledge by holding an auction on the Common, by holding a "Redwood Shop Fashion Show", and by dinners put on jointly by the five churches.

Not much has been said of the Sunday School but a full history of this important part of the church life will be given later. On January 1, 1966 we had enrolled in the Church School 320 pupils, and in the Cradle Roll (under three years of age) 45. More space was needed for classes so in 1963 the
Church Vestibule was completely renovated for Sunday School purposes. Partitions were put up, making five separate rooms. The renovations included new modern fluorescent lighting. All this cost approximately five thousand dollars. In 1962, through the kindness of Mr. Arthur Bailey and Mr. Arthur Gray, moveable classroom dividers were provided for use in the Parish Hall for the Junior Department.

No history of the Church would be complete without some mention of Edward A. Brown. He became sexton on April 1, 1876 and was the dean of sextons in New England, if not in the United States. Many a Saturday night, with the temperature around zero, he spent at the church to keep the coal fires burning and thus have it warm for the Sunday services. He was relieved of part of his duties in the latter years, but was still sexton at the time of his death December 2, 1943 at the age of 90.

Not much has been said about the ministers' wives, but with the exception of Mr. Brinsmead, the ministers were all married and nearly all had a family. These wives have been helpmates, belonging to and working in all the societies of the Church, teaching in the Sunday School, and in some cases have served as deaconess. These wives held the love and esteem of all with whom they came in contact.

Thus we draw near to the three hundredth anniversary of this old church. We have seen it grow in membership, with a large Sunday School, a Parish Hall, robed choirs, both Senior and Junior, strong Societies connected with the Church. It has become a modern Church in every way. May it continue for years to come. The Parsonage, too, as stated previously, has been made modern in every way.

I wish it were possible to mention by name all the people who have helped make this Church what it is today, but there are so many it would be ill-advised to give any of their names. However, we do look back with reverence and thanks to all the Ministers, Deacons, Deaconesses, Trustees, and many many others who have spent their lives in service for the Master and for this Church. To them we do give our thanks but not only to those of the past but to those workers of today who are giving their best to the Church. And we look to the boys and girls of today, as well as future generations, to keep this Church growing in strength and power in the community.

The following poem was given at the end of the sermon preached by Rev. Albert E. Beaumont, then Pastor of First Church on Sunday, August 24th, 1930 on the occasion of Marlborough's Tercentenary Celebration Week. I do not know if he composed the poem or not, but I feel it is appropriate to end this History of First Church and its activities.
"Three hundred years mark the time
Since seekers after truth divine
Besought the Lord to help them form
A fellowship to breast the storm.
Here in this realm of holy bound
Man's life with God is truly found.
Three hundred years, and He's the same
Who changes not, Christ is His Name."

"As faithful as our fathers were,
May we their children be;
And in our hearts their spirit live,
That gained our liberty;
God help us all to do and dare
Whatever can be done,
Till for the good old cause of truth
The victory shall be won."

The First Church in Marlborough
(Congregational)

ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEES

GENERAL COMMITTEE
The Rev. John W. Morrow, Mr. Wallace Standley
Co-Chairmen

Mrs. Everett Angier        Miss Nancy Funderburk
Mr. Robert Cutter         Mrs. E. Douglas MacKay
Mr. Robert Eisenhauer       Miss Hazel O. Warren

SUB-COMMITTEES

BANQUET COMMITTEE
Mrs. Everett Angier, Chairman

Mrs. Fred Aldrich         Mrs. Arthur Marsh
Mrs. Robert Eisenhauer       Mrs. Clifford Petty

DECORATIONS
Mrs. Kenneth Leonard, Chairman

Miss Maebelle Baldwin        Mr. Kenneth Leonard
Mrs. Arthur Gray         Mr. Walter Stapelfeld
Miss Eleanor Jones
FINANCE

Mr. Everett Angier, *Chairman*

Mr. Fred Bearce  Mr. Glenn Owens, Jr.
Mr. Henry Eager  Mr. Adelbert Smith
Mr. Robert Eisenhauer  Mr. Walter Stapelfeld
Mr. James MacLeod  Atty. Richard S. Temple

FLOAT COMMITTEE

Mr. Maurice E. Bailey, *Chairman*

Mr. Warren Bailey  Mr. Carl Hayes
Mr. Walter Bradley  Mr. William Scott
Mr. Robert Eisenhauer  Mr. George Veith

Also members of the General Committee assisting on details of arrangements

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Miss Hazel O. Warren, *Historian*

Mr. Rudolph Keyes  Mrs. Rudolph Keyes

HOMECOMING COMMITTEE

Mr. Robert Eisenhauer, Mrs. Everett Angier, *Co-Chairmen*

Mrs. Carroll H. Ellis  Mrs. William R. Mann
Mr. Gordon Hamilton  Mr. William R. Mann
Mrs. Elmer Holden  Mrs. Elsie Woodward
Mrs. Burton Lippard  (in charge of invitations)

PAGEANT COMMITTEE

Mrs. Wallace Standley, Mrs. John W. Morrow, *Co-Chairmen*

Mr. Robert Cutter  Mrs. Perry W. O'Leary, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Davidson  Mr. Joseph Seabury
Miss Nancy Funderburk  Miss Hazel O. Warren

PUBLICITY AND PROGRAM

Mrs. Fred N. Bearce, Mrs. Ulderic Hurley  *Co-Chairmen*

Mrs. Allan B. Costello  Mrs. Warren Heath

ORATORIO COMMITTEE

Mrs. Thomas Hays, *Chairman*

Mr. Clinton Beaven  Mrs. John W. Morrow
Mrs. Gordon P. Hamilton
Mrs. Warren J. Heath was appointed in March 1962 to fill a newly-created position of part-time secretary with an office at the church. She also serves as a Church School teacher.
OFFICERS OF FIRST CHURCH -1966

Pastor ................................................................. The Rev. John W. Morrow
Moderator ............................................................ Carlton W. Allen
Clerk ................................................................. Mrs. E. Douglas MacKay
Assistant Clerk ..................................................... Mrs. Philip W. Gilchrest
Treasurer .............................................................. Everett L. Angier
Assistant Treasurer ............................................... Mr. Willard A. Potter
Collector ............................................................. Mrs. Clifford P. Davis

Deacons

Mr. Jesse M. Wade
Mr. Newman Walbridge
Mr. Kenneth C. Leonard
Mr. Philip R. Goodwin
Mr. Gordon E. Nelson
Mr. Carl E. Jahn

Deaconesses

Mrs. Kenneth C. Leonard
Mrs. Walter Stapelfeld
Mrs. Alfred H. Ebert
Mrs. Philip R. Goodwin
Mrs. Ralph A. O'Coin, Sr.
Mrs. Carl E. Jahn

Board of Trustees

Mr. Adelbert F. Smith,
Chairman
Mr. Fred N. Bearce
Mr. Robert M. Eisenhauer

Auxiliary: Atty. Richard S. Temple, Mr. Henry T. Eager

Christian Education Committee

Mr. Rudolph H. Keyes,
Chairman
Mrs. Ulderic F. Hurley
Mrs. James H. MacLeod
Mr. Richard D. Bennett
Mrs. John M. Jackman
Mrs. Irving D. Miller

Social Action Committee

Mr. Ralph A. O'Coin, Sr
Mrs. Everett L. Angier
Mrs. Richard W. MacEwen
Mrs. Frank S. Burton
Mrs. Joseph F. Connolly

Stewardship Committee

Mr. Norman C. Allen, Chairman
Mr. Edward H. Schow
Mr. George L. Burke

Music Committee

Mr. Clinton R. Beaven, Chairman
Mrs. Gordon Hamilton
Mrs. John W. Morrow

Auditing Committee

Mr. Edward F. Craig, Chairman
Miss Ethel Beals
Mrs. Rudolph H. Keyes

Nominating Committee

Mrs. Arthur D. Marsh, Chairman
Mr. Gordon P. Hamilton
Mrs. George H. Wollrath
Head Usher .......................................................... Mr. Arthur D. Marsh
Altar Flower Chairman ................................. Miss Maebelle Baldwin
Secretary.............................................................. Mrs. Warren J. Heath, Jr.
Custodian.................................................................. Mr. Kenneth F. Pond
Church School Superintendent ...................... Mrs. Alfred E. Booth
Associate Superintendents ............................. Mr. Joseph E. Seabury
........................................................................ Mr. Arthur L. Gray
Organist and Choir Director ........................ Mrs. Thomas H. Hays
Youth Directors

Junior High Pilgrim Fellowship ............... Miss Nancy Funderburk
Senior High Pilgrim Fellowship .......... Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cutter
The First Church in Marlboro (Congregational). The Church built in 1853.
First Church in Marlborough

The Rev. Norman C. Maclean

The Rev. John W. Morrow

Edward A. Brown, Sexton of First Church for 63 years. Picture taken at the 275th Anniversary of the Church in 1941.

Rev. Albert H. Wheelock, Pastor 1906-1916. Taken at the time of the 275th Anniversary of the Church in 1941.
OLDEST MEMBERS OF FIRST CHURCH

A total of 224 years of membership in First Church is shared by the above ladies. Mrs. Brown is our oldest living member, age 96, and has been a member for 82 years; Miss Mildon for 72 years and Miss Edith M. Temple, 70 years. Miss Temple is the present chaplain of the Ladies' Benevolent Society.
MEMBERS OF FIRST CHURCH FIFTY YEARS OR MORE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Alice H. Brown</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>Miss Ella M. Perry</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Eleanor M. Meldon</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Mrs. Maud E. McKenzie</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Edith M. Temple</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Ralph F. Barnes</td>
<td>1912</td>
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<td>Mrs. Alice M. Cunningham</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>Mrs. Ethel L. Churchill</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond C. Blake</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Rudolph H. Keyes</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claude E. Williams</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Mrs. Velma H. Williams</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Charlotte Josephson</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Mrs. Esther B. Hurley</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Mabel J. Findlay</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Mrs. Anna C. Nilson</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Margaret R. Mann</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Miss Ella M. Bergman</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Ethel G. O'Leary</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>William R. Mann</td>
<td>1916</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Elizabeth H. Bemis</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Gordon L. Churchill</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Hazel O. Warren</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Bradford Cutler</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Florence G. Frye</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Mrs. Hazel Johnson</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Bessie Holden</td>
<td>1908</td>
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</table>

THE FIRST CHURCH IN MARLBOROUGH
DEACONS OF FIRST CHURCH

Until 1881, four Deacons were elected and they could hold office as long as they lived. In 1881, six Deacons were elected, one each year. They were to hold office for a six year period, and at the end of the six years, would have one year "off", but were usually re-elected at the end of that year for another six years. After three full terms of six years, they could be put on the Honorary list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electd</th>
<th>Died</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Ward ......................1666</td>
<td>Aug. 10, 1687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Ruddocke .....................1687</td>
<td>Jan. 29, 1693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Rice ......................1687</td>
<td>Aug. 15, 1712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Woods .........................Sept ...1704</td>
<td>Apr. 5, 1716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Newton .....................June 1, 1710</td>
<td>Sept. 24, 1727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Woods .........................Aug. 9, 1716</td>
<td>Aug. 7, 1718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caleb Rice ..........................Mar. 12, 1718</td>
<td>Jan. 5, 1739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Keyes .......................June 17, 1726</td>
<td>Aug. 25, 1742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Barnes .........................Apr. 17, 1729</td>
<td>Apr. 5, 1752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Woods .........................May 22, 1741</td>
<td>Apr. 10, 1772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Stevens .....................May 22, 1741</td>
<td>Dec. 6, 1761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Rice .........................Oct. 14, 1742</td>
<td>Jan. 15, 1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Tainter ......................Aug. 18, 1742</td>
<td>Feb. 19, 1764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Barnes .......................May 26, 1762</td>
<td>Mar. 24, 1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Stow .........................Oct. 17, 1770</td>
<td>Jan. 12, 1818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Stow ..........................Oct. 17, 1770</td>
<td>Dec. 16, 1795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Howe .........................Mar. 20, 1776</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samuel Howe .........................July 3, 1794</td>
<td>July 31, 1820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abner Goodale ......................July 3, 1794</td>
<td>May 16, 1823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josiah Howe .........................Sept. 21, 1796</td>
<td>Jan. 15, 1827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Hapgood ...................Oct. 17, 1821</td>
<td>Apr. 12, 1849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Goodale .......................Sept. 15, 1823</td>
<td>Oct. 17, 1858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezekiel Bruce ......................Nov. 7, 1860</td>
<td>Mar. 13, 1827</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
William E. Tidd ..................... Dec. 16, 1836  Dism. May 2, 1851
William Stetson ..................... Dec. 1, 1853  Nov. 28, 1869
John E. Curtis ........................ Apr. 5, 1855  July 18, 1896
(Resigned Jan. 17, 1896)
Rufus Howe .......................... July 2, 1858  Dec. 3, 1895
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1890)
William Lyman Weeks...........  Feb. 27, 1862  May 11, 1902
(Made Hon. Dea. Dec. 1896)
David B. Goodale .............................. July 5, 1874  Apr. 29, 1900
Levi W. Baker .......................... July 5, 1874  Mar. 4, 1912
Charles F. Robinson .......................... Jan. 1885  Jan. 1924
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1924)
Elmer D. Howe .......................... May 1890  Died June 1924
John H. Burhoe .......................... Jan. 1892  Died Jan. 1920
Uriel C. Simonds .......................... Jan. 1896 - Jan. 1921
Benjamin F. Greeley .......................... Jan. 1903 - Jan. 1917
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1917)
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1927)
Edgar Weeks .......................... Dec. 1903 - Jan. 1920
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1928)
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1928)
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1940)
Herbert H. Vining .......................... Jan. 1925 - Jan. 1933
Jan. 1946 - Jan. 1952
Oren B. Brooks .......................... Jan. 1921 - Jan. 1940
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1941)
James Campbell .......................... Jan. 1924 - Jan. 1936
Frederick D. Potter .......................... Jan. 1925 - Jan. 1931
......... Jan. 1944 - Jan. 1950
Frederick L. Claflin .......................... Jan. 1929 - Jan. 1934
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1934)
William D. Lee .......................... Jan. 1930 - Died in office Apr. 1935
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1946)
Elliott Works .......................... Jan. 1935 - Jan. 1940
Hermann G. Johnson .......................... Jan. 1938 - Jan. 1944
Myron Davis .......................... Jan. 1947 - 1 year
Wallace Standley ............... Jan. 1950 - Jan. 1956
                                        Jan. 1959 - Jan. 1962 also 1964
Ivar Olsen ....................... Jan. 1956 - Jan. 1959
                                        Jan. 1965 - 1 year
Norman Winegardner ............ Jan. 1963 - Died Sept. 1964
Jesse M. Wade .................... Jan. 1964 -
Newman Walbridge ............... Jan. 1964 -
Philip Goodwin .................. Jan. 1965 -
Kenneth Leonard ................. Jan. 1965 -
Gordon Nelson .................... Jan. 1966 -
Carl Jahn ......................... Jan. 1966 -

DEACONESSES OF FIRST CHURCH

The first Deaconesses were appointed in 1883, four in number. In 1888 this number was increased to six, the same as the Deacons, and they held office for a term of six years. After three full terms they were made Honorary Deaconesses.

Mrs. E. G. Gibson ............................... 1883 - 1884
Miss Abbie Stone ............................... 1883 - 1886
Mrs. C. G. Whitney .............................. 1883 - 1884
Mrs. S. B. Parmenter .............................. 1883 - 1885
Mrs. A. P. Sanborn .............................. 1884 - 1888
Miss Nellie Hastings .......................... 1884 - 1885
Mrs. A. A. Brigham .............................. 1885 - 1886
Mrs. A. F. Newton .............................. 1885 - 1886
Miss Hattie L. Onthank ........................ 1886 - 1926
Mrs. Abbie A. Metcalf .......................... 1886 - 1890
Mrs. Lucinda S. Parker .......................... 1886 for 1 yr.
Mrs. D. A. Walker .............................. 1887 - 1894
Mrs. Mary Eager ................................................... 1887 - 1899
Mrs. Delia E. Bucklin ........................................... 1887 - 1888
Mrs. G. T. Fletcher ............................................. 1888 - 1890
Mrs. Mary S. Chamberlain ................................... 1888 - 1893
Mrs. Josiah S. Howe (Amelia) ............................. 1889 - 1899
Mrs. Theodore Meanor (Eliza) ............................. 1890 - 1891
Mrs. Ellen M. Howe ........................................... 1891 - 1899
Mrs. Herbert J. Bowers ....................................... 1892 - 1906
Mrs. Leander Morse ........................................... 1892 - 1897
Mrs. Charles F. Robinson ................................... 1892 - 1930
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 8, 1930)

Miss Sarah D. Witherbee ....................................... 1897 - 1907 Resigned
Mrs. Mary J. W. Blake ......................................... 1898 - 1903
Miss Lydia S. Boyd .............................................. 1901 - 1903
Mrs. Alice Simonds ............................................. 1902 - 1907
Mrs. Mabel F. Mann ........................................... 1904 - 1909
Mrs. Mary A. Wheelock ......................................... 1907 - 1909
Mrs. Nellie S. G. Claflin ................................. 1884 - 1885
(formerly Miss Nellie Hastings) .................. 1884 - 1885
Mrs. Evelina A. Howe ............................................. 1908 resigned
Mrs. Marion M. French ......................................... 1909
................................................................................. (Died in office Dec. 1926)
Mrs. Lillian E. Thompson ................................ .. 1911 - 1913
Miss Mary B. Witherbee ........................ Jan. 1912 - Jan. 1913
Mrs. Grace M. Morris ................................ Jan. 1913 - Jan. 1914
Mrs. Ella R. Sutton ................................ Jan. 1911 - Jan. 1917
Mrs. Lena V. Pratt ............................................. Jan. 1912
................................................................................. (Died in office Jan. 1923)
Mrs. Jennie M. Weeks ................................ Jan. 1914 - Jan. 1918
Mrs. Prudence E. Whitman .............................. Jan. 1919 - Jan. 1923
Mrs. Alma M. Addison ................................ Jan. 1923 - Jan. 1928
Mrs. Elizabeth M. Findlay .................................. Jan. 1920 - Jan. 1938
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1938)

Mrs. Mary L. Carpenter .................................. Jan. 1927 - Jan. 1934
Mrs. Cora D. Lee ............................................. Jan. 1927 - Jan. 1936

Mrs. Mattie S. Curtis ...................................... Jan. 1930 - Jan. 1943
(Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1943)
Miss Carrie J. Holden .................................. Jan. 1931 - Jan. 1936
Miss Mary E. Curtis ........................................... Jan. 1932 - Jan. 1939

Mrs. Cora Jones ............................................. Jan. 1933 - Jan. 1939

Mrs. Alice E. Martin ....................................... Jan. 1938 - Jan. 1940
Mrs. Sadie Vining ............................................. Jan. 1936 - Jan. 1947
Mrs. Anna B. Potter.......................... Jan. 1938 - Jan. 1951
................................................................... (Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1955)
Mrs. Ethel L. Churchill.......................... Jan. 1939 - Jan. 1945, 1948
................................................................... (Made Hon. Dea. Jan. 1948)
Mrs. Elsie Woodward.......................... Jan. 1940 - Resigned 1945
................................................................... Jan. 1947 - Jan. 1953
Mrs. George Day ................................ Jan. 1942 - Resigned Jan. 1944
Mrs. Winifred Brigham ......................... Jan. 1944 - Resigned Jan. 1947
Mrs. Marion Noyes............................. Jan. 1944 - Jan. 1950
Mrs. Carolina Keyes............................ Jan. 1946 - Jan. 1959
Miss Natalie Leyden............................ Jan. 1948 - Jan. 1954
Mrs. Marion Allen.............................. Jan. 1949 - Jan. 1955
................................................................... Jan. 1962 - Jan. 1964
Mrs. Annabelle MacLeod ...................... Jan. 1950 - Jan. 1957
Mrs. Eleanor Haitsma ......................... Jan. 1952 - Jan. 1958
Mrs. Blanche Straw............................. Jan. 1951 - Jan. 1957
Mrs. Margaret Mann............................ Jan. 1954 - Jan. 1960
A three-year term beginning 1956
Mrs. Clem Bearce.............................. Jan. 1956 - Jan. 1959
Mrs. Helen Standley........................... Jan. 1959 - Jan. 1962
Mrs. Irving Miller............................. Jan. 1960 - 1 year
Mrs. Helen MacLeod......................... Jan. 1961 - Jan. 1964
Mrs. Marion LaCombe........................ Jan. 1962 - 1 year
Mrs. Rita Angier.............................. Jan. 1962 - Jan. 1965
Mrs. Ethel Stapelfeld.......................... Jan. 1964 -
Mrs. Myrtle Leonard ......................... Jan. 1964 -
Mrs. Gertie Ebert............................. Jan. 1965 -
Mrs. Charlotte Goodwin....................... Jan. 1966 -
Mrs. Ralph O’Coin............................. Jan. 1966 -
Mrs. Etta Jahn................................. Jan. 1966 -
SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School was first organized on May 31, 1818 and meetings were held in the old School House a few rods southwest from the Meeting-House. Sessions were held during the months of July, August and September, the lessons studied being the long and short catechisms. Verses of hymns and passages of scripture were learned and recited. The enrollment was forty-four scholars, eight boys and thirty-six girls. The first superintendent was David Goodale. The Sabbath School was under the direct control of the Church, the Church electing all the officers including the superintendent until 1853, when the Church by vote allowed the school to make its own nomination for superintendent, but voted on by the Church at the Annual Meeting.

There were but two departments in the Sunday School until 1897 when Miss Mary E. Curtis organized the Junior Department for children between the ages of eight and twelve. Miss Curtis was superintendent of this department for many years. The department was made possible by the work of the Home Workers and Trustees who improved and enlarged one of the small rooms leading out of the vestry for this purpose.

There were a number of Protestant Chinese in the City who attended First Church. The Chinese Department of the Sunday School was organized about 1887 under the leadership of Miss Harriet Alexander; it was in existence for some twenty years.

In September 1912 the First Church Sunday School furnished a room at the Marlborough Hospital, at an expense of one hundred seventy-one dollars.

In the fall of 1940 the senior department was eliminated and in its place the Junior Church was organized, but it was in existence only about ten years. This was an exact duplicate of the Church, with all the officers, moderator, deacons, deaconesses, etc.

The Church School has grown during the years and now has an enrollment of 320 including the Nursery. In 1962 moveable classroom dividers were presented by Mr. Arthur Bailey and Mr. Arthur Gray for use in the Parish Hall by the Junior Department. During the summer of 1963 the Trustees voted to remodel the old vestry. Five new classrooms, with scaled-to-size furniture, were ready for the opening of the Primary department in September.

In 1963 the Sunday School adopted the new curriculum of the United Church of Christ. The children, ages three through the twelfth grade, are now receiving planned and coordinated Christian Education.
YE OLDE COUNTRY CHOIR

When the church was first started in 1666 there was no choir, and in fact there was no music of any kind. In 1793 the church voted to follow the usual custom of reading the Hymn or Psalm line by line. It was not until 1807 that a Committee was chosen to report on "what regulations are proper in regard to singing on Sacramental occasions; who shall perform and what tunes?" After Mr. Bucklin accepted the call to First Church, it was voted to hire Master Sanger for one week to teach the singers in the Parish, previous to his ordination. They had no organ, as the first organ was not purchased until 1836, but they had the trombone, clarinet, 'cello, and the base and double base, and part of the time a melodian. A piano was not purchased until some time later. In those days the strength of voice rather than the perfect tone or correct ear for music was what counted most and the choir was considered a place of distinction.

The choir occupied what is now the gallery of the church and it was not until 1868 that changes were made and the choir loft was built in the front of the church. As stated above, the first organ was purchased in 1836, the second in 1868 and our present organ in 1915.

Robes were first worn by the choir members on Easter Sunday in 1925. The Junior choir was organized in 1933 by Mrs. Raymond C. Blake, assisted by Mrs. Beaumont. They were provided with robes by a devoted member of the church. Following the redecorating of the Sanctuary, the choir members worked hard raising money for new robes, and these were worn for the first
time on September 10, 1961. They were the color to harmonize with the decor of the Sanctuary.

Today we have a choir or rather choirs of which any church should be proud. Mrs. Virginia Hays, the organist, took over the duties of the Choir Director in June 1962 and has continued to the present time. Except on Easter and Christmas the choir sings only at the eleven o'clock service, but at the nine-thirty service there is either a soloist or the Junior Choir.

SOCIETIES OF THE CHURCH
LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

The Ladies' Benevolent Society, the oldest Missionary society in Marlborough, was organized January 1st, 1818, and has been in continuous operation since. Some of the old records give the organization date as December 31st, 1817, but as it has been given as January 1st, 1818, since 1900, I have so listed it.

Originally the group was known as The Female Benevolent Society in Marlborough and was formed to "alleviate the misery and enlighten the ignorance of man." The Society was organized to embrace three objects:

1. To aid the Female Educational Society of Boston in their benevolent exertion.
2. To benefit our own town by circulating books and administering relief to such objects of charity as fall within our notice.
3. To improve our minds by conversation and reading and thereby to become better acquainted with means and motives for doing good.

The members shall regard each other with tender affection and cultivate a spirit of harmony and love and they shall endeavor to cover each others failings with the mantle of charity and never mention them but when, in the sincerity of their hearts, they think they can do it from motives for doing good.

Any lady sustaining a good moral character may become a member of this society by paying twelve cents a year or more and subscribing to the constitution, but no member under the age of fourteen shall be considered a voter."

The meetings were held at the members houses. During the meetings the ladies worked, some braiding straw, which was afterwards sold, some binding shoes. Other work was quilting and also knitting. Patchwork was made and the children sewed on the bright squares.
In 1820 the constitution was changed and somewhat broadened, and instead of the annual dues of twelve cents, each lady was to bring five yards of straw braid annually.

With the organization of the Home Workers and Women's Board of Foreign Missions, the Ladies' Benevolent Society confined its activities to Home Mission work.

In 1840 the "Female Band" voted four shirts, four bosoms and four dicky's to Mr. Sawyer and one half of that amount to Mr. Stetson for their kindness in taking the ladies to meetings "in inclement weather".

Refreshments were served as in modern days, each hostess trying to outdo each other in the elaborateness of these refreshments until in 1853 it was voted "to dispense with a variety at our society table and in the future to substitute but two kinds of food."

Lists of donations made in those early days included skirts, bosoms, dicky's, dresses, chemises, petticoats, sheets, pillow-cases, socks, night gowns, night-caps, hose, aprons, and suits for boys. Many times clothing was given to the poor of the town, and sometimes to the children that they might attend "Sabbath School."

The Society has continued to function and in 1968 will celebrate its One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary. With the consolidation of all the ladies' societies into the Women's Fellowship, the Ladies' Benevolent Society became the missionary part of the Fellowship.

As an example of the work now being done, during 1965 they contributed to Ministerial Relief, Walker Missionary Home, Convention of the South, Pleasant Hill, Tenn., St. Louis Project, North Dakota Commission, Baldwinville School for Girls, Ryder Memorial Hospital, Congregational Christian School for Children, to two former Ministers' wives, and to the daughter of one of the Missionaries from this Church, who is herself a missionary in Angola, Portuguese, West Africa.

Given to the District Nurse in Marlborough for distribution to the poor and needy were: 9 crib quilts, 5 crib sheets, 2 dozen diapers, 16 jackets, 7 robes, 15 pair of socks and booties, 5 women's blouses, 2 women's sweaters, 1 woman's dress, 8 pairs of mittens, 3 pairs of gloves, 3 baby snow suits, 2 coats and 1 hat, 1 pair of quilted pants, 1 lap robe, 3 baby dresses, and 2 baby slips. This was all given in 1965.

Dues of one dollar a year are paid to the Women's Fellowship, and all members of the Fellowship are considered members of the Benevolent Society.
Ladies' Benevolent society group assembled for final meeting of year on June 1, 1966, at the Curtis Avenue home of Miss Hazel O. Warren. From left to right: Mrs. Frederick Porter, Mrs. Edward Frazer, Mrs. John Matheson, Mrs. Robert Eisenhauer, Mrs. Elmer Holden, Mrs. William Mann, Mrs. Clifford Davis, Mrs. Dean Woodward, Miss Edith M. Temple, Mrs. Everett Angier, Mrs. Oscar Josephson, Mrs. Fred Aldrich, Mrs. Frank Maddox, Mrs. Walter H. Leach, Miss Hazel O. Warren, Mrs. J. Dana Tripp, Mrs. Roy Dudley, Mrs. George Parmenter.
WOMENS' FELLOWSHIP

In June of 1958, a large group of women met at the church with the purpose of forming a new society to be known as the Womens' Fellowship of the First Church in Marlborough (Congregational). This was a consolidation of all the ladies' societies in the Church. By-laws of the National Fellowship were adapted to the group, and officers elected. Mrs. Everett Angier was first President.

Through the years this group has continued the work of the Church especially carried on by the Home Workers. During the years since organization they have raised money from food sales, catering to various banquets -- such as those for the Bowling League and Senior Citizens. In 1959 the Fellowship sponsored an Open House Fair which netted one thousand dollars. They have interesting programs each month, except July and August, held on the second Tuesday of the month. These meetings and programs are followed by refreshments.

During the years they have contributed to the Christian Higher Education Fund, the Walker Home, the Heifer Project, the Second Mile and sent $50 to a needy family in Texas. They gave one thousand dollars for furnishings in the Parish Hall, paid one hundred dollars to complete the powder rooms in the Parish Hall, donated six small chairs for the nursery, paid $49.68 for the parlor doors, installed a new microphone system in the Parish Hall in 1962, paid for the extension phone in the Pastor's Study, gave fifty dollars to the Senior Choir toward new robes, contributed to the Sunday School, and gave to the Baldwinville School for Girls. They also contributed for the running expenses of the kitchen and gave money to be used in the running expenses of the church. They have given a helping hand where there has been trouble. When the Hopedale Congregational Church was burned down, they gave toward the rebuilding and also in 1966 they gave a mammoth food sale, the proceeds of which went to the Hudson Federated Church which was burned out during the year.

In 1962 the Society (and also the entire church) sponsored a Cuban family who moved to this City and in 1964 adopted a little Indian boy, through the "Save the Children Campaign."

On Ash Wednesday of each year, a Silent Luncheon followed by Communion is held for the Ladies of the Church and all profits from the luncheon are turned over to the Ladies' Benevolent Society.

We hope the Society will be with First Church for many years to come.

COUPLES' CLUB

The Couples' Club was organized in 1955. Its main object is to get better acquainted with the other couples in the church and have something the husband and wife can participate in together. They have interesting meetings followed by a social hour with refreshments. They have Christmas parties, bowling night, covered dish suppers, etc. They pay just fifty cents a couple for each meeting attended.
PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP

This group of young people was formed in 1947 following the disbanding of the Comrades of the Way. This is a religious organization for the young people of ages fifteen to eighteen. In 1954 the Junior Fellowship was organized to include the boys and girls of ages eleven to fourteen. These are two fine organizations, working together in many of their projects.

Devotional services are held each Sunday evening, the Juniors at 5:00 and the Seniors at 6:30 at the church. They have many projects for entertainment -- swimming at the Fitchburg Y.M.C.A., roller skating, ice skating parties, Halloween parties and have been guests at Hillside School. Looking through the records I find at one time they collected clothing to be sent to the Sioux Indians, and also clothing and cash donations for the Hungarian Relief Fund.

Each year Christmas trees are sold and the income used to send representatives to the Northfield Conference Centre. The Juniors have joined in all these projects, and they also provided a Thanksgiving dinner for a needy family, as well as a Christmas tree with all its trimmings.

The two societies join in singing Christmas carols to the sick and shut-ins, and make visits to the Hospitals and Nursing Homes.

At the Sunday evening services, the Seniors have had subjects dealing with the history and beliefs of different religions and have been able to have clergy from the Seventh Day Adventist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Mormon Church and the Christian Science Church as speakers.

The goal of the Juniors has been Companionship, Community of Interest, activity, feeling or experience, friendliness.

Much could be said about these two societies but this brief resume will give some idea of the youth of today at First Church.

OLD SOCIETIES OF THE CHURCH

One of the oldest societies which I have been able to discover in the old records of the Church was the Association of Young Men formed in September 1736, with a starting membership of twenty-nine. This was in existence for several years but it is not known when it was disbanded. This was a very religious society, meeting on every Lord's Day, Thanksgiving and Fast Days "to carry on among ourselves Religious Worship, to Pray to God, to Sing His Praises, to Read His word or some Practical Discourse, and to conclude with Prayer, and while we Continue together our Conversation shall be Savory and Suitable to the End Proposed by us in our meeting together."
The next Society known is the Ladies' Benevolent Society which is mentioned in other places, formed January 1, 1818.

In December 1818, a Society known as the Assisting Foreign Mission Society of Marlborough, Framingham and vicinity was formed. This Society, with members both male and female, had as its object "to assist the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in sending the Gospel of Christ to the Heathen Nations in our own Country and abroad, and in translating the Holy Scriptures into their languages." "Anyone believing the Bible to be the religion of God and wishing that those now ignorant of it, should enjoy its light," was welcomed as a member on payment of dues of one dollar, at least, and agreement to pay one dollar annually. I have found nothing to indicate how long this Society was in existence.

Another society formed in the early years was the Female Cent Society of Marlborough, its object being to assist the Massachusetts Missionary Society in the distribution of religious books and in disseminating Christian knowledge among the destitute in our Country. The dues were one cent or more per week, to be paid once a year to the Committee. Any female of good moral character could become a member.

On February 23rd, 1842, the Marlboro Juvenile Society met and formed a new society to be called "The Young Ladies Sewing Circle"; its object: the intellectual and moral improvement of its members and the relieving of the needy by means of united prayers and contributions. The dues were ten cents for all those under eight years of age, twenty-five cents annually for those between eight and sixteen, and fifty cents for all those over sixteen. The refreshments at their meetings consisted of two kinds of food and cold water. They had forty-seven members, and the largest number at any meeting was thirty-four. In January 1854, it was voted to furnish the small vestry on the left in the church with a carpet, table, Bible, chairs, sofa and mirror. Also fifty dollars was appropriated to furnish the large vestry with furniture, Hymn Books, etc. At the same meeting it was voted to unite with the Ladies' Benevolent Society. This was done at the end of 1854.

The Auxiliary to the Women's Board of Missions was formed on February 29th, 1876 and was in existence for many years. They had a membership of around sixty, and in 1901 this membership had reached seventy-five. Their dues were fifty cents a year. Their work was for foreign missions. I can find no record of when they disbanded, but memory seems to indicate the late 1930's.

The Home Workers was formed in September 1876. The purpose of the Society was to raise money in one way or another and with it to aid the Church in whatever direction there was need, and at the same time assisting in the social life of the church. Throughout the years since its organization until 1958 when all the women's societies were merged into the Women's Fellowship, the Home Workers were always ready to back the church in any
enterprise for the betterment of the Church. The following will give, in a small way, a few of the things which the Society did for the Church.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Extensive repairs to the church vestry</td>
<td>$259.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Repairs to Church auditorium</td>
<td>650.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Silver purchased for use in the various societies</td>
<td>87.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Entire renovation of church parlor, with new carpet and curtains</td>
<td>105.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Piano purchased</td>
<td>525.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>New toilet rooms</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Church renovated. In auditorium, ceilings, walls and woodwork tinted and painted, wide mouldings over the front arch, new doors, new carpets, electric lights installed. Main vestry and junior rooms and all hallways painted, new carpet in junior room, heavy mattings in hall, one new furnace installed and one reset</td>
<td>2,901.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Kitchen made over, back hall and library painted</td>
<td>329.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repairs on parsonage, covered piazza built</td>
<td>464.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Brussels Church carpet for auditorium, platform and choir</td>
<td>789.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Organ. Home Workers paid half the cost, or</td>
<td>2,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Extension put on kitchen, library painted</td>
<td>470.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Ladies' parlor renovated, papered, painted, and new rug</td>
<td>216.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Following the hurricane, the Home Workers paid for the cost of the new kitchen, made payments on the grant mortgage, and gave towards the running expenses of the Church.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The members formed Circles in the Society which gave much enjoyment to the members, and these Circles also helped in the raising of money for the Society.

The Children's Mission Circle was organized on December 1, 1883. Later this Society changed its name to "The Gleaners." Meetings were held on Saturday afternoons monthly. The first half hour was spent in devotional exercises and readings, and the last part in sewing and games. What money they raised was sent to both Foreign and Home Missions. They also sent a Christmas box to India. This Society was evidently disbanded at the end of 1891.

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor was organized on February 15, 1887, and the Junior Society in October, 1892. These societies had various committees: PRAYER MEETING, each member conducted one meeting and provided leaders for the other meetings of the month; CALLING COMMITTEE, made many calls, inviting people to the meetings and endeavoring to have them become Christians; FLOWER COMMITTEE, supplied flowers for the pulpit every Sunday, and sent flowers to the sick and
shut-in; TEMPERANCE COMMITTEE encouraged total abstinence and distributed "no license" literature; MISSIONARY COMMITTEE distributed leaflets giving missionary information and invitation to revival meetings. Of course these changed during the years, but the Societies remained a good influence in the Church and Community. They belonged to the National Christian Endeavor Union. The Societies were disbanded in 1945 and the Comrades of the Way organized that same year. However, this Society was of short duration and in 1947 the Pilgrim Fellowship was organized.

The Helping Hand Society of King's Sons and Daughters was organized in January, 1889 and continued in operation for some four or five years. During these years they did much good. They helped in providing Thanksgiving dinners for the needy, completely furnished an outfit for a boy in the Sunday School, sent flowers to the sick, sent a box of toys, etc. to a family in the West, made and sold articles to raise money for their work.

The Girls' Missionary Club was organized on May 9, 1894, with its Annual Meeting held the second Thursday in June. All meetings were held on the second Thursday of each month at private homes. The Club had a membership of fifty-two and the dues were twenty cents. They raised money for both foreign and home missions. This Club was of short duration, lasting not more than two or three years.

The Men's League was organized in 1900. The object of the League was "to cultivate and promote the social, intellectual, fraternal and religious life of the men of the community; to bestow sympathy upon those who are in misfortune, to cultivate good citizenship, to promote a more intelligent interest in the work and welfare of the church." This Society also was of short duration.

MOTHERS' ASSOCIATION

This was a very active Society, probably started about 1915. No one can seem to remember the exact date. Meetings were held at the church in the afternoon monthly. They had good times, did sewing, and helped in many ways in the Church. They were active for about twenty years.

MARMISO

This society was organized under the leadership of Mrs. Leonard Whitman about 1915 and as with the Mothers' Association was active for more than twenty years. Meetings were held monthly in the evening at the member's houses. The name was derived from Marlboro Missionary Society, and the members were mostly the younger group of ladies and their work was for home missions. They sewed, sold Christmas cards to raise money, and at one time put on a play.
COURT CAMELOT -- QUEENS OF AVALON

This organization was formed in 1917 with Miss Eleanor Mildon, known as Lady-of-the-Lake, as adult adviser. Primarily it was a ritualistic order designed for teenage girls. Under Miss Mildon's leadership it flourished for twenty-nine years, disbanding in 1946.

Although this group was organized at First Church and kept its headquarters there, eligibility for membership was open to all Protestant girls in the city. The membership was limited to thirty.

Over the span of years their philanthropies were many and varied. Their greatest benevolence, however, could not be measured in dollars and cents for it was the gift of love shown by practical kindness to their two adopted sisters.

Roumaine Caron was a World War I Belgian nurse (Catholic) who was hospitalized in this country with tuberculosis. She is buried in the Immaculate Conception cemetery in Marlboro.

Kyriaki Nicolaidou was a joy to know and although sightless led a most inspiring life at Perkins Institute for the Blind. She returned to her native Greece to teach the blind there. Her adopted sisters are still in touch with her.

Court Camelot was a training ground for Christian womanhood and its effectiveness is evidenced by the number of former Queens who are still active in their respective churches.

MARTHA MARY GUILD

This Society was organized on September 12, 1944 to embrace the younger members of the church, under the leadership of Mrs. John Cummings. Their object was to enlist the women of the church in a closer fellowship, and all women under fifty years of age were invited to become members. Their first president was Mrs. Walter E. Morse; Councillors were Mrs. John Cummings and Miss Elizabeth Seuss. At the close of the first year they had a membership of one hundred.

They did much during the years for the Church. Among the many things donated were:

- Three thousand dollars toward the church mortgage
- One thousand dollar renovation of parsonage dining room
- Purchased Syracuse china dishes with "First Church" baked on
- Twelve dozen red water glasses, $33.75
- One brass cross with candlesticks for Sanctuary, $110
- Coat rack for Sunday School, $20.00
- Sum of money for books for Childrens' Library
- One hundred fifty folding metal chairs, $695.50
- Ten folding tables with shellacked tops to preserve them
- Linen dish towelling for kitchen
- 12 15x20 Trays, $31.25; 12 Alum. Pitchers, $55.20
- Burlan curtain back drop for auditorium stage, $14.80
There were many other gifts made to the Church, but it would take too much space to list them all. Money for these gifts was raised in various ways—suppers, concerts, Christmas bazaars, bridge parties, food sales, making of May baskets, plays in which the members displayed their acting skills.

A beautiful "Candlelight Memorial Service" was conducted in memory of our loved ones in the service and those who had given their lives in the service of their country. Gold Star mothers were special guests and were presented with a white carnation, signifying purity and peace. The Mothers of those still in the Service were presented a maroon carnation signifying courage. Two plaques, with a complete record of all church members having served their country, were placed on either side of the Sanctuary.

The last banquet of the Guild was held on June 10, 1958 at the White Cliffs in Northboro with the late Mrs. Estelle O’Coin the last president. In September all organizations joined the Women’s Fellowship of First Church Congregational.

This is only a short account of this fine organization and the things they did for the church, but they are now workers in the Fellowship.

Two other societies were mentioned in the booklet published on April 1, 1918, of which I have no other record:

Astolotte Club for young women, meetings held bi-weekly on Tuesdays at 7:30 P.M.

Castle Perilous, Knights of King Arthur, for boys and young men. Conclaves were held weekly on Mondays at 7:30 P.M. in the Castle Hall.

A Men’s Club was formed in 1948 but lasted only until 1950.

The Triangle Club was formed in the 1920’s and was in existence for about ten years. They were a small society and their aim was to earn money for the Church.

**SPRING HILL CEMETERY**

Not far from First Church is the Spring Hill Cemetery, where will be found the resting places of many of the former ministers, deacons and missionaries of the Church. The oldest stone is that of Captain Edward Hutchinson, who was shot by "treacherous Indians on August 2, 1675. Dyed August 19, 1675."

It had been the custom of the early settlers to have their burying ground back of the meeting-house, but as the early church was built on the Indian Plantation, it is believed the people previous to 1675 were buried in the older cemeteries in Wayland, Watertown or Charlestown.
Spring Hill Burying Ground is described in a survey by James Keys on May 23, 1737 as "Marlborough Ould Burrying Field" and as containing four acres and forty-six rods, and it is quite early referred to as the "Ould Ground on Burrying Hill." The survey was accepted and entered by the Towne Meeting of which William Ward was moderator, May 24, 1737.

At a meeting of the proprietors of Marlborough, April 8, 1706, it was ordered that the land exchanged with John Perry, the tailor, two and one-half acres, adjoining the Meeting House Land, "shall be for a Trayning Place and a Burrying Place forever." This seems to fix the date of the opening of the cemetery in the rear of our present Junior High School.

In the Spring Hill cemetery are buried generation after generation of the leading families of Marlborough. The first minister of the Church, Rev. William Brinsmead is buried in about the centre of the cemetery. Over his grave is a large stone supported on granite pillars and on the stone is a bronze plate bearing his name, placed there in recent years by the Daughters of the American Revolution. Close by his tomb is another similar stone elaborately lettered with a Latin inscription, marking the resting place of the second minister of the Church, Rev. Robert Breck, who died in January 1731, the full translation of the inscription was given previously on page 12.

Rev. John N. Goodhue, pastor from 1836 to 1839 and Rev. Albert E. Beaumont, pastor from October 1928 to the time of his death January 6, 1935, are both buried near the other ministers, Mrs. Beaumont died on June 21, 1955 and is buried with her husband.

Rev. Edward Warren, son of Thaddeus and Lucy Warren, sailed for Ceylon as a missionary under the American Board in 1818. His health gave out and he died in Cape Town on August 11, 1818, aged 32. A stone is erected to his memory in the Warren lot.

In the Goodale lot, will be found memorials to the memory of several of the old workers in the Church: Deacon Abner Goodale, Deacon David Goodale, and Deacon David B. Goodale. Another member of the family, a sister of Deacon David, and the first teacher of the newly organized Sunday School in 1818, of which school her brother was the first superintendent, is Lucy Goodale Thurston. About 1819 she became the wife of Rev. Asa W. Thurston and with him sailed for the Sandwich Islands as a missionary, or "mad fanatic" as the early missionaries were called. In the course of time, their daughter Lucy was sent back to this country to be educated at Mt. Holyoke Seminary. On arrival of the ship in New York, this daughter was taken ill and died and is buried in the Goodale lot.

Another of the Deacons buried in Spring Hill is Deacon William Stetson, known as the "sweet singer of Israel," elected as Deacon in 1853, the year our present church was erected.

On the reverse side of the tombstone of Miss Hannah Maynard, daughter of Hezekiah and Hannah B. Maynard who died on February 7, 1870, there is a
unique inscription: "I give and bequeath to the Town of Marlborough the sum of $1000 to be kept as a fund forever, and the income of interest thereof, to be annually appropriated and distributed by the Selectmen of said Town at their discretion to the worthy and industrious poor native citizens of said Town."

Many of the soldiers of the Revolutionary War from Marlborough and of the early church are buried in this cemetery. The following list is taken from the Franklin P. Rice book on inscriptions, and may not be complete:

Lieutenant Joseph Arnold  Hezekiah Maynard
Joel Barnard  Captain William Morse
Benjamin Barns  Jonas Smith
Captain Moses Barns  Daniel Stevens
Lieutenant Ivory Bigelow  Abraham Stow
Timothy Bigelow  John Stow
Lieutenant William Boyd  Quartus Sherman
Major Amasa Cranston  Captain Jonathan Weeks
James Dalrymple  Col. James Weston, severely wounded at the battle of Monmouth, died October 15, 1809
John Dexter  Josiah Wilkins
Captain Uriah Eager  Jonas Wilkins
Deacon Abner Goodale  Abraham Williams
Col. Thomas Hapgood  Alpheus Woods
Uriah Eager, Jr.  
Daniel Harrington  
John Harrington  
Robert Hunter  

Taken at the service held in 1930 celebration of the City.
In 1924, Artemas Ward of New York City, advertiser, publisher, manufacturer, and philanthropist, erected the beautiful fence surrounding the cemetery and also erected the beautiful granite Pioneer Memorial Pier with bronze markers at the junction of East Main and Brown Streets. His first American ancestor, William Ward, born in England in 1603, died in Marlborough on August 10, 1687; he is buried in Spring Hill. From this first American ancestor was descended General Artemas Ward, the first Commander-in-Chief of the American Revolution.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MIGHT BE OF INTEREST

The thirteen men from Sudbury who originally petitioned the Courts to grant them land to set up a new township were:

Edmund Rice        John Howe
William Ward        John Bent, Sr.
Thomas King        John Maynard
Thomas Goodnow      Richard Newton
John Woods        Peter Bent
John Ruddocke       Edward Rice
Henry Rice

Of the above, William Ward, Thomas King, John Ruddocke and John Howe "were chosen to put the Affairs of the said new Plantation in an orderly Way."

In September, 1657, the following names, in addition to the original grantees, appear on their list:

William Kerly        Solomon Johnson
John Rediat        Samuel Rice
John Johnson        Peter King
Thomas Rice        Christopher Banister

Varying amounts of land, from fifteen to fifty acres, were granted to these men. Immediately after this grant of land for the Plantation of Whipsuppernicke to the above mentioned men, the General Court granted to Mr. John Alcocke of Roxbury, eight hundred forty-two acres, together with permission to add another one hundred or more acres, provided it hinder no former grant. His land was extended to 1042 acres and raised a controversy among the Whipsuppernicke Company, which claimed a portion of his grant. His land was between Natick and Whipsuppernicke. In 1659 this controversy was settled with two hundred acres relinquished by Alcocke and added to the Whipsuppernicke plantation. However, the General Court granted Alcocke two hundred more acres in "liewe of the two hundred acres he grattiffyed ye plantation of Whipsuppernicke otu of his oune."
Mr. Charles Chauncy, President of Harvard College, owing to the smallness of his salary as head of the College, was given several grants of land by the General Court for a farm. The following report was made by the commissioner for locating one of these grants:

"Whereas John Stone and Andrew Belcher were appointed to lay out a farm for Mr. Charles Chauncy, President of Harvard College, we have gone and looked on a place, and there is taken up a tract of land bounded in this manner: on the east by a little swampe neare an Indian wigwam with an orchard of apple trees belonging to the wigwam, a playne joyning to the swamp, the playne running to a great Pond, and from thence to Assebeth River; and this line is circular on the north side; the south line running to the south side of a place of meadow called Jacob's Meadow, and so to continue till it reach to the said Assebeth River. 18: 8: 1659.

Abdrew Belcher."

The following year, on petition of the proprietors of Marlborough, the Court confirmed their former grant, and as it concluded the grant made to Mr. Chauncy, it was provided that Marlborough should pay to said Chauncy "all his charges expended in laying out his farm, and he hath liberty to lay out the same in any lands not formerly granted by the Court." I have given the above as Westborough was part of Marlborough in the early years, and the people there attended the Meeting-House in this town. The name of the Pond at that time was Chauncy Pond and later became Lake Chauncy.

Do you know why the early church was called "Meeting House"? Cotton Mather, at that time the acknowledged spiritual adviser, objected to calling the building put up for general worship a "church" and declared it must be a "Meeting House", and this was the name these buildings were given for many years.
HISTORY

of the

FIRST CHURCH OF MARLBOROUGH
(CONGREGATIONAL)

on the occasion of its
THREE HUNDRETH and TWENTY FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Marlborough, Massachusetts

1666 - 1991
A correction is noted in the church history the spelling of the first minister - William Brinsmead not William Brimsmead. This has been verified through many historical documents.
It is with great pride and pleasure that we present the "Continuing History of First Church in Marlborough (Congregational)".

We have this opportunity to link the past with the present for your enjoyment in our 325th anniversary booklet.

We are especially pleased to gather together the many and varied facts and dates, each of which has contributed to our growth during the years.

We realize that time and space do not allow us to capture in detail, each idea, event, place or name. Therefore we encourage you to add your own ideas or notations to your copy of this history for further historical notes.

We wish to acknowledge the tremendous effort of Hazel O. Warren, who passed away several years ago. Hazel was the first historian of First Church. This book is dedicated to her and we hope that this edition will remain a significant contribution to the historical records of First Church in Marlborough (Congregational).

Rheta M. Gennari, historian
Alice Heath, assistant clerk
CONTINUING HISTORY OF
FIRST CHURCH IN MARLBOROUGH
(CONGREGATIONAL)

1962

Glenn E. Owens was the first scoutmaster of Troop #10, Boy Scouts of America chartered and sponsored by the First Church (Congregational).

1966

The Rev. John W. Morrow accepted an invitation to deliver the sermon at the Immaculate Conception Church at the United Thanksgiving Service on November 22, 1966. This marked the first time a Protestant minister had ever preached from a Catholic pulpit in the City of Marlborough.

Ladies Benevolent Society was honored on its 150th anniversary at the 11:00 a.m. service on November 19, 1966.

1967

Board of Trustees and members of First Church acknowledged receipt of a beautiful pulpit Bible. It was used by Rev. John W. Morrow, Sunday, January 22, 1967 for the first time.

In May, three hundred Pilgrim Hymnals were donated by the Women's Fellowship -- replacing the outdated thirty-year old hymnals.

November 21, an Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service was held in the church. Mrs. Virginia Hayes and many choir members from First Church participated in the Ecumenical choir.

November 18: "While the date may change, the day never will -- it's the Saturday before Thanksgiving at the church on the hill -- ." The phrase that organized the "Meetinghouse Fair" sponsored by the Women's Fellowship. Mrs. Alan Costello and Mrs. Glenn E. Owens, Jr. served as co-chairmen.

1968

Aluminum siding installed on the church.

The church school celebrated its 150th birthday on May 13, 1968. History shows that it started with 44 children, mostly girls.

The project of remodeling the front foyer of our church was instituted by the Women's Fellowship.

*a first! Baccalaureate Sunday honoring the high school graduates was celebrated, rather than at a banquet as in past years.
1970

In May, a celebration was held to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the arrival in Hawaii of the Reverend and Mrs. Asa Thurston, missionaries from First Church in Marlborough (Congregational).

The Central Association was formed, an association of all United Church of Christ churches in central Massachusetts.

1971

The Deacon's benches were dedicated in memory of Arthur Gray.

1972

The Trustees voted to change the name of the Fellowship Room to the Temple Room in memory of Judge Winfield Temple, who served as an auxiliary Trustee for twenty-three years.

In October, First Church of Marlborough By-Laws were amended to give the vote to the eighteen year olds.

Fire alarm system installed throughout the church.

The Rev. John Morrow resigned. He received and accepted the call to become Senior Pastor of Bethesda United Church of Christ in Utica, New York in September.

The Rev. Dr. Madison Scott served as Interim Minister beginning October 2, 1972. He was the Senior Minister at the Wilton, Connecticut Congregational Church and attended Assumption College in Worcester while serving at First Church in Marlborough. He preached his last sermon on Sunday, July 15, 1973.

The Angier stained glass windows were installed to the sides of the front entrance.

The Christian Education Committee approved the printing of a youth newsletter to be included in the Crier each month entitled "The God Squad". It was an enjoyable informative additive edition by Mrs. Carolyn Martensen.

1973

April 1 -- The congregation extended a call to Rev. Zaven Dohanian, pastor of the Ararat Armenian Congregational Church of Salem, New Hampshire to become pastor at First Church. He was graduated from Eastern Nazarene College and Nazarene Theological Seminary in 1954. He was installed by an Ecclesiastical Council in October.
The memorial window over the front door was dedicated to John D. and Catherine Tripp. Dogwood trees were planted on the Bolton Street side of the church. (All have been destroyed)

On September 23 a silver service, displayed in the narthex, was presented to Women's Fellowship for use in the church, in loving memory of Fred and Everett Angier.

1974

In June the Crier staff noted with regret the resignation of Miss Hazel Warren as historian of First Church. She had written the 'Historical Reminiscences' column for each issue of the Crier since its inception 11 years ago. She had filled responsible positions in our church for the past 65 years. She compiled and authored, with graceful skill, the 'History of the First Church in Marlborough (Congregational)' upon the occasion of our 300th anniversary as a church in 1966. The book is a significant contribution to the historical records of Marlborough. The Church council appointed Miss Ellen Bailey to replace her.

*a first! Mrs. Everett (Rita) Angier was elected Trustee, the first woman to be so honored in our church's history.

*A HIGHLIGHT OF OUR CHURCH HISTORY

The ordination of Nicholas G. Granitsas in his home church on November 10, 1974 at 4:00 p.m. He graduated from Harvard University and received his Master of Divinity degree from Gordon-Conwell Seminary. He accepted a call to be pastor at the First Congregational Church in Revere, Massachusetts.

Notable By-Law revisions were made, making the Church Council the chief administrative board, establishing the Diaconate and abolishing the Church Committee.

1975

*a first! Mrs. Robert (Cynthia) Vail was elected Moderator, the first woman to serve in this office.

The Dorothy Cogswell memorial stair-glide was installed.

First Church initiated its Bicentennial Commemoration Sunday, April 27th at the morning worship service. The pastor conducted a partial recreation of early services. Mr. & Mrs. Allan Costello dressed in period garb and greeted parishioners at the front door.

A celebration dinner marked the final payment of the Parish Hall mortgage, Sunday, October 19, 1975. Also on this date, beautiful oak doors at the front of the church on High Street were dedicated in loving memory of Marion Brigham Earnshaw.
1976

The Church Council created the Bicentennial Committee with Mrs. Carolyn Purcell as chairman. Special services were held at Spring Hill Cemetery and a special celebration held on the common as part of the city festivities.

The Rev. G. Jeffrey Marks served as Assistant Pastor. He was a graduate of Dartmouth College and Dickinson Law School and prepared for the ministry at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

*a first! Deaconesses helped with ushering and distributing communion during church service.

Mr. Robert Eaton was hired as organist and Chancel Choir Director. Mr. Valmore Morris, organist since 1970 retired.

1977

The Rev. Chester Dziczek of Clinton, Massachusetts was hired as Assistant Minister. He received his Master of Theology degree from Andover-Newton Theological Seminary and was ordained in 1972.

1978

The sanctuary was re-painted, a new boiler installed and the building was insulated.

JOHN BROWN BELL

1978

A 23 foot tower, built at the Union Common (church owned land leased to the city of Marlborough) to give a permanent home to the "John Brown Bell". It had hung since 1892 on the front of the GAR Building. An agreement signed by the city of Marlborough, American Legion Akroyd-Houde Post #132 and the First Church of Marlborough (Congregational) stipulated that the ownership of the John Brown Bell is to remain with the Post #132 and they have the right to remove the bell at any time.

It was also agreed that if at any time, and for any reason, the First Church of Marlborough (Congregational) should require the use of the land on which the bell is located, the Marlborough Chamber of Commerce would remove or relocate it. The maintenance and upkeep of the tower and bell will be the concern of the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Marlborough.

1979

The boiler room was concreted.

The church parlor was re-decorated.
1980

The Rev. Zaven Dohanian resigned as minister to accept a call at First Congregational Church of Fall River. June 18, 1980.


In October the Teaching Parish Committee was established. Miss Ellen Bailey was the Minister-In-Training. This committee will represent the church as a teaching parish in the Field Education Program of Andover-Newton Theological School.

1981

Rev. Wayne Norman Pruitt accepted the call to be pastor of First Church. He preached his first sermon on September 13, 1981 with a reception following. He received his Master of Divinity in 1976 from Andover-Newton Theological School. He was the Associate Minister in Orange, Connecticut Congregational Church.

Handicapped entrance ramp constructed.

April 2 -- Couples Club reorganized.

First Sunrise Service held on Easter Sunday at the Marlborough Country Club. Senior High Youth Fellowship conducted the service.

June 21-- Special meeting established the Pastoral Relations and Review Committee

Chancel Choir appeared on October 18 with new robes and pennant collars.

1982

In October Ellen Bailey resigned her position as historian. The Church Council welcomed Rheta Gennari.

Construction of a new entrance vestibule at the Bolton Street entry. The minister's study was redecorated.

Installation of ceiling fans in the sanctuary and Parish Hall.

1983

January 19, 1983 – Annual Meeting. The following By-Law change was made:

Junior Deacon and Deaconess shall be appointed for one year term from September to June. Tiffany Vail and David Thomson, the first to serve.
A trustee may be elected to the office of Honorary Trustee after serving one full term having the power of voice but not vote at meetings.

June 5, 1983 - Confirmation Sunday. Rev. Wavne Pruitt welcomed into church membership the members of the Confirmation class.

1984

February - service of Ordination for Miss Ellen Bailey. Ellen had been a member of First Church since 1953 and taught Sunday School many years. As a student at Andover-Newton Theological School, she assisted in our Sunday School and our church as a Minister-In-Training. Ellen received a call to serve as Youth Minister of the First Federated Church in Hudson, Massachusetts.

On April 10 a special meeting at First Church was held to vote to change the date of the Annual Meeting. It was voted: The annual corporate meeting of the church shall be held on the third Wednesday of March in each year at such an hour and place as the Trustees shall determine, except when this date occurs during Holy Week, then the annual meeting shall be held the fourth Wednesday in March.

In April, First Church accepted the invitation to share services during July and August with the Baptist Church of Marlborough. This practice continued until 1990.

Hand Bell Choir fund established. First Church to have a Hand Bell Choir!

August 27, 1984 -- Ladies Benevolent Society joined Women's Fellowship.

In September, Scott Anderson accepted a letter of invitation from the Teaching Parish Committee to train at First Church as Minister-In-Training.

December 9 -- The Hand Bell Choir had its debut with director, Roberta Saart. "The Joyful Ringers" Bell Choir of First Church.

December 31 -- Robert Eaton resigned as Choir Director and Organist. Jan Patterson replaced him in April as Director of Music.

1985

April 21-a special event celebrated 'Recognition Sunday' honoring those who had been a member for 40 years or more. A luncheon in their honor was served in the Parish Hall after worship service.

In September, sanctuary renovations were completed. The organ was relocated and additional space provided for the choir.
In November, Stephen Trimble, a student at Andover-Newton Theological Seminary was hired as Minister-In-Training.

Mrs. Fred (Betty) Hollis retired as Sunday School superintendent. Mrs. Gerard (Ruth) Levine was welcomed as her capable replacement.

A permanent Teaching Parish Committee was established.

The Social Action Committee continued to deepen its commitment to mission at First Church. "Our Father's Table" was established to provide an evening meal with other community churches.

Long Range Planning Committee was established by the Church Council in order to be more intentional about the direction and scope of First Church's mission.

1986

The Social Action Committee continued to share Christian love and concern by being involved at: Pinegrove Nursing Home, Westboro State Hospital, "Our Father's Table", and Better World.

The Music Committee purchased 30 new choir chairs.

1987

The Social Action Committee became Christian Outreach Committee at First Church's Annual Meeting. (By-Law)

"A.S.K" (Adult Social Klub) evolved out of the previous Couple's Club.

Rev. Pruitt commended church clerk Helen McKay for her 30 years of service.

In March, Music Director and Organist, Jan Patterson resigned. In June, Interim Choir Director/Organist Jonathan Rappaport was hired.

October 20 -- First Church Men's Fellowship Banquet was held in the Parish Hall.

1988

Sabbatical leave for Rev. Pruitt to attend Mansfield College, Oxford University for Michaelmas Term, Oct-Dec.

Hospitality Committee created.

Rev. Janet Parsons Mackey served as Interim Minister during Rev. Pruitt's sabbatical leave. She served at the UCC Conference Center in Framingham as the Stewardship liaison for the council.
Cottage Day Care rented Sunday School classroom area and the old church office on the first floor.

Sanctuary pews were re-upholstered.

Temple Room refurbished.

Individual amplifiers were purchased for the sanctuary by people with hearing difficulties.

1989

Mary Aberg became the Associate Minister. She received her Master of Divinity in May 1989 from Andover-Newton Theological School.

May 14, 1989 -- Ordination of Mary Aberg.

Natalie Sarrazin joined us at First Church as organist and Music Director, following the resignation of Jonathan Rappaport on July 1, 1989.

June 18, 1989 -- Dedication of the Landscape project.

Mr. Edward Craig retired as sexton, September 1, 1989, following twenty-three years of dedicated service. Woodrow Wilson replaced him.

September 17 -- Sunday worship services broadcast on Marlborough's cable channel as an extension of the church's ministry to carry the service to those people unable to attend church.

Daniel W. Shahan accepted the position of Minister-In-Training while attending Andover-Newton Theological School.

The Stewardship Committee established a permanent sub-committee to concern itself with long-term giving to be called the "Long Range Planned Giving Committee".

Enrollment in Sunday School classes is approximately 140 students, with an average weekly attendance of 70.

1990

We noted, with sadness, the death of our former minister of First Church (1954-1961) Rev. Norman C. MacLean at the age of 88 years.

Structural repairs in the basement and the first floor were finished. The amount of the entire project, $42,565 was funded almost entirely by the Capital Fund Campaign and the assets from the Day Care Center.

A special meeting on April 1 was held to honor a request from the minister. Rev. Pruitt requests permission for participation in the Doctor of Ministry program presented at the Eastern Baptist Theological
Seminary in Philadelphia, PA during the next two and a half years. It was so granted.

A 325th Anniversary Capital Fund Drive was established to address the major structural restorations of the church building. Shares were $3.25 each and "sold" in lots of ten shares.

1991

January 27 -- Pulpit bible dedicated in memory of Mrs. Richard (Betty) Holmes.

CHOIR RECOLLECTIONS

by

Ruth Russo

Looking back on my 25 years of First Church Chancel Choir membership, I pause to reflect on a few events -- some humorous, some moving, some inspiring -- but all woven into the threads of a wonderful group.

In 1966, the year I joined, the choir, augmented by outside singers, sang a public performance of Mendelssohn's oratorio, "Elijah", for the 300th anniversary celebration, under the direction of Virginia Hays. Since then, the choir has performed many shorter choral works including portions of masses, works by Bach, Mozart, Thompson, and Pinkham. The latter, a modern composer, is not a choir favorite and evokes many jokes as well as groans!

In the early 70's, during the week before Christmas, a few of us choir members would take turns in the early evening playing carols on the carillon through the tower speakers. It was an inspiring touch to the season a practice I would like to see started again.

Through the years the choir has participated in many all-church programs, and individual choir members have and are participating in city and regional choruses.

In 1976 we were saddened by the passing of Hazel Eisenhauer, a long-time member and lovely lady. At our Christmas parties, she always brought a lovely china cup and saucer to put into our Yankee swap. Needless to say, it was the most "swapped-for" present! Then in 1989, Astrid Hamilton passed away a 35-year-plus member and dedicated musician.

We have shared some moments of laughter also. In 1983, when Bob Eaton's wife Barbara was "expecting", we planned a surprise baby shower at the Bickfords. Truly a surprise it was! Barbara was busy that night, so Bob came alone, thinking it was a regular choir party! Bob opened the gifts and we all had a good chuckle without Barbara.

Also during Bob's "reign" as director, on Sunday mornings regularly we would hear strange voices coming from the carillon. After puzzling for awhile, we decided it was picking up a foreign radio broadcast, probably Radio Free Europe. Bob had to turn off the power when it became loud and competed with the sermon!

In June of 1989, the choir, along with the Broadmoor Singers of Natick and the choir of the Church of the Nativity in Northboro, performed at and sponsored a Strawberry Festival at First Church. This was under the direction of Jonathan Rappaport. Strawberry short cake was enjoyed by all, and audience as well as performers had an evening of singing and fellowship.
In January of 1991, we welcomed the Trinity Choir of Northboro under Bob Eaton's direction to join with us in an inspiring choir service together. This was a great addition to our anniversary year. We will travel to Trinity in May for a similar program.

I know I am speaking for many of us when I say I feel very at home in my "choir family". We provide each other with support and encouragement in happy as well as sad times, and we seek to continually inspire others with our music.
FIRST CHURCH IN MARLBOROUGH
(CONGREGATIONAL) UCC

MINISTRY OF FIRST CHURCH

Rev. Wayne N. Pruitt
Rev. Mary A. Aberg

Worship Service                  Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
10:00 a.m. Sundays                Nursery care provided

DIACONATE -3 years

James Martel               Cynthia Bradley
Brian Cobb                  Judy Berry
David Forsythe             Jennifer Cole
Mike Golan                  Niki Granitsas
Cliff Fenton                Marion Davis
Don McElman                 Janet Golan

BOARD OF TRUSTEES -3 years

Sandra Charland             Frank Marino
Mike Gram                   Richard Yurkus
Nancy Langelier             Warren Meier (Aux.)
Joseph Thomas               Fred Berry (Aux.)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION -3 years

Angela Carlson              Judith Butler
Diane Mason                 Ivy Gram
Tricia Harris               Laura Lane

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH -3 years

Vanessa Forsythe            James Hopkins
Bill Dunn, Jr.               Peggy Clark
Mary Steeves                John Tibbets
Roger Beaudet               Roger Frye
Pat Beaudet

MUSIC COMMITTEE -3 years

Janet Yurkus                 Ruth Russo
Loraine Geraway

AUDITORS -1 year

Peter Masucci                Stuart Smith
Don Potter
FLOWER COMMITTEE -3 years
Corleen Rinne
Margaret Zompetti

Dorothy Holden

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE -3 years
Jeffrey Mower
Douglas Sinclair
Lenny Aberg
Christine Wiggin
Deborah Marino
Marcia Fitzgerald

(ad hoc committee on Long Range Giving):
Allan Christensen
Robert Blomberg
Connie Anick

NOMINATING COMMITTEE -2 years
Susan Kinell
Cheryl Ravenscroft

Rebecca Cordeiro
Alice Olsen

COUNCIL-AT-LARGE -3 years
Steve Bickford
Richard Holmes

Ed Eaton

TEACHING PARISH COMMITTEE -3 years
Jean Padula
Joanne Bickford
Laura Lane (Christian Education)

Marion Davis (Diaconate)
Jennifer Cole (Diaconate)

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE -2 years
Lorraine Neill
Marjorie Fougere
Cheryl Tessier

Sandra Stetson
Barbara McElman

OFFICERS -1 year
Moderator: Joanne Bickford
Clerk: Betty Hollis
Asst. Clerk: Alice Heath
Treasurer: Myra Meier

Asst. Treas.: Marian Hopkins
Collector: Kent Callahan
Assist. Coll.: Janet Wattu

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
Deborah Mower
Brian Pilling

Lisa Rose

CRADLE ROLL SUPERVISOR
Sue Pilling
DELEGATE TO MA CONFERENCE AND
CENTRAL ASSOCIATION

Steve Bickford  Larry Stier

325th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Arnold Goodrich  Betty Hollis
Rheta Gennari  Jean Dunn
Peter Palmgren  Janet Yurkus
Continuing History of the First Church in Marlborough (Congregational) UCC

On the Occasion of its Three Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary

1991 – 2016

Church and Parish Hall Photo taken in 2012
Rev. Richard Weber  
1993 - 2000

Rev. Deborah Loomis Lafond  
2002 - 2006

Rev. M. Elizabeth “Betsy” Waters  
2006 – 2010

Rev. Kazimierz (Kaz) Bem  
2011 -
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This 2016 fourth edition of the *History of the First Church in Marlborough (Congregational) United Church of Christ* was possible only with the assistance of the many people who aided in the research, writing, editing, and publication. Throughout the process, I gained a new appreciation for Hazel O. Warren, Alice Heath and Rheta M. Gennari, who wrote the prior editions, and for the legacy they left us.

Thank you to Pastor Kaz Bem for the new articles about four of our missionaries; and to Jean Padula, our historian until her death in 2005, for the description of our beautiful stained glass windows.

Many thanks to those who reviewed the first rough draft of this update, searched their memories, and suggested additional history to be researched and assimilated. They were Joan Beauchemin, Cliff Fenton, Arnold Goodrich, Sr., Anne (Betty) Hollis, Beverly Hollis Fiske, Gary Hollis, Marian Hopkins, Laura Lane, Carol MacEwen, Deborah and Francis Marino, Barbara Stone, Robert Vail, and Janet and Richard Yurkus.

The electronic records generation came of age during the time span of this update. Computer floppies, diskettes, disks and drives became obsolete and were discarded. Determined to include only history based on written records, not memories, the most time consuming and arduous part of updating this history was locating the records of the past 25 years. While Annual Reports were kept, Criers, which most completely reflected the life of the church, were not. For most years, only the paper copies survived and finding them was truly a treasure hunt, underscoring the importance of keeping and safeguarding paper backups of historically significant happenings and documents. I am especially appreciative to Cliff Fenton for his excavation of church storage places, to Joan Beauchemin, Rev. Betsy Waters and Sandy Stetson for sharing Criers from their personal files, and to Jeremey Crocker for his research of treasurer records.

The editorial team of Laura Lane, Deborah Marino, Barbara Stone, Robert Vail, and Janet Yurkus deserve special recognition for their guidance and input through many drafts, to Fred Haas for editing the final document for readability and to David Youngstrom for scanning and reformatting the entire prior history book for printing.

Cynthia D. Vail, Editor

Printing of the 2016 edition of the *History of First Church in Marlborough* was made possible by contributions to the First Church Memorial Fund.
First Church in Marlborough has had twenty-five very busy and productive years since the last update to our history in 1991. Society has changed markedly in these years. A decline in attendance at all mainline Protestant churches has been observed. Sunday Blue Laws are a thing of the past, and many folks work all weekend. Sports are increasingly scheduled for Sundays, and our children and teens have greater difficulty attending services. Nonetheless, First Church has survived it all and prospered in many ways. Our membership numbers are slowly growing and we enjoy a greater diversity in our membership than ever before. Many different backgrounds, ethnicities, and a wide age span are visible. A thriving enthusiasm for learning and fulfilling the Mission of First Church are obvious everywhere.

The corporate structure of our church was altered considerably when we voted to change our by-laws in 2015 to adopt the Ministry Model officially and do away with the expanded committee structure that was used for decades in the church. The Sunday School has used new and diverse techniques to teach and stimulate our children. Our liturgy is often altered to enhance the worship experience and to include us in the world-wide Christian community. We look forward to the future and the opportunities that await us!

As we celebrate our 350th anniversary we are thankful for all our 214 members and we would especially like to honor those who have been members for forty years or more:

| Byrne, Ernestine | 1953 | McElman, Barbara | 1966 |
| Fiske, Beverly    | 1956 | McElman, Donald  | 1966 |
| Stone, Barbara    | 1961 | Beauchemin, Joan | 1967 |
| Nott, Peter       | 1962 | Provencher, William | 1967 |
| Hollis, Gary      | 1964 | Holmes, Richard | 1971 |
| Vail, Cynthia     | 1964 | Cooke, Elizabeth | 1973 |
| Vail, Robert      | 1964 | Cooke, Frederick | 1973 |
| Fenton, Clifford  | 1965 | Saart, James     | 1976 |
| MacEwen, Carol    | 1966 | Saart, Roberta   | 1976 |
CONTINUING HISTORY OF FIRST CHURCH IN MARLBOROUGH
(Congregational) United Church of Christ 1991-2016

1991 continued from previous update

During 1991 First Church celebrated its 325th anniversary with many events including an updating of the History of First Church, a music festival, a pot luck Supper, a mammoth auction, a historical pageant and dinner, as well as a special service at Springhill Cemetery, where some of the early members and ministers are buried; a strawberry festival, a float in the annual Marlborough Labor Day Parade and culminating in an anniversary ball. The Anniversary Committee was chaired by Arnold Goodrich and included Rheta Gennari, Jean Dunn, Betty Hollis, Peter Palmgren and Janet Yurkus.

Rev. Wayne Pruitt celebrated his 10th year with First Church and his 15th in the ministry.

A mammoth auction chaired by Arnie Goodrich and Cliff Fenton held on February 23, 1991, raised over $9,000.

Alice Blakeley, who died in 1990, left a bequest establishing the Alice Blakeley Trust in the amount of $98,100. Her bequest specified that the income from the donation be used to provide scholarships to college-bound students of the families of First Church. The first scholarships were awarded in May of 1993 to Jennifer Berry, Susan Callahan, Robert Collins, Jr., Kristen Hopkins, Kelly O’Leary and James Stott. Scholarships continue to be awarded annually. As of 2015, the trust had awarded 283 scholarships, totaling $232,800, while leaving the principal, annually adjusted for inflation, intact.

A handicapped bathroom was built near the Bolton Street hallway and the upper and lower narthex were renovated.

The two Bolton Street stairways from the Bolton Street hallway to the second floor were carpeted by the Women’s Fellowship.

Daniel Shahan completed his second year as minister-in-training and left to further his studies elsewhere.

David Congdon, a first-year seminarian, began his minister-in-training year in September. Rev. Mary Aberg became his supervisor while he worked with our youth groups and Sunday School.

Music Director Natalie Sarrazin resigned due to relocation and Jane Whitney Haman became Organist/Choir Director.
In September, the Children’s Cottage Center ended their rental due to financial constraints.

A Bequest of over $150,000 from Marion Earnshaw established the Earnshaw Trust, the income from which still benefits First Church today.

1992

At the March Annual Meeting, a By-Law change added the requirement of a two-thirds vote at a business meeting of the congregation to spend any principal of endowment funds.

Rev. Mary A. Aberg resigned effective July 15, 1992, after three and one-half years as our Associate Pastor. She became Interim Pastor at the United Church in Clinton, Massachusetts.

*A first! Our first Annual Labor Day BBQ was held.

In September, Paul Thistle was appointed Music Director, replacing Jane Haman who resigned.

A new mission statement was accepted at a special meeting on September 20. It read as follows:

* Welcome all to a positive environment for personal and spiritual growth through the worship of God.
* Foster a caring, friendly and inviting ministry of people who are committed to knowing God, God’s will and the teachings of Jesus Christ.
* Reach out to all with faith and love.

At a special meeting held on November 1, the congregation approved the purchase of a new Wicks pipe organ to replace our 1915 Austin pipe organ, using up to $170,000 of unrestricted funds to be paid back by a Capital/Organ Fund Campaign. The twenty rank, two manual organ custom designed by Wicks Organ Company was designed to allow for future expansion of the range of colors. There is potential for the addition of a commanding solo trumpet stop and solo flute on the great manual, for an 8-foot flute celeste on the swell, and mixture on the pedal. Only the casework, façade, and twelve 16-foot open wood bass pipes were retained from the 1915 original installation.

Brian Jones, a well-known organ recitalist, played the organ at its dedication program on October 24, 1993. The installation was completed with the connection of the carillon to the belfry speakers in 1994. The Organ Search Committee members were chaired by Richard Yurkus and
included, Joanne Bickford, Fran Charland, Bob Collins, Mike Gram, Jane Haman, Ruth Russo, Roberta Saart, Peter Stott and Janet Yurkus.

The Ladies Benevolent Society est. 1818, merged into the Women’s Fellowship and ceased to function as an independent body.

*A first! In December, the Guardian Angels Christmas Gift Mission was begun in conjunction with the First Congregational Church in Revere, Massachusetts. Rev. Nicholas Granitsas, who grew up in First Church, was Pastor in Revere. His mother Niki Granitsas, a member of First Church Marlborough, coordinated the Marlborough donations. The program came to be known as Santa’s Helpers and later as Stars and Angels served Marlborough as well.

1993

Church Council presented multiple By-Law revisions at the March Annual Meeting. They included the addition of the Scholarship Committee and the provision that confirmands were members.

The March “Bring the Pipes to Life” Auction raised in excess of $21,000 toward the Organ Fund as reported by Peter Masucci, Chair.

In May, the interior of the Parish Hall was repainted and the bathrooms refurbished courtesy of the Women’s Fellowship.

Rev. Dr. Wayne Pruitt resigned as pastor effective August 30 completing twelve years of ministry at First Church. During his tenure, he earned his Doctor of Ministry from the Ministry to Marriage and Family program at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Nancy Crandall joined us as Organist/Choir Director to replace Paul Thistle in October.

Brazilian Assembly of God began renting our Sanctuary on Saturday and Sunday night, continuing until they moved to their own space in 1995.

1994

In September 1993, Rev. Richard L. Weber came to us as Interim Pastor. A graduate of Boston University School of Theology, he was ordained by the United Methodist Church. His twenty-five years of experience in pastoral ministry included settled pastorates in three Pennsylvania Methodist churches and interim assignments in Vermont and Massachusetts.
Early in 1994, a petition circulated among the congregation with approximately 140 signatures asked that Rev. Weber be considered as our permanent pastor. Since such a call would involve breaking of the interim covenant between the church not to call the interim as settled pastor and the pastor not to accept if asked, a series of information meetings were held and a survey conducted by the Church Council. Rev. Weber wrote a letter to the Church Council on March 7 indicating his willingness to serve if called. A Special Meeting of the voting members of First Church was held on March 10, 1994, to call him as settled Senior Pastor. After much discussion, including input from a representative of UCC, the final vote was 103 in favor, 14 in opposition and 2 abstentions. It was not until February 19, 1998, that the Central Association Church and Ministry Committee of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ granted him dual standing so that he could be formally installed as Senior Pastor on May 31 of that year. His UCC dual standing lasted only as long as he served First Church.

*A first! Ash Wednesday and Good Friday services were added.

In April, Gail H. Kendrick was called as Associate Pastor. Rev. Kendrick brought a broad and deep life experience as a middle school teacher and small business owner as well as two years with the Evangelical Congregational Church of Harvard, Massachusetts, while finishing her seminary education at Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Massachusetts. She was ordained in the Union Church of Stow on June 12. Her formal installation as Associate Pastor was held on May 31, 1998.

*A first! In May, the Back to School Backpack was launched to provide needy children with necessary school supplies and fall jackets.

On May 21, the First Annual Antique and Collectible Show raised over $1700 toward organ replacement costs.

Vision 2000, a series of envisioning seminars were started to explore what our church would be like at the turn of the century in the year 2000.

A $40,000 loan collateralized by a First Church savings account was used to remove the asbestos from the church and parsonage, replace the church boiler and burner, and install doors in the heating pipe tunnels under the Parish Hall, so the recirculating heating pipes could be reinsulated.

*A first! Oct 16, First Church participated in the Walk for Hunger for the first time.
The belfry was evaluated structurally and it was found prudent to “ring” the bell by a rope attached to the clapper but not to “swing” the bell back and forth.

Trustees formed an Investment Committee to look into increasing returns on our investments.

1995

In January, Pastor Weber grew a mustache and told the congregation that when 250 people attended a church service he would shave it off. It came off in March.

A new sketch of our building was created and given to us by Peter Whitman, artist and architect, in appreciation of our hosting the Musicians of the Old Post Rd. It was used for many years on Sunday bulletins, stationery, annual reports, and for the cover of this 2016 history.

The church library was reorganized, expanded and relocated to the Temple Room by Sandra Callahan, Dolly Potter, Chris Wiggin and Nancy Gill.

*A first! The first Vacation Bible Club was held during the summer.

Our underground heating oil tank was removed; the Marlborough Fire Department certified no leakage or environmental damage had occurred. New tanks were installed in the basement.

In April “Auction II the Sequel” raised over $14,000. One-half went to the Organ Fund and the other half to reduce the budget deficit. The First Auction was in 1991.

At a special meeting on October 29, the congregation voted to change the fiscal year to July 1 through June 30 starting July 1, 1996, to coincide with the church year. At the same time, terms of office changed to begin on the first day of July, following election.

1996

Scott Thomas Davis became a student-in-care student minister under the guidance of Pastor Gail Kendrick. He was ordained at First Church on October 18, 1998, after he was called to the Grosse Point United Church, Grosse Point Farm, Michigan.
In February, the parsonage furnace caught fire in the early morning hours. Quick teamwork by the Trustees changed the heating system from gas to oil and the Pastor’s family was able to move back in within 24 hours.

*A first! A Child Safe Policy was developed and implemented thanks to the efforts of Dave Martin, Kathy Connolly, Brian Pilling and Pastor Gail and the Church Council. The safety and well-being of our children while in the church is monitored using the policy and procedures outlined in the Child Safe Policy handbook. The policy was revised in 1999 and in 2002 when it was updated by Church Council and Christian Education people to include a background check for some positions.

The Multimedia Committee became an independent group to reflect their expanded operations beyond the weekly cable television broadcasts.

*A first! The first computer network was installed thanks to the work of Floyd Rinne and the financial backing of the Women’s Fellowship. First Church’s first email accounts were established in October of 1997.

A new pictorial directory was published.

1997

*A first! The Outreach Committee started the Bunny Basket Program to provide Easter gift baskets to children served by the Marlborough Food Pantry.

We were saddened to learn of the death on September 30, 1997, of Rev. John Morrow who pastored us from 1961 to 1972.

*A first! The First Pilgrim Youth Fellowship (grades 5-8) overnight lock-in was held in the church.

A Bake, Yard and Plant Sale chaired by Dotty Clark and Jeanne Cummings raised over $3,600 toward the organ debt.

1998

In January, Mary Lou Weber, Pastor Weber’s wife, became Music Director and in October Jim Duncan became our organist, replacing Dr. Nancy Crandall who resigned the previous year.

The resignation of Associate Pastor Rev. Gail Kendrick was accepted with deep regret as of November 8. Pastor Gail left us with an enduring
appreciation of the God-incidents in our lives. She became Senior Pastor at the Congregational Church of Townsend, Massachusetts.

1999

In January, a twenty-year Lease of the Union Common to the City was signed. The lease was renegotiated in 2009.

In March, Rev. Dr. Gary Shahinian was called as ¾ time Interim Associate pastor. Dr. Gary taught philosophy at Redeemer College in Ontario and Dordt College in Iowa. Most recently he had been Interim Associate Pastor at Pakachaog Church in Auburn, Massachusetts, and Pastor at the Armenian Church of the Martyrs in Worcester, Massachusetts. He resigned to accept a settled pastorate at Park Congregational Church in Worcester in March of 2000.

Dave Martin, a church member, began his ministerial studies at Andover Newton Theological School in 1996. Beginning in September of 1998 he served as student minister at the Harvard Evangelical Congregational Church UCC in Harvard, Massachusetts. In March of 1999, the Deacons of First Church voted to begin a student-in-care relationship with him in support of his call to ordained ministry. He was called as Associate Pastor at the Highland United Church of Christ in Highland, Illinois in 2001. Both his Ecclesiastical Council on June 27, 2001, and Ordination on October 7, 2001, were held at First Church.

On April 25, First Church members joined the 432 churches of the Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ in Worcester to celebrate The Mass Conference’s 200th Anniversary Worship Celebration.

The fourth volume of church records was put on microfilm and acid-free paper.

During the summer, the Demolish the Debt fundraiser raised over $1,500 toward paying the organ cost.

The bell tower and cupola was restored utilizing $8,000 from Women’s Fellowship and maintenance & repair funds.

At a special meeting on October 3, the proposed purchase of the factory building behind the church at 31 Springhill Avenue failed to gain the two-thirds vote necessary to expend endowment funds.
2000

Rev. Richard Weber resigned effective April 2, citing that his views of the ministry and his desired direction for the church had changed and were no longer compatible with First Church. He was given 13 weeks paid vacation and sabbatical time, as well as use of the parsonage until July, when he would start a new position at the Methodist Church of Sharpsville, Pennsylvania. To assist the members in resolving the conflict within the congregation following Rev. Weber’s resignation, conflict counseling meetings were led by Rev. Karen Nell Smith of “From Conflict to Community” throughout the year.

In April, Rev. Frederick Rhines was called as Interim Pastor. He was a 1982 graduate of Andover Newton Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree for ministry and later trained as an Intentional Interim through the National Interim Ministry Network. He served with us until July 14, 2002.

In May, Dr. Robert P. Eaton returned as Music/Choir Director and organist, replacing MaryLou Weber and Jim Duncan who had resigned.

In June, Rev. Jane Wenninger was hired as part time Interim Associate Pastor. Pastor Jane resigned in July of 2001 to relocate to Houston, Texas.

Chalice Hymnal, copyright 1995 by Chalice Press, was approved as the new pew hymnal to replace the Pilgrim Hymnal. They were purchased using special memorial donations.

The oldest church record book 1704-1802 was restored at the Document Preservation Center in Andover.

2001

In March, Auction 2001, chaired by Dotty Clark, was a success earning over $16,000!

After a study of the condition of the parsonage and the cost to repair and/or modernize it, the congregation voted on July 6 to sell it for $252,000. The sale proceeds were invested in the First Church in Marlboro Pastoral Housing Fund to be used only to support the pastor of First Church as the parsonage was a donation to the church for that purpose.
The Back to School Backpack Program was launched in 1994 to provide needy school aged children in Marlborough school supplies, including a backpack and warm jacket. The program was renamed the Katy Mahoney Backpack Program in 2001 in memory of Katy Mahoney, a child of the church who lost her five-year battle with cancer at the young age of eight. Katy was an old soul who knew how important it was to a child's self-esteem to start school with the items other children had.

In the spring, a new Sanctuary roof was installed. The $16,506 of the $25,800 cost was raised through a Buy a Shingle campaign chaired by Ed Eaton.

In September, in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks, several members of the congregation arranged to open our church, providing music and prayer materials at noon on Friday, September 14. Nearly fifty worshippers, mostly from the community, sought the comfort of our Sanctuary.

Spaghetti Suppers began and are ongoing. They have been conducted through the years by various groups within the congregation, including the Joyful Ringers, Women’s and Men’s Fellowships.

2002

*A first! First Woman Senior Pastor. On June 16, 2002 Rev. Deborah Anne Loomis Lafond was called as Senior Pastor. A graduate of Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts, with a B.A. in Business Administration and Psychology, and more than 20 years of lay ministry and graduate work at Andover Newton Theological School and Boston College, she received her Master of Divinity degree from Boston University School of Theology. Ordained in 1998, her previous pastorate was at First Congregational Church in Princeton, Massachusetts. Pastor Lafond started her ministry at First Church on July 16, 2002. At her formal Installation on February 9, 2003, she was presented a stole hand crafted by Laura Lane from pieces of fabric given by over sixty members of the congregation. The idea of the stole was conceived by Sandy Wahl and the swatches represented meaningful moments in the lives of the givers.

Historian Jean Padula completed copying all birth, death, and marriage records from all church record books and put them in a notebook to assist visitors looking for genealogical information.

*A first! Our domain name www.firstchurchnet.com was purchased, in April, by computer director Floyd Rinne.
2003

A new pictorial directory was published.

By-Law changes approved at a special meeting on January 26 included clarification of the voting rights stating that only members eighteen-years-old or over could be officers of the church or vote at any meeting held by the church in its corporate capacity. A second By-Law change specified that the officers of the church shall be Members of the Board of Trustees, Moderator, Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Collector and Assistant Collector.

A new Stair Glide from Bolton Street foyer to the Sanctuary was installed, financed entirely with restricted funds.

A kitchen stove vent hood, exhaust ductwork and fire suppression system was funded by the Women’s Fellowship.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake suppers became part of our Lenten tradition.

2004

In January, in spite of the efforts of a human resource professional to resolve the personnel conflict between Rev. Deborah Lafond and music director Dr. Robert Eaton, he resigned. The Chancel Choir simultaneously disbanded in support of Dr. Eaton. Walking in the Way, a group of mostly ordained clergy experienced in conflict resolution, was brought into the church by the Church Council to work with the congregation, establishing a conflict resolution and transformation system to resolve future conflicts in the early stages.

Abby Ginnetti began as our Interim Organist. Under her guidance, a new choir of volunteers was established and debuted on Easter Sunday.

In March, through the vision and leadership of Steve Kotsopoulos, a praise band called the “UpPraisers” was formed to introduce an up-beat musical element to our worship service, in effort to appeal to the younger members of the congregation as well as those young at heart. It was a truly inter-generational instrumental and vocal ensemble that included participants from age eight to 80. Their first performance was on Youth Sunday in March. In October of 2010, acknowledging their music style as a Christian Rock Group, they changed their name to “covenant.”. The group disbanded in May 2014.
The steam heating lines (pipes) under the flower room and in the tunnels under the Parish Hall leaked, causing significant damage to the first floor rooms. The damage required new or refinished floors in the flower room, three classrooms, and two hallways in the classroom wing, as well as plaster wall repairs to the flower room, the Bolton Street hall, and the chair glide stairway. Our insurance covered the $28,000 cost of repairing the damage but not the pipes. The extensive repairs inspired the donation of new cabinets and counter in the flower room, and chandeliers in the main hallway.

A $17,655 bequest from the estate of Frances Gage was used to establish the Gage Reserve Fund. The funds were used first for repair of the leaking steam pipes, and then to hire a consultant to recommend alternatives to the aging steam system.

*A first! The Prayer Shawl Ministry was begun by the Outreach Committee. With prayer and meditation, singly or in groups, First Church knitters and crocheters made shawls for cancer patients. While it began as an outreach to cancer patients, it grew to minister to all in need of spiritual comfort, including those in South Africa and New Orleans, Louisiana.

First Church joined the United Church of Christ national “God is Still Speaking” Campaign to heighten awareness of UCC churches philosophy of welcome.

2005

In February, member Russ Goliger became our Music Director. He brought to us his extensive musical experience in directing and conducting, as well as his talent as a vocalist. His background included a baccalaureate in Musical Theater from Syracuse University.

Special meetings, held in January and May, authorized the Trustees to spend $166,000 to convert the heating system from steam to hot water. The conversion was deemed necessary due to the frequent and costly repairs to the old steam pipes within the walls and under the Parish Hall foundation. In response to the significant unbudgeted cost of the heating repairs, an anonymous group from First Church offered to match all contributions. As a result of the Challenge Fund, $50,000 was raised to offset the costs of the conversion.

When Hurricane Katrina devastated St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, on August 29, 2005, our organist Abby Ginnetti’s sister Linda and her family of four adults and two teenagers fled their home with only the
clothes on their backs. First Church adopted the family and almost immediately collected and shipped over 80 pounds of clothing, linens, sundries, and new bibles to their one-room shelter in Baton Rouge. In the following weeks, we sent checks totaling over $4,000 to assist them.

In November, a $4,156 bequest was received from the Abbie P. Dearth Trust. Mrs. Dearth died in 1943. The funds were discovered during the clearing of her deceased attorney’s account. She was related by marriage to the family of John Edson Warren.

The roofs over the Parish Hall and the Temple Room and offices on the Bolton Street side were replaced.

2006

*A first! In March, members Pat & Roger Beaudet embarked on what was to be the first of seven lengthy mission trips over five years to the Hurricane Katrina ravished areas of Buras and Arabi, Louisiana and Picayune, Mississippi.

Rev. Deborah Loomis Lafond resigned effective March 12 citing the myriad challenges and expectations facing her ministry and that she and church leadership had reached a philosophical impasse about the future mission and direction of the church.

Rev. Gail Miller bridged the pastoral gap during March and April by preaching on Sundays, including Easter, and covering emergencies for six weeks.

Rev. M. Elizabeth (Betsy) Waters was called as Interim pastor on May 1. She earned a Masters of Divinity in Parish Ministry degree from Andover Newton Theological School in 1995. Her secular experience included twenty-one years as a school psychologist for grades Pre-Kindergarten through twelve, ending in 2003. In 2007, the members of First Church voted to change her status from Interim to Revitalization Pastor, as she led us thru a period of spiritual renewal and the shifting of our church structure from a committee to ministry based one.

The Women’s Fellowship sponsored new flooring in the Parish Hall, kitchen, Bolton Street hallway, mailbox hallway, Treasurer’s office and all adjacent closets. The Fellowship paid $18,000; in addition Abbie Dearth’s bequest of $4,156 and $1,000 from the Spaghetti Supper profits went toward the project.
A defibrillator was purchased and placed in the Bolton Street hallway to enable rapid response in cases of cardiac arrest. A plaque was attached acknowledging funds used for its purchase, maintenance, and ongoing volunteer training. Funds were donated in the memories of Barbara Barnicle, Fred Fitzgerald, Florence Hall, Cynthia Hastings, Iona Jackman, Dr. Raymond Johnson, Sara Johnson, Irving “Bud” Miller, Mildred Morse, and Beverly Provencher.

The First Church sign on Union Common, at the corner of Main and Bolton Streets, was replaced with a new sign, paid for by memorial funds.

*A first! Our first Annual Luminary Memorial service was held on November 5, memorializing our loved ones and Massachusetts veterans killed in the Iraq war. A total of 211 luminaries lit the wall surrounding the front of the church and the walkway leading up to the church. The tradition continued through 2012.

2007

In February, eight people connected to First Church, led by Rev. Betsy Waters, went on the first Work Camp Trip to New Orleans, Louisiana. Dormitoried at Good Shepherd UCC, in Metarie, and using donated supplies, they helped rehab areas destroyed by Hurricane Katrina and worked in the schools to foster resilience in the children. The work camp missions continued annually through 2013.

A new pictorial directory was published.

Before receiving her call to ministry, Nancy Gill was a member of First Church for fourteen years and served as our secretary for five of those years. Ordained as Rev. Lee Atherton on April 29, 2007 at the Evangelical Congregational Church of Westborough, Massachusetts, she began her ordained ministry at First Church in Sterling, Massachusetts, as its Youth Pastor. She stated that while in seminary, as God gave new names to Abram, Jacob, Saul and Simon, she answered God's call to become Lee Mary Atherton, as her life too was transformed by God.

A bequest was received from the estate of Natalie Gustafson in the amount of $125,000. Received at a time of great need, $59,000 was used to pay down the heating system loan.

In September, Roberta Saart, director and founder of the Joyful Ringers handbell choir stepped down as director after over twenty years of her special music ministry.
Doreen Oughton began her student minister year with us in September supervised by Rev. Betsy and member Rev. Phyllis Frechette. After ordination, she was called to First Congregational Church of Leicester, Massachusetts, in August 2008.

Members Dan Brevik and Suzanne deMillar gave a large collection of books related to becoming the church of the 21st century. Their generosity greatly expanded our library to over 500 books. It was relocated to newly built bookcases in the classroom hallway.

*A first! The 23rd Psalm outreach ministry/fundraiser was introduced to First Church by Marcia Fitzgerald. Each box contained a handmade bracelet and a color coordinated copy of the 23rd psalm and sold for $25.

Jim Duncan returned as organist, having previously served as organist from 1998 to 2000. Jim is a member of the American Theater Organ Society and came to us with more than 50 years experience as a church organist. He and his wife Linda, also a theater organist, treated us to piano/organ duets on a number of occasions.

2008

*A first! An email prayer list was established to enable the members to request and receive prayers throughout the week. This operated in addition to the established telephone prayer list.

In January, Diane Burke joined the Joyful Ringers as their director, bringing a wealth of knowledge playing English handbells. While we were her first directing position, she had seventeen years’ experience ringing with multiple local bell choirs. She was also a charter member of the Merrimack Valley Ringers, an auditioned choir.

*A first! Building Use Ministry Team of Bill Davis, Chip Horne, and George Pellerin was formed to format contracts for the groups using our facility and to work to more fully utilize the building.

Repairs were made to the roof and walls in the Sanctuary and Parish Hall caused by water damage over the winter. The Sanctuary, balcony, choir area, organ pipes, and ceilings were repainted using the balance of the Gustafson Fund. At the same time the Lexan covering the Sanctuary stained glass windows was replaced and the window casings were repaired, all paid for by the Helen Doyle Memorial Fund of $21,000 donated by her son Jack Watson in 2005. During the painting, the congregation met for worship in the Parish Hall.
In August, Rev. Sarah Hubbell joined us as Pastor of New Opportunities. She worked with our Sunday School and coordinated special events, including a Labyrinth Sunday and New Orleans mission trip activities until her departure in June of 2009. During her time with us, she created and implemented a multi-church mission project called “We All Have Stories to Tell.”

New carpeting donated by Jean Dunn was installed in the downstairs classroom hallways.

A temporary Nominating Committee change to the By-Laws was voted to suspend the committee system for two years to enable the church to evaluate the ministry model of organization. The By-Law suspension was extended in 2010 and again in 2014.

First Church was introduced to Worcester Fellowship (Massachusetts) an "outdoor" or "street" church by our member Bob Knox. Under his leadership, First Church provided lunches, socks, eggs for Easter and annual Christmas parties.

2009

In January, First Church and the City of Marlborough renegotiated the lease allowing city use of the Union Common for purposes of a public park. New provisions included a ninety-day termination notice for either party and gave the city a right of first refusal option if the church desired to sell the property. The lease expiration date was December 31, 2019.

In January, a new fire alarm system was installed in Parish Hall. The project included an upgraded system in the Sanctuary and bathroom facilities.

In March, Men’s Fellowship was formed by founder Cliff Fenton.

FallFest, organized by Nancy Battaglino, was held on Union Common. Participants, in addition to our members, were our renters Assembly of God Shalom, Boy Scout Troop 41, and Indian Dance Troupe “Nrityanjali.” Funds raised were $2,500.

2010

In May, Rev. Dr. M. Elizabeth “Betsy” Waters ended her revitalization pastorate with us, leaving behind a healed and energized congregation to go forward with our search for a settled pastor. During her tenure with
us, she earned her Doctor of Ministry from the doctoral program in preaching at the Chicago Theological Seminary.

In June, Rev. Mary Poole was called as Bridge Pastor and served until July 2011, when the Search Committee selected a candidate for settled pastor.

In September, Maebelle Rose Baldwin left the church a generous bequest of $286,795. She was a lifelong member of First Church and served in many offices and committees. On the occasion of her 100th birthday in January 2007, 150 people attended a special birthday gala for her at the church, and the city declared “Maebelle Baldwin Day.” She was 101 at the time of her death.

This year was the 350th anniversary of the City of Marlborough and of our gathering as a church in 1660. We took part in many of the city’s celebrations and hosted some of the activities in our building.

In December, the first pew was removed from the front of the Sanctuary to provide more room for music groups, weddings, and funerals.

Also in December, Miss Marion L. Davis, a member for sixty-eight years and active participant in First Church life, died in January. She left First Church a bequest of over $10,000.

2011

In February, Herob Presbyterian Reformed Church rented our Sanctuary and Parish Hall for their church services and activities. Their tenancy continued until 2014.

First Church “Rewards” Fund Raising Program, led by Linda Warren, began. The church received commissions on store gift certificates sold at face value. The program continued to provide significant income for many years to come.

In April, Caring Ministry was formed to assist the pastor and congregation with visits, phone calls, transportation, and other kinds of support.

*A first! In June, Kazimierz Bem – or Kaz, as he wanted to be called – was called as our Senior Pastor at a special meeting on June 5, 2011. A Polish citizen, Rev. Bem received a Doctorate in International Law in the Netherlands and practiced Refugee Law until he followed his call to ministry. He served as student pastor for three years at the First Church
of Christ UCC in New Haven (Center Church), Connecticut, while he earned an M. Div. from Yale in May of 2011 and a Master of Sacred Theology in 2012. A delegation from First Church rented a bus and attended his ordination at the Center Church on September 11, 2011. Guests, friends and family came from all over the globe. He was formally installed as Pastor of First Church on June 10, 2012. This was the first time the church called an openly gay pastor. The congregation stood at 176 members when he was called.

First Church joined the world of social networking on Twitter and by forming a group and public page on Facebook, the largest social network in the world.

The tank type hot water heater in the basement was replaced by an “on demand” water heater installed on the first floor in an effort to reduce costs. Many donations to defray the cost were received, including those from the Women’s Fellowship for $3,500 and the Men’s Fellowship for $1,000.

The sewer line from the church to Springhill Avenue was replaced with an improved “clean out” access.

Mrs. Jean Dunn, a long-serving member of First Church and a founding member and ringer of the Joyful Ringers English Hand Bell Choir, passed away. The many donations made in Jean’s memory were used to erect practice mirrors in the music room.

2012

A new pictorial directory was published.

In May, By-Laws were amended to allow members younger than eighteen years of age to vote at corporate meetings. Due to legal ramifications, however, those under 18 could not be allowed to be an officer of the church or to vote to dissolve the corporation.

In July, all sixty-six Sanctuary pew sections (including the balcony) were repainted. The project was paid for by donations received from individuals and the Men’s Fellowship through an “adopt” a pew campaign.

Hundreds of lights and light fixtures were replaced with new low energy lighting. A large portion of the cost was paid by National Grid ($7,594); the remainder by donations from the Men’s Fellowship ($2,000), the Robert Stetson Memorial Fund, and the Earl and Lorraine Neil Memorial
Fund. Follow up figures after six months indicated a savings of twelve percent on electric costs.

In August, custom drapes and new hardware for the Parish Hall windows were donated by the Women’s Fellowship.

In September, FallFest 2, chaired by Kim Beauchemin, raised approximately $1800 – despite uncooperative weather.

2013

*A first! In March, Holy Saturday Easter Vigil was held for the first time, thereby completing the Holy Week of services.

A high-efficiency oil burner was installed at a cost of $9,300. The new burner was expected to reduce oil consumption by twenty percent, thus paying for itself in just over two years.

Income received from rental of our facility for the fiscal year July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013 was $25,124, greatly helping our financial position.

2014

When Jeremey Crocker was appointed Interim Treasurer effective February 1, 2014 prior to being elected Treasurer at the annual meeting of May 2014, he undertook a major overhaul of the financial records of the church in order to bring them into compliance with generally accepted accounting principles and standards for not-for-profit organizations. The project involved restating financial records for all fiscal years after the fiscal year 1994. The endeavor also required review of ledger books as far back as the 1970s (and in one case, information from 1666) in order to find and present correct historical information. In all, it took over 120 hours to complete.

At a special meeting on June 29, 2014, Rev. Phyllis Hamilton Frechette was voted “Honorary Pastor Emerita” of First Church in recognition of her continuing contributions to the ministry of First Church since she became a member in 2008. In addition to preaching during the absences of Pastors Waters, Poole and Bem, she served on Rev. Waters Parish Project Group. In 2011 she performed her Lenten monologue “Woman at the Well.” A graduate of Framingham State College, Massachusetts, with a Bachelor of Science in Education, later earning a Master of Education, she taught grades K-3 for 32 years. After retirement from teaching she graduated from Andover Newton Theological School in
1995, was ordained in the United Church of Christ in Canton, Massachusetts at the age of 75 and served there as Associate Pastor for 11 years. Upon retirement the Canton church designated her “Associate Pastor Emerita.” In 2011 Rev. Frechette’s book Remembering Millington, A Village Swallowed Up by the Quabbin Reservoir was published.

Diane Urwiller was voted Student-In-Care by the Diaconate in June of 2014. A science teacher by profession, Diane received a Bachelor of Arts in Biology with minors in Chemistry and Education from Framingham State College in 1971. She served many positions in the church lay ministry. She was student minister at the Union Evangelical Church, UCC of Hopedale, Massachusetts, in 2014-2015. Diane graduated from Andover Newton Theological School in May 2015 with a Masters of Divinity degree. As of this writing she is resident Chaplain at Jackson Memorial Hospital, Miami, FL for the 2015-2016 year, while she completes her ordination requirements.

2015

A new set of By-Laws was approved by the congregation at the May 3rd Annual Meeting. Presented by the Church Council, the updated By-Laws replaced the committee and board system of governance with the Ministry Model, added the Pastor as an officer of the church, included the Treasurer as a Trustee and eliminated the “inactive member” designation.

In June 2015, Russ Goliger, a 21 year member of First Church and our Music Director since 2005, restarted his discernment process toward ordained ministry. First Church formed a “Local Church Discernment Committee” to affirm and recommend Russ to the MACUCC Committee on Ministry and he was unanimously welcomed back into the process. Originally a student at Andover Newton Theological School, Russ matriculated into the Masters of Divinity degree program at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry in September 2015. Russ had 25 years of experience in Training and Development in corporations and as an independent consultant.

The Trustees and Council agreed to place our oldest records, dating from 1704 to 1900, on permanent loan with the Congregational Library and Archives (CLA) in Boston. Representatives of CLA approached First Church to participate in their “New England Hidden Histories” project. The project seeks to find, preserve, and digitize the earliest records of the Congregational Churches in Massachusetts and New England to make the records available to all online.
The Deacons and Pastor Kaz introduced a new hymnal, *Glory to God*, on Sunday, October 11, 2015. Copyrighted by the Westminster John Knox Press 2013, the hymnal was developed and ratified by the Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song. The majority of the hymnals were paid for by memorial donations.

The Women’s Fellowship voted to finance the replacement of the carpeting in the Sanctuary. The work was completed in 2016.

2016

[The following events were added after the publication of the 1666-2016 printed history.]

The 350th Anniversary Committee led by Pastor Kazimierz Bem and Susan Pellerin, assisted by Joan Campbell, Laurel Hill, Pat Kennedy, Laura Lane, Brenda Quimby, Lorna Taylor, Cindy Vail, Linda Warren and Janet Yurkus, worked throughout the year to present multiple events celebrating First Church’s 350 years.

On February 23, the Congregational Library and Archives and Marlborough Historical Society hosted a lecture in our Sanctuary by Professor Jeff Cooper entitled “Discovering New England’s Hidden Histories in First Church Marlborough and other Congregational Churches in New England.”

On May 15, a Pentecost International Heritage Brunch led by Pat Kennedy and Janet Yurkus, assisted by Laurel Hill, was held in the Parish Hall. Food representing more than 20 nationalities from five continents was shared, demonstrating the wide diversity of our congregation and providing inspiration for the 350th cookbook.

The fourth edition of the “History of First Church,” edited by Cindy Vail and her team, was issued.

On Sunday, May 29, over 100 people from the church and community attended a Remembrance Service and Tour of Spring Hill Cemetery led by Paul Brodeur of the Marlborough Historical Society, Pastor Kaz, and Cindy Vail. A remembrance service was held at the graves of Rev. William Brinsmead, Rev. Robert Breck, Rev. John Goodhue, and Rev. Albert Beaumont. Their graves, as well as those of Edward Hutchinson, the first person buried in the Cemetery, Rev. Edward Warren, missionary to Sri Lanka, and the Goodale family were decorated with geranium plants. The City of Marlborough under the leadership of Department of Public Works commissioner John Ghiloni had restored the Brinsmead table stone and beautified the cemetery in time for our celebration.
Pastor Kaz was invited to preach at the Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers held in the First Parish in Dedham. His sermon was part of a continuous series of sermons preached since the Convention’s founding circa 1692.

The 25th Annual Labor Day BBQ fundraiser was held on the Common offering food and drinks to parade goers.

A picture of our 300th Anniversary Float taken at the 1966 Labor Day parade won a prize in the Marlborough Labor Day photo contest.

A cookbook entitled “Our Best Recipes,” organized and edited by Lorna Taylor, Brenda Quimby, and Linda Hilliard, was published in September as part of our 350th celebration year.

Attended by 286 people, our 350th Anniversary Celebratory Worship Service and reception was held on October 2. The Rev. Dr. Gottfried Locher, president of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, preached the sermon and co-officiated with Pastor Kaz. Under the direction of Music Director Russ Goliger, the Chancel Choir, Joyful Ringers, covenant. music group and instrumentalists Jennifer Bastien, Diane Gilchrest, Timothy Goliger, Sarah Shaw, Christina Rowell and Organist Jim Duncan, joined together to provide magnificent music. Many past ministers of First Church, representatives of the United Church of Christ, City of Marlborough officials and former First Church members traveled from far and near to join in the celebration. The service was led by Pastor Kaz and the Diaconate while the reception was coordinated by Moderator Joan Campbell.

Immediately following our October 2 celebration, Rev. Kaz travelled to Sri Lanka to participate in the 200th anniversary celebration of the school and mission founded by our missionary, Rev. Edward Warren (1786-1818). Rev. Kaz preached at the mission almost 200 years to the day from Rev. Warren’s first sermon in Tellippali.

The “350th Anniversary Black & Gold Gala,” led by Susan Pellerin and Linda Warren with assistance from Laurel Hill was held on October 22nd at Sts. Anargyroi Greek Church in Marlborough and proved a very successful fundraiser. The evening included catered hors d’oeuvres and specialty desserts, a special ‘350’ ice sculpture, live jazz by The Moonlighters, a silent auction and various raffles. We were blessed with generous corporate sponsors, commercial and private donors, as well as the support of members and friends of First Church in Marlborough.

Funds raised from the 350 functions including the sale of 23rd Psalm bracelets made by Marcia Fitzgerald and her team, anniversary coffee mugs,
cookbooks, and history books were instrumental in raising over $14,000, which provided seed money for the “350th Outreach Fund.” The mission of the fund is to provide local, national, and international outreach funding in gratitude toward God. The steering group of the fund consists of the Pastor (ex officio non-voting), the Moderator (ex officio voting), and two church members (voting). Any future members will be approved by the Church Council from church members. Grant proposals from First Church members actively involved in an outreach project for the benefit of Marlborough, the United States, or an international project will be reviewed by the members noted above with a donation issued based on a unanimous vote of the three voting members.

On November 6, First Church and the Marlborough Historical Society co-presented a program entitled “Who Were the Puritans and Why Do They Matter?” in our Sanctuary. The lecturer was Dr. Margaret Bendroth, executive director of the Congregational Library & Archives, author of “The Last Puritans.”

In addition to the many 350 anniversary events, 2016 saw new carpet in the Sanctuary financed by the Women’s Fellowship. Funding included a grant to the fellowship by the family of Wayne (Ed) and Ruth Eaton.

First Church received a bequest of $2,000 from the estate of Ruth Clarke West, celebrating the Clarke family’s membership of nearly 100 years.

We certainly all enjoyed a very active, meaningful, and productive year 2016 at First Church. Each special program was carefully planned and executed by caring, loving members and friends for the celebration of our long history and a shout-out to our future. It was only through the hard work of many that we shared so many memories together of all our church has been historically and how we fit in today’s complex world. Much has changed but much remains the same. We are still called to spread the “Good News,” just as we were many years ago. May we be blessed with the same wonderful spirit in the future that guided those who came before us as we look forward to the next 350 years!
In the process of my research, I have discovered many interesting things, some of which I felt you would enjoy hearing about. While photographing the stained glass windows I had occasion to read the memorials at the base of each. As I had never read these, (except the one near where I sit,) I thought that perhaps you too would be interested in knowing what these inscriptions say.

By way of introduction, as you may know, this church building was erected in 1853, and yet the windows in the sanctuary are all dated about the 1880’s, indicating that they were put in several years after the church was built.

In the lower vestibule, where the windows are relatively recent, I’m sure you have noticed the rose windows beside the front door in memory of Rudolph Keyes. Further to the sides, over the stairs are windows of Christ with children, in memory of Everett Angier, and St. Francis with animals, in memory of Fred R. Angier. Above the front doors is a window with twelve medallions, one for each of the 12 apostles, in memory of John and Catherine Tripp.

In the sanctuary, the window with the anchor, is in memory of Stephen Morse, January 16, 1797 – March 19, 1885. The window with the sheaf of wheat has the following dedication: in memory of the Goodale family, many members of which in different generations have served the Church of Christ as ministers, missionaries and deacons. The window with the open book is in memory of Rev George Nathan Anthony. (Rev. Anthony was minister of our church from 1860 – 1869). The window with the shepherd, sheep, and an angel overhead has the inscription, in memory of Anne Fisher Boyd, 1821 – 1881). The next window, with the cross and crown is in memory of Rev. John N. Goodhue (pastor from 1836 until his death in 1839). The window with the dove is inscribed in memory of Carrie Maria, only child of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Fairbanks, Born 1835. Died 1867.

I hope the next time you enter the sanctuary, you will observe our stained glass windows with new appreciation for them, and truly enjoy them!!!

This article is reprinted from the September 1999 Crier.

[Note: The Goodale family mentioned above includes Miss Lucy Goodale who married Rev. Asa Thurston in 1819 and immediately sailed to the Sandwich Islands to bring Christianity to what is now called Hawaii. The church they founded was the first Christian Church in the Sandwich Islands. Mokuaikaua Church still exists today in Kona on the Island of Hawaii.]
FIRST CHURCH MISSIONARIES

Rev. Edward Warren (1786-1818)  [Note: The first name of his mother and the dates of his ordination and sailing are corrected in this update].
Rev. Warren was born to a long-time member of First Church, Thaddeus Warren and his wife Lucy. The family was closely related by marriage to the Goodales. Despite suffering from tuberculosis – then a terminal disease – he attended Middlebury College, Vermont. In 1811, he underwent a religious conversion and decided to become a missionary with the newly formed American Board of Commissaries for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). He completed medical training at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, and theological education at Andover Newton Theological School, Massachusetts. On June 21, 1815, he was ordained in Newburyport with five other young men to “bring the light of the Gospel to the heathen in Asia.” His health was so fragile, that the event caused a serious hemorrhage, which almost put an end to his plans. By fall it improved, and on October 21, 1815, he set sail with others for Colombo (today’s Sri Lanka), where they arrived on March 22, 1816. The missionaries then moved to the north of the island, where they established a Christian school for boys and girls – as Union College in Tellippalai, it still exists today. Rev. Edward Warren worked there tirelessly but suffered another hemorrhage in 1817. It was decided that he should move to the more temperate climate of South Africa. There he died in Cape Town on August 11, 1818. His last words were “Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Today I shall be with Christ!” His symbolic grave can be seen at the Spring Hill Cemetery, Marlborough.

Lucy Goodale (1795-1876) and Asa Thurston (1787-1868)
Arguably the most well-known First Church missionary, Lucy Goodale was born to an extended and devout Christian family, her father Abner Goodale being a long time deacon of First Church. Her mother, Mary Howe came from a very prominent Marlborough family. They were related by marriage to Edward Warren. Lucy was introduced to her future husband, Asa Thurston, an aspiring missionary, by her cousin William Goodell. According to another source, Goodell proposed to her on behalf of his friend (and was accepted!), and she met Asa only later. They were married on October 19, 1819, Asa was ordained as a Congregational minister in Newburyport, Massachusetts and set sail for the Sandwich Islands (as Hawaii was then known) on board the “Thaddeus” on October 23, 1819, where they arrived in 1820. The Thurston family established the Moku‘aikaua Church in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii which still exists today. Unlike many missionary couples, the Thurstons spent most of their lives in Hawaii where Lucy (Goodale) Thurston died on October 13, 1876 in Honolulu. The Thurston family descendants, many of whom were clergy, continue to be prominent citizens of Hawaii to this day. There is a large family grave of the Goodale family at the Spring Hill Cemetery.
Rev. William Goodell (1792-1867)
Rev. Goodell came from the prominent Goodale/Goodell family in Marlborough. His parents moved to Templeton, Massachusetts where he was baptized in the Congregational Church but he often spent time and worshipped with his family at First Church in Marlborough. William was present at the ordination of the terminally ill Edward Warren (1786-1818) which made a deep impression on him. He decided to become a missionary too. Goodell associated with other mission-oriented students at Andover Theological Seminary, and was the person who introduced Rev. Asa Thurson to his cousin Lucy Goodale. In 1822, within the space of a few weeks, William Goodell was married, ordained and sent as an ABCFM missionary to the Ottoman Empire in today’s Syria and Lebanon. His career was tumultuous and in 1828 an angry mob forced him to flee Beirut for Malta. In 1831 he relocated to Istanbul (Turkey) where he spent the next 34 years. Goodell translated the Bible to contemporary Armenian language, as well as established the first Protestant (Congregational) church in Turkey’s capital. It met first at his house until 1857 the Dutch ambassador gave them the use of the old and unused Dutch Reformed Church chapel at the embassy grounds. Known as the Union Church of Istanbul, the congregation still exists today. William Goodell returned to the United States in 1865 and died in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Florence (Warren) McGill (1883-1942)
Daughter of longtime deacon of First Church William Otis Warren (1849-1930), and his wife Martha Anne Spooner, Florence was raised in an active First Church family. Her younger sister, Hazel Warren (1890-1988) was also a long time First Church historian. Florence wanted to work as a missionary. The ABCFM did not have any open spots when Florence applied in 1918. Undeterred, she tried through the South Africa General Mission and was accepted for a placement in Ninda, Angola. There she met and married a Church of Scotland minister and missionary Rev. Andrew McGill. After a few years in Ninda, the McGills started a new mission in Muye, also in Angola. Florence McGill died of a tropical disease in 1942 in Cape Town, South Africa. Her two daughters, were also missionaries: Kathryn (b.1923) married another missionary Ronald Filby and they worked for a decade in Angola, until his untimely death in 1963, when the widow moved to South Africa. Kathryn’s older sister, Jessie McGill (b.1921) worked as a mission nurse in a hospital in Seipa Pinto. The McGill missionary work in Angola came to an end in 1975 after the country’s independence and eruption of a civil war. Jessie McGill then moved to South Africa where she was still active in mission work as late as 1988.
FIRST CHURCH MINISTERS

William Brinsmead 1666-1701
Robert Breck 1704-1731
Benjamin Kent 1733-1735
Aaron Smith 1740-1778
Asa Packard 1785-1806
Sylvester F. Bucklin 1808-1832
Charles Forbush 1833-1834
John N. Goodhue 1836-1839
George E. Day 1840-1847
David L. Ogden 1848-1850
Levi A. Field 1853-1859
George N. Anthony 1860-1869
Charles R. Treat 1870-1873
John Willard 1873-1879
Samuel E. Eastman 1880-1881
Albert F. Newton 1882-1892
William F. Stearns 1893-1895
Lincoln B. Goodrich 1896-1905
Albert H. Wheelock 1906-1916
Belvo Z. Stambaugh 1916-1920
Stanley H. Addison 1921-1928
Albert E. Beaumont 1928-1935
John Cummings 1935-1953
Alfred E. Wheeler (Cummings was on active duty as a Navy Chaplin) 1942-1945
Norman C. MacLean 1954-1961
John W. Morrow 1961-1972
Zaven Dohanian 1973-1980
G. Jeffrey Marks, Assistant Pastor 1976-1976
Chester Dziczek, Assistant Pastor 1977-1977
Wayne N. Pruitt 1981-1993
Mary Aberg, Associate Pastor 1989-1992
Gail H. Kendrick, Associate Pastor 1994-1998
Deborah Loomis Lafond 2002-2006
M. Elizabeth Waters, Revitalization Pastor 2006-2010
Kazimierz Bem 2011 –

SUPPLY AND INTERIM PASTORS

Rev. George Denham, Supply Pastor 1850-1853
Rev. Dr. Horace F. Holton, Interim 1953-1954
Rev. Raymond Cosseboom, Supply Pastor 1961
Rev. Dr. Madison Scott, Interim Pastor 1972-1973
Rev. Janet Parsons Mackey, Sabbatical Interim 1988
Rev. Dr. Gary Shahinian, Interim Associate pastor 1999-2000
Rev. Frederick Rhines, Intentional Interim Pastor 2000-2002
Rev. Gail Wenninger, Bridge Pastor 2006
Rev. Mary S. Poole, Bridge Pastor 2010-2011