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HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF

UNITY CHURCH,

CHICAGO,

Prepared for the Celebration on
the occasion of the

PAYMENT IN FULL: CHURCH INDEBTEDNESS,

HELD

November 17th, 1879,

BY

SAMUEL S. GREELEY,

BENJAMIN F. ADAMS,

WILLIAM G. LEWIS,

THE NEWBERG
CHICAGO
LIBRARY

Committee.

CHICAGO:

Press of INGENBOLL BROS., 170 CLARK STREET.

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✠✠ HISTORICAL ✠ SKETCH ✠✠
OF
UNITY CHURCH,
CHICAGO.

Unity Church sprang from the urgent desire on the part of those members of the First Unitarian Church and Society of Chicago, who lived in the North Division of the City, to have a church near their own homes.

The force and reasonableness of this desire were cordially admitted by the members of the First Church; and largely through the representations of the late Artemas Carter, the principle was adopted by that church, that the property owned by it was a trust held for the spread of Unitarian Christianity, to be equitably divided between itself and new churches in the North and West Divisions, if such should be founded within a reasonable period.

The property consisted of an eighty-foot lot on Washington street, between Clark and Dearborn Streets, the site of the wooden church, which was soon after destroyed by fire; and it was voted, at a meeting of the Society, held April 27th, 1857, that one-quarter of this lot should be given to a church in the North Division, one-quarter to a church in the West Division, half being retained for the use of the mother church. Messrs. E. K. Rogers, Artemas Carter, Jerome Beecher and Josiah L. James, were made a committee to arrange the details of the division.

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These preliminaries having been settled, a meeting of the retiring members, living on the North Side, was held on May 11th, 1857, in the office of the late William M. Larrabee, Treasurer of the Galena and Chicago Railroad, who was also a withdrawing member of the First Church. A list of persons present at this meeting, fortunately preserved from destruction by the great fire of 1871, shows the following names: Benjamin F. Adams, William M. Larrabee, Eli Bates, Nathan Mears, Gilbert Hubbard, Samuel S. Greeley, William H. Clarke, Capt. Samuel Johnson, Benjamin F. James, Samuel C. Clarke, Henry Tucker, George Watson, Augustus H. Burley and Edward K. Rogers.

It is believed that, at this meeting, it was definitely voted to organize a church, and a committee, whose names are not now recalled, was appointed to draft a constitution.

Other meetings were held from time to time, and on December 23rd, 1857, the constitution was adopted, the name "Unity Church," a happy suggestion of Mr. James, fixed upon, and the first board of officers elected, namely: Trustees, William M. Larrabee, Benjamin F. Adams, Benjamin F. James; Secretary, Samuel S. Greeley; Treasurer, ————.

A quarter of the old church lot on Washington street, being the east 20 feet of lot 7, block 38, original Town of Chicago, was conveyed to the Trustees of Unity Church, according to the above vote, on June 25th, 1858.

And so began our existence as a property-owning corporation. Business meetings were held from time to time at the house of Mr. Bates, and elsewhere. But it was not until the following spring that our active life as a Christian Church began. Then the little wooden Baptist Church, of about a hundred and fifty Christian power, on the corner of Dearborn and Ohio Streets, was rented for use on Sunday afternoon, and Mr. Robert Collyer, who was in the service of the First Church as its minister at large, was engaged to preach to the new born church for a few months, till a permanent minister could be settled; and he preached his first sermon on the last Sunday in May, 1859. Mr. Collyer writes to the committee, that his text was Rev. xxii, 17, and that the sermon was a stupid one.

Some of us, whose heads now bear the frosts of early winter, but who were then overflowing with youthful enthusiasm for the

new enterprise, still remember how our feeling of anxious responsibility for the initial effort of an unknown man, gave way, first to relief, then to surprise, and finally to joyful certainty that the "hour and the man" had come, and that a new moral force had suddenly risen among us; that an unheralded champion had stepped into the lists with level lance, to offer wager of battle for mental and spiritual freedom.

Our enthusiasm gave us little rest. A subscription was started, locations were canvassed, plans approved, and on August 20th, of the same year, the lot on the northeast corner of Chicago Avenue and Dearborn Street (lot 15 of block 1, Bushnell's addition to Chicago) was bought, and construction at once undertaken. Our first Board of Trustees, Messrs. Adams, Larrabee and James, elected in 1857, held over, and through their energy and wise economy, our house was ready for use before the end of the same year, with about 450 sittings, and costing the modest sum of \$4,000.

It was dedicated amidst the furious cold and snow of Christmas eve of 1859, Rev. Dr. Hosmer, of Buffalo, preaching the sermon. Of this period, Mr. Collyer writes: "I was anxious then to be free from the work of preacher to you, and have you call some well accredited man, and sent in a letter urging this step; but you said the church had been built for me to preach in, and I must take the office. I was, therefore, called in the regular way, and accepted the call, but never was installed, as I had never been ordained;" and as if to remind us how entirely we had broken from bondage to the "letter which killeth," he adds: "Nobody thought of it, and I didn't care to push it before you. I was recognized and welcomed by the Unitarian body in a special service held during the sitting of the Western Conference at Milwaukee, in June, 1859, and this was as near as I ever came to an ordination in any sense." Unity Church must be forgiven, if in its youthful haste to begin its work for humanity, it entirely forgot to perform the ceremony which the Christian world has, time out of mind, held to be the decent and fitting prelude to the union of a pastor with his people.

For a few months, perhaps, for the first year, Mr. Collyer's labors and his salary were shared by us with the ministry at large, but as we became stronger, and were able to pay our way, the work

of the ministry at large fell to other hands, and Mr. Collyer devoted himself to his church. It was the day of small things. Our annual deficit of two hundred dollars or so, seemed as frightful to us as the deficit which dragged down France to a bloody revolution and her king to the scaffold ; but we paid it like little men, at the end of each year, and plunged recklessly into a new debt for the next year. Our church was our home, and the tones of its sweet singer still vibrate in memory like whispered music of other spheres.

We once tried to write out some simple form of creed, to the service of which such property as the society might own, should be formally surrendered, but our belief was too inclusive to be imprisoned in words, and we gave it up.

The *one* point on which we all agreed, was that all might differ.

The constitution of the Society, as amended April 11th, 1870, states "that the object of this Society is to promote moral and spiritual improvement and the practice of the principles of Christianity, while disseminating the truth and doctrines of religion in accordance with the Unitarian faith."

Probably no copy of the original constitution, adopted in 1857, has escaped destruction, but it is believed that it differed only in certain details, making the tenure of membership more explicit, from the constitution of 1870, a printed copy of which is in the hands of the trustees.

No other statement of the articles of belief of Unity Church, nor of its definition of the Unitarian faith, has ever been made.

When the war of the rebellion broke out, we sang "America" together in a storm of sobs and cheers, and then pastor and people settled down to do their share of work for our country and her soldiers. Our young men started to the front at President Lincoln's first call ; our minister went to nurse and comfort the sick and wounded at Fort Donelson and on the Potomac; the sisters of the church were instant in the prayer of tender service at the soldiers' rest and the hospitals, and in the Sanitary Commission.

Their names and good deeds rise as a cloud of fragrant incense from the altar of the Fatherland.

In December, 1866, was formed the "Liberal Christian League," a society composed mainly of members of Unity Church Society,

Mr. Collyer being the President, having in view the judicious relief of poverty, and also the study of various plans of social reform. Careful reports were made, upon improved dwellings for the poor, the care of friendless women, the prevention of cholera, and lectures and entertainments at low prices for the masses.

In April, 1867, the League resolved, that in their opinion "liberal preaching on Sunday evenings in some central hall in this city, under the auspices of this League, would tend largely to advance one of the principal objects which it was organized to promote." The expenses were to be met by voluntary offerings. Ten gentlemen, viz: Benj. F. Adams, James P. Fogg, C. J. Hull, Josiah L. Lombard, William G. Lewis, James H. Moore, Samuel Shackford, James Brooks, George E. Adams and Edwin Lee Brown guaranteed any deficiency in means that might occur. The details of the work were managed most successfully by Messrs. J. P. Fogg and George H. Cushing.

Library Hall was engaged for the purpose, and Mr. Collyer, with some aid from Rev. Dr. Ryder and Rev. Robert Laird Collier, preached on Sunday evenings through the winter to full and interested audiences, largely composed of young men and of persons not connected with any church.

Liberal thought thus found its way to great masses, with whom there was no other channel of communication. These meetings were conducted with all the enthusiasm of a genuine revival.

The Liberal League was soon after merged in the Chicago Christian Union, a society having the same objects in view, but composed of the "liberal Christians of Chicago," and which for several years held important rank among the missionary and charitable agencies of the city.

Through the storms of war and the sunshine of returning peace, our society still grew, till it became a question how to find room for the increasing congregation.

In 1866 Mr. Collyer made his first visit to his Yorkshire home, and it was voted to take advantage of the long vacation to enlarge our church by adding a wing on each side. But "exceeding peace had made our people bold," and when the money was to be provided, it was found that our capitalists were strongly in favor of abandoning the site which we had outgrown, and building a large and permanent house. The apparent prosperity of

the times made great undertakings seem easy, and it was soon decided to buy the lot, which we now occupy, and to procure plans and estimates for a stone church to cost not more than \$60,000.

A building committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Gilbert Hubbard, Eli Bates, Nathan Mears, William G. Lewis, George Chambers, George Webster and Harry Fox.

As Mr. Chambers, of the committee, was a builder of the highest repute, it was decided to have the masonry done by the day, under his superintendence.

The corner stone was laid on August 29th, 1867, with appropriate ceremonies. The history of the construction is best told by Messrs. Joseph H. Moore, John E. Fry and Thomas S. Wallin, Trustees from 1867 to 1870, in their Annual Report of April 11th, 1870, as follows :

“A loan of \$50,000 was effected from Mrs. Greene, and another of \$15,000 from Artemas Carter, Treasurer of Antioch College, the proceeds of both of which were turned over to the Building Committee by the Trustees, bearing interest at ten per cent. per annum, and secured upon the property of the Society.

“Our first report was during the occupancy of the old church building, which gave accommodation to about four hundred hearers. The end of the second year found the Society in the lecture room of the new church, and enabled to give sittings to seven hundred. Shortly after our last annual meeting, the Society took full possession of the new church edifice, and on the 20th of June, 1869, the dedication services were held, Dr. Bellows, of New York, preaching the sermon. We can now seat about twelve hundred, with capacity for two or three hundred more, by special effort. The financial exhibit will show a corresponding progress and success.

“The annual report of two years ago shows a total annual revenue from all sources of \$6,056. One year ago there was reported from the same sources \$7,463. Our income for the past year from the same sources has been \$16,074. Yet this is but a small portion of the whole result in the way of raising means during the past year. Added thereto is the munificent offering of dedication day, footing up nearly \$60,000, most of which has been paid ; also, cash paid in this year for account of

new organ, say, \$10,000, making a total sum of about \$86,000, which Unity Church has furnished for church purposes during the past fiscal year.

"In reviewing the history of its success, we believe the Society will consider it eminently just and proper that we should place upon its records our testimony and belief, that first among the agencies which have contributed to this great result, are the influence and example of our first and only pastor, and the beloved friend of us all, Robert Collyer."

Appended to the report from which the above extracts are taken, I find the following :

"I want to make a note or two to this report :

"*First*—To say how sincerely grateful I feel to this outgoing Board of Trustees for the faithfulness with which its whole business has been conducted through the long term of three years, and through a period of extraordinary care and labor.

"*Second*—To Mr. George Chambers, who built the walls of our new church as carefully as if he were building a house that should stand good for many generations after he is dead and gone, and then gave the whole compensation that should come to him, amounting to \$5,000 to the church, with a generous subscription beside.

"*Third*—To my people, who have so nobly subscribed to this noble enterprise and made it their pride and joy to do so—men, women and children.

"May God bless them for all their work and labor of love.

"ROBERT COLLYER,

"*Pastor of Unity Church.*"

The total cost of the church, including ground, edifice, furnishing and organ, appears from the accounts of that time to have been \$210,000.

The Chicago Avenue lot, with the wooden church, was conveyed, October 19th, 1867, to the North Baptist Church, for \$16,662.

Our enjoyment of our new and costly temple was short. The 9th of October, 1871, witnessed its destruction and the ruin of the homes of most of its worshippers. Only the massive walls and towers stood as monuments to the good faith which had gone to its building.

On a Sunday, shortly after the great fire, a handful of people stood among the ruins listening to comfortable words from the pastor, and pledging themselves to each other that Unity Church should rise again.

Men dazed and blinded by the suddenness of the disaster, could not at once see the resources which were left to them ; they could only feel the needs of the hour and grope their way toward supplying them. How magnificently the country and the world answered the first shuddering cry for help from the homeless thousands, we may now recall in grateful silence.

To our sister churches throughout the country, it seemed of the first importance that Unity Church should be replaced, and its influence maintained in this great city. And it was apparent that this could not be done for some years, by men who had a city to rebuild and its business affairs to reinstate.

The American Unitarian Association therefore undertook to raise subscriptions, with the help of appeals from Mr. Collyer, during the year 1872, with the understanding that half the sum so received should be devoted to Unity Church. A friend in Boston generously provided for Mr. Collyer's salary for the year. The result was a donation, principally from the Unitarians of New England, of \$59,387 to this Society.

At a meeting of the Society held in the Third Unitarian Church, on January 8th, 1872, it was voted to rebuild Unity Church on its former site, and a building committee was appointed, consisting of Nathan Mears, Henry T. Thompson, Thomas S. Wallin, William C. Dow and Edward I. Finkham, who at once began active operations in reconstruction.

During the rebuilding, services were held in a temporary wooden building, which had been hastily erected by our neighbors of the New England Church, and was most kindly offered to us for use on Sunday afternoons.

Services were resumed in the lecture room of the church during the winter of 1872-3, and on Sunday, December 7th, 1873, the house was dedicated, and the auditorium occupied for the first time. Dr. Furness, of Philadelphia, preached this, our third, dedication sermon. The total cost of reconstruction, including the organ, appears to have been \$91,737.

At the annual meeting held March 30th, 1874, it was, on motion of Mr. Collyer, resolved, "that the grateful thanks of this church be hereby given to the Building Committee: Nathan Mears, Henry T. Thompson, Thomas S. Wallin, William C. Dow and Edward I. Tinkham, for its faithful and devoted service: that the vote be recorded in the 'Church Book.' and that a committee be chosen to prepare an address, which shall be engrossed on parchment, and a copy, signed by the Committee, presented to each member of the Building Committee, for preservation by their families, including one for the family of our beloved brother, E. I. Tinkham, now gone to his rest."

And so began, in the deepening shadows of the year 1873, the third era of our history as a Christian Church; a beginning grim with widespread commercial wreck, and individual suffering and privation, more depressing than the black clouds of war, because defeat was never relieved by alternating victory. In those days it was never "quiet on the Potomac," and no sunlit peak of Lookout Mountain pierced the gloom that brooded over the valley of despair.

The new debt incurred so hopefully the year before, in the finishing of our house, then loomed up like the shadow of coming ruin, and the stroke that warned our Trustees to pay the semi-annual interest, sounded like the measured pealing of a passing bell.

On October 27th, 1874, a new loan was voted, of \$30,000, for five years, to take up the remains of past indebtedness, and from that time forward the Society bent its energies anew to the payment of its current expenses and its interests. The increasing cheerfulness of the annual reports, from this time forward, testifies to the courage and "clear grit" of our officers.

The admirable report of Messrs. Felix, Thompson and Adams, in March, 1877, says: "It is well known that the loss sustained by this Society in consequence of the great fire consisted, not so much in the destruction of church property, as in the destruction of the business and the homes of a large majority of its members.*"

*NOTE. The following detailed statement of the private losses sustained by individual members of Unity Church congregation may, we think, be very properly given here as confirming the statement of the Trustees in their report quoted above. They are the result of very laborious and careful inquiry, made during the winter of 1871-2.

"As each year since then has shown an increase in the population of the North Side, so each year has shown an increase in the revenues of the church. Considering the difficulties which the Society has had to contend with, arising out of the financial distress of the whole country since 1873, we have reason to congratulate ourselves, and to believe that the next few years will show a still greater improvement in the material condition of the Society."

Meanwhile your hands were not idle, nor your feet weary. The Ladies' Sewing Society and the Unity Church Fraternity, were active in raising money for church purposes, and in the work of outside charity. The Sunday School was large and well trained, and gave useful instruction to many children, who were gathered from outside the church.

At a meeting of the Sewing Society, held in February, 1876, originated the thought of the "Unity Church Industrial School," for the training in habits of order and industry of young girls in the poorest quarter of the city. It was to replace the Sewing School, which had been kept weekly for several years, and was to offer daily instruction in sewing and household work, close by the homes of its pupils.

A small one-story frame building was rented on Larrabee Street, and fitted with such stove and furniture as friends could give, and there the directresses of this modest, but most useful of charities have labored and still labor, with heroic endurance of fatigue and discomfort. In such works this humble school house has received a consecration holier than pomp of priestly sacrifice could confer.

At the annual meeting of the Society, held March 31st, 1879, as the time was approaching for paying the loan of November, 1874, a committee was appointed, consisting of Edward Black-

by Mr. Henry T. Thompson, then, as now, a Trustee of the church. "There were at the time of the fire, 170 pew holders, of whom 136 were housekeepers, and 34 were boarding. Of the 136 housekeepers, 56 owned their houses, which were burned; 15 owned their houses, which were not burned; 56 lived in rented houses, which were burned; and 9 lived in rented houses, not burned; 152 persons had their places of business destroyed, including clerks, whose employers' places of business were burned; 115 lost both their homes and places of business by the fire. There were only 9 of the whole number of pewholders who entirely escaped direct loss. The aggregate direct loss by individual members, is stated at \$2,350,200."

man, B. F. Felix and J. C. Brooks, to arrange for paying or refunding the funded debt of the Society. Mr. Felix, upon whom fell the active labor of the committee, addressed himself to the task of getting subscriptions for the payment of the debt.

In May the Society was startled by the sudden resignation by Mr. Collyer of his pastorate, to accept a call from the Church of the Messiah, in New York.

So long and so pleasant a union could not be broken without great pain on both sides. Mr. Collyer was then the oldest settled pastor in the City, having completed his twentieth year of labor with us. The necessity of the change seemed imperative to him, and when on June 23rd, 1879, the resignation was accepted, the general sentiment of the Society seemed to be that Unity Church had a life of its own which might not, and could not be seriously disturbed by the loss of its pastor.

“Men may come and men may go, but I go on forever.”

Aided by this conviction, the work of subscription went on the more bravely, and the debt was paid at its maturity on the first of the current month. To the persistent six months' work of Mr. Felix, more than to any other agency, is the success of the movement due.

During eight of the ten years since 1870, Mr. Henry T. Thompson has served this church as Trustee, with a devotion and self-sacrifice, that place him highest among her benefactors. Many have given of their means, he has given himself.

We have met to-night to celebrate our emancipation from the thralldom of debt. Our mortgages are released, our notes are cancelled, and no man can lay a creditor's hand upon this property, which now first really belongs to that service, to which we undertook to dedicate it ten years ago.

For this let us rejoice and give thanks! But may we venture to declare that we still owe a debt as sacred as that just paid? Its evidences are recorded only in the registry of deeds of grace and good will. Many of our creditors are unknown to us, and all are beyond the reach of individual repayment.

But we shall never earn the world's receipt in full, nor the quittance of our own consciences, till we have freely given in some form or other, to the common cause, which we and our

Eastern benefactors hold dear, the full amount which they contributed, in our disaster, to rebuild Unity Church.

The committee to whom was entrusted the preparation of this sketch, have attempted to give a complete list of the officers of the church from its foundation to the present time. In the absence of all records prior to October, 1871, this has proved a more difficult task than it first appeared.

In the following list, the names given for the years 1857, 1858, 1859, are correct. We can learn nothing as to the officers for the years 1860, 1861. As to the years 1862 to 1866 inclusive, there is some conflicting evidence, but the list as given is believed to be, in the main, correct.

For and after the year 1867 the list has been compiled from authentic sources, and is known to be correct.

SAMUEL S. GREELEY, }
 BENJAMIN F. ADAMS, } Committee.
 WILLIAM G. LEWIS, }

List of officers of Unity Church, elected December 23rd, 1857 :

WILLIAM M. LARRABEE, }
 BENJAMIN F. ADAMS, } Trustees.
 BENJAMIN F. JAMES, }
 SAMUEL S. GREELEY, Secretary.

-----, Treasurer.

1858.

WILLIAM M. LARRABEE, }
 BENJAMIN F. ADAMS, } Trustees.
 BENJAMIN F. JAMES, }
 FRANK W. BUCKINGHAM, Secretary.

NATHAN MEARS, Treasurer.

1859.

WILLIAM M. LARRABEE, }
 BENJAMIN F. ADAMS, } Trustees.
 BENJAMIN F. JAMES, }
 EDWARD L. HOLMES, Secretary.

HENRY TUCKER, Treasurer.

1860.

Unknown.

1861

Unknown.

1862.

GILBERT HUBBARD,
 WILLIAM G. LEWIS, } Trustees.
 JOHN S. BREWER, }
 EDWARD L. HOLMES, Secretary.

J. THOMAS CARTER, Treasurer.

1863.

GILBERT HUBBARD,
 WILLIAM G. LEWIS, } Trustees.
 JOHN S. BREWER, }
 EDWARD L. HOLMES, Secretary.

CHARLES H. ROGERS, Treasurer.

1864.

JAMES P. FOGG,
 GEORGE H. CUSHING, } Trustees.
 GEORGE WEBSTER, }
 EDWARD L. HOLMES, Secretary.

C. J. HAMBLETON, Treasurer.

1865.

GEORGE A. WHEELER,
 JOSEPH H. MOORE, } Trustees.
 HORACE S. NICHOLS, }
 EDWARD L. HOLMES, Secretary.

C. J. HAMBLETON, Treasurer.

1866.

JAMES H. MOORE,
 C. J. HAMBLETON, } Trustees.
 C. O. THOMPSON, }
 EDWARD L. HOLMES, Secretary.

J. LELAND FOGG, Treasurer.

1867.

JOSEPH H. MOORE,
 JOHN E. FRY, } Trustees.
 THOMAS S. WALLIN, }
 EDWARD L. HOLMES, Secretary.

WILLIAM E. FURNESS, Treasurer.

1868.

JOSEPH H. MOORE,
 JOHN E. FRY, } Trustees.
 THOMAS S. WALLIN, }
 EDWARD L. HOLMES, Secretary.

WILLIAM E. FURNESS, Treasurer.

1869.

JOSEPH H. MOORE,
 JOHN E. FRY,
 THOMAS S. WALLIN, } Trustees.
 EDWARD L. HOLMES, Secretary

WILLIAM E. FURNESS, Treasurer.

1870.

GEORGE A. WHEELER,
 D. F. BAXTER,
 HENRY T. THOMPSON, } Trustees.
 GEORGE E. ADAMS, Secretary.

WILLIAM ELIOT FURNESS, Treasurer.

1871.

NATHAN MEARS,
 JOHN E. FRY,
 HENRY T. THOMPSON, } Trustees.
 GEORGE E. ADAMS, Secretary.

WILLIAM ELIOT FURNESS, Treasurer,

1872.

NATHAN MEARS,
 JOHN E. FRY,
 HENRY T. THOMPSON, } Trustees.
 GEORGE E. ADAMS, Secretary.

WILLIAM ELIOT FURNESS, Treasurer.

1873.

NATHAN MEARS,
 JOHN E. FRY,
 HENRY T. THOMPSON, } Trustees.
 HENRY HOOPER, Secretary.

SAMUEL COLLYER, Treasurer.

1874.

JOEL D. HARVEY,
 PORTER P. HEYWOOD,
 JOHN WILKINSON, } Trustees.
 HENRY HOOPER, Secretary.

DUDLEY P. WILKINSON, Treasurer.

1875.

PORTER P. HEYWOOD,
 GEORGE PAYSON,
 AMORY BIGELOW, } Trustees.
 HENRY HOOPER, Secretary.

DUDLEY P. WILKINSON, Treasurer.

1876.

GEORGE E. ADAMS,
HENRY T. THOMPSON, } Trustees
BENJAMIN F. FELIX, }
EDGAR HOLT, Secretary

JOHN S. BREWER, Treasurer.

1877.

GEORGE E. ADAMS,
HENRY T. THOMPSON, } Trustees
BENJAMIN F. FELIX, }
EDGAR HOLT, Secretary

JOHN S. BREWER, Treasurer.

1878.

ELI BATES,
HENRY T. THOMPSON, } Trustees
R. W. HOSMER, }
EDGAR HOLT, Secretary

JOHN S. BREWER, Treasurer.

1879.

HENRY T. THOMPSON,
N. H. BARNES, } Trustees.
WILLIAM BEYE, }
E. L. TALBOT, Secretary

JOHN S. BREWER, Treasurer.

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CONSTITUTION

—AND—

BY-LAWS

OF—

UNITY CHURCH.

CONSTITUTION.

WE, the members of a Religious Society, known as UNITY CHURCH, and located in the North Division of the City of Chicago, do hereby adopt the following Constitution :

ARTICLE I

The name of this Society shall be UNITY CHURCH.

ARTICLE II.

The object of this Society is to promote moral and spiritual improvement, and the practice of the principles of Christianity, while disseminating the truths and doctrines of religion in accordance with the Unitarian faith.



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ARTICLE III.

Any person renting a pew, or part of a pew, to the amount of one-third thereof, and having been in possession of the same for not less than three months, and who shall be approved by a majority of the members present at any business meeting of the Society, and who shall sign the Constitution, shall be deemed a member of Unity Church: *Provided*, that any member who shall be in arrears of pew-rent for the period four quarters, shall forfeit his membership; and *provided, further*, that any person may withdraw from membership by notifying the Secretary, in writing, of his desire to do so. The cessation of membership is to be noted in every case by the Secretary, opposite the name of the member, in the record book of the Society.

ARTICLE IV.

The officers of the Society shall consist of three Trustees, a Secretary and a Treasurer, to be chosen by ballot at each annual meeting of the Society. A majority of all the votes cast shall be required to elect, and each officer so elected shall hold his office for one year, or till his successor is chosen. Any officer, however, may be removed by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the Society.

ARTICLE V.

The duty of providing a place of worship, and procuring the services of a Pastor, shall devolve upon the Trustees, subject to the action of the Society. But no change of Pastor shall be made except by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the Society.

ARTICLE VI.

The care and control of all the property of the Society, both real and personal, shall be with the Trustees. But the affirmative vote or written consent of all the members of the Society shall be required to effect the purchase, sale, incumbrance or other disposition of the real estate.

ARTICLE VII.

Any of these articles except the first, may be changed at any regular meeting of the Society, by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the Society, the vote thereon being given in person or by proxy, and the said change having been proposed at a previous meeting.

ARTICLE VIII.

This Constitution shall be in force on and after the twelfth day of April, A. D. 1870.

BY-LAWS.

ARTICLE I.

SECTION 1. The Trustees alone shall make contracts or engagements binding upon the Society, unless a vote of the Society shall otherwise direct.

SEC. 2. They shall fix the rental of the pews and rent the same, and report each rental to the Secretary.

SEC. 3. They shall approve all bills before being paid by the Treasurer, and countersign all checks upon which money is to be drawn from the bank, but may delegate this duty to one of their number. They shall audit the Treasurer's account, and make a detailed report of the affairs of the Society at each annual meeting. And they shall so order and conduct the affairs of the Society as best to promote the objects of this organization, as set forth in the Constitution.

ARTICLE II.

SEC. 1. The Secretary shall notify all meetings of the Society, when required to do so by those having authority to call them. He shall attend the same, and keep a full and correct record of the proceedings thereof. He shall hold secure all papers and documents belonging to the Society which may come into his hands, and conduct its correspondence, as directed by the Trustees or a vote of the Society.

SEC. 2. He shall make out the bills for pew-rents, and deliver the same to the Treasurer for collection.

SEC. 3. He shall keep a list of the pew-holders, alphabetically arranged, and also a correct record of the members of the Society. And he shall present at each meeting of the Society the names of those eligible to membership. His records shall at all times be open to the inspection of any member who may desire it.

ARTICLE III.

SEC. 1. The Treasurer shall have the custody of all the funds of the Society, and hold the same for disbursement. It shall be his duty, under the direction of the Trustees, to collect the rentals, subscriptions, and other incomes of the Society, and deposit the same in such bank as they may designate, to the credit of himself as Treasurer of Unity Church.

SEC. 2. He shall pay all bills approved by the Trustees, but no money shall be drawn from the bank by him until the check is countersigned by at least one of the Trustees. He shall keep a correct account of all receipts and expenditures, with vouchers for all payments made. His books shall be open at all times to inspection by the Trustees, and he shall make a detailed report to them in such form as they may direct, at the close of each fiscal year, and at such other times as they or the Society may desire.

ARTICLE IV.

In case of vacancy in any office by removal, resignation, or death, the vacancy may be filled at a special meeting called for the purpose, the object of said meeting being stated in the call.

ARTICLE V.

Pew rents shall be due and payable quarterly in advance, on the first day of April, July, October and January of each year. And in case the rent of any pew for two quarters shall be due and unpaid, the Trustees may at their option declare the pew vacant and rent the same anew.

ARTICLE VI.

The annual meeting of the Society shall be held on the last Monday of March of each year.

ARTICLE VII.

Special meetings may be called by the Trustees, or by ten members of the Society, if the written request of that number to the Trustees for a meeting shall not be complied with for the space of two days, or if the Trustees are absent, or if the offices of the Trustees shall be vacant.

ARTICLE VIII.

Notice of special meetings shall be given from the pulpit at the Sunday morning service next preceding the meeting, and be published in one morning and one evening Chicago English daily paper, on the day of the meeting; or notice of said meetings may be given by publishing the same twice in such papers on consecutive days, the last publications to be on the day of the meeting.

ARTICLE IX.

Fifteen members shall be required to form a quorum at all meetings of the Society. At such meetings the chairman of the Trustees shall preside, or in his absence the next in order of record.

ARTICLE X

Any of these articles may be changed at any regular meeting of the Society, by a vote of three-fourths of all the members present, the change having been proposed at a previous meeting.

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PROPOSITIONS

TO AMEND THE

Constitution of Unity Church,

Submitted by Mr. T. F. WITHROW.

I.

Substitute for the Third Article the following :

ARTICLE III.

Any person who has habitually attended the services of the Church for a period of six months, and has a right to occupy a seat therein, either by lease from the Society or by license from a lessee, may, upon being approved in writing by at least five members of the Society, be admitted to membership, by the vote of a majority of the members present at any regular meeting.

Any person thus admitted, shall, upon signing this Constitution, be admitted to all of the privileges of membership.

Membership may be forfeited :

FIRST. By resignation.

SECOND. By refusal, for six months after demand, to pay any indebtedness due to the Society.

THIRD. By conduct inconsistent with a character for integrity and morality.

Resignation shall take effect, upon the receipt by the Secretary of notice thereof, in writing, signed by the member resigning. Forfeiture, for either of the other causes named, shall not become operative, until directed by a vote of the Society, at a regular meeting, held after the accused has had a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

II.

Substitute for the Fourth Article, the following :

ARTICLE IV.

Propositions relating to the settlement or dismissal of a Pastor, or the creation of a lien or incumbrance upon the property of the Society, shall

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be determined by vote of the Society in regular meeting ; and upon such questions members shall be entitled to vote upon the basis of seats in the Church by them held, the rental for which shall have been paid for the year then last past, as follows :

FIRST. Each member, who is not the head of a family, one vote for each seat, not exceeding two in number.

SECOND. Each member who is the head of a family, one vote for each seat held for the use of such family, not exceeding six in number ; *provided*, that when the family consists, in whole or in part, of a husband and his wife, both being members, each shall be entitled to a number of votes equal to one-half of the number of seats so held.

Upon all other questions each member is entitled to one vote.

Each member may cast the number of votes to which he or she is entitled, in person, or by proxy duly authorized in writing.

III.

Substitute for the Fifth Article, the following :

ARTICLE V.

The officers of the Society shall consist of three Trustees, a Secretary and a Treasurer, who shall be elected annually, by ballot.

The Trustees shall have the general management of the property and affairs of the Society, subject to the By-Laws and such orders as may be made, from time to time, by the Society.

The Secretary and Treasurer shall perform such duties as shall be prescribed by the By-Laws.

Officers can be elected only by a majority of the votes cast at a regular meeting, and can be removed only by a two-thirds vote of all the members of the Society.

IV.

Substitute for the Sixth Article, the following :

ARTICLE VI.

A Pastor can be settled or removed only under authority of a resolution passed at a regular meeting, by a majority of two-thirds of all the votes cast, as provided in the first clause of the Third Article.

The property of the Church can be encumbered only when authorized by a resolution, passed at a regular meeting, by a majority of four fifths of all the votes cast, as provided in said clause and Article.

PROPOSITIONS

TO AMEND

THE BY-LAWS.

I.

Adopt the following as

ARTICLE IX.

The religious, charitable, educational, social and literary work of the Society, shall be under the general direction of the Trustees, assisted by the following Standing Committees, which shall be appointed by the Trustees :

FIRST. Committee on Music.

SECOND. Committee on General Charities.

THIRD. Committee on Industrial School.

FOURTH. Committee on Social and Literary Exercises.

The Committee on Industrial School shall consist of nine persons, and may divide itself into sub-committees.

All other Committees shall consist of three persons each.

II.

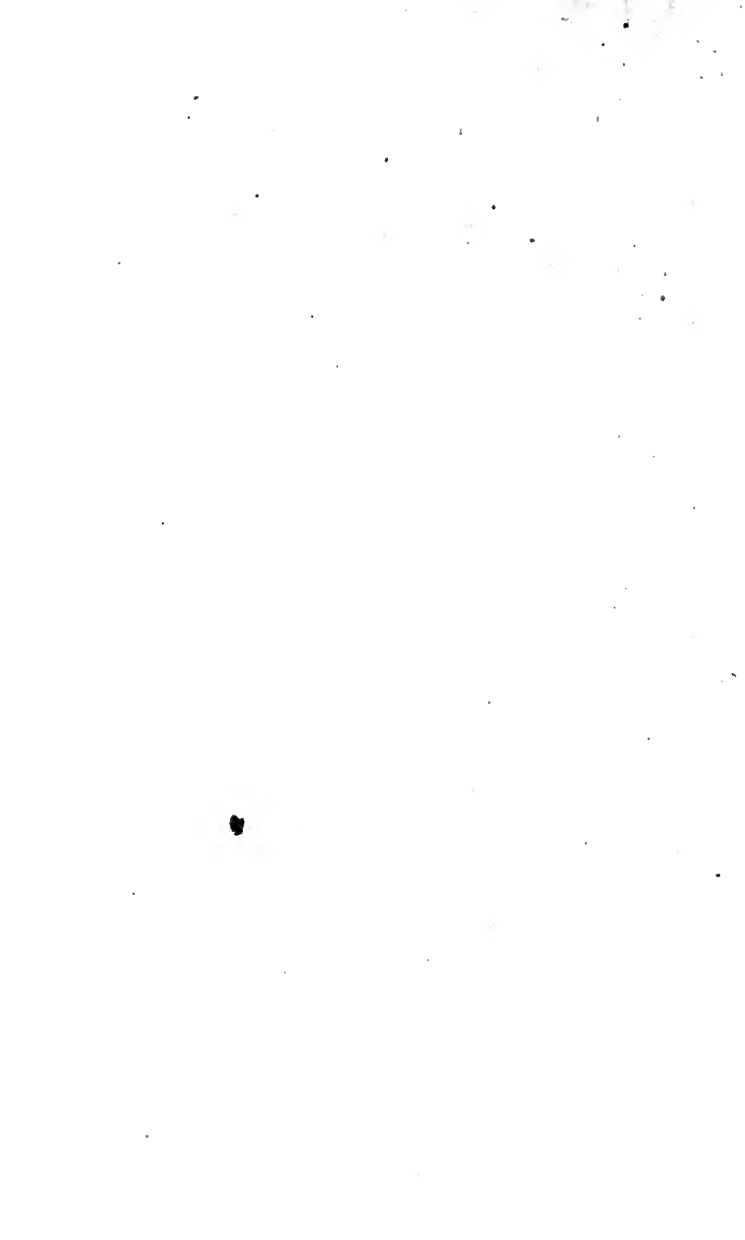
Change the number of Article X to XI.

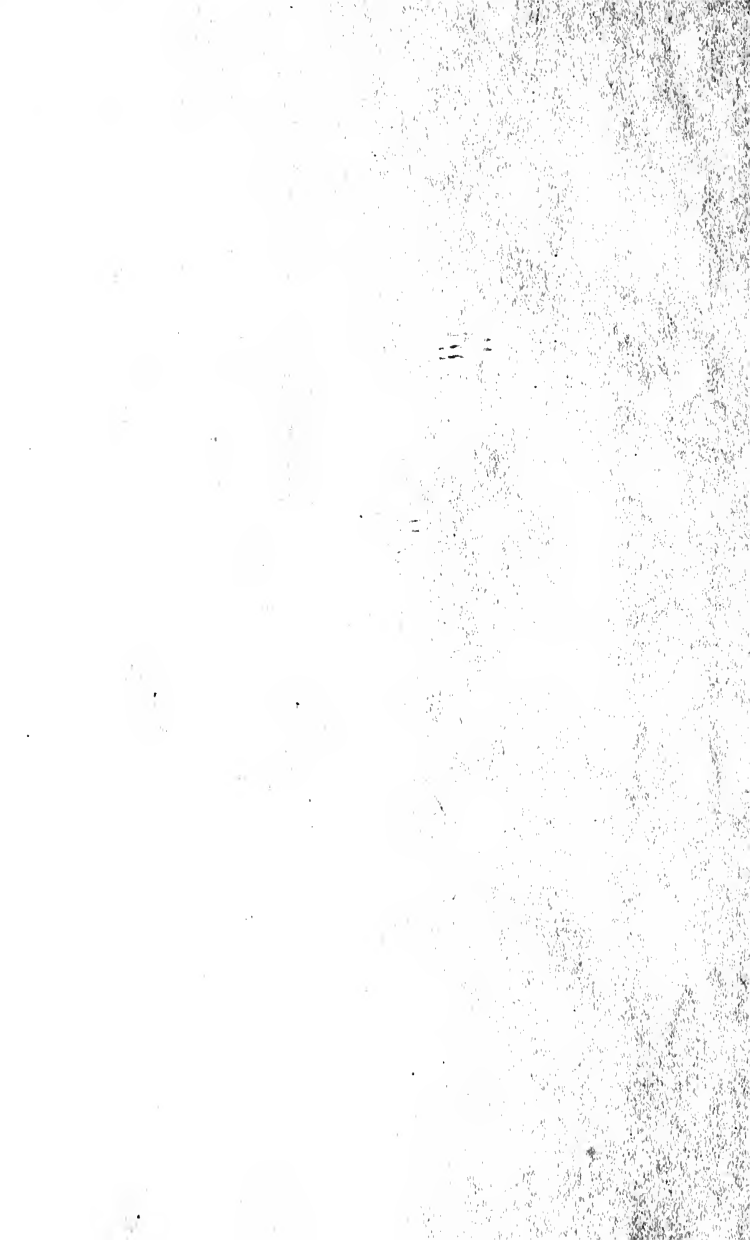
Amendment to the Constitution, proposed by Mr. H. H. Thomas.

In place of Article III, insert the following :

ARTICLE III.

Every adult person who has rented a sitting, or for whom a sitting has been rented, and who has occupied the same for the space of three months, and who shall have signed the Constitution, shall be considered a member of this Society, and entitled to a vote at all meetings of the Society : *Provided*, that any member who shall be in arrears of pew rent for the period of four quarters, shall forfeit his membership : and *provided, further*, that any person may withdraw from membership by notifying the Secretary, in writing, of his desire to do so. The cessation of membership is to be noted in every case by the Secretary, opposite the name of the member, in the record book of the Society.





SEP 1 1934

