

First Congregational Church

GEORGETOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

A Venture In Faith

God has a way of choosing humble persons and common tasks through which to reveal his will and his love. His is a quiet way. A way of growth, yes. But first of all, a way of transformation. We are the ones whom God seeks out to be transformed by the renewal of mind and spirit. It may not take much of a person to be a Christian. But it does take all of him.

The Christian Church is none other than the fellowship of persons who are being daily recreated and made new through their relationships of service, one to the other and to God.

The Christian Church is a family—of all ages, sexes, races, and people. No less duty is ours than to proclaim to each generation the

gospel of Christ and to instruct and educate and nourish a growing maturity of mind and spirit. This is not alone the task of ministers or of teachers or of parents. This is the task of the Church as the Church. Each one of us, as a member of this Church, shares in a ministry of Christian education. Each one of us will do his share in this ministry only as he opens himself to the possibilities of transformation and growth. No program, no activity, no committees, no meetings have relevance. Not until the Christian Church becomes a "living word" in our deepest spiritual experiences. Only then have we truly entered into our Christian integrity and commitment.







Our Responsibility

To implement our heritage, our Church inheritance, we are conducting this Canvass.

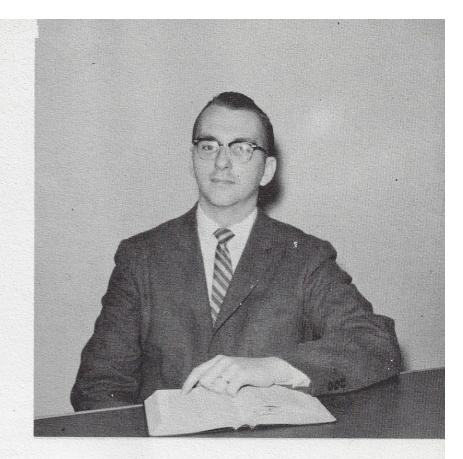
It is a truism that nothing can remain static in this world; it must move either forward or backward. In the face of that truism, can you doubt that we stand at a crossroad? Can you doubt that we will always stand at a crossroad? Yes, we can take the wrong road, as an individual or as a congregation. The question con-

fronts us now: Will we take that road, or meet the challenge of the present as an opportunity to bear witness to our beliefs so that the legacy we pass along will be burnished, not tarnished —so that, in short, we can think of our Church and outreach activities with Christian pride?

Loyalty to the church is manifested in several ways, chief of which, as men always have recognized, is faithfulness in worship. Faithfulness in worship eventually results in an awakening of spirit which in turn activates the worshipper to higher aspirations, and a deeper sense of Love and Loyalty to Almighty God.

Loyalty to the church means that when the church to which we belong begins to bestir itself about its responsibilities to the community in providing a safe and adequate place of worship with sufficient facilities to house the church school and carry on an active program, no member will withhold his help and support until after he has made sure he is fully informed as to what is being proposed.

Loyalty to the church in congregationalism at least, means that once a decision has been democratically arrived at in a church meeting, one gets behind that program and supports it, just as one supports his State and the Nation, even though he is a member of the minority party.



A Message From the Minister

Once there was a college which succeeded in securing a new campus and a completely new set of buildings. When questioned about this marvelous accomplishment, the president simply explained, "We have held to the idea that that which should be done can be done."

We are not suggesting that our church should have a new site and a completely new building. We are suggesting that we should have facilities that are modern, attractive and adequate. We are suggesting that our Church School children should have ample quarters which are conducive to worship and study; that the members of our Youth Groups should have accommodations suitable for varied activity. We are suggesting that our various adult organizations should have meeting places and work rooms which make for comfort and efficiency; that members of our staff should have offices and equipment which will make for effective service.

"That which should be done can be done." Many of us may wonder still about how it can be made possible. The answer lies in our willingness to embark upon a planned program of Christian stewardship. Such a program begins with an awareness of our constant dependence upon God. It continues with our desire to express our gratitude by offering generous portions of our time, talent and treasure. Christian stewardship of this quality proves to be a blessing to the souls of the participants. Moreover, it enables the church to move forward as an instrument for the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

You Can Be Very Proud

In 1638, Rev. Ezekiel Rogers sailed from England for the Massachusetts Bay Colony and arrived in December of that same year. "With him were twenty families from his former parish of Rowley, England. It was not the time of year to start a new settlement, so the company was divided up, some spent the winter in Salem, some in Boston, and some in Ipswich. A site between Ipswich and Newbury was chosen and in May 1639, Mr. Rogers came, with between fifty and sixty families, to the site of their new home and named the district for the home he left behind in his own country.

Mr. Rogers was for about twelve years, Chaplain in the home of an English landholder. His sincerity for his chosen work is proved by the fact that he stayed so long in one family and that he was well liked. His desire to preach more religion for everyday living didn't interest some of those in his charge. For after he left he took the Lady of the Manor to task for "neglecting self-examination and for carelessness in the choice of associates." He was placed in charge of St. Peter's in Yorkshire, but he didn't hesitate to voice his disapproval of the way the people were being "allowed sports on God's Holy Day." Even John Calvin, the personification of Puritanism, allowed the old men to bowl on the green and the young men to

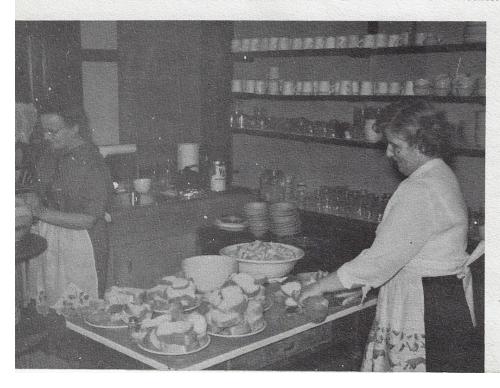


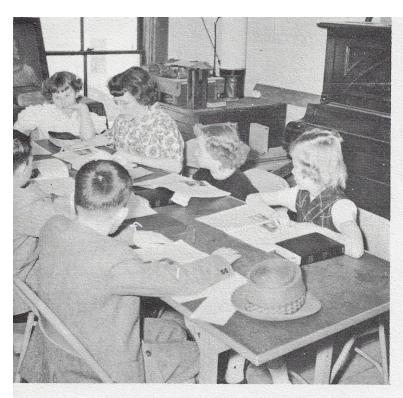
practice military tactics. And because he disapproved he was forced to leave England. He came to these shores to found a new colony whose members worshipped God on the Sabbath, and every day.

Rev. Ezekiel was a man of some means and he was generous in his care of others who had less of the goods of this world. All in the colony were the same—he who had, shared with he who had not; he whose crops were good shared with those who had not so much. This is Socialism at its best and for the best interests of all. Only the first settlers didn't call it "socialism"—it was just living the Christian way to them. And so they lived through the years, helping and caring for, and loving one another.

In 1669, John Spofford, with his family, left Rowley and journeyed into the wilderness and became the first settler of New Rowley. More families followed and so at last there were enough for another settlement.

It was a long trip to Rowley every Sunday, probably by ox-cart to worship. Sunday lasted all day in those early years of our country, and it was a long trip back home, with no doubt, chores to be done and the coals of the banked fire to be raked forward and the house made warm. Nor could it have been a comfortable ride in a springless wagon. So a church was erected nearer home. In 1725 and





1726, after meetings and discussions it was decided to build a meeting-house on land about 100 feet away from what is now Rocky Hill Farm. The frame was raised June 5, 1729 and the next step was to petition the General Court for the establishment of an independent parish. This was done on May 27, 1730 and New Rowley was now separated from the mother church.

In the records of the old church, and no doubt, in every church of that day, you will see how every action from setting a pane of glass to painting the pulpit was surrounded by restrictions. Jealousy was beginning to creep in, and every improvement was given a stated time for completion and generally a committee was appointed to see that the work was done on

time and in a satisfactory manner. And then a committee was appointed to see that the committee to examine the work was onto its job. Well, they must have gotten things done.

As with most Congregational Churches in New England we had in our town two organizations to run the Church. The one, Parish, was in existence before the Church organization was formed in town although it was responsible to and for the Church and called the minister and arranged the ordination. The Parish and the Town appear to have been the same organization although no thought could be given to existence without the spiritual guidance of the Church, which held strict discipline.

The Church, after organization, called ministers, who were paid by the Parish and as can be imagined this at times resulted in very embarassing situations. Only Church members could vote or hold office in the early town government.

Two separate organizations continued to conduct the business of the church, with separate meetings and the financial situation of the Church being controlled by the Parish, whose membership included many not covenant members of the Church.

February 11, 1954 the Church and the Parish were officially merged and incorporated as The First Congregational Church of Georgetown with a new Constitution and By-laws providing for more practical and efficient operation of our internal affairs.





Our Goal ???

In the life of every church as in the life of every person there comes a time when we need to take stock of where we are and where we are going. The goals which we set ourselves in this canvass cannot be measured by dollars alone. We hope that by the leading of God's Spirit our own faith may be deepened and our own commitment strengthened.

A Building Program—Why

The Long Range Planning Committee, appointed by the Moderator at the Annual Meeting of the Church October 11, 1956, studied the whole problem of our Church as regards physical facilities. After considerable study and consultation, the Committee made its report at a special meeting of the Church February 6, 1958. Among recommendations was the need for increased Church School

space, a social hall large enough to accommodate our growing Church Family, and a modernized kitchen. These needs increase in importance almost daily as our Church facilities are used with ever greater frequency.

EDUCATIONAL, FELLOWSHIP AND BENEVOLENCE GOALS

- A complete program of Christian education from Nursery class through adult class.
- 2. An integrated educational program throughout the Church, with each class studying the same general subject at its own age level.
- High standards in curriculum, teachers, teaching techniques, physical facilities and devotion to Christian teaching and learning.
- 4. Broadened program of social and benevolence facilities for youth and adults.
- Increasing our help to the needy at home and abroad.

PHYSICAL FACILITIES NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT THESE GOALS

- 1. Adequate space for each class where the children will feel a sense of pride and permanence.
- 2. For the younger children rooms acoustically separated from the morning worship service.
- 3. A small chapel, not only for Church School worship, small weddings, funerals, youth groups, but to encourage the devotional life of other groups using the Church Building.
- 4. A general fellowship room, with adjoining kitchen for social and recreational purposes to accommodate our large Church Family.
- 5. A Library for use of our entire Church Family.

Our Budget Needs.

In addition to our budget needs of Minister's salary, fuel, water, electricity, telephone, insurance, program materials for Church School, office supplies, etc. The Board of Trustees have outlined the following that need to be taken care of at this time.

- 1. Debt retirement. Debt of \$4,300.
- 2. Paint Church and Parsonage.
- 3. Repairs to Church and Parsonage.
- 4. Work on grounds around Church and Parsonage.
- 5. Fire insurance needs to be more than doubled on Church.
- 6. New pew cushions are desperately needed.
- 7. Additional parking facilities are needed.
- 8. More money needed to maintain Church.
- 9. Something done about kitchen.

Our Needs for Others.

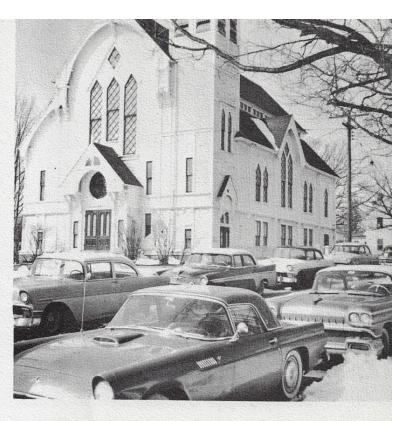
Our Benevolences: Our Christian World Mission through the Massachusetts Congregational Christian Conference, the Board of Home Missions, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Andover-Newton Theological Society, and other local and world-wide mission services.

We need to be doing a lot more than we are now doing for those outside our Parish.

In 1957 the dollar income of the American Board was nearly the same as our income in 1925. We have been spending more on ourselves and less on others. This we should try to change.

It Is Up To Us.

Our needs are only the evidence of our opportunities. We should welcome them as proof that our circle of influence is constantly widening. "Christ has no hands but our hands



to do this work today." In a very real sense Christ has no money but the money in our hands with which to do His work here.

A study of the giving potential of this parish, placed beside church groups in our area, indicates from every standpoint we can take care of all the above needs. But statistics cannot prove that we will do it. The answer to that question lies in the hearts of the families and individuals of the congregation.

We can agree that there is no limit that may be validly placed upon the need of our Church for money. That is why we have undertaken this present Canvass.

We shall determine how much money we can, as a Church family, raise so that we may work more effectively for God.

The Church is committed to a generation long principle to do an excellent job and to provide the best tools for the task. In strengthening the Church we inspire our Community and undergird the moral foundations of the nation.

The Church has been a bulwark in the Community ever since it was founded. In making it more adequate, we are saying to the Community and the Country, "We believe in God. We are convinced that the passing on of our heritage of faith and freedom is important. We support that basic institution which teaches that man has dignity and divine destiny."

Our Plan Jo Meet Our Need

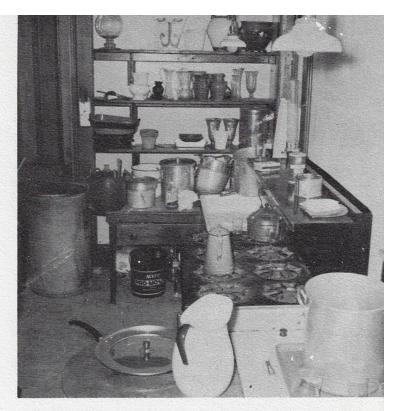
The Bible tells us, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The reverse is even more true. Where our hearts are, there will our treasure be also. If our hearts are committed to the mission of the Christian Church, then our giving is not so much a sacrifice as an expression of our gratitude for what God has given us in Jesus Christ.

The answer as to how much each of us should give is not easy. No one can decide for us. We must decide as families and individuals. The two guides which can best help us are the leading of God's Spirit and the vision of One who gave His life upon a wooden cross.

Because Christian giving is voluntary, statements of intention and faith to give, called pledges, payable weekly, will be sought. Thus, as we all give together, we shall see the amount that we can raise.

The possibility of our church reaching the goal will depend entirely upon the members and friends of our parish. To the degree that





we all raise our sights to the Biblical interpretations of giving (i.e., a Christian's giving should start with a tithe) will determine to a large extent the amount to be raised.

Giving is a habit and for most of us a rather weak and casual habit. There is a conservative instinct, a resistance to giving, on the part of many people which stems not from selfishness but from carelessness. When we first stop to think how much has been given to us in our lives, we are better prepared to take seriously our own responsibility and need to give.

The Canvass

For some time now a Cabinet has been at work formulating plans for this Canvass.

Within the next few days, one of your good neighbors will call upon you to discuss your pledge to the Church. There is nothing complicated about our Canvass plan. We are simply asking that every member and friend of the Church set aside a generous and sacrificial portion of his income each week.

Since the total needed for our program is a large sum if thought of in terms of cash gifts, we would jeopardize the probability of attaining our goal by attempting to make the total gifts in cash. Pledge cards will be presented to members of our Church. It should be remembered that making a pledge in this canvass is not like signing a note for the amount subscribed. We are simply asking that you indicate on the pledge card how much you feel you will be able to give weekly.

If your financial circumstances change, or if you should suffer any misfortune which would make the continuation of payments an undue hardship on you, your pledge may be decreased or discontinued simply by notifying the Church office in writing. If your financial circumstances change for the better, we hope you will want to increase your pledge.

We are suggesting that the families make a pledge payable weekly to the Building Fund for a period of three years commencing Sunday, Sept. 6, 1959.

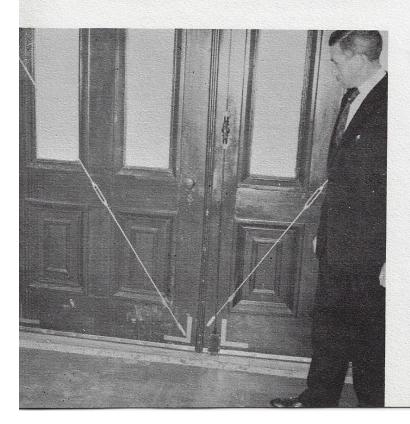
We are also asking the families to make a pledge to the Current Expense and Benevolence Budgets to run through August 31, 1960. Pledges to the Current Expense and Benevolence Budgets should not be reduced in order to make a pledge to the Building Fund.

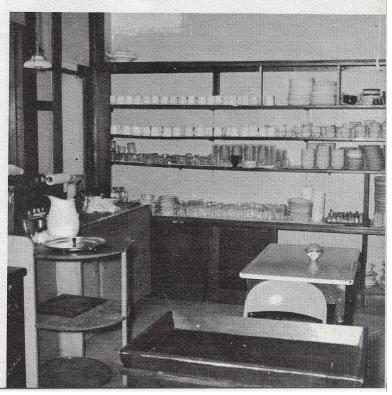
The volunteer canvasser who will call at your home will be one of many. He will have spent many hours preparing himself for the task. He will have given generously of his own money. He believes in the worthwhileness of

our Church and its work and is proving his own faith by calling upon others. His is not an easy job, so extend to him, please, your warm welcome when he calls.

It is hoped that each one of us will prayerfully consider our pledges and will attempt to make them representative of our commitment as Christians to the work of our Lord.

Our pledges will truly represent how much our God, our Church, and our Christian faith mean to us,





Our Church Now

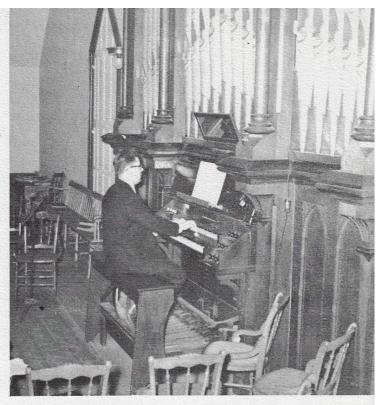
TODAY'S FULL SCALE YOUTH PROGRAM

"Train up a child in the way he should go" is a piece of wisdom that more Christian Churches are taking to heart as never before. In a true program of Christian education, spirit, mind and body all find their place. In this whole field we at First Church are making some headway but we need to do much more.

Perhaps few realize how many youth our church serves.

72
115
36
50
25
28
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326
35
30
40





Our Community and our children are looking to us for guidance. We love them all too deeply to say anything but "yes." Our answer will be to build a fellowship that can care for all. Not an organization of stone and wood, but a fellowship of love and faith in Jesus Christ. We will be improving a building, but more important we will be improving our fellowship. That is why this is a venture in faith.

Regular weekly events: Sunday

9:30 Church School (First grade—Senior High Class)

11:00 Service of Morning Worship

11:00 Church School (Nursery—Six months—Kindergarten)

4:00 Pioneer Fellowship for 7th and 8th graders

7:00 Pilgrim Fellowship for high school students

Monday

2:30 Camp Fire Girls

Wednesday

2:30 Blue Birds

7:00 Church Choir

Friday

2:30 Junior Choir Rehearsal

Regular Monthly Meetings:

The Church Cabinet, Board of Christian Education, Board of Trustees, Board of Deacons, Guild, Church School Staff, Women's Missionary Society, Music Committee, Couples Club.

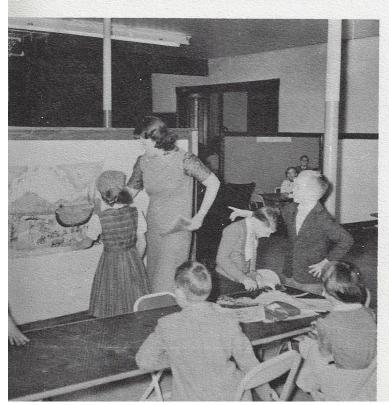
What Is My Part?

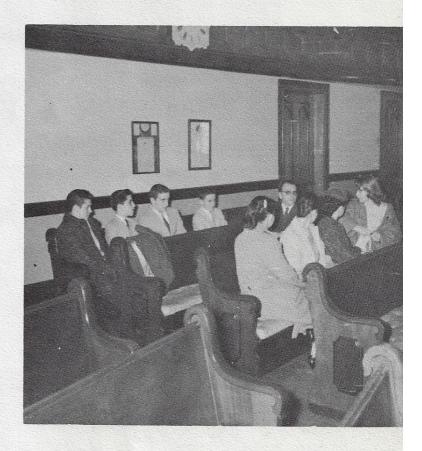
The answer as to how much each of us should give is not easy. No one can decide for us. No one will decide for us. We must decide as families and individuals.

The important question that we have to answer for ourselves is, "How much should we give as an expression of our love to God for giving us Jesus?" The amount we raise will depend to a large degree on how high we lift our sights as Christians.

A Christian should try to set as his goal for Christian giving \$2.00 per week for each \$1,000 of annual income. Of this he should be striving to give \$1.00 per week for each \$1,000 of annual income to his Church.

If we remember the parable of the widow and her last two coins, we will realize that no amount is too small or too large to show our love to God. Each one of us has to give in the manner in which God has prospered us and





not worry about what our neighbors or friends may or may not do, or be able to do.

Invariably, this kind of giving strengthens faith and brings the kind of interest that permits a Church to grow and render greater Christian service. Only Sacrificial Giving will enable our Church to reach the goal. Sacrificial Giving is the kind we do for those we love. We think in terms of HOW MUCH we can give those we love. Selfish giving asks HOW LITTLE can we give and get by.

Sacrificial Giving results in a pledge for a larger amount than we thought would be possible.

Our pledges will reveal our gratitude for God's blessing, our appreciation and our concern for the work of His Church.



Leaders of Tomorrow

We of the First Congregational Church owe it to our children to give them every help and aid in Christian Training for the tough days ahead. Thus our effort at this time to improve our Christian Educational and social facilities. Here is an urgent overwhelming need that the adults of our Church must meet right here in their own community.

Each boy or girl has his or her youth just once. For it is only "a minute" before the youth of today will be the voters, the businessmen, the ministers, the church members, the parents of tomorrow. The members of our Church have a once in a life time opportunity to provide, through sacrificial giving, a building that will make it possible to improve and enlarge the splendid work now being done for our Church and Community.