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THE COMMUNITY SERVICES OF FIRST UNITED CHURCH

A case-study of the relation of the ministry of the  
church, social work, and neighborhood rehabilitation.

by

Henry McFarlane Morrow

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## ABSTRACT

The Protestant Church has a tradition of active participation in the life of the community. This tradition comes from a conviction that the church has a responsibility to work for the well-being of society. The United Church of Canada is active in the field of social action. It has also assumed responsibility for the operation of some social services. During the past twenty-five years the profession of social work has made tremendous strides and is now taking its place as one of the major professions. Many services, formerly offered by the church, are now included in distinctive social work agencies. The relationship between the church and these social work agencies is one that interests the writer.

There are some within the church who would advocate a Protestant bloc of social services in the community, others feel the church's contribution must be indirect through the participation of its leaders and members in the work of the social agencies, and a few would restrict the church to a centre for worship and religious teaching. The secularism of the modern age has impelled many to consider the Protestant Church's relationship to education and social welfare.

One of the principal home mission agencies of the Protestant church is the institutional church, a centre for a religious and social service ministry. These churches are situated in deteriorated parts of the city. Some would advocate an extension of this programme into the transitional areas of the city. This thesis has sought to examine the place of the church in social welfare programmes and to relate this to the study of an institutional church. First United Church is located on the periphery of a deteriorated area and is also adjacent to a transitional area in the city. Its programme has been studied in the light of its service to these specific areas. Finally, the Demonstration Housing Survey of the University of British Columbia is recommending that the Strathcona district be replanned and that a low-rent housing project be erected in this section of the city. Consideration has been given to the possible modification of services which would be indicated and the new opportunities for community service which would be presented if this project proceeds.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was made possible through the interest of the late Rev. Andrew Roddan. He was conscious of the changing nature of the work at First Church and encouraged the writer to undertake this study. The deteriorating physical environment was a source of concern to him and he welcomed the possibility of a low-rent housing project being proposed for the area adjacent to First Church. He was particularly anxious that the church be prepared to participate in plans for rehousing and neighbourhood rehabilitation. The writer is appreciative of the cooperation he received from Dr. Roddan and the members of his staff.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL WORK

Sixty-two years ago when Vancouver was incorporated, people had a very limited concept of social welfare. Canada was still the land of frontiers and like most frontier communities the acts of neighborliness served to meet many social needs. Gradually the population has increased, and with industrial and commercial development, large centres have arisen. Neighborliness has not been adequate to meet human needs and many groups have become concerned with the welfare of the community. Today many professional and non-professional agencies such as public health departments, visiting nurses, private social work agencies, public welfare departments, probation services, recreational agencies, social action groups concerned with social reform, political parties, churches and others are interested in varying aspects of the field of social welfare. No one group is able to say that they serve the total field.

The twentieth century has also seen the growth of a new profession, Social Work. This new profession has now taken a leading place in the life of the community. Social work has developed as those who were engaged in working with people, in children's agencies, charity organization societies, and other welfare agencies sought to understand human behaviour better and to evolve techniques of work which helped the client to respond to the professional worker in such a way that he would be assisted in working out a solution to his own problem. Today there are four main phases of social work: case work, group work, community organization and social research. Case work is concerned with a professional relationship between a worker and client so that the latter is able to make a more satisfying and socially acceptable adjustment to life. Case work is

practised in many settings, in agencies devoted to case work services exclusively and also as a department in agencies whose main task is in another field of endeavour as in schools, hospitals, churches and industry. It is a form of counselling in which the client is helped to make his own decision, rather than receive advice. Group work has been defined by Miss Grace Coyle as "an educational process aiming at the development and social adjustment of individuals through voluntary group association."<sup>1</sup> Group work requires a trained worker to be leader of the groups and it is through the skill of this leader that the "group work process" takes place. This branch of social work is still comparatively young and it is only in recent years that it has been recognized as having a distinct body of knowledge and experience. Group work is being practised increasingly in community centres, neighbourhood houses, Y's and other recreational agencies. Group work is changing recreational activities from "busy work" to purposeful activities based on individual needs. "Community organization" seeks through a coordinated program to meet the social needs of the community. There is an increasing understanding that in this age of specialization there is a need for working together in community service. Through organized community action the needs of the community can be best met. Social research is concerned with a study of social problems in the community and serves as the factual basis for social action and for the improvement of standards and services to the people. Therefore it will be seen that social work is now a many-sided profession reaching out into the community, serving the needs of people, and influencing the thinking and action of daily life.

- 1.- Frank J. Bruno, "Trends in Social Work as Reflected in the Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work, 1874-1946," Columbia University Press, New York, 1948, P. 274.

The technique of "knowing a person" developed by social work form the body of knowledge of the profession. It is closely connected with the profession of psychiatry and there exists a cordial relationship between the two. Social work in North America has drawn heavily upon this allied field for its understanding of personality, and workers lean upon this profession for counsel and help in meeting many of the situations found in the practice of their profession. In other professions, as in medicine, where the approach is somewhat different, the relationship has been entered into with more reluctance. Gradually social work is becoming recognized by this profession. In still others, where there is a deep philosophical basis, such as found in the ministry, the relationship has been one of armed neutrality. Each group approaches the same problem from a different base and so each has mental reservations concerning the other. This is unfortunate as the church is above all an institution with which the objectives of social work is in closest agreement. Mr. Bruno comments:

"As it happens, the one institution with which the objectives of social work is in closest agreement is the church, and yet the give-and-take between the two has been less significant than between the other professions and social work. This is probably because of the absolute character of the philosophy of the church which finds the pragmatism of social work an uneasy yoke-fellow. The church accepts social workers, but largely that it may promote its own objectives by the professional methods of the newer vocation. Social work, on the other hand, has not been influenced particularly, as to method, by the church. It would take more wisdom than is available at the present time to explain this fatal dichotomy between two such allied institutions as the church and social work. All that can be safely asserted is that there is much the church could contribute, in method to social work, out of its age long experience in human relations; but as yet the way to its utilization has not been found."<sup>2</sup>

There is no denying the truth of Mr. Bruno's statement that these two professions have had little significant give and take between them. However it does not seem that the differences are irreconcilable. There are signs that the social work profession and leaders amongst the ministry are anxious that working relationships between these two professions might be strengthened. A Conference was sponsored by the Canadian Council of Churches between social workers and church leaders in Ontario, at which the whole question of the relationship between the two fields was discussed, and while no reports of this meeting were issued, the views expressed proved that all felt the need of a closer relationship.<sup>3</sup>

Many of the functions now performed by social work were once carried on through the Christian churches. In the early stages of its development, men and women trained in the churches provided a considerable portion of the professional and executive leadership of social agencies. In its beginnings much of the social work was sectarian, and some sectarian work continues in the modern community. The Roman Catholic, Jewish, Lutheran and Salvation Army groups maintain a program of social work. Most of the other churches perform some social work functions or operate agencies within the community. It is significant that the non-sectarian agencies are frequently referred to as the Protestant agencies in the community. Social agencies and churches are so intimately concerned with the well-being of individuals and of society that neither should be satisfied with a relationship that does not intertwine. The church, because it is the church, must always have an interest in social work either through the sectarian agency or in cooperation with the community agencies. Some have chosen one approach, some another, others are seeking a solution to this question of the relationship of the church to social work.

3.-Personal letter from Dr. W. J. Gallagher, Secretary Canadian Council of Churches.



### Some Approaches to Church Social Work

Of all churches, the Roman Catholic Church takes a particularly comprehensive view of life, and believes that it is important to include education and social work as a part of the church's ministry rather than as an aspect of community life conducted by some other agency. Hence we find in every city of any consequence a group of Catholic Charities, operating under the authority of the Bishop, and designed to render service in the fields of family counselling and child welfare. There appear to be three principal factors influencing this attitude of the Catholic Church to social work. First, the church regards charity as one of the great virtues and the giving of charity as a Christian obligation, therefore the Catholic charity has in mind not only the recipient but the welfare of the giver, who through such contributions is helped to practice the greatest of all virtues. In Christianity and Social Adventuring, William J. Kerby expresses it as follows:

"It would seem more in keeping with the instincts of the Catholic Church to speak of the charities of the Catholic Church rather than of its social work. The authentic eminence given by Christ to charity as the greatest of the virtues has never failed to exert powerful influence in Catholic life. Love of God and of neighbor is fundamental in the divine plan. Charity as a spiritual bond in the Christian life leads to service as an obligation in that life."<sup>4</sup>

A second consideration is the responsibility which the Church assumes for the interpretation of the moral law. Dr. Kerby writes, in Christianity and Social Adventuring,

"The supremacy of the moral law as interpreted by the church from both natural and supernatural standpoints is recognized as a primary factor in shaping

4.-Jerome Davis Ed., Christianity and Social Adventuring,  
The Century Company, New York, 1927, P. 119

all policies of service to the poor. Every measure of relief, every plan that deals with the dependent family must meet the approval of the moral law before it is incorporated into Catholic practice."<sup>5</sup>

Finally, the church's conviction is that the parish is the canonical, spiritual and social unit in the life of the church. The social agency is a resource which the parish priest might use in meeting the needs of his parishioners. As a result of these convictions the Catholic church feels bound to continue its own social welfare institutions.

#### Jewish Social Work

Wherever there is concentration of Jewish population, there the Jewish community provides welfare services for its own people. The Hebrew religious traditions have always emphasized charity. Within their community there has been a sharing of resources to assist the needy, and they have tended to become a self-contained group. This exclusiveness has been a protection in times of persecutions yet has also been the focal point of attack on this minority group. Today most Jewish communities have well-developed welfare programs, many with very high standards of practice, which seek to serve the needs of their own communities. Jewish agencies have pioneered in certain forms of professional work. This is especially true of the group work field, where they have made an outstanding contribution. In this modern day when the fear of persecution is still a reality, and when the cultural and religious traditions of the Hebrew peoples are not fully understood or appreciated by Gentiles, it would seem likely that the Jewish people will continue to feel a need to organize.

### The Protestant Churches' Dilemma

The Protestant Churches have no established policy in regard to social work. In a letter from the Pathfinding Service for the Churches in New York, David Barry, the research director writes:

"...there is not too much agreement among the various religious groups as to what the social service function of the church should be, and there is even disagreement within particular communions. It is a topic discussed frequently by Home Mission Boards when they are allocating budget funds, but the range of opinion varies from the Catholic groups, who consider all social work to be preferably under church supervision to the premillennialists who seem to think that any social amelioration merely postpones the second coming."<sup>6</sup>

In 1946, the Church Conference of Social Work meeting in Buffalo discussed the role of the church in social work.<sup>7</sup> A great variety of opinions were expressed at this meeting. In his presidential address, James A. Crain emphasized the need for a philosophy and adequate goal for church social work. He suggested that there were two dominant attitudes today, which may be illustrated by the following example:

In the first case, a neighbourhood house had been established by a church. Gradually as the work of this centre expanded, community funds were contributed and the work became more and more a community venture. When the time came for the erection of new buildings the church board deeded the property to the agency board and withdrew from the management of the centre. A church venture had come to be accepted as a community responsibility and at this point the church withdrew, having fulfilled its

6.- Quoted from a letter received from David Barry, Research Director of the Pathfinding Service for the Churches in New York.

7.-The following pages contain several quotations from the Proceedings of the Church Conference of Social Work, Buffalo, New York, 1946. The addresses are recorded in mimeographed form and may be obtained from the office of the Secretary of the Conference.

function of pioneering the establishment of the community house.

A different attitude is revealed in the second type of situation. Here church groups enter the field of social service both for the purpose of carrying out the Christian imperative of serving needy humanity and for purposes of denominational or sectarian prestige. The church in this case would continue to operate the centre, because of the obvious differences in philosophy between this latter group and the former church group. Mr. Crain felt that there is a real need for an answer to the question, "What is church social work?"

At this conference, Dr. F. Ernest Johnson of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, reminded those present that the traditional pattern of Protestant social work in North America has minimized the operation and control of agencies by churches or religious groups and has maximized Protestant participation in non-sectarian agencies. Protestant Churches have stressed the sense of Christian vocation in community service. Their people have been encouraged to give leadership in community agencies. Through this leadership the church sought to bring its influence to bear on the many social agencies operating in the community. Today, in the face of increasing secularism and the Protestant church's diminishing influence in community life, many church leaders are questioning this traditional policy. Some have suggested a Protestant bloc of social agencies, comparable to the Catholic bloc and the Jewish group. If such a plan were seriously attempted social work would become a battleground for sectarian agencies, with duplication of services and a resulting failure to meet the total needs of the community.

A few denominations have adopted a national social work policy. In the United States the Lutheran Church has established its own social

agencies. Speaking on the "Philosophy and Pattern of Lutheran Welfare,"

Henry J. Whiting says:

"As a church we are committed to serve men in the name of God who reveals Himself in Christ. As a church we must be about Our Father's business. We have no alternative. Hence the Lutheran Church has now and will continue to build and strengthen its services to people. Whether the services offered today such as child welfare, health, care of the aged, etc. will still be offered in the years ahead, we cannot say. That will be dependent upon the needs as well as the nature and content of social agencies available in the future. But the church as a church will be serving and meeting human need."<sup>8</sup>

In many centres, as in Seattle, the Lutheran group maintain their own Chest, and conduct an annual campaign for the support of their own charities. Such social work is of course sectarian, and if other denominations were to pursue such a policy there would be duplication of services with lessening of efficiency and increase of cost to the community. Most other Protestant churches have rejected such a plan.

The Salvation Army has a dual function - that of church and social agency. They believe that the

"ultimate objective of both is the same....the salvation of men...by the power of the Holy Spirit combined with the influence of human ingenuity, energy and love .....Thus today the Salvation Army operates a variety of social services in a religious setting with Christian motivation and goals."<sup>9</sup>

Speaking to the Church Conference of Social Work at Buffalo, Major Jane E. Wrieden thus summed the experience of The Salvation Army:

"The Salvation Army is finding that becoming a qualified agency, like becoming a qualified person is a continuing process. Thus, the changing pattern of social work in The Salvation Army is a daily challenge to those representatives of the agency who give themselves fully to the job of offering professional services in a dynamic religious setting. What are some of the challenges

8.- Proceedings of the Church Conference of Social Work, Buffalo, 1946.

9.- Ibid.

The Salvation Army is facing -- challenges we would like to share with other churches?

We must continue to maintain the high standards of professional practise demanded of competent practitioners, even to the point of leadership in setting standards. These standards must be a means to an end --

....We must continue to relate the pattern of social work within The Salvation Army to the pattern of social work in general, and to the total stream of life in the community and in the world, 'not in subjection to but in relation to' other groups....This will mean that workers must be willing to sink themselves in something bigger than themselves....the agency, and that the agency must be willing to sink itself in something bigger than itself -- the community and service to others.

....We must engage in research, especially in the area of the conscious use of an effective religious approach to problems.

We must above all learn to integrate the knowledge and skill of dynamic psychology and social case work with our religious insights and goals...."10

Here we have a leader in The Salvation Army who is coming to grips with this problem of integrating a high standard of professional social work practise with the dynamic of religious living. The writer agrees with Major Wrieden that church social workers must learn "to integrate the knowledge and skill of dynamic psychology and social work" with their "religious insights and goals." If other religious groups are to justify their social service program they would do well to consider these challenges set forth by her. Religious social work should have a qualitative distinctness.

Most denominations find themselves responsible for the administration of social agencies, and for the carrying out of certain social work functions as a part of their church program. Some churches, such as the Congregational Church, feel that their function is social action and they

should not operate social agencies. Yet they find themselves operating neighbourhood houses and other social agencies. Many of the denominations are confused. They are looking for some criteria by which they can establish a policy in regard to social work. The types of social work carried on by Protestant Churches include: child welfare services, hospitals, homes for the aged, city mission societies, seamen's agencies, maternity homes, neighbourhood houses, and summer camps. Many of these activities are restricted because the Mission Boards allocating the funds are not sure of the church's role in maintaining these services. John L. Mixon has expressed the situation very well,

"Social work functions are in a sort of voluntary relationship in the Protestant Churches neither wholly within our field of responsibility and thereby elevated to a place of respect and adequate support nor completely eliminated because our Christian consciences somehow will not permit us to let go."<sup>11</sup>

#### United Church of Canada

The United Church of Canada has given some consideration to the question of the relationship of the church to social agencies. In 1938 the Commission on Urban problems presented a report to the General Council, one section of which dealt with this subject. The report recognizes that in the past fifty years there have been great developments in the field of social welfare and that services once sponsored by a church are now the responsibility of specialized agencies. The development of social work is recognized as an evolving pattern.

Study of the work of the church and its local congregations and institutions reveals involvement in an extensive pattern of social work. There are services to families which are in poverty or destitute such as through

11.- Ibid.

the social assistance funds of the congregations; varied services to children, such as the Earls court Children's Home in Toronto; service to unmarried mothers through institutions like the United Church Home for Girls in Vancouver; provision for recreational services through Community Houses attached to institutional churches like First Church in Vancouver; and counselling service where family relationships are strained. In his daily task the church worker comes face to face with social problems and social need. The United Church of Canada commission suggested certain principles which they thought should be kept in mind in dealing with this problem of the relation of the church to social service organizations.

"Social Service activities carried on by the church show the connection between faith and practice and give an immediate expression to the service motive emphasized in Christian teaching.

....any work carried on by the church should be on the newer and more effectual lines, and not carried on in the old ways, by methods elsewhere discarded..  
...Social work carried on by the church should command the respect of the community.

There is quite a large constituency known to the church, which does not come to the attention of the social welfare agencies of the community. These families may not be relief cases, but do require advice from someone whom they can trust, and often they go to their minister for this form of help. It is important that he should be in a position to give sound advice.

Some church representatives should also have knowledge of the community resources in mental hygiene, recreation, social care of dependents, education, etc....."12

These statements are reasonable. It is proper to expect that the church should give competent service in its ministry to people. Too often the social work of the church is not keeping pace with modern developments

12.- Report of the Urban Problems Commission, United Church of Canada, as submitted to the General Council, 1938.



in the field, the church is lagging. Frequently ministers are well trained in theology but receive little or no training in the art of counselling. Parishioners have a right to expect more than good intuition when they go to their minister for help with a problem. The minister should know where he can learn of the welfare resources in his community, many are lost in the maize of modern welfare agencies. The United Church would do well to follow out these four principles enunciated in the report of the Commission on Urban Problems.

The report continues:

"The individual church should recognize itself as one factor in an immensely complex situation, and should be ready to cooperate with social agencies at work in the district...

The great movement of the various welfare services in certain centres makes it necessary for the church to limit its responsibility in this field. The multiplication in denominational lines, of various services in the community may be wasteful and inefficient.

The fact that a great deal of the social welfare work of the community is organized under private agencies or through public departments, does not mean that they cease to be a concern of the church. For their successful operation they must have large numbers of interested citizens serving on governing boards, committees, as volunteers, and on paid staffs."<sup>13</sup>

The church must face this fact that in modern life it is one of many agencies in the community. The cooperation of all is necessary for the fullest service to the individual. The minister through his work in the parish can encourage his lay people to participate in the activities of the numerous social agencies and if he has made himself acquainted with the numerous services offered in the community can skilfully refer people to the appropriate agency. The church can become a vital factor in effecting the maximum service to the individuals within the parish.

At Buffalo in 1946, Dr. Johnson argued that the traditional Protestant attitude towards social work was one of indirect participation through the sense of Christian vocation of individual members of the church. This report implies the general acceptance of this position by the United Church of Canada. It makes no claim that the church should be responsible for social welfare and recognizes that the church is one of several agencies working in the community. This report is quick to remind the church that cooperative effort gives the finest community service and makes no suggestion that the church should establish services for its own members.

The Commission suggested that the church might give careful consideration to its responsibility in providing leisure time activities. They appeared to feel that at the time of making their report (1938) that development in this field was such that the church must continue a pioneering job. This raises the question as to whether the role of the church should include that of initiator of new programs. One of the leaders of the United Church Department of Evangelism and Social Service has suggested that the church should be so sensitive to human needs that they would recognize unmet problems and provide services to meet these needs. He further believes that the church should provide these services only until they are sufficiently recognized and demanded by the community that non-sectarian groups will take responsibility for providing them. Thus he would relinquish services to a public or private agency when the demand for them overflows from the church constituency into the fuller community. Such a policy is not accepted practice in the United Church and there are many who would disagree with such an attitude but it does merit serious consideration as a legitimate function of the Christian Church.

The report of the Commission on Urban Problems has the distinction of

being an attempt by a major denomination to state their position in regard to social work. Many questions remain unanswered but it will serve as an excellent basis for further discussion.

Many seek a pattern of Protestant Welfare work. Mr. John L. Mixon, former Welfare Director of the Los Angeles Council of Churches suggests that:

"What is needed today in Protestant welfare is not a "pattern" so much as an understanding of what social work is and to use social work methods and skills in working out our relationship and responsibilities as Protestants in meeting human needs."<sup>14</sup>

As one who has training in the church and in social work, the writer would agree with Mr. Mixon. The two approaches are not irreconcilable and each has a contribution. The church in its social institutions can lead the way in helping the two professions to work together for the welfare of the individuals seeking help.

14.- John L. Mixon, Proceedings Church Conference of Social Work, Buffalo, 1946.

## CHAPTER II

### FIRST UNITED CHURCH, AN INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH

North American cities have developed very rapidly and with this development have come great changes in population. Areas which were once good residential areas are now virtual slums. As the city expands, the commercial and industrial enterprises invade the older residential sections; those residents who can do so move out to the newer sections on the perimeter of the city, leaving the older homes for lower income families. Many of the dwellings are converted into rooming houses and it is common to find two or more families living in a single house. Here in overcrowded conditions, social conditions fester and decay sets in; morally and socially the area declines until it would seem that all sense of community has disappeared.

Churches which were once proud self-supporting congregations find that their membership gradually declines as their members move out to the newer districts. Frequently, the homes of the former residents are occupied by two or more families and the older district becomes a blighted area with a high mobility of population. The traditional church program fails to attract many of the newer residents, and they do not participate in church life to the same extent as the families who are moving to other parts of the city. Many congregations in the United States and Canada have had to decide whether to adapt their program to meet the changed conditions in their community or move to a district where many of their members have already settled. Some have moved out to the suburbs, some have tried to carry on in the old location without any adaptation and have gradually disappeared, others have boldly adapted their program to

meet the needs of their own constituency and have given excellent service as Christian centres in the sore spots of the modern city.

No two communities are identical; differences in the educational and occupational status of the residents, their racial backgrounds, cultural and religious traditions, all make variations in the community. So it is that no two congregations face the same problems. The manner in which a congregation fits into the life of a community and meets the needs of the inhabitants determines the effectiveness of its ministry. Of course there are degrees of adaptation.

The church which combines a social service and religious ministry is known as an institutional church. Frequently this kind of church is located in the centre of the city amidst the wretched, overcrowded slums which are found in many cities. Many institutional churches were organized in non-Anglo-Saxon communities in an effort to provide wholesome leadership for the European immigrants who flocked to Canada, a generation ago, and found themselves in a strange land, not knowing the language or the customs of the people. Through these institutions the church sought to extend the hand of friendship to the stranger at their door.

#### The Institutional Church

The institutional church emphasizes the religious ministry. It is not a social agency. It might have an excellent counselling service, provide a good community house, operate an excellent summer camp, maintain "goodwill industries," give social assistance to needy families not able to receive public assistance, and perform many other social work functions: yet basically it is a church. Graham Taylor, who was for many years Professor of Sociology at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago

and who was one of the founders of its School of Social Service Administration, has told of his work at Fourth Congregational Church in Hartford.<sup>15</sup> When he went to this congregation towards the end of the last century he found only the shell of a once great church. There were less than one hundred active members. A large proportion of the neighborhood population was neither interested in nor influenced by the church. Mindful of social needs, Taylor developed an institutional church program, not forgetting that this was fundamentally a church, until Fourth Congregational Church became a thriving centre. Under his leadership religion and the social movement joined forces to serve the needs of men and women.

Since Graham Taylor's day there have been many institutional churches organized in the cities of this continent. Some have been successful and have made an impression on the community in which they were located. Others have failed to be effective either as centres of a social ministry or as centres for religious teaching. Many feel that as the institutional church becomes more a social agency than a church it loses its effectiveness. They suggest that the institutional church must provide its social ministry as part of the Christian imperative to serve and keep foremost its religious purposes. It is a church first and a social agency second. Others feel that the two functions are irreconcilable and that the church should solely concern itself with spiritual matters and let welfare agencies provide the social ministry.

The United Church of Canada maintains some fifteen Institutional Churches. Some were opened in the early years of this century when the flood of immigrants from Europe was at its peak. They offered social and religious services to these strangers within the Dominion, and sought to prepare them for life in the land of their adoption. Others have grown

15.- Graham Taylor, Pioneering on Social Frontiers, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

out of the needs of slum and near-slum areas. Self-supporting congregations have come under the care of the Board of Home Missions and a social service ministry has been added to the religious program. Today there are centres in the main cities of Canada, extending from Vancouver to Sidney. The church is committed to the continuance of this type of ministry.

#### History of the First United Church

First United Church in Vancouver is one of this group of Institutional Churches maintained by the Board of Home Missions. As its name implies it was the first church of the denomination in Vancouver. The congregation belonged to the Presbyterian Church before church union in 1925, and was originally established through the efforts of the Presbyterian Church in Eburne, now a suburb of Vancouver. When the C.P.R. first came to Vancouver services were started and a small church was erected on Cordova Street. This building was destroyed in the great fire which swept the city in 1886. It was replaced by a larger building which still stands on Cordova Street near Main. Some years later the present building at Gore Avenue and Hastings Street was erected. This church auditorium will seat approximately seven hundred and fifty people. The attached Sunday School room is suitable for smaller meetings, banquets, etc., and the young people have played badminton in this room. In the early days this was one of the most representative and influential congregations in the city.

With the expansion of the city and the opening of new residential areas the original inhabitants moved away from the area adjacent to the church and their homes were taken over by newcomers of many nationalities. The industrial area began to encroach on the residential district, rooming houses became more common, and gradually the area changed from a middle

class community to the near-slum it is today. The church was affected by this transition. Many members moved away and became active in the churches nearer their new homes. The new arrivals were not responsive to the traditional church organization. The old First Church found itself faced with a critical problem, which came to a crisis in 1916. Finances were strained, and the congregation had to consider whether to continue in the present location. While the congregation was considering this problem the Home Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church offered to assist them to continue their work, by undertaking to supply the minister for the church. The succeeding five years saw two ministers occupy the pulpit of this pioneer congregation. In this period the Vancouver Community House was organized as a branch of First Church. In 1921 the Home Mission Board decided to call a man specially qualified for dealing with a cosmopolitan congregation. Reverend J. Richmond Craig was appointed, and continued as minister and superintendent until 1929 when he was called to Grace Church in Winnipeg.

Reverend Andrew Roddan began his ministry at First Church in January 1930, and continued until his death in May of this year. During his ministry the church has had to meet many calls for assistance, has frequently taken the initiative in speaking for the underprivileged, and often the voice of First Church through its minister has cried out against degrading conditions. Under his leadership the church dared to serve.

The present minister, Reverend R. A. Redman has only commenced his ministry in this pioneer church.

#### The Vancouver Community House

The Presbyterian Church in Canada was one of the pioneers in the



settlement movement in Canada. Under the leadership of Dr. John Shearer, Superintendent of the Social Service Department of the Presbyterian Church from 1910 to 1917, the first of the church settlements. St. Christopher House in Toronto was opened in 1912; in the same year Chalmers' House was opened in Montreal, and thus began a movement that was ultimately to include seven centres.

The settlement houses were governed by a local board appointed by the Presbytery. This board was responsible for providing the building and equipment for the centre. The central budget of the church undertook to provide the staff and meet the operating costs. The settlement was related to the Presbytery in a similar relationship to a congregation but for all practical purposes the local board was the governing body. Before the University of Toronto opened a School of Social Work, St. Christopher House initiated an intensive in-service training program requiring twelve months of residence and supervised field work. This program was planned as the training centre for all the church settlements.

In 1918 when First Church was reorganizing its work in order to serve its environment, the Vancouver Community House was organized. Even in those days, First Church was located on the corner of the district it sought to serve. Mrs. Van Munster came out from St. Christopher House to direct the new settlement. Arriving in Vancouver, she found accommodation suitable for developing a settlement program had not been secured. The local officials expected her to use the school rooms of the church. Mrs. Van Munster delivered an ultimatum to the local boards; either they would provide her with proper accommodation or she would return to Toronto. Within three months she was installed in two adjoining store buildings with a residence overhead. The buildings were well located (at 905 East Georgia

Street). The work developed very quickly, and soon the Vancouver Community House was a thriving social centre.

From its inception Vancouver Community House was connected with the work of First Church and never became a settlement house as some of the other settlements which had their beginnings in church home mission programs. Its program was really one of church sponsored community recreation. Without a strong board the Community House did not have any group to speak for it in the councils of the church and to interpret its purpose and work to the community. Lacking this leadership the Community House was hampered in its struggle for adequate financial support and its leadership became increasingly inter-related with the church leadership. In 1921, a new building was in prospect but unfortunately church finances began to feel the pinch, those who had little sympathy with settlement work clamored for reductions in this area. Not having laymen able to defend and fight for the continuance and expansion of the Community House, the former group prevailed and the centre had to carry on in the stores. Mrs. Van Munster resigned in 1921 and was replaced by Miss Grace Atkey. Gradually policy changed and in the latter years of the Community House's existence the deaconess and girls worker with assistance from the theological students and volunteers carried on the leadership of the activities. In 1931, the depression struck Canada, church budgets had to be drastically curtailed, and the Vancouver Community House closed its doors. Once again the "non-essentials" were being reduced.

Study of the annual report for 1930 reveals that a varied program was in operation. The kindergarten had a total enrollment of sixty-four, with an average attendance of forty-five children. Twenty nationalities were represented in the school. There were a number of boys' and girls' clubs,

varying in size from eight to sixteen members, meeting in the community house. A mother's club, the White Shield Club, met each week with an attendance of almost forty members. Story Hours were held on Wednesdays and Saturdays and appear to have been exceptionally well attended. An average of one hundred children attended the Wednesday hour. A mission band and an adult Bible Class met regularly at the Community House. There is no record of any men's clubs using the premises and the White Shield Club appears to have been the only women's club so that, apparently, the main program emphasis was directed towards boys' and girls' work.

After the closing of the Community House an attempt was made to continue many of these clubs and activities in the church building at Gore Avenue and Hastings Street. The annual reports for the years succeeding 1931 show a large increase in the club work carried on at First Church. The kindergarten was discontinued, but an attempt was made to develop a strong program of boys' and girls' work as a part of the mid-week program of the Sunday School.

In 1939, the Women's Missionary Society of the United Church were persuaded to open a kindergarten house in the Seymour School district. At that time the area close to the church was about ninety percent Oriental and all the denominations had kindergartens for Oriental children. The area around the Seymour School had no kindergarten or club house and the younger children could not come as far as First Church. A small house was rented across the street from the Seymour School, and a kindergarten was organized. This school met Monday to Friday from nine to twelve. A mother's club was organized and met regularly at the house. "Explorer Groups" for boys and girls, ages six to eleven, were established and met one afternoon a week. One senior girls club which had previously met at

the church used the house as its meeting place, since this location was more central for the members. The kindergarten house continued to serve this district until after the evacuation of the Japanese population in 1943.

When the Japanese people with their minister were evacuated from the Coast, First United Church took over the property of the United Church Japanese Mission. This mission property included a church building and a fine community building with gymnasium and club rooms. All the club work and the kindergarten were transferred to this centre at the corner of Powell and Dunlevy Streets.

#### First Church Today

Today, First Church looks back over a history which parallels the history of Vancouver. The church has seen its environment change drastically in the last sixty years. The once proud First Church is now a mission church, the once fine residential district is now virtually a slum, but the church still stands near one of the city's main crossroads and strives to be a living witness of Him who said "the greatest would be the servant of all."

The church has a staff which includes a deaconess, girl's worker and kindergarten teacher, office secretary, superintendent and staff of the welfare industries and the minister-superintendent. This staff offers a great variety of service through counselling, the community house and club program, the camp, the "welfare industries", and through many forms of assistance to the homeless and needy. Succeeding chapters will review the work of the church, but first it is necessary to look at the environment in which the work is carried on and to appreciate the conditions under which many of the people live. The work can only be properly understood in the light of the environment which forms the parish.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

First United Church is located on the fringe of three distinct areas of population. (1) West from the church, towards Cambie Street and extending from the waterfront to False Creek, is an area of cheap hotels and rooming houses. When a committee of the Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver, which had been studying social health conditions in this area, released their report<sup>16</sup> the newspapers entitled it "Vancouver's Square Mile of Vice." (2) North of Hastings towards the waterfront and bounded by Gore Avenue and Glen Drive is a residential district which is gradually being transformed into an industrial and commercial area. While no specific study has been made of this district in recent years, it is a matter of agreement that the housing conditions in this area are worse than those in the district south of Hastings. (3) A third area which can be distinguished is located south of Hastings, extending from Gore Avenue to Raymur Avenue and south to the False Creek Flats.

Within the last year this latter area has been the scene of an intensive survey under the auspices of the University of British Columbia and Vancouver agencies interested in housing. A special study is being developed to demonstrate the economic and social costs of a blighted area and the need for low rental housing projects. Working from the actual facts of the area, it is proceeding to a complete replanning and neighborhood rehabilitation project in all the "blueprint" detail. Considerable reliable infor-

16.- Survey of Social and Health Conditions in a special area of downtown Vancouver, prepared by a Committee of the Health and Auxiliary Division, Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver, April 1947. (mimeographed).

mation is therefore available about this area.<sup>17</sup> Some of the survey findings will be reproduced in detail, so that the environment of one group of residents dwelling adjacent to First Church will be understood. It is obvious that if a low rental housing project could be erected in this area the environment will be radically changed.

Main Street was once one of the principal business streets of Vancouver. First Church faced the main business district and the area east of the church formed a good residential section. As the city developed and newer districts were opened up the commercial centre of the city moved westward towards Granville Street and the residents of the East End, or rather those who could afford it, moved to the newer residential districts. The rooming house became a characteristic of the area and two or more families came to live in houses which were originally built only as single family dwellings. Small scale industry and commercial warehouses also began their invasion, and the process of decay which started then is now the outstanding feature of the area. Today the area west of the church is the focal point for the most serious social problems - immorality, drunkenness, delinquency are rooted in this district. East of the church and extending to Glen Drive is a district which still retains some good features and has all the characteristics of a mixed and transitional area.

As there is such a marked contrast between the <sup>areas</sup> east and west of the church, it seems best to describe them separately so that the reader will be able to appreciate the environmental problems facing First Church.

17.- The writer is indebted to Dr. L. C. Marsh, director of the survey, for advance information on the parts of the survey utilized in this chapter.

"The Square Mile of Vice"

The eastern or "downtown" area consists of small commercial buildings over the most of which are lodging houses. There are 139 licensed lodging houses containing a total of 6,008 rooms with an estimated population of between 9,000 and 10,000 people.<sup>18</sup> There is evidence of a high degree of transiency within this area, which includes the central part of Chinatown and the "skidroad" - a district which caters to loggers, miners and seamen. A high proportion of the population is composed of single men and women, but there is ~~no~~ reason to suspect that a relatively high number of families occupy rooms in this part of the city. The Community Chest survey, which included the area from Gore to Abbott, recorded 234 children who attended the elementary schools from this area.

Social Welfare Problems

Social workers report that persons who might be termed drifters, and who are frequently in trouble with the authorities, take rooms in this area. This "square mile" is a verdant field for male and female prostitution and sexual perversion. During 1946, approximately 60 percent of the lodging houses in this district were reported to the Division of V. D. Control as a place of meeting or exposure resulting in the spread of V. D. These premises were reported 644 times and were responsible for nearly 55 percent of the total reports concerning specific lodging houses in the whole of Vancouver for 1946. There are 29 beer parlours in this area, representing 46 percent of the total for the city. They were responsible for two-thirds of the beer parlour pick-ups in the city, according to the 1946 statistics of the Division of V.D. control. Likewise, of the numerous cafes scattered

18.- Survey of Social and Health Conditions, p.c.

throughout the city, 57 were reported as "facilitation" and of this number 23 were located in the survey area. During the same year, 148 charges were laid in the Police Court against women keeping a disorderly house. More than 86 percent of these establishments were located in this area. In short, this area is the social cess-pool of the city. As might be expected, the area has a high incidence of juvenile delinquency. The report comments:

"Lodging houses provide havens for delinquents and pre-delinquents for a night or longer with no questions asked. Almost every runaway from home, foster home, or institution finds his or her way to this part of town, and from example or opportunity, frequently becomes involved in some act causing his or her apprehension by the police."

These are strong words, but they are written by people who know this problem all too well in their daily work.

The centre for the illicit narcotic traffic of Vancouver is located squarely in this area. Drug addicts, alcoholics, those addicted to "canned heat," flavoring extracts, shaving lotion and other perversions which debase personality, all congregate here.

Many elderly people, living on social assistance, live in the survey area to the West of Main Street. Here under deplorable housing conditions they are unable to properly care for themselves and the usual complaints associated with old age are aggravated. As a result of poor housing conditions many of the social assistance cases in this area have recurrent admissions to hospital. Many adults and children from this locality report to hospitals suffering from scabies or infested with vermin. The baths and frequent changes of linen which are a part of the treatment, are, of course not available in their lodging houses.



### Housing

Sanitation, and overcrowding are ever present problems in this area.

The following are a few of the comments made by the committee:

"Long dark corridors branch out, with rooms opening off on either side. Sometimes it is necessary to light matches to pick out the room number desired.

Doors and walls are flimsy and permit sounds and smells to escape into the halls.

Bathrooms and toilets are dark, cramped and discolored looking - a far cry from the spick and span tiled bathrooms of the modern apartment or hotel. One would hesitate to bathe a child in most of the rusty-looking tubs."

It is the same old story of inadequate and inferior living conditions. In some instances three or four people occupy one single room, resulting in pressure on plumbing facilities which were not very adequate at any time. There are plenty of instances of large rooms being subdivided, and of people having to depend on artificial light at all times. Many of the available rooms are found in lodging houses which were not intended for housekeeping purposes and the result is that nearly all the occupants of the locality exist on meals cooked on electric plates or eat in the cheapest restaurants to be found in the vicinity. In many cases there is no water in the room and a common sink is used by all. In some instances the only heat is provided by a common stove in the hall and the tenants have to leave their doors open in order to benefit by the heat.

### Recreation

The main branch of the Public Library is located at Main and Hastings Street and there is a potential playground with some equipment in the 500-block Carrall Street. These facilities comprise the non-commercial recreation within the area of the Community Chest survey. There are

several card clubs, a bowling alley, pool halls, theatres, and beer parlours in this square mile. The Chinese "Y" is just outside the area, on Pender Street east of Gore Avenue. First United Church, St. James Anglican Church and the Salvation Army Citadel are on the fringe of the area, and all face on to Gore Avenue. There are a number of evangelical missions in the area, but it is difficult to assess their contribution to the social life.

The Community Chest survey concludes -

"It can be seen that though the district is a colourful and exciting one, it is completely lacking in wholesome outlets for every age group and type of resident and indeed, is actively unwholesome, especially for children and young people. It would be impossible for such young people to develop acceptable habit patterns in these surroundings."<sup>19</sup>

Such is the environment which faces First Church as it looks East towards the city centre. The church is a lonely citadel amidst an environment which depresses the personality of all those who gather there.

#### The Strathcona Area

This second district coincides with the University Housing survey area and extends south and east from the church. This section of the city was laid out when it was thought it might be a good residential district. The large number of single dwellings in this area is in marked contrast to the hotel and lodging house area west of the church. Many general statements have been made about this area. It has been referred to as an area of transients, or as a "Chinese" or "foreign-born" area. The survey data show that it would not be correct to refer to it either as a solely "Chinese" or "foreign-born" area since more than a quarter of the people in the area have British or American backgrounds. Its varied racial pattern

19.- Survey of Social and Health Conditions, previously cited.

of population is well known, however, to those who work in the area. First United Church for example, report that they have had contact in one year with more than thirty-five nationalities. While no detailed measurement of race and nationality was attempted the housing survey secured sufficient information to define the main thnic stocks. "Families with a continental European background form a very large group in the district (38 to 40 percent). The Slavic races are especially important; Ukranians, Russians, Poles, Serbs, all have their own distinctive clubs or associations; and Italians are well represented. Scandinavians are most numerous amongst the Western European immigrants. Most of the Chinese live in the area west of the church and probably only about 28 percent of the population living east of First Church to Raymur Avenue is Chinese. There is a small colony of negroes, representing about 3 percent of the total population, residing in the south-east corner of the survey area."

While it is true that this is an area of high mobility, about 30 percent of the population represents new and possibly mobile population) there is also a large stable population living in the Strathcona district. The survey showed that about 25 percent of the families had lived in the district for periods of five to ten years, and another 18 percent for more than ten years. Many single men live in this part of Vancouver. The housing survey estimates their numbers as well over 2,000. Many of them work in loggin camps, on boats or in other occupations which take them away from home for long periods of time. These men use some of the boarding houses as their permanent address. Many others are in receipt of small pensions, old age pensions or social allowance. Very few single women live in this section of the city.

The Strathcona district still remains much more an area of families

and children than is often supposed. In a sample of six hundred houses recorded in detail about three-quarters were confined to a single family without any boarders or sub-tenants. Families of all kinds account for 63 percent of the total population of the area. Well over half of these families have one or more children. The proportion of married couples with no children is noticeably high, particularly among the tenants. There also appears to be a fairly large percentage of broken families. Of the families living in the area, 62 percent live in single houses while not necessarily occupying the whole house; 20 percent live in apartments, 11 percent in boarding houses and the remaining 7 percent are the worst housed group of all, living in cabins.

#### Income of Principal Residential Groups

The families living in this area are amongst the lower income groups. The constant calls the church receives for assistance have given the workers the impression that many families have a marginal income, which is unable to meet any emergency situation. The information, received by the interviewers in the housing survey, gives plenty of support to this view.

First Church receives numerous appeals from single men for clothing and other forms of assistance. Many are too old to work, others appear to be unemployables. The housing study revealed a noticeably large number of single men living on inadequate incomes and this fact helps to explain the reason for the large number of appeals received by the church from older single men. A sample based on more than six hundred single men living in the Strathcona district showed that more than half of them lived on either a pension or assistance income. The single men who had gainful employment, were a good deal better off though the medium income at the time of the survey did not rise to more than \$1,320.

### Rents Paid by Tenant Families

The Strathcona District is clearly a low rent area. The median rent for families living in single houses is \$21, compared to \$20 for those in apartments and \$17 for families living in rooming houses and cabins. The median rent for families in all groups is \$19 for unfurnished accommodation and \$22 for furnished quarters. Single men who are boarders or lodgers pay a median rent of \$5 per month for unfurnished rooms and \$9.50 per month for furnished rooms. The adequacy of housing accommodation received for these small rents is of course another story.

### Housing Conditions

Dr. Roddan, in his annual report for 1946, deplored the housing conditions in the vicinity of First United Church. In common with other workers, he felt that overcrowded and inadequate housing is a contributing factor to the social and moral decay of the area. A study of social agencies and welfare institutions serving the Strathcona district was included in the housing survey. Many of the workers interviewed had strong opinions about the housing conditions in this sector of Vancouver. One of the workers of the Children's Aid Society is quoted as follows:

"Housing is a contributing factor to the problem parents have, but not the primary one. A great number would do better if they had a proper home and given a chance in a residential district where there would be no adjacent beer parlours. So many times in a neglect case the first thing people fling at you is 'If you would find us a decent place to live'. Many have come from the prairies in search of a better way of life. They became submerged by the district and degenerated."

A Family Welfare Bureau worker made a similar comment: "People's standards take a nose dive in these squalid conditions, particularly people

from the prairies." And the Metropolitan Health Unit record reports that - "It is significant that the public health nurse in this district has the heaviest case load in the whole unit. It is daily brought home to the nurse how difficult it is for families living in this area to have the kind of wholesome family life, materially and spiritually, which a more residential area would help them to create for themselves."

These are a few of the opinions of those who work with the people living in this area. What are the housing conditions? A walk through the parish area reveals an area of older houses. Some of them have been kept in good repair, but many others have been allowed to deteriorate and present an unprepossessing appearance. The overall impression is that of a "run down" district. The assessment of the structural state and interior conditions of the housing in the Strathcona survey gives ample confirmation.

The following statement is from the report of District Nurse of the Metropolitan Health Committee to a survey visitor of the University of British Columbia, Demonstration Housing Survey.<sup>20</sup> "There are at least a hundred and more probably one hundred and twenty-five, houses in which the rental unit is by the room. Only about half of them have any adaptation or improvements for the purpose. A high proportion of the smaller apartment suites are also converted dwellings, some with dark stairs, small rooms and very limited facilities." Over one-quarter of the single houses, one-half of the apartments and practically all of the cabins are disfigured by clumsily built shacks, woodsheds and lean-to's. Another symbol of

20.- "It is not uncommon to find children attending school whose skins are marked with the scars of bed bug bites -- scars which become septic. The incidence of skin troubles of many kinds among these children is quite noticeable, and observers feel that this is at least partly related to housing conditions."

deterioration is the vacant lot, overgrown with weeds and in many cases littered with refuse; hardly a street is without one or two of such lots. Walls were rated "defective" only if they had not seen paint for several years, were leaning, or showing cracks, but 18 percent of the rooming houses and 44 percent of the cabins showed these defects. Defects in the interior of the houses were much more common in apartments and rooming houses and worst of all in the cabins.

Adequate cooking facilities and food storage accommodation is essential if people are to enjoy a balanced diet. Fifteen percent of the dwelling units in the apartment buildings and rooming houses had no proper facilities for cooking. Half of the single houses depended on a crude cupboard or a window box for the storage of food. More than one-fifth of the rooming houses had no provision at all for keeping food. With such inadequacies it is little wonder that there are so many complaints about the house-keeping habits of those living in this area. Again, more than one visitor has remarked on the plumbing smells which greet a person on entering many of the rooming houses and apartments in this district. It is hard for many to realize that those who are doomed to live in much of the housing of this district must tolerate disreputable bathing and toilet facilities. The survey comments that "taking all the multiple units together, the situation for a prospective tenant in this area, not able to find or afford a house, is that not one out of any two could be counted on to offer satisfactory washing, bathing and toilet equipment."

A former case worker with the John Howard Society commented that "The curse of being poor is everyone is in everyone else's pocket, so much so that private functions cannot be performed in privacy." These remarks are very apt in view of the fact that overcrowding is one of the outstanding facts revealed in the material of the survey.

Forced to live in buildings made unsightly by outhouses, with leaking roofs, dark dingy rooms, inadequate sanitary conveniences and improper facilities for the preparation and storage of food, the spirits of men and women become dulled and the environment works its subtle influence. In such housing conditions the inadequate are submerged, while only the strong survive.

#### Distance from Home to Work

Dr. Roddan was able to say from his acquaintance with many within the area that it was one of its advantages that people could live near their work. He suggested that many families do not wish to move from this area because of its central location. The survey confirmed this view for it revealed that only 21 percent of those interviewed expressed a preference to move on to another district and almost 40 percent definitely preferred to continue living in the survey area. Other facts show that a high proportion of the workers living in this district find their employment in the parts of the city nearest to the area.

#### Parks and Play Spaces

The survey area covers approximately one hundred and sixty three acres. There is only one playground, MacLean Park, located within the area. This park is largely dirt surfaced, with a few swings and a wading pool. The school ground at Strathcona School is available as a play space but this ground is already overcrowded with extra school buildings. South of the area lie the False Creek flats. A portion of this ground is being developed for industrial use. These flats are used by the city as a garbage dump, which is an excellent breeding place for rats and does not enhance the Strathcona district. Plans have been prepared for the creation



of a large park on the "Flats" adjacent to the Strathcona district but it appears this project is still for the future. Powell Street grounds are located in the area north of Hastings Street but are used largely for adults and baseball and soccer league games. There is no park with lawns and gardens close to the area. Many of the children have to play on the streets and alleys of the district.

#### Economic and Social Costs

The area covered by the Housing Survey, contains approximately 2 percent of the population of Vancouver, yet it accounts for at least 3.5 percent of the total services recorded through the Social Service Index. Persons depending on pensions and social assistance are heavily represented in this area. A large amount of publicly and privately supported medical care is directed annually to this area. A high proportion of the active tuberculosis cases are to be found in this district. Visits to this area account for 3 percent of the total work of the Victorian Order of Nurses. Visits per case which averaged, in 1946, 4.46 for the city as a whole, amounted to 12.95 for this section of the city.

"The fact that about 7 percent of 1946 arrests for drunkenness and almost 17 percent of the arrests on vagrancy charges were made within or near the district, if nothing more, indicates the environment to which the children and adolescents of the area are subjected." Traffic accidents are extremely high. "It is true that they are produced by the outer streets of the survey area, but heavily used streets crisscross the whole district. Almost 16 percent of all accidents in 1946 occurred within and on the perimeter of the area. Fire calls have been very light but the potential fire hazards are very widespread. Casual observation reveals the need for sanitary inspections, particularly for problems of rats,

vermin, garbage disposal and plumbing, in this sector of the city."<sup>21</sup>

#### Area North of Hastings Street

The area north of Hastings Street extending from Gore Avenue east to Glen Drive is much more an area in transition than the Strathcona district. The commercial and industrial companies are invading this area and even now dwellings find themselves sandwiched between warehouses, factories or junk yards. A superficial examination of this part of the city would seem to indicate that housing conditions are poorer here than in the Strathcona district. There are some instances on Powell Street of families living in stores, and many other completely sub-standard habitations. It would appear that this district will continue to deteriorate as a residential area and that eventually it will become filled with commercial buildings. Proximity to the waterfront, to the C.P.R. and National Harbour Railway are factors which encourage this trend.

Powell Street grounds is the only park or playing field north of Hastings Street. This is a dirt field and is used mainly for organized sports. The Family Welfare Bureau has a heavier case load in this district than in the Strathcona area. The western section presents some of the problems found in the downtown area and the eastern part compares more closely to the Strathcona district.

The city-wide case-work and health agencies all have heavy case loads in the parish area composed of these three districts which have been discussed. The only group work agency within the area is the "Chinese Y."

21.-Demonstration Housing Survey, Interim Report, July 1947, University of British Columbia. (mimeographed)

The Strathcona Day Nursery has been located in the Community House of First United Church, which is located at Powell and Jackson Avenue. This agency has now moved to a new location on Powell Street. The Junior-G Club, a boy's club sponsored by the Vancouver Boys' Club Association, is located in the 600 block Vernon Drive, a block or two beyond the eastern boundary of the area. The Junior-G Club has had the use of First United Church Gymnasium for basketball and other indoor sports.

Four national societies have halls within the area. The Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, the Federation of Russian Canadians, the Croatian Educational Home, and the Serbian Educational Home conduct programs which, among other things, perpetuate the music and crafts of their homelands. Some have a recreation program for their members. Because of their base it is not possible for them to become community centres, and in some cases the society only serves a part of the national group they represent. These organizations draw their membership from the entire city.

There are a large number of churches in the area or adjacent to it. Five Chinese congregations and missions are supported by the Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and United Churches. All of these missions operate kindergartens. The United Church Kindergarten has recently admitted Occidental children, and reports indicate that Oriental and Occidental children get along well together in the school. These missions also maintain some group activities for boys and girls and young people. There is a Russian Orthodox Church on Campbell Avenue, but there are indications that this church is poorly attended and that the priest works at a secular occupation. Many of the Slavic peoples living in the area have been members of the Orthodox church, yet they do not respond to it in Canada. The Roman Catholic Church has a large parish church and a separate school in this district. The Italian Community and some of the other

European groups are well represented in the congregation. The Salvation Army Citadel is located at Gore Avenue and Hastings Street, opposite First United Church. They carry on their traditional program embracing a religious and social service ministry. Few of their members reside in the area. Jackson Avenue Baptist Church was once a self-supporting congregation, but for more than twenty years has been a city mission supported by the Baptist Convention of British Columbia. They have a kindergarten and maintain a number of boys' and girls' and young people's activities as a part of the mid-week program of their Sunday School. They aim to provide a program of church centred community service.

St. James Church is the mother church for the Anglican denomination in Vancouver. Following the tradition of the "high church" they have remained in their original location, even though their congregation now lives in all parts of the city. The present modern church building is the third edifice to be erected on this site. St. James Church has a strong influence in the East End of Vancouver. A sense of social responsibility is evident in the clergy, and in many quiet ways they have made the church a part of the life of the deteriorated area in which they are located. They have old people's homes on Cordova Street next to the Parish House, and operate a row of cabins on Glen Drive. Here Old Age pensioners are able to receive clean accommodation for six dollars a month. The church operates a kindergarten five mornings a week. The Scout and Guide program is followed and a large number of the children from the area north of Hastings Street participate in these activities. St. James Church has found that Hastings Street is a major dividing line and that very few boys and girls cross Hastings Street to attend Sunday School or club activities. Workers at First United Church have had the same experience.

The original Jewish synagogue is located at 700 East Pender but with the opening of the new synagogue on Oak Street services and activities in this building have been discontinued.

People of all ages and racial backgrounds, many with limited incomes, live in this blighted area of the city. Housing conditions are poor with much overcrowding and inadequate accommodation, there are few proper play spaces, and the general environment is not conducive to normal living. In such a setting, several churches are seeking to give some extra service to the people living around them. Unfortunately, many are grouped in one small section of the area while there are large sections without club activities of any kind. All of the city-wide case work agencies are busy in this sector of the city; but group work and recreational activity is limited, the Chinese Y and the Junior-G Club being the only agencies serving these people. It may well be asked: where does the church fit it?

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CHURCH SERVES INDIVIDUALS

The church stands in the city streets surrounded by an environment that degrades men and women. The needs of the city and its people rest heavily on the heart of the church.

"It sees the city throngs mobile and transient, its family life disintegrating, its home life decaying. It sees the busy pleasure seekers trying to find release and thrills, and knows all too well the problems of delinquency will arise. It sees men and women at work with a multiplicity of vocations which thwart their creative instincts and turn life into a mechanical process. It knows the cry of the unemployed. It sees the crowd of Non-Anglo-Saxons trying, too often in vain, to make adjustments to a new world. The sound of foreign tongues is not strange to the church for it began with men speaking in foreign tongues. To all the cries of the city streets, the church lends a listening ear, for it is of the streets and of the city itself."<sup>22</sup>

Wherever men live in the city, the church is there. The church is the custodian of a changeless message. It is a citadel of hope. Believing that Christianity does mean a common brotherhood, that fellowship and encouragement should be offered "even unto the least", the church adapts itself to many forms of service.

Traditionally the church has been concerned with the wellbeing of individuals. For two thousand years, it has performed an inclusive ministry to all who were in need. The sick, the lonely, the bereaved, the troubled, the hungry, the homeless, have found the church a place of refuge. First United Church tries to continue this tradition and offers an inclusive ministry.

22.- Forster, H.G., The Church in the City Streets, The Committee on Missionary Education, The United Church of Canada, Toronto, 1942, p. 164

### Religious Ministry

First one foremost the church has sought to provide a religious ministry, which has been the force behind all forms of service offered by the congregation. The ministers of First Church have been forceful preachers, and through the years have made the pulpit of this church influential in the life of Vancouver. In recent years it has been increasingly difficult to attract large congregations to the regular services. Enough evidence has already been given that the environment and housing conditions hinder the receptiveness of the people to any community activity, as they are dulled by the drabness of their lives. A large number of the congregation travel some distance to the church, and as these resign their membership they are not being replaced. Faced with such a problem, the church has had to depend to a great extent on the transient.

A minister who can attract the transient to the church performs a very real task. These people are attracted by sensational topics and special features. From week to week they change and it is extremely difficult to mold such a group into a congregation. Today First Church is faced with declining attendance at the church services. Table 1 shows a decline in church attendance each year from the peak attendance of 1931 (the morning attendance in 1942 and the evening attendance in 1944 were slightly improved over the previous year but the trend is clear). The Sunday School shows the same general decline. If church attendance is a measuring stick of the response of the community to the religious ministry of the church, then it would seem that the district served by First Church is less receptive to the church today than it was fifteen or sixteen years ago.

Throughout the years of his ministry in Vancouver, Dr. Roddan broadcasted at least one service each Sunday. In this way the voice of First

Church has spread into the far corners of the province. This radio ministry has always been self-supporting, as contributions from listeners have met the expenses of broadcasting. This would indicate an interested listening group. It has extended the influence of First Church beyond the parish area and through it many calls for help have come to the minister. The radio has proven invaluable on those occasions when Dr. Roddan was making an appeal on behalf of one or other of the many projects fathered by him, during his eighteen years in Vancouver.

Through pulpit and radio, First Church is influential in the life of the city. Many look to it for the formal services of the church. In 1946 the minister performed 200 marriages and officiated at 75 funerals. Only one other United Church in the city of Vancouver reported more marriages performed, and only two other ministers reported officiating at more funerals that year. A glance through the registers reveals that these calls came from all parts of the city. They show something of the place of the church in the life of the city and reveal that, while attendance at services declined, a large number of families look to this centre as their church.

#### The Sunday School

Undoubtedly there are many reasons for the serious decline in Sunday School attendance. The neighborhood is less receptive, parents do not see that their children attend Sunday School, and leadership is needed for the School; these are perhaps the most obvious causes. In such a difficult environment there is a need for exceptional leadership, yet tragically, by the very nature of the congregation, the leadership is not present. Without an adequate number of volunteer teachers a Sunday School can not be successful. The stable middle class congregation, as is to be found in



Trends in Church Service Attendance

First United Church, 1930-46

(Average for each year)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Morning Service</u>	<u>Evening Service</u>
1930	289	838
1931	400	1012
1934	294	686
1936	171	412
1937	184	266
1939	173	195
1940	172	181
1942	190	179
1944	151	189
1946	130	160

Source: Compiled from the Annual Reports of

First United Church

1930 - 1946

the better residential districts of the city, is constantly recruiting teachers from its membership. That group of people is declining in First Church. More and more of the families lack the ability to give leadership or are so pressed down by their circumstances that they are not ready to accept such responsibility. Graham Taylor foresaw this very problem when he was in Hartford. He felt that the effectiveness of the institutional church depended on its remaining a congregation with members able to accept responsibility for leadership; so that the less able would be carried by the more aggressive members. He feared the day when the church membership would all be of the mission group. Under such circumstances there would be few strengths to lift these people needing lifting into something bigger than their own problems. This would seem to be the dilemma which is facing the Sunday School at First Church.

### The Counsellor

Traditionally, the pastor has been a counsellor. In a simpler society, the minister, the doctor and the lawyer were the confidants of the family. As life grew more complex others have entered the counselling field. In a modern city such as Vancouver there are many agencies and groups interested in helping people meet their problems. There was a time when the City Social Service Department was only concerned with the relief of destitution,, helping people with their other problems was not considered a part of the function of a relief office. This situation has changed; today, the city social service department has a large number of social workers on its staff. It is a part of their job to help those receiving social assistance to meet other situations, which might be a more basic need than the obvious economic one. There is every likelihood that this counselling service will increase. Some case workers feel that workers from the public department

should continue their contacts with people who are constantly on and off public assistant rolls.

Private social agencies provide valuable counselling services. People faced with emotional, economic, family, or any other type of personal problem may apply to the Family Welfare Bureau for help. Through a case work relationship, many of those in need are helped to understand their situation and to make some adjustments in their lives. The Children's Aid Society is concerned with the welfare of children and is constantly working with families as well as with individual boys and girls. They too offer a counselling service. Other specialized agencies such as the John Howard Society, which only works with men and women who have been convicted in the courts; and the Rotary Counselling Service, which offers vocational guidance to young men between seventeen and twenty-four, share the counsellor role.

In our modern society the trend appears to be toward more services for the individual. The courts are now interested in using trained case workers as probation officers, the schools are moving towards more intensive counselling programs, industry has almost universally employed personnel officers, who try to fit the man to the job and to help him with his employment problems so that he will become a more efficient employee. Many share with the minister the role of counsellor, yet large numbers of people continue to look to the minister for help with their varied problems. Through the years thousands of people have climbed the narrow stairs that lead to the minister's study at First Church, and there in the quietness and privacy of that room have poured out their troubles. In numerous ways, the minister has been able to help them. A man of wide experience in meeting people learns intuitively how to help them with some of their

problems. The Counselling service is one of the important services offered by an institutional church.

Today, there is a new recognition that counselling is a skilled task. In the past twenty-five years, through the understanding of human behaviour learned from modern dynamic psychology, professional techniques have been developed. The counsellor trained in indirect counselling, the social case worker and the pastoral counsellor all depend on this same basic body of knowledge. In discussing the large number of agencies offering counselling services with a prominent leader of the United Church, he commented on the increasing need for more counselling services in the community, and said that the church must remember it will always have a role to fill in providing competent counsel. He felt that there was a need for trained counsellors within the church. Such people would help the church meet individual needs. The American church has some ministers who are highly trained in dynamic psychology. A few like Rollo May, Russell Dicks and Otis Rice are really lay analysts. In the Canadian church, there are very few ministers trained in modern counselling methods.

In a centre like First United Church there is a great need for highly skilled counsellors. Workers must be able to help people with all kinds of problems. It would seem desirable that there should be a close liason between the church workers and the social workers active in the district, for there will be many problems coming to the attention of the church which can be worked out easiest by referring the individual concerned to the agency best able to serve him. In the past, First Church has referred families and individuals to specialized agencies and to the public departments for assistance. However, it would seem that there could be more referrals and for a greater variety of reasons. Records are not available

but the writer suspects that a large percentage of referrals have centred in economic or health services requiring a direct concrete service, rather than in assistance in meeting behaviour problems; or in solving family tensions either between parent and child or between parents.

There are some who would question such a policy, but it does seem that the minister or church worker should be able to differentiate between the problems which should be their concern and those which should be referred to a social agency. Assuming the presence in the community of a competent agency to which referrals could be made, it would seem that some sort of referral policy could be evolved. The pastoral counsellor is concerned with attitudes and philosophy of life; because of his role he will always give advice on moral and spiritual issues, which in their broadest interpretation include all social relationships. He represents a philosophy of life which he believes to be the most satisfactory for daily living. The writer believes that the church has a responsibility to help normal people think through their problems and attitudes towards life. The church will always be concerned in family relationships. When people are concerned with perplexities which are basically moral or religious problems the pastoral counsellor can be of great service. Often people have other problems which come to the attention of a church worker, frequently a specialized worker is better able to help men and women work towards a solution. Deep seated emotional problems require patient counselling and psychiatric consultation or examination. Such problems would probably be better referred to a case work agency. There will always be a measure of overlapping but it would seem that if they so desire an institutional church and a social agency could cooperate in meeting the total social needs of the community. Each must recognize that the good of the community is the end and that they are but the means, as all work together the

individual is served best.

#### Relationship of Minister and Social Worker

Frequently, Protestant Ministers who intellectually recognize the place of the public and private agencies in the field of social work fail to use the services which are available within the community. Personal problems, minor emotional disturbances and marital problems are discussed with parishioners without any consideration of using social agencies save as resources for relief, to provide care for a neglected child, or to provide medical treatment. The agency is a resource. The converse is also true. Social agencies may easily forget to consider the strength of the minister's relationship to the client and do not take him into their confidence as they take school teachers, nurses, and doctors. So frequently, the two professions parallel each other. An observer might ask whether or not each profession accepted the other.

The relationships between minister and parishioner, case worker and client are not identical. The minister is the recognized leader of a church and is essentially a propagandist. He has a conviction about life to which he is constantly seeking to win others. Many regard him as one of authority; in some churches he is a priest, as in the Anglican Church, a mediator between man and God; in other churches, as in the reformed group, he has not this office yet many set him apart because he alone is able to dispense the sacraments and officiate at weddings. The minister has three tasks - preacher, leader and pastor. As a minister seeks to lead his parishioners to a greater understanding of Christianity, it is inevitable that he will come close to them

The social worker is trained to understand personality problems and assist people to make a proper adjustment to life. Working in a social

agency, the worker offers a specific service to the community. The worker seeks to help the client meet his problems in socially accepted ways through a relationship in which the client himself is changed by his increasing awareness of himself. The social worker is dependent on psychiatry for much of his understanding and techniques, deepseated problems are treated under the direction of a psychiatrist. The case worker works with those who come for help and because of the singleness of his role is able to work much more intensively with individuals than a minister who has a more varied role in the community.

#### Some Experiments in Cooperation

In some centres, the case work agencies have endeavoured to develop cooperation with the ministers in helping to provide good counselling service for the parishioners. In New York, the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, division for the churches was established in 1938, with a threefold function:

"To assist in the coordination of social services under church auspices and to give guidance to clergy in relating church social service programs and interests to the programs of other social agencies in the community.

To give assistance to the minister, who wants it, in his role of counsellor to people in trouble, as well as to aid him in the selection of appropriate social services resources when these could be utilized to give greater service to parishioners.

To give social agencies more extensive knowledge of the facilities and resources within the church, which could be used effectively, either alone or in collaboration with the social worker, to help people in difficulty."<sup>23</sup>

23.- McCabe, Alice R., "Pastoral Counseling and Case Work," The Family, Vol. xxiv, No. 7, November, 1943, p. 256

At the end of five years, a study was made to discover how ministers used the social agencies. It revealed that while one thousand churches belonged to the federation, only two hundred and eighty-five churches used the bureau each year. Fifty percent of the requests in the five year period were for financial help and employment, and 15 percent of the referrals involved the need for some adjustment with the public welfare agency. Other referrals concerned the institutional care of the aged, placement of children, and marital disturbances requiring court action. In all but a few of the referrals, immediacy and acuteness of the need were striking factors. When difficulties in family relationships were involved, an almost negligible group of families were discussed with social agencies before rather marked emotional or psychological breakdown had occurred. The New York experiment does not appear to have been a happy one .

A similar study was made in St. Louis in 1945 and reflects a different approach to the problem of ministers and social workers cooperating together. One staff group of the Family and Children's Service sought to bring about a closer relationship between itself and the ministers in the part of the city served by the district office. Meetings were arranged with five ministers serving a deprived neighborhood, two ministers on the district committee, the chairman of the committee and a staff members. The purpose of the meetings was to learn about the problems coming to the ministers and to show how the agency might help. At first the ministers felt case work was superfluous. They had confidence that they were able to judge accurately the needs of character of the people coming to them. It was most revealing to the ministers to learn of the complexity of some of these problems as seen by the case worker and to learn her method of helping. Over a period of three years the district committee planned and



carried through a number of other meetings to which all the clergy were invited. Some aspect of agency work: care of children, of employed women, , financial needs of people, vocational counselling or other service was discussed. Case material was used to make real the particular problem, policy or procedure being discussed. Over this same period there were 71 referrals by 32 men representing 14 denominations. Twenty of the referrals were by 2 ministers who had been connected with the district committee for 2 years or longer. The 71 referrals were divided as follows: 17 were for financial assistance, 13 concerned family relationships, 7 had medical problems, 11 needed employment and vocational counselling, 9 requested planning for children (2 of which were requests for placement of illegitimate children and 7 were concerned with over aggressive behaviour of children), 7 were for exploration of a problem which the ministers knew needed attention but about which they could not be specific. Interestingly enough, one-third of the referrals grew out of the discussion of other cases.

Concurrently the case workers asked the help of the ministers in 33 cases. He either brought the need of the client to the generosity of the giving group, or was able to give support and encouragement to lonely and dependent people. Frequently, the minister was able to put these people in contact with a parishioner who was ready to give them the warm, friendly, strong interest they needed. In cases of conflict about religion, he was able to advise the case worker regarding the religious aspects of the problem. Miss Brown concludes her report:

"In general, the minister does tend to see tangible problems that can be treated in pretty matter-of-fact terms. He sees the social worker as sympathetically giving direction to specific resources and opportunities within the community. He tends to question the social worker's use of psychiatric concepts even while seeing a need for that kind of understanding.

"Workers should, however, be able to find ways of drawing in the clergymen in those areas where the combined service is effective and acceptable to him

Only as his concept and ours broaden can we hope for the increasingly greater acceptance of each other's function which will result in the larger service to the client and the community for which both groups are striving."<sup>24</sup>

This experiment seems to indicate that the approach to a cooperative relationship can only be based on an understanding of each other's function. It is significant that the men who knew most about the work of the agency referred most cases. The district committee seems an excellent way to come to understand each profession's approach to a problem, and to work out the role of each in helping with its solution.

Minister and social worker each have a role in this field of counselling. Neither must minimize the place of the other. Undoubtedly the theological colleges will provide more adequate training in counselling; so that the minister of the future will be able to help parishioners more effectively. Through exchange of information and other tokens of mutual recognition, and through common discussion, as in the district meetings, the place of each will be clarified.

In Toronto, the relationship between the churches and the Neighborhood Workers Association is a good example of effective cooperation. The Neighborhood Workers Association program is organized on a district basis, with offices in a number of local centres. Dr. J. R. Mutchmor feels that if other parts of the social welfare organization become more decentralized, then local churches will work more effectively with the social agencies concerned.<sup>25</sup>

24.-Baldwin, Ruth M., "The Minister and the Social Worker," The Family, Vol. xxvi, June 1945, p.154

25.-Dr. Mutchmor is the Secretary of the Board of Evangelism and Social Service in the United Church of Canada. This opinion was expressed in a letter to the author.

Social work is not decentralized in Vancouver, but it is interesting to note that one agency has a district office and committee in North Vancouver, which has been able to establish a good relationship with the churches. The ministers, as yet, do not refer people to the agency but show an interest in its work and one man participates on the agency board. Problems have been referred to two of the ministers, and the ministers have cooperated very well, when helped to understand the problem and the contribution they or their churches could make in its solution. There is hope on the part of the agency workers that, as the ministers gain more confidence in the work of the social agency and greater insight into the work it is doing, they will feel free to discuss problems with the case workers and refer some behaviour problems for treatment. This appears to be the way in which minister and social worker will learn to work together, each giving his contribution, so that the total needs of the community may best be served.

It would seem that in the First Church area there is an excellent opportunity for churches and social agencies to cooperate in serving individuals. This is an area of great social need. No person could be so bold as to suggest that one agency or church could meet all the needs of the people living in this part of the city. It would appear to be a case of helping the clients find the service which will most adequately meet their need. A church which is a part of the community will receive many requests for assistance and for advice. The writer believes that the church should have workers trained in modern counselling methods, who are well acquainted with the services available in the community. Such counsellors, considerate of the best interests of the client, would know whether to refer him or to work with him in the church. This is a highly skilled task. An opportunity for such service is presented to the church which is situated, as First

Church is, in the heart of a deteriorated area. The church can be like an admitting ward of a hospital. (If such a program were possible, all social agencies and the church would have to clarify their purposes and policies). It is also reasonable to expect that, if the church were providing a professional counselling service, referrals would be made to them by social agencies. The church has an obligation to provide able counsel to those who seek help, and should mean providing people for the job who are trained in modern counselling methods. This service to individuals is of vital importance.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Many calls for assistance come to First Church in the course of the year. The church does not grant assistance to families or individuals who would normally be cared for by one of the established public or private agencies. However, assistance is given to many transients, to the homeless, and to meet many emergency situations. The church seeks to meet some of the unusual problems. Clothing and furniture is supplied through the "Welfare Industries." Transportation vouchers are granted to help people travel to a place of employment or to return home if they become stranded in the city. Each Christmas many families are helped through the work of the Christmas Cheer Fund. Almost 500 families and single men receive hampers or vouchers to augment their limited incomes for the Christmas holiday. All names are cleared through the Social Service Index so that there is no duplication with other agencies.

In the past, First Church has tried to meet emergency situations to the limit of its resources. In the 1930's the full effect of the depression was felt on the Pacific Coast. Thousands of single men who were dismissed from employment and various work projects drifted to the Coast. The federal, provincial and municipal governments had no adequate plan for them, in their extremity these men built "jungles" for themselves along the waterfront and at the city dump off Prior Street and Campbell Avenue. The Presbytery of Vancouver, under the direction of First Church, arranged for the men to be fed in First Church and at St. Andrew's-Wesley Church, and every day for many months over a thousand men a day were taken care of in this way. The work was extended to the "jungles" themselves and each day for seven months the trucks of First Church went to the city dump with

loads of food, to be distributed amongst the thousands of men living there. Money and supplies poured in and enabled the church to continue this work. An emergency situation was met with social assistance.

One other incident will illustrate the assistance program. During a very cold snap in Vancouver there was much suffering among the poor. The relief issue for fuel was \$3.75 a month, which was an inadequate sum to maintain a fire in the midst of a long cold spell. Dr. Roddan appealed for five hundred sacks of coal to meet an emergency situation. The response exceeded all expectations, and three thousand sacks of coal were contributed, by the citizens of Vancouver, to augment the inadequate fuel allowance.

During this past winter the church has been faced with the problem of the transient unemployed and the problem of the unemployed employables, who are not eligible for public assistance. In their hour of adversity, many look to the church for help. Others have been referred to the church by social agencies and by the City Social Service Department. Many of these have received grocery orders which have helped tide over the emergency. The minister and staff have questioned the wisdom of accepting these referrals from the city department. They feel that, if the public assistance people recognize legitimate cases of need, they should be able to help rather than refer such families to the church. Unfortunately, the public agencies are bound by rules and regulations and are not free to grant assistance to any save those covered by their regulations. The First Church Staff have a difficult choice: will they help most by accepting referrals from a public agency or can they by their refusal help to force the public department to change their regulations? As governments accept responsibility for the unemployed, the need for assistance decreases; yet there continues to be the unusual situation not covered by general regulations.

The church will need to continue helping these people.

Many families and single people receive assistance from the Welfare Industries. People applying for assistance receive an order from the church which they present to the sales clerk at the Welfare Industries shop. In this way, all assistance is granted through the church office, and articles donated are charged to the social service account of the church. (The Welfare Industries are discussed later in this chapter).

Camp Fircom, First Church's Camp on Gambier Island, (see Chapter vii), is a fresh air camp. Each year a number of families, who are not able to pay the full fee, go there for a ten day holiday. It is the policy of First Church to have everyone pay something towards the period in camp. Frequently, this is a very small contribution which is decided in discussion with the family concerned. The balance is charged to the camp account.

The salaries of the staff at First Church are paid by the Board of Home Missions. All money raised by the congregation and contributed by the many friends of the church is spent directly in the ministry of service. The social assistance work is largely possible through the contributions which are received each year in response to the Christmas Cheer and other appeals which are made to the citizens of Vancouver and the lower mainland.

It is important that, in granting assistance, consideration be given to the welfare of the individual; so that he does not become dependent through the help he receives. Under the request for material assistance may be the need for counselling services or referral to an agency for help with a more permanent plan. The Family Welfare Bureau has learned that many requests for case work services have come from families whose original contact with the agency had been through an application for assistance from the Dependents Board of Trustees. The office secretary at First Church.

interviews many of the applicants for assistance. She has had some experience in a group work agency and has a keen interest in people but is neither a trained deaconess or social worker. Her secretarial duties are quite onerous. It might be possible to arrange that applications for assistance be channelled through one worker who was a trained counsellor, preferably a case-worker, who might have the liason with the social agencies in the community and be able to take the time necessary to help these families in the best manner.

During the war years, five major denominations united with the New York City Mission Society in the administration and financing of an inter-denominational religious and social service program in the Navy Yard - Fort Greene area of Brooklyn. An institutional church was established and a full time staff of three members provided. These consisted of a minister, a social worker and a director of religious education. This is in marked contrast to the policy in many institutional churches, where duties are divided according to sex and age. The social worker on the church staff was responsible for community contacts, and for referring families to social agencies. This approach, within the church, increased the service to the parishioners. This social worker worked with all social agencies and was accepted by them. The writer has discussed the possibility of such a staff relationship with the deaconess at First Church and she feels that there is much to commend such a rearrangement of staff responsibilities. Instead of one worker doing girls' work and another women's work each would become a specialist in a field of service, social work or Christian education, and would be able to give more competent leadership in the more specialized field. If such a rearrangement were possible then the social worker on the church staff could assume responsibility for administering the assistance program established by the church board.



### The Welfare Industries

The Welfare Industries of First United Church were started by the Rev. Richmond Craig during his ministry at First Church. Under Dr. Roddan's leadership, they developed and expanded their services to the community. The Welfare Industries gather donations of clothing, furniture, bedding, stoves, etc., as well as all manner of salvage. Contributions are received from all parts of the city and the lower mainland. In the past year the Welfare Industries have cooperated with local churches in the Fraser Valley by returning to them a share of the proceeds from any salvage they contribute. The churches have salvage drives and assemble the material at a common point; from which First Church trucks are able to collect it and bring it to the city. For many years the Welfare Industries solicited regularly from door to door but in the past year this has been discontinued, and the response from the general public continues to be very good.

Once collected, the material is taken to the warehouse and sorted. Paper, rags and other materials that are only good for salvage are bundled up and sold to the industries which can use this material. Clothing, boots and shoes, etc., are taken to the shop, and there the dressmakers, tailor or shoemaker make the repairs needed to make the donated articles serviceable. Furniture, stoves, etc., are taken to the workshop and repaired by tradesmen so that they will be of value to those needing such articles. These goods, which are serviceable, are then offered for sale in the stores of the Welfare Industries. The clothing and other articles offered for sale is priced very nominally. It is expected that the price received for the article will cover the cost of repairs, collection and sale. However, even this very nominal price is not final, and if a family cannot pay the price asked it may be reduced. If a person is seeking a donation from the Welfare Industries, they must go to the church office and secure

an order. The value of the articles contributed is then charged to the social service account of the church.

Use is made of "opportunity labor" and "test labor". Sometimes people will apply to the church for assistance and rather than make a grant they will be offered a day's work at the Welfare. They receive the minimum wage for this work and are thus given an opportunity of earning the money they need for some specific purpose. This is "opportunity labor." The church social service fund pays the first day's labor, but if the Welfare should call them back for a second day's work they pay the wages. "Test labor" is often used when men or women come seeking a donation of clothing or furniture. The agency does not believe that it is good to make an outright gift, and in most cases they feel the client should make some contribution for the articles he receives. Frequently, when an application for a donation is made the church will require a period of service in return for the desired materials. This work is credited at the prevailing wage rates, so that in a sense the client earns the articles he desires.

The present superintendent, Mr. J. Hayward, has been with the organization since 1932 and has been superintendent since 1933. When he took charge of the work there were 12 employees earning about \$70 a week. In those depression days the wages were very low. Today there are 32 employees and the weekly wage bill is approximately \$700. As will be mentioned later, many goodwill industries provide employment for handicapped persons but First Church has not followed this policy. The great expansion of this work took place during the depression and the employees were recruited from people who received "opportunity labor" and others who came to the church seeking financial help. This staff has proved to be very loyal and Mr. Hayward has a small turnover of labor. Two employees have been with this department of the church for more than 17 years.

In 1947, thirty five thousand people were assisted through the welfare industries. There was a turnover of some \$48,000; sale of clothing, utensils and furnishings amounted to \$32,000 and the revenue from salvage sales were \$15,000. More than \$33,000 was paid out in wages, and the balance was spent in the purchase of a new truck, supplies and rent. It is the policy to operate retail outlets in various parts of the city. A store has been operated on Kingsway near Broadway but had to be closed during the war. Another outlet was operated on Abbott Street near Cordova but had to be closed as the hotel proprietor required the space for a restaurant. Outlets have also been operated on Richards Street. A retail store is operated at the main warehouse which has been in the old Turner Institute at Pender Street and Dunlevy Avenue. This property has been sold and the industries moved into the old Japanese church at Powell Street and Jackson Avenue. Here the floor space is hardly adequate for the work carried on. A lot was purchased in 1947 at 4th Avenue and Alberta Street, where it was proposed to build a proper warehouse. There has been some difficulty about financing such a project.

This venture is not underwritten by the United Church of Canada and all financial undertakings have been underwritten by the minister. Under Mr. Hayward's administration no subsidy has been required, as the operations have covered their cost. In 1947, the Welfare Industries of First United Church were incorporated under the Societies Act and a Board of five established. The property on 4th Avenue is owned by this Board. This Board is composed entirely of people directly connected with the work of the department, the minister, the superintendent of the welfare industries, the church secretary and two employees of the department.

Welfare industries are often criticized by a group within the church who would question the desirability of a church operating such an enter-

prise. These same people criticize any venture that is not specifically "religious." Since this is a service provided in the community, to assist the most needy economic group. The service is to all, but it represents a very tangible evidence to the community that a Protestant church cares for the welfare of less fortunate people. It is conceivable that the need will disappear when the new order is ushered in and there is opportunity for all. There is no denying that the existence of such service is a condemnation of our social conscience, but the fact remains that last year thirty-five thousand people were assisted through this work. Mr. Hayward feels that there are two advantages in having the welfare industries sponsored by a church. First, the agency has a status in the community and hence is able to work through the other churches in collecting materials. They have an outreach into the city and surrounding municipalities which is essential if adequate supplies are to be obtained. The other advantage is, that having such a department helps people outside of the church to see a specific job the church is doing.

#### Goodwill Industries of America

The Welfare Industries are a part of a network of Goodwill Industries which operate in 93 communities in the United States and Canada. They began in 1902 in the slums of Boston, where Dr. Edgar J. Helms, a Methodist minister, gave handicapped people "not charity but a chance." Eighty-five of these autonomous goodwill industries are members of the national organization, Goodwill Industries of America. The program presented by that national organization is to provide jobs, job training, rehabilitation services and opportunities for personal growth for the handicapped and disabled. In the early days of the movement the economically handicapped were assisted but today they have been replaced in most centres by persons

with physical, mental or social handicaps.

"The extent to which the reconversion to an emphasis on aid to handicapped persons has been accomplished is reflected in the fact that eighty-three percent of the persons employed by all Goodwill Industries at the time of their last annual reports were handicapped people. Thirty-six percent of them suffered orthopedic, organic or health liabilities. Twenty-four percent sought the help of Goodwill Industries because of age or infirmity handicaps. Mentally, emotionally or socially handicapped totaled fourteen percent of all employees. The blind or persons with defective vision four percent of all employees. The remaining five percent were men and women deaf, hard of hearing, or suffering from speech handicaps."<sup>26</sup>

Individuals are encouraged and helped to make the quickest possible readjustment to the demands of normal living while they are in the employ of a Goodwill Industry. Some take a long time to readjust while others need only a little assistance, a little training, and a little encouragement to achieve a triumph over their disabilities. It is recognized that the job is of great value in the therapeutic treatment of disabled persons. Some who come to the Industries have never known what it is to earn, others have earned well up until the time of their disability, to such people the job is the key to self-respect, it is the first step in their rehabilitation. The goodwill way offers these jobs by providing a varied industrial program in each community in which the Goodwill Industries operate. Basic is the collection of household discards, clothing, furniture, utensils, any articles with enough usefulness left to provide job opportunities. Cleaning, renovating and repairing these discards, or preparing them for salvage, provides the jobs that bring the funds to provide wages for handicapped persons.

Disposition of these products is made through the several hundred

26.-John P. Hein, The Goodwill Way, Reprint from Journal of Rehabilitation, National Rehabilitation Association Inc., February 1947, Goodwill Institute of America Inc., Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Goodwill Industries' stores. These sales realize about 80 percent of the total income of Goodwill Industries each year. The average subsidy required is about 20 percent of the budget of the local industries. This provides for the non-income producing rehabilitation services which could not in any case be taken legitimately from the productive efforts of the handicapped workers.

The rehabilitation objectives of Goodwill Industries require careful attention to putting the handicapped person into a job suitable to his disability.

"There is no standard pattern for placement within the local Goodwill Industries. Even where physical handicaps are similar, physiological, psychological and sociological factors vary so widely that the case study method of placement has been adopted by most of the more progressive Goodwill Industries. Personnel counselling, medical examination and aptitude and many other techniques of social services are used with varying emphasis and varying effectiveness in the local Goodwill Industries all over America."<sup>27</sup>

Mr. Hein continues:

"Where expert social services in counselling, placement and rehabilitation are available through agencies in a community other than the Goodwill Industries, such services are used. Many of the Goodwill Industries' employees in such cases are referred to the Goodwill Industries plant by other agencies. There is a cooperative exchange of information and services."<sup>28</sup>

The second phase of the Goodwill Industries program is training. Through job-training men and women may learn a useful occupation and have the satisfaction of a productive experience. Training, like placement, is very much of an individual matter. Several Goodwill Industries have been pioneering in pre-training work with severely handicapped persons. Work is provided for homebound handicapped people -- rehabilitation is the purpose in this work.

27.- Ibid

28.- Ibid

Employment, training and rehabilitation services are three principle phases of the Goodwill way. The goal, according to Executive Secretary Oliver A. Friedman is to assist handicapped and disabled persons "to attain the fullest physical, mental, moral, emotional, social, cultural, spiritual, vocational, and economic development of which they are capable."<sup>29</sup> In other words the program aims at the return of the "whole man." To attain this they seek to provide something more than a job through training and therapeutic work.

"Goodwill Industries provide opportunities for personal growth by helping even the most severely handicapped person to enjoy normal social intercourse, individual and group recreational activities, self expression both on and off the job, and religious inspiration."<sup>30</sup>

They candidly recognize religion as a part of the total rehabilitation program. They encourage each person to find in the church of his own choice the moral strength and inspiration needed for daily living. These services are available to all regardless of race or creed.

The national organization was reorganized in 1944 and has a statement of purpose and policies to govern its activities. The Goodwill Industries of America work in close cooperation with the Department of Goodwill Industries of the Methodist Church. The executive in charge of both organizations is Mr. Oliver A. Friedman. Accepted qualifications for leadership in this organization are very general and no specific professional training is required. It would appear that this national organization is feeling its way forward in the field of service to handicapped persons. The national officers admit that there is a very wide variation in standards and services throughout the eighty-five member agencies. All, however, appear

29.-From Statement of Purpose and Policies for the Organization, Operation Service and Development of Goodwill Industries (Revised April 1944).

Part 1 - Purpose.

30.-Hein, op.cit.

to be moving towards a more professional approach in their service to this group of people.

#### First Church and Goodwill Industries

The Welfare Industries of First United Church are not affiliated with the Goodwill Industries of America. The Superintendent, Mr. Hayward, keeps contact with the superintendent of the Seattle Industries and there is a mutual exchange of information, trends, etc. First Church have not made it a policy to use the industries as a means of serving handicapped persons. The economically handicapped have been assisted and these have tended to become regular employees. The Vancouver Agency has no subsidy of any kind and hence, must of necessity finance as economically as possible. With a loyal staff it has been possible to make this enterprise self supporting. Consideration might be given to re-orienting the policy of this department towards assisting handicapped persons in their rehabilitation. If such a policy were undertaken, a subsidy would undoubtedly be required and consideration would have to be given to a possible source of financial support. In Vancouver, there are many efforts on behalf of the handicapped and there would need to be close cooperation with the council for the guidance of the handicapped to ensure that there was no duplication of services already offered in the community. Many of the services sponsored by the Goodwill Industries of America are already being performed by other agencies in the city. There is no apparent need for the Goodwill Industries to undertake a recreational policy or a counselling service. The actual economic situation seems to be one area where they can serve. Should the policy become one of assisting the handicapped persons, a close liason with all social agencies would be necessary so that the job undertaken by the Welfare Industries would become a part of the total services in



the community. There is no doubt that at the present time there is an efficient and loyal organization which would help the Welfare Industries make a forward step in service. The Goodwill Industries emphasize the place of religion in the total rehabilitation services. An industry connected with the work of an institutional church makes for a good relationship. People employed in the industry can come to know the church workers in such a way that they feel free to seek their help in making a connection with the church activities. It seems an excellent indirect method of contact.

There is no doubt that a goodwill industry attached to an institutional church or other recognized agency in the community gains a status which makes its work easier. It would be expected that a board under church nomination would also be certain to keep the service ideal foremost and to see that this enterprise never be a business for profit.

The present policy of routing all donations to clients through the church office is undoubtedly a good one. The work of the Welfare Industries becomes in fact a part of the social assistance department of the church. It is questionable whether at this stage of their development the Welfare Industries in Vancouver could support a trained person able to interview and help those seeking assistance. It is reasonable to suggest however, that consideration might be given to having a social worker, well aware of all the community services, attached to the church. In this way all who seek assistance, either through the church or Welfare Industries would have a much better chance of finding the most adequate help for their total problem.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHURCH PROVIDES A COMMUNITY HOUSE

The need for play, for recreation, for opportunities of self expression and new experiences is basic to mankind. Those activities which a man carries on over and above his work, may be called recreational.

Recognition of the value of recreation grows continually. The key, in the development of personal character and of culture, is found in a people's use of leisure time. It is an art and a vital part of the educational process. Once it was considered inconsequential activity but now there is an increasing awareness that it is a social force of tremendous consequence.

Historically, organized religion has viewed recreation from more than one viewpoint. In the first place, religion claims to deal with the whole of life. Hence, the churches are concerned with recreation as one phase of experience to be integrated into the good life in accordance with religious principles. In the next place, people who have something in common, whether it be in school, business or politics, wish to join in recreation together. The same holds true for religious affiliation. Recreation thus finds a place in church life, regardless of any conscious purpose it might serve. Thirdly, leisure time activities and clubs are recognized as a means through which religious training is expressed and integrated into daily living. Church leaders plan these leisure time activities as a part of their total program.

#### Community Centres

During the recent war there was considerable discussion in favor of the erection of useful war memorials. Many communities recognizing the

value of recreation suggested the building of a community centre as a suitable memorial. Often the advocates of such a plan had a hazy conception of the program which should be provided in such a centre. They did however, have an appreciation of the place of recreation in the life of the people. Some think of the community centre in terms of buildings, some of sports pavilions and playgrounds, some of a common hall, others of an arts and crafts centre, and still others of friendship houses with an active club program. The writer feels that community centres should provide facilities for health, recreation, informal education, cultural participation and above all for the opportunity of group activity to all classes, races and groups of people. Ideally the community centre should provide a unified base for community life.

The community council, which represents all groups active in the district and includes interested citizens, who are anxious to promote community spirit, can most adequately provide the centre. Such councils are more active in the stable communities where the average family owns their own home and where community organizations are comparatively strong. It is interesting to note that in the Kerrisdale district of Vancouver, where several of the churches have strong recreational programs and where numerous other cultural and recreational groups are active, a money by-law has been passed, to provide funds for the erection of the first unit in a community centre project. In areas of overcrowded housing, where living conditions are inadequate and the population is relatively mobile, there is little community spirit. Often the potential leadership is crushed down by the environment so that there is little possibility of the inhabitants providing a community centre on their own initiative. The Strathcona districts is such an area. If community centre facilities are to be provided, some group must assume the responsibility for providing them as a

community service.

There are many groups interested in providing service in transitional or slum areas. Traditionally the settlement house has sought to help the stranger, the frustrated, the poor, and the outcast to find themselves. The story of the settlement movement is the record of men and women of culture going to live amongst the underprivileged and taking to them the opportunity of enjoying the better things of life. While the patronizing attitude has had to be guarded against, nevertheless, many of the settlements have succeeded to a remarkable degree in identifying with the community and become in fact community centres. The settlement has helped people to express themselves and has encouraged wholesome recreation. These early settlements were provided by people from outside of the community. Today, the settlement and the neighborhood house carry on the tradition of the pioneers and seek to provide a community house where all are welcome.

While settlements have always tried to serve all residents of a district, regardless of race, creed or class, they have in the main been sponsored by two types of organization. First, the non-sectarian group maintained by socially interested citizens of all creeds or none and secondly, the sectarian settlement sponsored by a religious group. This latter type of house provides an inclusive service but usually the staff must be members of the denomination sponsoring the settlement. In Canada the settlement movement has been developed by groups representing these two traditions. It has already been noted that the Presbyterian Church in Canada, one of the churches which helped form the United Church, maintained seven settlements. The settlement or neighborhood house can serve such areas as the Strathcona district.

The Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. are now developing their programs in neighborhood branches. In meeting the needs of specific areas, they are of necessity caught in the dilemma as to whether they ought to serve as a community centre seeking to serve the whole community, or whether they should follow their institutional pattern. If the "Y" has a distinctive contribution to make, then it would seem that they must fulfill their primary purpose even at the expense of not being all things to all people. If the "Y" is to be a Y.M.C.A., they can, at best, only serve a section of the community.

The church is always found in the needy areas of the city. Amongst those living within the inner circle of the city, in the midst of warehouses and factories, in dilapidated, inadequate housing, often overcrowded with several families occupying one house, which was built for a single family dwelling, the church carries on.. Many of the city churches have institutionalized their program and provide recreational activities to meet the varied needs of their constituency. Seven days a week, the church hall is busy providing a centre for the community. It is interesting to note that most of the former settlements of the Presbyterian Church are now attached to city churches and have developed as recreational centres connected with a congregation, rather than maintain their autonomy as settlements. St. Christopher House in Toronto is, the only remaining settlement, supported by the United Church of Canada. This settlement is also in receipt of a grant from the United Welfare Chest of Toronto. The Community Houses, attached to the City Missions across Canada, are really a part of the congregational activities. They may seek to provide an inclusive program and may attract many non-members as participants. As the "Ys" have difficulty in fulfilling their purpose and concurrently providing a community centre, so the problem is much greater for the churches.

Other groups provide some community service. The Boys' Clubs provide recreational facilities for boys of all ages. Cultural and racial groups provide clubs for their own people. In an area, such as that served by First Church, it would seem that total recreation needs will only be served if some group or groups take the initiative.

### Group Work

The settlement, the "Y", and the church are all interested in meeting what is recognized as a fundamental need. Recent years have witnessed the development of a new branch of Social Work which is concerned with working with groups of people. This is called Social Group Work. Miss Grace Coyle has defined social group work as

"a type of educational process carried on in voluntary groups during leisure time with the assistance of the group leader aiming at the growth and development of the individual through group experience and the use of the group by its members for purposes which they consider socially valuable." 31

This new profession is helping to develop community recreation so that the needs of the individual are met through his group activities. Once the program was the important consideration but today, with the help of modern developments in the study of psychology, group workers are coming to a fuller awareness of individual needs and a deeper understanding of human behaviour. No longer can the program be considered an end. It is merely the means of helping people find satisfactions and to grow as social beings. There is a new awareness of the importance of trained leadership, so that leisure time activity is more than busy work.

In all areas of a city, it is important that competent leadership be provided for the leisure time programs. In a section, such as the Strathcona District, where the environment is so unfavorable, where there is a high incidence of family breakdown, and where the changing economic conditions are very quickly reflected, the need for adequately trained recreational leadership is urgent. The professional group worker, with his understanding of human behaviour, and his basic belief that the person is more important than the program, can make a valuable contribution to the leisure time activities of settlement, "Y" or church. In skilled hands, leisure time activities can become recreational in the highest meaning of that word.

In the Strathcona area there is need for more group work activities. The Norrie report on recreation and group work in Greater Vancouver pointed to this district as one amongst others which was in need of new centres.<sup>32</sup> It is important that each group participating in a recreational program should understand its place in the total community and have its purposes clear. Working together, the several agencies interested in serving the recreational needs of the community will most adequately serve the total population.

#### Church Programs of Midweek Activities

It is interesting to observe that the Canadian Churches have emphasized a mid-week program as an essential part of their Christian educational syllabus. There has been a recognition, on the part of the leaders of

32.- Survey Report of Group Work and Recreation of Greater Vancouver, 1945, Survey Director, L. E. Norrie, Community Chest and Welfare Council of Greater Vancouver.

the youth programs, that the leisure time informal groups are powerful instruments for education in living. The Canadian Council of Churches promotes the Trail Ranger and Tuxis program for boys and the C.G.I.T. movement for girls. Both of these emphasize spiritual, mental, social and physical growth. They lend themselves to adaptation to meet the individual needs of the participants. Tuxis and C.G.I.T. are essentially democratic programs and achieve their best results where the leaders have some knowledge of the basic principles of group work. These boys and girls programs are officially endorsed by the United Church of Canada.

The boys program began in the Y.M.C.A., about 1912. Originally it consisted of a series of tests known as the Canadian Standard Efficiency Tests which the boys were required to pass. Upon reaching a required standard, they were given a bronze medallion. In the early years of the First World War, in response to an expressed need for a leisure time program for boys, this movement spread from the Y.M.C.A. into the churches and became known as the Trail Ranger and Tuxis movement. Soon groups had been organized in all sections of the country. In the early years, the Y.M.C.A. provided the paid leadership for the National and Provincial committees. In most cases the groups were formed from Sunday School classes and met during the week as a club group. Within the program, there is room for variation according to the interests and needs of the individuals in the group. In recent years the national and provincial leadership has been weak. Without aggressive leadership at the top the program has not maintained itself as one of the more popular time activities of teenage boys.

Simultaneous with the development of the distinctive boys' program in the churches, the Canadian Girls in Training Movement sought to provide



a mid-week program of informal education and recreation for teen age girls. In 1915, the first national advisory committee for cooperation in girls' work was established. Through the succeeding years the girls have had strong national and provincial leadership. Today the C.G.I.T. movement in Canada includes some forty thousand girls in its membership. The purpose of leaders in this movement has been set out in these words:

"Our task as leaders in Christian education is to help girls grow into conscious fellowship with God leading to an awareness of responsibility to God and His world. We seek to provide within the church the opportunity for girls to see the Christian way of life and commit themselves to it.

We believe our purposes can be achieved by the process of group participation in a program where the girl learns

1. to worship
2. to study, according to her particular needs at each successive stage in life
3. to give herself in service to people and causes and to be able to
4. enter into fellowship with all people." 33

The church also sponsors a young people's program which seeks to emphasize the development of a full life, and to help the youth of the church integrate their religious knowledge and convictions with other aspects of living. In seeking to achieve this purpose the democratic participation of the membership is encouraged.

The women's organizations in the churches have always stressed the friendship group. The ladies form "circles" which undertake some form of service and provide companionship. Many congregations have an active A.O.T.S. (As One That Serves) Club where the men meet together and undertake service projects on behalf of worthy causes.

In one sense all of these club programs are a form of Christian education. They are also programs of group participation. Through activities

and group interaction the youth of the church might learn to integrate their understanding of religious and ethical teaching into daily living. These clubs vary in quality. Some are rigid in seeking to follow a set program, others are fluid and seek to follow interests and meet the needs of the group members. The churches in Canada have taken a leading part in the development of leisure time activities for their members. It would seem that if they are to maintain the leading role they have earned that they must avail themselves of the skills and knowledge found in this new branch of social work which is so vitally interested in group activity. With leaders trained in social group work, these programs have unlimited possibilities as active forces for self-development.

#### First Church's Club Program

For many years, First Church has sought to provide a program of club activities. Subsequent to the closing of the Community House on Georgia Street, the club work was transferred to the church at Gore Avenue and Hastings Street. Here the clubs were organized in accordance with the general program of the United Church for midweek club work. The C.I.G.T. program was introduced and a boys program was developed which included religious instruction and recreation. This program did not follow the Trail Ranger or Tuxis movement but was built around the personality of the volunteer boys' worker, who had an unusual ability to attract boys. By modern group work standards the boys activities could be severely criticized. However, it should be noted that through this program almost one hundred boys participated, each year, in the many projects sponsored by the boys' leader and teams were entered in all divisions of the Sunday School Athletic Association. In August of 1947, the boys' leader resigned and during the past winter the boys program has been virtually non-existent. The

Young People have always followed the official church program and participated in the many activities sponsored by the Vancouver Presbytery Young People's Union.

During the latter years of the 1930's, there was an average attendance of sixty-five girls at the C.G.I.T. meetings. The girls were organized in a department with the professional girls' worker as Superintendent. This large department was divided into small groups of eight to ten members with a volunteer leader in charge of each group. Each of these sections had its own president and other officers, there was a departmental president and secretary and these together with the officers of the groups formed the executive of the C.G.I.T. They worked with the leaders in planning program. Departmental projects were undertaken and the smaller groups also had individual projects. During the war years, the attendance of the girls fell and the present workers have not been able to reverse the trend. In those years it was easy for teenagers to secure employment, and as they went to work the girls drifted away from the clubs. At this critical time, there were changes in volunteer and professional leadership, and this was a contributing factor to the declining attendance. This past year there have been two small C.G.I.T. groups with a total enrollment of not more than twenty girls

The explorer program was organized for the nine to eleven year old group. They met for a time at the church and later at the Kindergarten House on Georgia Street. The attendance increased considerably when the meetings were moved to the latter location. There are a few girls meeting at the Community House in an explorer group.

The youth program has been democratically organized and the young people determined their own program. A student from Union Theological College has usually been attached to the club as counsellor or group leader.

This has been a small club for many years. Unfortunately, the boys' worker did not encourage the boys to participate in the young people's program and this hampered the coordinated development of the youth activities. During the war years, this group diminished in size and has not functioned during the past winter.

One problem, which has increasingly worried workers at First Church, is that of the distances members of the group have to travel to attend meetings. As the population of this central district is constantly changing, so it seems that boys and girls and young people are traveling greater distances to the church. A former girls' worker has hazarded a guess of the distances the girls, attending clubs at First Church in 1940, lived from the church building. She intimates that 5 percent lived within two or three blocks, 25-30 percent within 5 to 10 blocks, the largest percentage 50 percent or more lived in the Templeton School district, Grandview and about 15 blocks east of the church on East Hastings Street and north towards the waterfront, about 10 percent came twenty-five blocks or more, and the remaining 5-10 percent lived in the Main Street district between Third Avenue and Broadway. About half of the children participating in the younger clubs, were from other denominations or unchurched families.

Unfortunately, there are no comparable figures available for the boys program. The Young People's Society was a small group for many years, and drew its membership from all parts of the city. At the time the writer was connected with this group, approximately half of the young people lived in the area east of the church; very few lived within easy walking distance. The deaconess and children's worker have provided the addresses of families, known to them as being active in one of the clubs, in the church. A very small number of families live within the Strathcona area,

or north of Hastings Street between Main Street and Glen Drive. The problem of meeting the needs of the people, living adjacent to the church, is occupying the minds of the staff.

#### Community House

Following the dispersal of the Japanese people, First Church took over the former Japanese Mission and reopened it as a community house. The kindergarten, which had been meeting in the Seymour School district, was moved into the new centre and the clubs, which had formerly used the church hall, moved to the community house. The Board of Home Missions provided a small budget (\$2500) to meet the expenses of taxes and maintenance. Aside from a grant of \$200 for a part time student, there was no provision for an addition to the staff of First United Church.

The present program at the community house includes the kindergarten, which meets five mornings a week and has an average attendance of 26 children. The Strathcona Day Nursery, operated by the Alexandra Community Activities, met in the community house until recently. During the past winter, there was no boys' program active in the house. C.G.I.T. and explorers met regularly but the attendance was small. One of the Mother's Clubs, led by the deaconess has met in the community house regularly. These few activities sum up the regular program of the house.

Facilities here are comparatively good. There is an excellent gymnasium and a number of small rooms suitable for games and club rooms. Adjacent to the house is Powell Street Grounds, which provide ample playing space for athletic activity. There is no lounge or common room where people might come for the sake of companionship. The functions of the neighborhood house or community centre are not performed by this centre. It is understandable that with the present staff it would not be possible to provide a real community house program. Such a project would involve a

considerably higher bidget than the present \$2500. It has already been observed that the Norrie report showed the need for more recreational facilities in this area. It would seem that First Church must consider whether it has a responsibility to meet that need, at least in part. The name community house is misleading. Are these facilities to be used for the mid-week program of the church, in the same way as any church hall is used, or should the church provide a wider service to the community? In seeking an answer to this question, it is well for the church to consider carefully its relationship to the neighborhood house movement and to the community centre movement.

#### The Christian Neighborhood House

In deciding the future of the Community House, the church must consider the future role of the Christian Neighborhood House in an area such as that served by First Church. Consideration must also be given possible relationships between the church and the community centre - should one be established in the community.

The Board of National Missions, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., is responsible for the administration of a number of Christian Neighborhood Houses. A survey of the work performed by these houses was made in 1943 by the rev. K. D. Miller of the Mission City Society of New York. This report is an excellent study of the place of the Christian Neighborhood House in the community.

Dr. Miller points out that the neighborhood house maintains a seven day a week program of friendly service to the people of the community. In common with all neighborhood houses, many of the activities of the house are of a recreational, educational or social service nature. Throughout all of these activities is implied a deep religious purpose. Dr. Miller comments:

"Not all of the neighborhood houses have a regularly organized church, but all of them give a central place to religious education and worship. Although the approach is informal and unconventional, the neighborhood house is the church reaching out in a ministry of understanding, sympathetic understanding and love. It may emphasize services rendered rather than services held, but it is nevertheless the church standing in the midst of our neediest humanity as one who serveth." <sup>34</sup>

In the opening decades of this century, when cities and industrial centres were being flooded with immigrants from south-east Europe, the neighborhood house as a home mission agency came into being in the United States. It was born of a desire to serve these people in the name and spirit of Christ. Through the years, one of the chief values of the neighborhood house movement has been its freedom from traditional restraints and ecclesiastical red tape, and its ability to adapt itself quickly to new conditions. These houses are for the most part located in crowded and deteriorated residential districts. They are in a strategic position to render outstanding service to their constituents, the church and the nation. In the first place the neighborhood house has a chance to identify itself with the people it serves. People without resources feel most keenly the need for constructive social change. Yet they feel unable to express themselves adequately. There are those who would like to exploit these people for selfish ends; there are those who would continue to make paupers of the poor by their gifts; and there are others who deplore the lack of community amongst these people but make no constructive effort to help them. The Neighborhood House and especially a Christian Neighborhood House has an opportunity of identifying with these people,

34.- Kenneth D. Miller, The Christian Neighborhood House, Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church in U.S.A. New York, 1943  
page 5.

helping them to become vocal about their own interests and concerns, assisting them to express themselves and help them to discover themselves and a pride in their own achievement. In a word, the neighborhood house worker has an opportunity to teach the real patterns of democracy by accepting people as individuals, asking nothing of them, but ready to give to them a helping hand in discovering democracy at work in their own neighborhood. Secondly, the neighborhood house workers have an opportunity of going out into the neighborhood and performing institutionally unselfish leadership. If the neighborhood house has a genuine desire to serve the area in which it is located, there are any number of community projects for which it might supply the leadership.

The neighborhood house requires a large budget and this must be secured either from mission boards or community chest funds. Most neighborhood houses, being located in the inner city or in one of the transitional areas of the city, have a constituency of working people who have a marginal income. This fact, coupled with the transiency of such areas, makes it imperative that if these agencies are to be maintained that they be supported by outside funds. The returns in the form of added church members or adherents are rather meagre. It is not surprising that many attack expenditures of large sums in predominantly Jewish and Roman Catholic areas when opportunities are presenting themselves in newer communities for work amongst Protestants.

After studying the situation facing the presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Dr. Miller recommended:

"As some radical adjustments in the neighborhood house program are equally called for. But anyone who knows these areas of our cities must say that the situation here calls not for less work of the sort carried on by neighborhood houses, but more.



"This is not to say that more neighborhood houses as such should be started or even that the present neighborhood houses should have their programs and budgets enlarged. But there are many churches situated in these areas which should introduce the neighborhood house type of program; namely a seven day program of services, designed to meet the most urgent needs of the community in the name and in the spirit of the Christ. The neighborhood houses came into being because of the failure of the conventional churches to minister to the foreign colonies of our cities. Now that the colonies are no longer foreign, a church which happens to be favorably situated as to location and plant, has a much better opportunity to serve the community effectively, than was true a generation ago. However, such a church cannot be effective if, in its program and in its conception of its mission, it remains stereotyped and conventional. But a sufficient number of churches are carrying on an effective program in downtown deteriorated and foreign communities to assure us that given the right leadership, a moderate budget, and a broad-gauged and liberal official board, a church can be as effective as a neighborhood house in such a community." 35

#### Seven-Days-a-Week Church Recreation Program

Dr. Miller's conclusions seem to favor the institutional church program as distinct from the neighborhood house supported by a denomination. The difference between these two programs has already been noted, the former is basically a church and the latter is basically a social agency. In giving consideration to the development of community work, the church should be conscious of the difference in function between these organizations. As Dr. Miller has pointed out - given good leadership and a moderate budget, churches can do an effective piece of work. They can provide a social centre for the community. It may be that the time has come for the churches to withdraw from the Neighborhood House work. Perhaps this should be carried on by the non-sectarian social agency financed by Community Chest or other community funds. The church however has a responsibility for the

recreation of the community, and must see that in areas of need that adequate wholesome and constructive recreation is available.

The reports of the Canadian Youth Commission show that many young people look to the churches as one of the main recreational centres. The needs of this group can be served effectively in a seven day a week program. The conventional church program is ineffective in meeting many groups. Mr. Don F. Pielstick, of the Home Missions Council of North American, reviewed the efforts of churches to minister to the mobile war worker. In his report, he deplored the fact that many churches were unable to adapt themselves to the needs of the immigrants and put this down to the need for the personal touch.

"(A) secondary group relationship has not proved dynamic enough to reach the lonely stranger in a hurried, restless community of war workers. Church after church printed posters, leaflets, established a welcome desk, or ran newspaper advertisements. In no place where this was the only approach do I know of a rewarding response. But report after report has come in where friendship was established with the newcomers, a club grew up and in this personal relationship church contacts were made." 36

If the United Church is to reach out to meet the people of the Strathcona District, serious consideration should be given to a program which provides opportunities for friendship and group activity. It is recognized that to extend the service of the Community House would involve a considerable expenditure, yet the fact remains that the conventional church services are not reaching the residents as one would like. In his studies of urban churches, Dr. Paull Douglass has emphasized that the successful church adapts its program to meet the peculiar needs of its environment. Under present circumstances, the church seems called to do more in the Community House.

36.- Don F. Pielstick, Wartime Facts and Peacetime Responsibilities  
p. 4 (mimeographed report).

### Church and Community Centre

Everyone should keep clearly in mind that a Community House is not a community centre. The present community house might perform many of the functions of a community centre, yet it is fundamentally a Church recreational centre. It is an institution provided by one group in the community, and its ideals and purposes are stated in relation to the philosophy which guides all the activities of that group. The community centre growsn out of the local Community Council or Association and ideally should include all groups within the community. It should provide facilities for each group and also be the common meeting place for the sharing of differences, in order that the understanding of each other's point of view might increase. Here all people of all races and creeds may come together in a common purpose.

Should a community centre be erected in the First Church area, the church would have to give careful consideration to its relationship to the centre. The Community Centre movement is more advanced in Great Britain than it is on this continent and there the churches have had to face up to their responsibility in the establishment of community centres. The National Council of Social Service has published a report which suggests the possible relationships which may be followed in any community. This report is of particular importance as it has the commendation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council and the Deputy for the Chief Rabbi. The second part of the pamphlet is of particular interest. It reviews the historic part played by the churches in the development of the social life of the community and emphasizes that, because of this tradition, it is difficult for them to stand aside from the community centre movement. The report makes clear the principles on which their interest in the matter rests:

"Christians and Jews are required on the one hand to embody their own understanding of human personality in appropriate forms of community life, and on the other hand to see that, as far as they can help it, the general character of the community life of the world as a whole is not adverse to the best interests of personality.....The endeavour to live in right relationships with other people in every human activity is, for them, an essential part of religion." 37

The authors of this brief suggest therefore, that the churches have a responsibility to their own members to give them regular occasions for meeting and acting together for social activities." They continue:

"However good the moral character of the wider environment, the churches will need to see that their young people spend part of their leisure in an environment where behaviour are not only practised but are directly related to their ultimate source in God." 38

This brief emphasizes, that beyond this interest in the group activities of their own members, the churches more than any other community institution, are bound to identify themselves with the life of the community in its many phases and try to see that every important human need is met.

The Canadian churches and especially the United Church of Canada have accepted this premise. The Trail Ranger, Tuxis and C.G.I.T. programs are designed primarily to provide a protected group experience for boys and girls, so that in leisure time groups they might learn to integrate their religious philosophy into daily living. Beyond this, the churches have accepted a measure of responsibility for the welfare of the community. Their interest in social problems is one expression, The spirit which gave rise to the Church Settlements is another expression of this same interest in community welfare. The United Church in planning their work in Vancouver

37.- The Churches Part in the Provision of New Centres of Community Life, National Council of Social Service, 26 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1, July 1947 - page 5

38.- Ibid - p.5

must keep this distinction clear. They have a responsibility to provide groups which will help their people integrate religion and life, and they have a responsibility for the total recreational needs of the districts in which they work. While both, if they are to be of a high standard, will follow the basic principles of group work, the former must be considered as a part of the church's educational program, while the latter must be regarded as a community service.

It is always good for community groups to determine their purposes clearly, then they will be better able to see their place in the total community. For the sake of all, the churches have to insist upon man's need to obey the moral law. Each in its own way seeks to bring man into a vital relationship with God. Each feels a responsibility to speak for God in the community and to act in His name in community service. This is a responsibility which no other bodies can share with them. They fulfill it in part by their teaching and worship, and in part by their traditional leadership in the life of the nation and of every community within the nation.

Likewise the community associations or Community Centres have an essential service to perform. At one time the church was the community centre. Modern society is a complex social organism with many groups active in the community. No one church, or group of churches, is acceptable as the obvious centre of all the diverse elements in the community. Under such circumstances, the only way of achieving the sense of freedom and equal association is by setting up some common centre by mutual consent. The British pamphlet wisely suggests:

"The basis for free association is lost unless all feel that they have as good a right to be there and to determine what goes on there as any of the neighbors.....When the common centre cannot be dominated at the outset by a religious view of life.....(the churches) must accept it and do what they can to gain

currency for such a view in the give and take of free association." 39

The community association performs a function in facilitating the free association of all groups within the community. It is desirable that people should meet with their neighbors, no matter what may be their respective identities or differences, under circumstances which require all to treat one another as equals, and on a variety of matters to strive to come to a common mind. No community association can help people do this. Through such participation democracy is practised in the community. The church cannot fulfill the function of a community association. It can, participate in the community association and through the give and take of democracy make its influence felt in the larger community.

Ideally, the churches and the community centre associations should be allies in the provision of services to the community. Through misunderstanding or selfishness on either side, they can fail to achieve this partnership. The churches may not be ready to let any other body fill a role they once filled, or they may be so wrapped up in their own plans that they do not see the opportunities presented in the community centre movement. The Community Associations through suspicion of the churches, or by failing to allow the churches' representatives to pull their weight in the common councils, or because they fail to consider the interests and convenience of the churches in their common planning, may frustrate the churches in their desire to participate in the community association. A basic principle of the community centre is that it should supplement and not supersede or interfere with the full exercise of the distinctive functions of other bodies. The churches need to be free to judge the extent to which they will use the common centre, but they are bound to admit in

39.- The Churches Part in the Provision of New Centres of Community Life, National Council of Social Service, London, 1947 pp 6 & 7.

principle the validity of the ideals of the community center. It is up to both to decide whether they will cooperate to make the community centre live.

#### First Church and Recreation

The First United Church is located in one of the deteriorated areas of the city, one in which there is great need for wholesome recreational outlets. The reports of the Urban Problems Commission of the United Church and of the Canadian Youth Commission indicate a conviction that the church has a responsibility for providing community recreation. The United Church has accepted the need for group activity as an essential part of their program, and through the work of the institutional churches has shown some recognition of the need for providing recreation and group activity as a community service. In the Strathcona area, First Church Community House might enlarge its program and become a neighborhood house. This would involve considerable expense and necessitate a large budget. The emphasis would be of necessity be on the total community. Through such a program the United Church would stretch out the hand of friendship to all. This program would involve the establishment of a social agency and the minimizing of the church emphasis in the program. It has been noted that Dr. Miller in his study of the Neighborhood Houses of the Presbyterian Church did not encourage such a policy, but suggested that churches should provide a seven-days-a-week program of recreation. Should the Community House provide such a program the emphasis would be as a church reaching out to serve. The type of activity would be very similar to that of the neighborhood house but the focus would be different, being a church recreation program rather than a social agency. In all probability such a program would make a less general appeal, but through group activity the church would serve the community, and by keeping its purposes clear would be free

to promote a more distinctive program than if it attempted to be the community centre. The writer believes that First United Church should pursue this latter policy and offer a recreational program offered as a part of the total service of the church to the community. A Protestant Church cannot expect to become the community centre in this area, but it is possible for it to provide real leadership as one agency working for the community. In developing program care must be taken to see that there is no competition but that the various churches and agencies offering service complement each other, so that there is the maximum service to the people. Should such a plan be followed, it is important that the church insist on a high quality of leadership. Consideration should be given to the appointment of a director who is trained in social group work. Of all agencies working with men and women, the church should be concerned with presenting a qualitative program which enables people to grow and learn to work and play together.

Under existing circumstances there seems little likelihood of a community association developing in the Strathcona area. Such districts tend to lose their potential leaders and the deteriorated and overcrowded housing conditions depress the inhabitants so that there is little evidence of community feeling. It would appear that, so long as present housing conditions exist, the neighborhood will have to depend on agencies and organizations to provide many of the functions of the community centre. However, should there be a rehousing project, which is the central purpose of the Demonstration Housing Survey of 1947 and its forthcoming report, First United Church would have to reconsider their recreational program and Community House policy.

It is possible that in such an event the church would only wish to retain those groups and clubs which are an integral part of their Christian



education program, and would be ready to contribute leadership to the community centre to which many of the activities of the Community House might be transferred. Such a policy would require a high calibre of leadership, and it would call for statesmanship in both church and community centre. Mr. L. E. White has written in Tenement Town, the record of an experiment in community living in a British housing estate, of his efforts to develop both a community centre and a church. Out of the efforts of Mr. White and his colleagues a distinctive place was discovered for each in the community. As members of the same team began to develop each organization, they learned the importance of joint planning; they also came to understand the advantages to both community centre and church when the leadership of each participated in the work of the other.

The need for recreation is basic. First United Church has had a tradition of community service in this field. There appears to be a continuing need. Perhaps other agencies will come to do the more general job, but so long as the church is concerned with human relationships it will have a legitimate place in this field of work. Two opportunities seem to present themselves to the church, the first is the provision of a seven-days-a-week program of leisure time activities; the second is to develop a program of friendship groups under strong professional leadership. If it follows out these opportunities First Church can meet a very real need in the East End of Vancouver.

## Chapter VII

### OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Camping can be one of the most creative experiences in the life of a boy or girl. Living together amidst the beauties of nature, participating in a wide variety of activities, learning the give and take of group experience, young people discover the art of living together. As a part of their ministry of service, First Church operate Camp Fircom.

#### Facilities

This camp is situated at Fircom Point on Gambier Island, where the church owns a campsite of fifty acres. This property fronts on almost half a mile of waterfront and contains three beaches. There is no community adjacent to the camp, and at the present time campers have hundreds of acres in which to hike and play. A Roman Catholic group have purchased property west of Camp Fircom and plan to develop a campsite. Should this or other developments proceed, there does not appear to be any danger that Camp Fircom will be crowded for play space. The long stretch of waterfront provides adequate swimming and bathing facilities, and there is an abundance of vacant land to the north of the campsite through which the boys and girls and adults may hike and pursue other camp activities.

This campsite was acquired in 1921 and has been used each succeeding summer as a fresh air camp for mothers and children, and boys and girls. The beginnings of this camp were very humble but through the years there has been a consistent effort to improve the facilities until today it is one of the best equipped camps in British Columbia. During

the golden jubilee year of First Church, Dr. Roddan spent much time in organizing the equipment at Camp Fircom. Through the generosity of Vancouver business men, materials were provided for the erection of a new dining room and assembly hall at the camp. Largely through the volunteer services of carpenters and other interested people, the present dining hall was erected. There is a fine fireplace, of Elphinstone granite, in the dining hall. The kitchen is well planned and provides adequate washing and cooking facilities in a room that is bright and easy to keep clean. The basement contains storage rooms and sleeping accommodation for the staff. Previous to the erection of this dining hall, cabins had been provided for the campers.

Today, Camp Fircom is a well equipped camp. Adequate water supplies are provided through a series of wells. A diesel electric light plant has been installed, providing light in the campers' cabins, the dining hall and kitchen. The kitchen is well equipped with two large camp stoves, an electric mixer, sinks and storage rooms. There are eight campers' cabins, a cottage built especially for the use of older women attending camp with the mothers' parties, a leaders' cabin and a cabin for the director. A small hospital is provided as a sick bay. Adjacent to the camp proper is a cottage, for the use of the minister, and a log cabin, which is used during the season as a visitors' cabin and during the winter as the home of the caretaker. The camp owns rowboats, which are provided for the use of campers and has two power boats, which are used as camp tenders. There is a good playing field adequate for all types of field sports. The space in front of the dining hall

is planted in lawn and serves as a courtyard around which the campers' cabins are spaced. Each cabin accommodates twelve people. Consideration might be given to providing more cabins for campers so that the number sleeping in each would be reduced. This would provide more air space per camper, and a smaller group in each cabin would probably form a more satisfactory unit. There has also been a suggestion that the cabins might be moved so as to provide more space between each cabin. There is much to commend this suggestion. The campers using this facility often live in overcrowded conditions at home and here where there is an abundance of space it would be good to allow them to feel the satisfaction of having ample living space.

There is no question but that this camp enjoys a very scenic location. The outdoor chapel looks out over the water towards Bowen Island and provides a beautiful setting for worship. There are numerous places provided on the camp property for people to sit and enjoy the beauty of nature. Many visitors have commented on the peace which they find amidst such surroundings.

Camp Fircom is not a port of call for any of the public transportation systems. Campers are transported to and from camp by chartered boats. The camp tender makes a daily trip to Horseshoe Bay (about forty minutes travel from camp) for perishable supplies and mail. It has been felt that the camp was better without a public wharf as through the present arrangements the camp remains a private resort and there is no problem of unexpected visitors, etc.

### Program

Camp Fircom operates during July and August each year. One hundred campers can be accommodated in one party, and in the average year almost six hundred mothers and children enjoy a ten day holiday on Gambier Island. Parties for mothers and children, for senior girls, senior boys, junior girls and junior boys make up the six groups attending during a season. The minister has been superintendent of the camp, and each party has been in charge of the church worker responsible for working with the same age group or sex in the winter program of the church. The deaconess has charge of the mothers and children, the girls' worker and boys' worker are each in charge of their respective camp groups. Program varies with the individual director. Worship, handicrafts, games, swimming, and campfires have been the foundation upon which the activities have been built.

The church has always emphasized the need for adequate and satisfying meals, and provision for the physical comfort and safety of the campers. It has been reported that this camp has one of the most thorough waterfront safety programs of any camp operating in the Vancouver area.

There are no records of the program activities of the camps and as the writer has not had the privilege of visiting Camp Fircom while campers were in session he does not feel competent to discuss program activities. First Church is fortunate in the location and facilities available at camp: this provides a tremendous opportunity for building a program which will do more than provide a good time for ten days. The mass approach to camping has disappeared: the camp of high standards seeks to understand the individual camper and to give all campers an opportunity

of living in congenial groups. Camping is more than giving city youngsters a chance to spend a week or ten days in the country -- it seeks to help individuals through a group experience to become socialized.

The modern camp has a fourfold objective. First, the camp is concerned with the health of the camper and with his education for health. Good health habits are encouraged. Physical skills are developed and emphasis is given to building the health of the camper so that he is better able to resist fatigue and disease. Safety education is stressed. On land, he learns to take proper precautions with axes, knives, etc., to be careful in the use of water from unknown streams and to adequately care for his own health. In the water, life saving instruction is emphasized and campers are instructed in the use of small boats. Health and education for health are emphasized.

The modern camp is concerned, in the second place, with education for leisure. Efforts are made to develop interest and skill in activities that campers may participate in on the adult level. It is important to develop within the camper resources for active self-propelled leisure time enterprises and to stimulate the creative expression of the campers.

Another objective of modern camping is to seek to make a contribution to the personality and social adjustment of the camper. It should provide experiences that make for "whole" living. It is known that the needs for social acceptance, for a new experience, for security and a sense of belonging are fundamental to all people. Camp can help to satisfy these needs. It can help people to grow emotionally, and can provide an opportunity for the practice of desirable habits of social participation -- unselfishness, cooperation, etc. The individual and his need must be written large in the program of the camp.

Finally, the camp must be a centre of education for community living. It may be a laboratory for practice in democratic living. All camps can encourage the development of a philosophy of life based upon the recognition of the supreme worth of persons and on ideals of social responsibility.

The degree, to which this fourfold objective will be realized, depends on the skill of the program leadership. It is commonly recognized that, under highly skilled leadership, more can be achieved in ten days at camp than in a season of weekly contacts. Social group work provides people with knowledge of personality and of human needs, and with the techniques which can build the most vital program to meet the individual needs of the campers. The camp setting provides the group worker with his greatest opportunity for effective work.

Because of the vital importance of the camp experience, many groups have developed camping programs. Here in the Vancouver area, trade union groups, the "Y's", the Alexandra Community Activities, and virtually all of the religious groups have developed camping programs. Standards vary from camp to camp but all recognize the opportunity presented through the camp experience.

There is a place for a variety of camps. The church camps fill a very important place in providing a recreational and educational experience for their young people. Where there is trained leadership, group work techniques are followed. The church camps emphasize Bible Study and worship. There is a place for a less intensely religious program in camping. The "Y" camps provide a wholesome group experience, which includes regular chapel periods but has not the intense religious educa-

tion program of the churches. The fresh air camps have a different clientele from either of these two types of camp (even though the fresh air camp might be operated by a church, as is the case with Camp Fircom). The program of such a camp must be built around the needs of the campers, meeting them where they are in their social and religious development. Under skillful leadership, such a program will help people to understand and experience richer living. A church fresh air camp presents an opportunity to develop program based on the highest social work standards plus the insights of a positive religious conviction. This is the opportunity presented to First Church.

#### Finance

The First United Church Fresh Air Camp entered the Welfare Federation of Vancouver in 1931, the year after Dr. Roddan began his ministry in Vancouver. They have continued through the succeeding years to receive a grant from the Community Chest. The camp is financed through this grant, donations from the interested friends and camp fees. It is interesting to note that the grant from the Community Chest has declined since 1937, while the total camp budget has increased. The grant for 1946 was only \$877 as compared with \$2,402 in 1936. This is due in part to the fact that the church has reduced their request for assistance from the community fund. In the same ten year period the amount collected in camp fees has almost tripled. This is due in large part to the changed economic conditions caused by the war and post-war employment conditions. In 1936, only a little more than 20 per cent of the camp budget was met through fees but ten years later more than 43 per cent of the budget was provided through fees paid by the campers. Donations continue to provide



a large portion of the budget. First Church reported a total expenditure of \$6,421 in 1946. The Community Chest grant only provided for about 13.5 per cent of the camp costs.

First United Church Fresh Air Camp is ready to serve the whole community. They have a very generous intake policy. A small percentage of the campers are members of the church, the balance come from other churches or are referred by social agencies or make personal application to the church office. Financial arrangements are worked out with each applicant according to his ability to pay. In so far as possible, they desire to take those most needing a rest or camp experience. Mr. Norrie, in his survey of Group Work and Recreation in Greater Vancouver, prepared a table showing the distribution of campers of four chest-supported agencies. (Adults and pre-school children were omitted from the table, hence the First Church figures are not completely accurate). It is interesting to observe that campers attended Camp Fircom from all but two of the city's twenty census areas.<sup>40</sup> These two represent West Point Grey and the district south of Forty-First Avenue between Granville and Camosun Streets. It is hardly to be expected that families from this part of the city would be represented at a Fresh Air Camp. Census area three has the highest number of campers attending Fircom. As this is a community service provided by First Church, it would seem reasonable to expect that the Community Chest should provide a larger portion of the

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40. Survey Report of Group Work and Recreation of Greater Vancouver, 1945, published by the Community Chest and Welfare Council of Greater Vancouver. P. E. Norrie, Director, p. 34.

camp budget. This is not a sectarian service, though First Church keeps foremost the desire to help people use the camp period for inspiration as well as physical recreation.

Camping is an accepted part of church programs and the fresh air camp is a part of the city mission work of the United Church of Canada in all the major centres of population. Camping will continue to be a major enterprise of First Church. With adequate budget, the splendid facilities of Camp Fircom, and a strong progressive program policy, this phase of the work can make a very positive contribution to the recreational services offered in the community.

#### SOCIAL ACTION

Throughout the years, First Church has been in the vanguard in the fight for social justice. The ministers of this congregation have been men with a dominating personality and they have never hesitated to turn their efforts towards crusading for a cause in which they believed.

Throughout his ministry at First Church Dr. Roddan campaigned "in season and out" against the ravages of the liquor trade. In the lane behind the church it is a common sight to see disfigured, unkept men and women drinking "canned heat"; in the immediate vicinity of the church one sees evidence of the terrible toll taken through excessive drinking; these and other similar problems weighed heavily on his mind and he took a leading part in seeking to arouse public opinion against such conditions.

The story of First Church's service to the men of the jungles has been told in the chapter on social assistance. A heroic effort was made to provide food for these unemployed men but the effort did not stop there. First Church, through its minister, labored to arouse the public conscience so that more adequate provision was provided for their maintenance.

Dr. Roddan performed many services of which none but his most intimate friends know. He tells of one service which was quietly but effectively performed:

"One day a group of Orientals came to see me. The Provincial Government of the day had decreed that under the new relief laws no Oriental was to be assisted. What were they to do? There was no work; they had families to feed. They had been born in British Columbia. Naturally, they felt this was discrimination of the meanest kind.

It happened that the Canadian Minister to the Orient was at the Hotel Vancouver. I called him and told him the story. He made a trip to Victoria and when he returned the law was changed and the Orientals were allowed relief." 41

The church has a place in the field of social action. There are some who would restrict the activities of the church and would make an artificial distinction between things religious and things secular. The modern churchman cannot accept such a distinction: life is a unity. In his report to the annual meeting of the Board of Evangelism and Social Service of the United Church of Canada for the year 1946, the Secretary, Dr. J. R. Mutchmor wrote:

"....Whatever views the United Church may hold, and some are quite divergent, no sane believer will contend that any major issue -- moral or social -- can be by-passed." 42

This has been the policy of this board of the church and according to his understanding of social problems the minister of First Church has followed such a policy on the congregational level. The largest Protestant denomination in Canada has no alternative if it is to be true to its Lord.

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41. Andrew Roddan, The Church in the Modern City, First United Church, Vancouver, 1945, p. 39

42. Twenty-Second Annual Report, The Board of Evangelism and Social Service, The United Church of Canada, Toronto, 1947.

In this work of social action the church is able to cooperate with all who are like minded. The church realizes that effective social action comes from the coordinated efforts of many groups. Unfortunately, the coordination of effort for social action has not always been practiced in Vancouver. Frequently the United Church group have planned and made their representations entirely on their own rather than as a part of the efforts of the Welfare Council. But church and social agencies need each other's help in this field of action which is still far from full development and coordination. It seems that this is one area of social effort where cooperation could first be achieved.

Chapter VIII  
REHOUSING, NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING, AND  
SOME CONCLUSIONS

The Strathcona district is one of the most marked examples of a deteriorated residential area in Vancouver, and the results of the Demonstration Housing Survey make it abundantly clear that this sector of the city contains a high percentage of unsatisfactory housing. Yet with all this, it is a district which contains a high percentage of families. Industry has not made as great inroads into this district as into the adjacent territory and this is still basically a residential district. Many families living in the area have expressed a preference to continue residing in this section of the city because of the close proximity to work and to the city centre. It is therefore proposed as the first area in Vancouver to be scheduled for slum clearance operations and properly planned as a public low-rent housing project.<sup>43</sup>

Subsidized public housing estates are a part of the established social pattern in Great Britain and the United States. A similar policy adapted to Canadian conditions has been urged and the first steps have been taken in at least one city (Toronto). Vancouver is beginning in community replanning not only because of the dangers of blight, but because of the extent to which it is already suffering from excessive decentralization. A policy which encourages the expansion of the city out a greater distance from the centre, while the core of the city

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43. The writer is indebted to Dr. L. C. Marsh, Director of the Housing Survey, for the information regarding the proposed housing and rehabilitation plans which follows.

deteriorates, cannot continue indefinitely. Vancouver is little more than sixty years old but a slum of twenty or even ten years standing can be intolerable. Pressures of low income, housing shortage, and since the war, high cost of living have forced more and more people to live in the lighted and sub-standard areas as they cannot afford the rents demanded for more adequate living accommodation. But in such an environment, people become apathetic and community feeling disappears. The relationship between poor housing and barren social life is undesirable.

#### Rehousing Strathcona Area

The plan proposed by the housing survey would completely replace a large portion of the dwellings and buildings in the area extending from Gore Avenue to Raymur Avenue and from the lane south of Hastings Street to the False Creek Flats. A few institutional buildings and the Strathcona School would remain in the area. The whole district would also be replanned so as to make the most efficient use of the space available. The grid plan of the streets would disappear; only one thoroughfare would intersect the project instead of the present half dozen traffic streets and the whole would become two neighbourhoods or communities. The east-west arteries would skirt the housing project completely so that there would be a minimum of danger from traffic. The Strathvons School would form the centre of one neighbourhood area and a new primary school proposed for the second area would be the centre's hub. Provision is made for parks, play space, and a shopping centre, and a community centre building for the whole district open to the cooperative use of all agencies, including the churches. Several churches would be located along the periphery of the project on Pender Street and provision is made for the

erection of a new church on the southern border of the project, as at least one church building calls for demolition.

The living accommodation would include suites of varying sizes to house families and single people. It is proposed to construct at least three types of accommodation, apartment blocks, houses with four and five bedrooms for large families, and small suites as well as two large hostel building for single men and women. The completed project would provide housing for at least the present population and probably more.

Should such a project proceed the environment in the East End of Vancouver would of course be radically changed. It is not probable that the people living in the district now would be identical with the population of the new estate. A large number of the current residents would move into the new housing estate, but there would be room for some coming in from other areas of inadequate housing, while some of the present residents of the Strathcona district (including some compensated for their present property) would choose to move away. In addition to the somewhat different personnel of the population the spirit would be considerably different. It is not too much to expect a new feeling of optimism amongst people who had a decent place in which to live. One would expect too that the possibility of doing effective work with these people in their new environment would be many fold greater than in their former squalid conditions. Many of the problems which worry workers in the East End of Vancouver would disappear, and public, private and voluntary agencies would be presented with an opportunity of re-orienting themselves to new and stimulating types of service.

### Community

Modern housing projects involve far more than merely rehousing the people. In planning these projects every effort is made to make provision for those facilities which will assist the growth of community within the project. The project managers, for example, must be more than business managers. They must be able to assist agencies to work effectively in the project, to help the people adjust themselves to their new life, and practice democracy in the common life of the estate. The manager must be a person of warmth and understanding if he is to fulfil the functions required of him, for he serves as liaison between residents and professional agencies anxious to serve the people of the estate. The editor of a pamphlet, Community Activities in Public Housing, published by the United States Housing Authority writes:

"It is this aspect of public housing that is unique in an urban environment that has lost many of the values of the old time neighborhood. But what is equally important, experiences indicate that community activities benefit both tenants and management alike. From one viewpoint, they contribute to the development of healthy family life. But they provide in addition, a basis for sympathetic and cordial relationships between tenants and management; .... Thus nursery schools, consumer services, health services, libraries, home making programs, forums, recreation associations, and other community activities play a very important role in progressive and sound housing management." 44

It is apparent that housing management involves far more than the mere business of caring for the facilities and providing living space for families. Management is concerned with community service to the residents. The American Housing Authority has prepared an outline of the mutual functions and responsibilities of housing authorities and

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44. Community Activities in Public Housing, Federal Works Agency, United States Housing Authority, Washington, May, 1941.



and community agencies in providing community services to project residents. This outline lists all conceivable types of agencies and under each major grouping lists management's responsibility to the agency, the agency's responsibility to management, the management's responsibility to the resident and the agency's responsibility to the resident. It is a comprehensive statement and shows management's concern with the community. In Vancouver, the report of the Demonstration Housing Survey is recommending that at least one and preferably two social workers (male and female) be senior members of the management staff. They would be chiefly concerned with the development of community spirit.

Should such a project, as is being proposed in the Strathcona area come to completion, the project manager will need the assistance of all the welfare groups, active in the community, in helping the new residents develop a community spirit. A Local Community Association would probably grow out of the desire of the people to use a community centre, to the best advantage. In the meantime, some recreational agency will have to provide a program of recreation for the community. Community growth is a slow process at best. People who have been depressed by their living conditions will take some time to learn to use their gifts of leadership and to move out into participation in the common life of the housing project. Mr. L. E. White has written in Tenement Town a report of the work of a team of conscientious objectors who chose alternative war service. He tells of his disappointments and even despair at times as he tried to establish a community association in a one-class housing estate in Great Britain. All of the residents had come from the slums and he and his colleagues found them very difficult to work with.

They seem to have had any leadership qualities repressed through their life in the slums of London. He advocated a modern type of settlement which might help to provide community leadership until such time as the people were ready to assume responsibility themselves. Fortunately, the proposed project for Vanzouwer will not be restricted to the lowest income group but will have a fair income range with some of the lesser paid white collar workers being encouraged to live on the project.

Nevertheless, should a housing estate be developed in the Strathcona area it is obvious that consideration will need to be given to providing the kind of leadership which will help the people to create their own social institutions.

#### Some Parallel Experiences

The writer has discussed the settlement suggestion with the secretary of the Seattle Council of Churches and his observations of the problems presented in the public housing projects in that city show that such an idea is well worthy of consideration. The church could not provide the leadership for such a settlement as that intended to precede a community association, as it represents only a part of the community. It could, however, share in providing community leadership until such time as the people are ready to assume their own leadership. There are many dangers in such a plan and it may be that they outweigh its advantages. Perhaps, the agencies must restrain themselves and patiently wait for the development of a community association and community centre as the people learn to meet some of the emergencies which present themselves in the community. If such a policy were followed, the church leaders would have an excellent opportunity to take the initiative in organizing the estate to meet specific problems.

Mention has already been made of the inter-denominational religious and social service program in the Navy Yard - Fort Greene area of Brooklyn. The district surrounding the Navy Yard has long been a deteriorated area. The development in recent years of two housing projects has materially altered the nature of the district. This new housing was utilized during the war years to accommodate Navy and civilian personnel of the Navy Yard. One small project was occupied by 200 Navy families and the Fort Greene houses accommodated 3,500 families, most of them workers in the Navy Yard. This interdenominational effort is the only Protestant church in the neighbourhood. A program of religious education has been pursued with a good response and 375 Protestant families have been contacted by the church. The social service worker on the staff works in cooperation with the social agencies operating in the area. Shortly after her appointment a conference was called to discuss a possible project for the church to carry out.

"It was agreed at the meeting that the most pressing need was that of additional recreational facilities for the young people of the housing project and the area outside. Accordingly the Navy-Fort Greene Recreation Committee was organized which proceeded to canvass the situation and to institute a recreational program. With the cooperation of the Housing Authorities and the Tenants' Association, rooms were allotted and equipment secured for a Teen Canteen for young people. About 150 young people have found this Teen Canteen a bright spot in their lives and have made of it also a demonstration that young people of different races can have good times together. This committee is, of course, inter-faith and with full representation of other church groups as well as social agencies, but it is satisfying to know that the guiding spirit of this community enterprise has come from the Protestant forces." 45

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45. Report of Interdenominational Project in Brooklyn, previously cited.

Church leaders could provide similar leadership in the Strathcona Housing project.

Consideration might be given to a policy whereby only one Protestant church ministered to the housing area. In difficult situations this appears most effective. However, as several churches are already established in the area adjacent to the proposed housing project, it is doubtful if it would be possible to have one community church. During the war years, the American churches evolved a plan for working in the wartime housing projects which were being erected. In some instances one denomination accepted the responsibility for working with all the people of an estate, in other cases the work was undertaken by a Council of Churches and was interdenominational in its nature, and in others service to housing projects was organized on a State level. From their experience in this work the church found reaffirmation time and again for these, among other things:

- (1) The value of stimulating initiative in people to accept responsibility to meet their own needs.
- (2) That in times of great stress the rendering of purely Social Service such as helping people to find living quarters, furnishing meals or nurseries, etc., opens the door for the Christian Gospel.
- (3) The importance of taking the responsibility to call together for discussion and understanding the opposing sides of social tensions. 46

Such jobs will need doing in the early months of the life of a housing estate. The church has a duty to be concerned with social relationships.

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46. War-time Facts and Peacetime Responsibilities by Don F. Pielstick, Field Representative, Home Missions Council of North America.

Should a housing project be constructed, First United Church would be strategically located at one corner of the proposed estate. This would involve considerable change in the program of the church and consideration would have to be given as to which functions the church would , which should be discontinued, and which might be performed either by the church or another agency.

The families moving into this new estate would be of limited financial means. Possibly, they would own old furniture needing repair so as to make it serviceable for the new modern living accommodation. The Welfare Industries of First Church might be able to provide materials which would help the family to repair their belongings. This might conceivably be a very much appreciated service to the community. In a letter to the writer, Mr. Friedman, the Executive Secretary of the Goodwill Industries of America, stated that such a plan had not yet been attempted but that he considered it had merit.

Through the services of its members, the church might assist in the organization of the Community Association. United Church congregations are democratically organized and people learn to practice democracy in church work. This might be carried over into the community. It is interesting to note that in a report of a study of Watling, twenty years after the establishment of a housing estate, one criticism of the church members in the community was that "(they) have not played, nor indeed tried to play a leading part in the more specifically civic sides of the life of the estate."<sup>47</sup> Church members have a contribution to make to the communal life.

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<sup>47</sup> Watling Revisited, Planning, a broadsheet issued by PEP (Political and Economic Planning), Vol. XIV, No.270, August 15, 1947, St. Clements Press, London.

There is always a danger that a housing estate might become self-contained. It is conceivable that people would be satisfied with the activities of the community association and centre and would make little effort to form outside contacts. This was a real problem at Watling. Neither the residents of the estate nor the surrounding community seemed anxious to mix. The report concluded: "The churches seem to make better bridge organizations than the community association and they have very much emphasized the social side of their work."<sup>48</sup> First Church, with its larger community contacts, can help to keep the residents of the estate from that isolationism which is so dangerous.

Camp Fircom would be a resource of inestimable value in helping to meet the recreational needs of the thousands of people living on the housing project. By offering the use of this facility, the church can render real community service to the people living near its doors.

It is conceivable, should a housing project be erected, that the church might be able to close the community house. The church will always want to have a program of group activity for the boys and girls of the Sunday School, but it is possible that with the erection of a community centre building, the church will only feel obligated to follow the traditional church program and leave the special groups and provision for mass recreational activities to the community association. If there is sympathetic leadership in both church and community centre then the two can complement each other providing a richer program for the total community.

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48. Ibid

The church is a religious fellowship but it is also a social institution. If it realizes that it is one of many social institutions and bends its efforts to assisting in bringing about effective cooperation with all the social institutions serving the community, it will increase the quality of service to all.

The erection of a housing project on the sight of this deteriorated residential area would present an opportunity to church and school and social agency to work together for the common weal. This depends on each recognizing the other as a partner. The project will go ahead in stages. There will be time for agencies, including schools, welfare agencies and churches, to develop plans before the third and fourth stages (which include the community centre) come to completion. Perhaps a coordinated approach will be ready by this time.

#### Conclusions

The church, because it is the Christian church, will always be concerned with the welfare of the individual and of society. In its concern for social living, it will always be active in the field of social action. The Christian faith and before it the Hebrew prophetic school, has struggled with problems of social injustice and man's inhumanity to man. This is a continuing function of the church. Religion has also influenced the development of many of the services to humanity which are now a part of Western society. Schools, hospitals, and a large portion of the social welfare program have grown from religious ideas and practice. It is important that social work and the church try to understand each other's approach and learn each other's techniques in working with people.

The church will undoubtedly continue to perform many social work functions as a part of its ministry. It may well be that the operation of social agencies is passing from sectarian auspices. Social work will be used in the church as its skills and services are used in schools, hospitals and in institutions. Like these other groups, the church must perform its social work functions according to the standards of the social work profession. Some leaders feel that the religious groups have an opportunity to develop a distinctive approach by combining the skills of social work with the insights of vital religion.

In an area such as that served by First Church there is a continuing need for the services offered by this congregation. If the present deteriorating environment continues, there is every reason to believe that there will be increasing demands for community service. Many look to the religious institutions for help with their problems.

Overcrowded, inadequate housing does depress, and people living under such conditions lose interest in community activity. With other agencies, the church suffers from neglect. In the face of the present environment there is bound to be an increasing need for social services in this section of the city. Counselling, assistance programmes, camp and community house can make a valuable contribution to the life of this district.

If the neighborhood rehabilitation and rehousing plans should go forward, the problems and the opportunities facing the church will be changed. There is every indication that coordinated community services will be provided for the residents of the project. The church would be free to make its distinctive contribution as a church, to provide services



for its own members and to share with others in working for community welfare.

Together, church and social agency can provide a comprehensive service to meet the needs of individual men and women.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

This study of the community services of First United Church has involved three areas of study. First, some consideration has been given to the social work function of the church and the relationship of the church to social agencies operating in the community. Secondly, a study of the present environment of First Church and the program offered in an effort to serve this present constituency. Thirdly, consideration has been given to the possibility of the building of a low-rental housing project in the area adjacent to the church. Such a project would present new problems and new opportunities to a community minded church.

Since Christianity and Social Adventuring was published in 1927 there has been little material published dealing with the question of the church and social work. Most of the material for this study has been secured through correspondence and personal interviews. Material has been secured from the following groups: Goodwill Industries of America Inc.; Home Missions Council of North America; Church Conference of Social Work, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America Inc.; The Pathfinding Service of the Churches, New York; Canadian Council of Churches; Board of Evangelism and Social Service, United Church of Canada; American Camping Association; Federal Public Housing Authority, Washington, D.C.; Director of Housing of the London County Council, and National Council of Social Service in England. Information obtained through the Housing Survey conducted in the Strathcona area in June, 1947 has been made available to the writer. First United Church have made available all reports and records which has assisted the writer in gaining an understanding of the breadth of the work carried on by this church.

This study has sought to point up the problems faced by First Church, which are common to many other congregations, particularly to other institutional churches. Some attempt has been made to evaluate the social service function of the church and to discover the peculiar role of the church in helping to meet the problems presented by this community.

Appendix B.

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#### 4. Correspondence

The writer has had considerable correspondence with people in Canada, United States and Great Britain who had experience with one or more phases of the problem studied in this thesis. Where a letter has been quoted directly reference is made in a footnote.