

May 18, 1947 - at 2 PM Dr. Phillips will discuss the proposed merger

Nov. 2, 1947 - Merger Study Committee:
Arthur Roberts, chairman
Dr. W. R. Bagley
Mr. A. L. Goodman
Mr. R. E. Page
Mr. J. W. Walker

Nov. 23, 1947 - Pres. McGiffert + Dr. Wilhelm Pauck will discuss proposed merger at P.C. Wed. evening
12/17/47 at 8 p.m.

Dec. 7, 1947

Dec. 14, 1947

Jan. 11, 1948 discussion of Proposed Merger
Tues. eve. Jan. 27 in
Sanctuary at 8. -
Pro: Mrs. P. F. Phillips,
Mrs. Clure
Jessica Page
Against: Mrs. Hunt
Mr. Montague
Theodore C. Goodman

Jan. 18, 1948 - Town Meeting - 8 p.m.
 Thurs. Jan. 24 to discuss
 Proposed merger (see previous
 notice)

Jan. 25, 1948

Feb. 1 - Note of appreciation to panel
 "upwards of 100 persons" braved
 sub zero temperature

March 7, 1948 - Merger Ballot Committee
 appointed by the Board of
 Deacons is: D. M. Bellows, Chmn.
 Mrs. M. H. Tibbetts
 Mrs. B. S. Savin
 R. G. Palmer
 C. D. Stillman
 W. H. Mitchell,
 ex-officio

April 4, 1948 - Total vote of P.C. on
 Proposed Merger was 707.
 For the Merger 176.
 Against the Merger 524.

June 13, 1948 - report on voting by
 C.C. Churches on Basis of Union

	Resol. No. 1	Resolution No. 2
Churches - For	2,576 (65.5%) 1,352	2,818 (73.3%) 781
Members - For	144,321 (63.3%) 83,583	147,680 (76.2%) 46,108
Conferences - For	32 (94.1%)	31 (91.2%)
Against	2	3
Associations - For	152 (80%) 38	163 (94.2%) 10

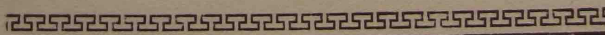
Exec. Comm. - resolution - favorable vote
 has fallen short of a clear mandate -
 advise the Gen'l Council to take no
 definite action at Oberlin

June 19 - Total vote
 of P.C. - as to whether or
 not to enter merged church:
 678 - for 158
 against 506



A STATEMENT
ON
THE UNION

*in the light of
the Action taken
at Oberlin*



A Statement on the Union

IN THE LIGHT OF THE ACTION TAKEN AT OBERLIN

To the Congregational Christian Churches

For the attention of Pastors
and Church Clerks

An extremely interesting situation has arisen, as a result of action at the General Council at Oberlin. The Committee, whose names appear below, has been charged with the duty of laying before all of our churches certain essential facts, and requesting the favorable vote of your church in support of the actions already taken in favor of union with the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

You will recall that as long ago as 1942, official negotiations with this sister church began, and finally culminated in a "Basis of Union," bearing date of January 22, 1947. A copy of this document is available on request.

You will recall also that it was stated in the "Procedures" preliminary to the Basis of Union, page 3, that our Commission on Interchurch Relations and Christian Unity recommended to the General Council that the latter vote approval of the Union if 75% of the Conferences voting, of the Associations voting, of the Churches voting, and of the Members voting, should approve the Basis of Union.

When the Oberlin General Council convened, it received the report from the Judges of Voting, showing the following percentages of approval of the Basis of Union:

By the Conferences voting.....	94.1%
By the Associations voting.....	80.0%
By the Churches voting.....	65.5%
By the Members voting.....	63.3%

No hard and fast formula to determine what would be a final affirmative vote was ever established by either the General Council, its Execu-

tive Committee, or any subordinate body. It appeared to the Council, however, that many churches had drawn the conclusion that a 75% affirmative vote, in each of the above categories, was a pre-requisite to full approval.

Two other significant facts are submitted:

(1) That there was a companion ballot, to the one submitted to the churches, which asked the question, in effect, whether the persons, Churches, Associations and Conferences voting would, in the event of Union, co-operate with that action, even if their vote on the first ballot was in opposition to the Union. On this second ballot, favoring such co-operation, the results were:

Conferences voting	91.2%
Associations voting	94.2%
Churches voting	78.3%
Members voting	76.2%

While a number of the "no voting" churches refrained from voting on this second resolution nevertheless it is a fair conclusion that of all of those who registered their opinions on the ballots already taken, a majority in excess of 75%, in each classification, favored co-operation with the Plan of Union to the extent that it would involve their willingness to place themselves in a relationship with the proposed new United Church of Christ similar to that they now hold with the fellowship of our churches. This was the purport of the second vote.

(2) Our denomination was the recipient of a remarkable vote of confidence from the Evangelical and Reformed Church, in that while it would come into such a Union with a smaller membership than ours, its General Synod approved the Basis of Union by a vote of 281 to 23, and of its 34 synods throughout the nation, 33 have similarly voted approval.

There have been in the past, genuine doubts among certain of our Congregational Christian Churches as to whether significant Congrega-

tional beliefs, methods and practices would be preserved if we went forward with this Union. Therefore, the General Council has taken the progressive step of debating at length, and adopting certain "Interpretations" of the Basis of Union, which now represent its official explanation to all of our churches, of what the Basis of Union accomplishes. These are set forth in the inset paragraphs Nos. (a) through (h) of the attached "Report of the Commission," and we earnestly suggest that you read and consider them. They are in harmony with the Basis of Union, in our opinion, and leave our individual churches in a position to maintain their work and their standing in the same manner in the proposed new United Church of Christ, as is their status at present.

You will further perceive that from the attached "Report of the Commission," the General Council came to the conclusion that it should, for itself, approve the Basis of Union. This was done with remarkable unanimity; that is, there were only a comparatively small number of scattered votes which dissented, which number we believe would not exceed 30 out of the approximately 1000 delegates of the Council present and voting on June 22, 1948.

In other words, the membership of the Council, which had its diverse opinions on this subject when it convened, by the time of adjournment had reached a place of splendid and substantial unity of feeling that we have it within our power to make a great forward step for the denomination. The largest group which had opposed the union voted formally to disband and to terminate its efforts, feeling that in the adoption of the "Interpretations," it had fairly safeguarded the principles for which it stood.

This Committee knows of no further organized opposition to the Basis of Union, in existence at this time.

It was widely believed at the Council that if the churches which had previously voted "No"

on the Basis of Union and those which had refrained from voting, would be willing to consider the whole question afresh, it would be probable that, in view of the foregoing developments, many churches might now be willing to register their opinion affirmatively; and that this number might be so substantial as to raise the total affirmative vote to 75% and more. Our great hope is to achieve the highest possible degree of unity in thought and action on this vital issue.

Therefore, the undersigned Committee, a considerable number of whose members were formerly in opposition to the Basis of Union, now embarks upon a program to appeal to all of our churches, in the hope that no less than 75% of those which elect to vote, will register approval of the Basis of Union. The Committee sincerely desires that the final steps in the consummation of the Union shall not be taken without a very substantial endorsement by the churches.

We, therefore, solicit your consideration of all these facts and ask:

(1) That the churches which formerly voted against the union again consider the matter in the light of the interpretations. A form of ballot is being enclosed for the use of these churches. Reinforced by the splendid unity demonstrated at Oberlin, it is the hope of this Committee that great numbers of these changed votes will be received.

(2) For those churches which thus far have failed to register any vote upon the subject, the same type of ballot is made available; and the Committee very earnestly urges affirmative action from this group.

(3) Since the means of voting must be open at the same time to every church in the denomination, opportunity is being given to the churches which formerly voted in favor of the union, so that if they care to do so, they may again consider the matter. However, if no action is taken by these "Yes" voting churches, their former vote will be registered as effective at this time.

Each church should proceed according to its own rules of conduct for taking such a ballot, but if a church has not adopted a rule or by-law prescribing a larger percentage, a simple majority vote of the members participating in the voting should govern the result.

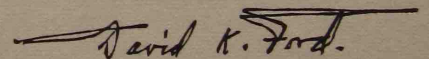
We feel justified in calling to your attention the fact that much of our denominational program, in other fields, is necessarily delayed and retarded until this all-important question is determined. The Council has set for us the date of January 1, 1949, to complete this new approach to the churches; but we sincerely hope that each church, upon receipt of this communication, will set about the business of calling the necessary church meeting to act, and that this action will be completed not later than November, 1948.

The Committee, you will note, has organized, with the Rev. Arthur S. Wheelock as Executive Director. He has been loaned by his church at White Plains, New York, on special duty at the Denomination's headquarters at 287 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. Please address questions or communications to him. Copies of this statement and of other enclosed material are available in quantity upon request. Be assured that each one of the Committee will welcome any communication which may be received, and will endeavor to act thereon to the best of his ability.

We have a great task before us, and only with your help can it be achieved.

Faithfully yours,

COMMITTEE OF FIFTEEN ON THE UNION,



DAVID K. FORD, Chairman

July 26, 1948

COMMITTEE

REV. ALBERT W. PALMER,
Honorary Chairman

REV. FERDINAND Q. BLANCHARD
MISS HELEN KENYON

MR. DAVID K. FORD, *Chairman*

REV. ALFRED GRANT WALTON
Vice Chairman

JUDGE CHARLES B. ADAMS
REV. WALLACE W. ANDERSON
REV. ARTHUR D. GRAY
REV. E. DANIEL HUGHES
REV. ARTHUR CUSHMAN MCGIFFERT
REV. FREDERICK M. MEEK
MRS. CLARENCE L. MURDEY
REV. ALBERT J. PENNER
REV. WALTER SCHLARETZKI
REV. EDWARD A. THOMPSON
MRS. LILLIAN W. TURNBULL
REV. ARTHUR S. WHEELOCK,
Executive Director

Brooklyn, New York - July 1, 1948

A Statement Regarding Oberlin Action on the Merger
by
Alfred Grant Walton

The Oberlin Council has reached a decision. It has approved a plan to unite the Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the United Church of Christ in America. The decision was reached by the democratic process which is characteristic of our Congregational tradition and in which we all earnestly believe. The outcome represents not only a parliamentary decision; it represents a spiritual achievement. It has restored unity to our fellowship and all true unity is a spiritual achievement.

The plan involves the approval of the Basis of Union with certain interpretations which are intended to make more clear the true meaning of the document. These interpretations have been acknowledged by accredited leaders in both groups as the correct meaning of the Basis of Union and they have now been accepted by the General Council as the interpretations on which its actions are based.

A careful analysis of the plan will make clear the following points:

- (a) While the name of the new denomination is to be the United Church of Christ, it is to be distinctly a fellowship of churches.
- (b) No church is asked to give up its own name. Any change of name is completely discretionary on the part of the church itself although many churches may wish to indicate in some way the larger fellowship with which they are associated.
- (c) The autonomy of the local church is acknowledged and it is clearly indicated that there shall be no invasion of the rights now enjoyed by local churches.
- (d) Churches, associations and conferences retain their present status maintaining the same relation to the United Church which they now hold to our own denomination. They do not unite with anyone except by their own volition and with their own consent.
- (e) The plan contemplates a real union of Christians in a deepening fellowship in which all will work together in the ecumenical spirit for a realization of the Christian goals to which all are dedicated.
- (f) While the Council has approved the Basis of Union it has agreed not to implement it until a 75% vote of the churches has been secured, or if this percentage has not been obtained, to proceed to implementation only after a definite percentage, to be determined later by the Council, is deemed sufficient.
- (g) At least three persons who have been known to be definitely critical of the Basis of Union have been put on the Commission of Interchurch Relations and Christian Unity thus giving minority opinion due recognition.
- (h) The plan carries a pattern which may open the way for an even larger expansion of the United Church and calls upon the Commission to be alert to such possibilities.

No one need have any fears regarding these proposals. They will be fully recognized and respected. The members of the Evangelical and Reformed Church are devout Christian people and have a definite contribution to bring to our new fellowship. In some respects they are more democratic than we are.

We have found a way that we can go forward unitedly. It may offer us less than we had hoped; it can realize for us more than we have ever expected. We are still a united fellowship and will continue to be one.

As one who has opposed the Basis of Union, my objections are now withdrawn. It is my judgment that "no" voting churches may very properly reverse their decisions and churches that have not yet voted should support the present proposals. The will of the majority has a right to prevail. A desire is greater than a difference; a purpose is more important than a prejudice. Let us secure not only the 75% approval of the churches but an even higher percentage that we may come into the United Church with full strength and let us make this action the first step toward even greater achievements in days that are to come.

Alfred Grant Walton

Report of the Commission

On Interchurch Relations and Christian Unity

WHEREAS, the Congregational Christian Churches have been traditionally in favor of Church union and by a substantial majority favor at this time union with the Evangelical and Reformed church;

WHEREAS, the Council has now before it the Basis of Union dated January 22, 1947,

BE IT RESOLVED that this General Council understands this Basis of Union as a plan to achieve union on the following basis:

(a) The Basis of Union calls for a union of the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

(b) The constitution for the United Church of Christ provided for in Article IV-A of the Basis of Union: (1) will not come into force until it has been ratified by two-thirds of our churches voting; (2) is to be based on the principles set forth in the Basis of Union; (3) is in no wise to abridge the rights now enjoyed by the churches; (4) will define and regulate as regards the General Synod but describe the free and voluntary relationships which the churches, associations, and conferences shall sustain with the General Synod and with each other.

(c) The Basis of Union calls for a union of the Boards of Home Missions, the Boards of Foreign Missions, the Annuity Boards, the Councils for Social Action, and similarly all related Boards, commissions, agencies, and instrumentalities of the two denominations.

(d) Churches, associations, conferences and the General Synod, being self-governing fellowships, possess autonomy in their own spheres, which autonomy is acknowledged and will be respected.

(e) Synods, conferences, associations and churches are to retain their present status until they are united by their own action and when mutually agreeable.

(f) Congregational Christian churches do not go out of existence at the time of the union of the two communions. In consummating this union the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church are uniting without break in their respective historic continuities.

(g) The United Church of Christ will be a union of two denominations joined in fellowship

and cooperation without involving any invasion of the rights now enjoyed by local churches or congregations.

(h) With the constituting of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches will remain in existence in order to fulfil necessary legal functions, but shall transfer to the General Synod all of its functions which do not for legal reasons need to be retained.

WHEREAS, the Basis of Union provides under Article X that the Basis of Union shall be approved by the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches "according to its own polity" and

WHEREAS, according to the polity of the Congregational Christian Churches the General Council is competent to approve the Basis of Union solely for itself;

BE IT RESOLVED that this General Council accepts the above interpretations as the basis on which our future action shall be taken, these interpretations being in harmony with the spirit and purposes of the Basis of Union.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Council approves the Basis of Union.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council makes the following provisions for the future implementation of the Basis of Union:

(1) That the Commission on Interchurch Relations and Christian Unity for the next biennium be enlarged by the addition of at least three persons, elected by this General Council, who shall represent points of view which have been critical of the Basis of Union;

(2) That the General Council submit the Basis of Union with the foregoing interpretations to the "no" voting churches and to the churches that have not already voted, that they may register their approval or disapproval of the same, and to the affirmative voting churches to inform them of the action of the General Council, in case these churches may wish to express themselves again.

(3) That when sufficient votes of approval have been added to the affirmative votes already secured to register 75 per cent of the churches voting, the Executive Committee be empowered, in consultation with the Evangelical and Reformed Church officials, to pro-

ceed to take necessary steps to consummate the Union; but if in the judgment of the Executive Committee it appears necessary to do so, it shall call a meeting of the General Council to take steps to consummate the Union.

(4) In the event of the failure to secure the recommended 75 per cent before January 1, 1949, the General Council, at a special meeting, shall determine whether the percentage secured is sufficient to warrant the consummation of the union.

(5) In order to be ready for the first meeting of the General Synod this General Council instructs its Executive Committee to assign to each Conference quotas for approximately three hundred delegates, who are hereby authorized to represent this Council at a joint meeting which shall constitute the first meeting of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

(6) That the Executive Committee is instructed to devise ways and means of supplementing the mileage pool so that the delegates will be under no greater expense in attending the adjourned meeting than would be the case for a regular meeting of the Council.

BE IT RESOLVED, that we earnestly request the Commission on Interchurch Relations and Christian Unity to bear in mind this Council's desire for larger union with other denominations, which was expressed in the spirit of the resolution presented and adopted at the Grinnell meeting of the General Council; and also to consider all practical measures for achieving a larger union within Protestantism—thus implementing the motto suggested by our Moderator, "Not frustration, not retreat, but progress toward unity."

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee is requested to promote the securing of the recommended 75 per cent vote by immediately appointing a committee to do this, and by providing this committee with necessary funds for the prosecution of the task.

Adopted by the General Council
Oberlin, Ohio, June 22, 1948.

A True Copy

Frederick L. Fagley
Scribe of the Council

Ferdinand Q. Blanchard
Chairman

Douglas Horton, Secretary

June 22, 1948

Mrs. Oscar Mitchell,
2516 East 5th St
Please return. March 1948

THE EVANSTON MEETING

We reject the present Basis of Union

It is a defective instrument for accomplishing
its purposes of organic union

We believe the kind of union it proposes is
short-sighted and ill-timed

We hold that the genius of Congregationalism
calls for a federative rather than an
organic union of churches

(Detailed Findings—Pages 3—15)

190 members of our Congregational Christian Churches from
twenty-seven states, having grave questions concerning the proposed
merger of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical
and Reformed Church, met at the First Congregational Church of
Evanston, Illinois, November 4 and 5, 1947.

Their deliberations are presented in the following findings which
were unanimously adopted at this meeting.

Copies five cents Each; three cents in lots of fifty or more.

The Evanston Meeting voted that there should be a Continuing Committee of ministers and laymen. This committee will continue the work of the Evanston Meeting as long as the proposed merger on the present Basis of Union is before our churches for decision. This committee will provide leadership and counsel, and act in behalf of those who in the name of Christ oppose the merger in its present form.

The Continuing Committee may be addressed as follows: The Evanston Meeting, Room 1302, 19 South LaSalle Street, Chicago 3, Illinois.

The Evanston Meeting elected a Budget Committee consisting of Mr. Allen T. Burns, Mr. Horatio Ford, Rev. Niel E. Hansen—to receive contributions from individuals and churches with which to carry forward the work of the Evanston Meeting.

FINDINGS COMMITTEE: Mr. S. T. Roberts, Chairman, Rev. Hugh Elmer Brown, Mr. Raymond H. Fiero, Mr. Horatio Ford, Mr. Stanley S. Gillam, Rev. Niel E. Hansen, Rev. Charles F. Jacobs, Rev. William A. Keith, Rev. A. C. McGiffert, Jr., Rev. George W. Shepherd, Rev. Max Strang. (For addresses, see page 16).

The Prayer At the Evanston Meeting

— HUGH ELMER BROWN —

Our Great Companion, Who art with us in all the chances and changes of this mortal life, in the incessant flow of our days, in the moral momentum of great causes, and in the everlasting march of thought,

Here in this Church may we feel afresh our divine kinship with Thee and with all men. Here may we rededicate ourselves to the building of an honest and friendly world. Here may we rise above the perspectives of class, church, nation and generation and catch something of the view from Galilee.

Send down Thy light and truth and let them guide us. If our meeting is unworthy, bring it to naught. If our meeting is worthy, give power to its decisions. Correct us where we are wrong. Inspire us where we are right.

Save us from living on a small scale in a great age. Save us from dealing on a small scale with great things. Save us from seriousness over trivial things and from triviality over serious things.

Deliver us from all pettiness, all pride of opinion, all prejudice, all intemperance of statement. Give us the spirit of restraint and judgement, of humility and patience. And may no unbrotherly moods or words mar our deliberations.

Give valor to our dreams of good. Lay across our lives the magnificent imperatives of Jesus. Let none of us forget the giant agony of the world. Help us to play a Christian part in the dreadful drama of our generation.

Amen.

Statement of the Evanston Meeting

(This is a summary. Numbers at the end of sentences refer to longer statements on the following pages.)

WE ARE UNITED in the Evanston Meeting in the conviction that, in view of the fact that the Basis of Union proposes a change from the congregational to the presbyterial polity, organic union with the Evangelical and Reformed Church according to this Basis of Union is undesirable and should not be consummated.

WE BELIEVE the Basis of Union must be accepted or rejected according to its printed word, without reliance upon the oral or written interpretation of anyone. (1)

WE ARE CONVINCED that the Basis of Union, if accepted with its ambiguities, contradictions and omissions, will, among other things, take away the autonomy of the local church. (1, 2, 3)

WE BELIEVE the Executive Committee of the General Council adopted uncongregational procedure for which it had no justification when it agreed to receive the Basis of Union from the Joint Committee; and that it assumed authority it did not possess when it sent the Basis of Union to the churches and set a date on or before which the churches must vote. (4)

WE POINT OUT serious defects concerning the Basis of Union such as the following:

It includes two contradictory methods of calling and accepting resignations of ministers. (5)

Though our time in history demands the largest possible expenditure for Christian work at home and abroad, a large amount of the missionary giving will be used annually for thirty years to fund ministerial annuities. (6)

Though the uniting of the Home and Foreign Mission Societies of the two groups may be legally effected, the legal question remains whether this could be done if some of our churches do not vote or vote "No". (7)

The uniting of the societies of the two groups will not increase Christian service or giving. It will bring heavy, time-consuming tasks in this grave hour in the world when the present vital force of all our national societies should be used to the utmost in Christian service rather than in organizational rearrangements. (8)

There will be very little consolidation of local churches of the two groups in any given community because of cultural, geographical and other differences. (9)

Legal difficulties exist in the proposed merger which need to be explored professionally by all churches inclined to vote favorably. (10)

A comparative financial statement of assets and liabilities of the two groups has never been published. (11)

WE BELIEVE it essential that a constitution and by-laws and a statement of faith, if we are in favor of either or both, be presented to our churches *before* a final vote is taken on the Basis of Union, if the proposed United Church and General Synod need anything more than the minimum constitution of our General Council. (12)

WE RECOMMEND the following to churches before they vote on the Basis of Union:

That they postpone voting until adequate opportunities have been given their members to study the reasons for and the reasons against the merger. (13)

That full recognition be given the right of Christian people to differ or dissent without penalty. (13)

That ministers and laymen, before voting, consider with wisdom the wider interests and possibilities under our present fellowship. (14)

That the Executive Committee of the General Council arrange for adequate education concerning the proposed merger for the members of our churches, and take responsibility for eliminating one-sided official propaganda for and promotion of the merger. (15)

That churches in voting on the proposed merger use the secret ballot. (16)

WE BELIEVE a person who opposes the merger as proposed in this Basis of Union cannot justly be understood to be opposing church unity. (16)

WE REPORT without prejudice a proposal acceptable to many in the Evanston Meeting that churches voting "No" on the proposed merger and those which refrain from voting should indicate their right and purpose to continue as Congregational Christian Churches and to seek fellowship with like-minded

Congregational Christian Churches if the United Church of Christ is formed according to the Basis of Union. (17)

WE ASK our young people to realize that the proposed merger, if voted, will take from them their inheritance of a place among the free churches, and deprive them of a position of leadership in bringing about and working out in their generation a new formation of American Protestantism—the federative union of many denominations. (18)

WE BELIEVE a "No" vote on the proposed merger will maintain for our churches the opportunity to help bring into existence a new pattern of federative union among many denominations. We believe this pattern to be of vastly greater importance for American Protestantism and the life of the World Council of Churches than the organic union of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. (19)

WE ARE UNITED in the Evanston Meeting in the hope and prayer that our fellowship of churches, beginning with the meeting of the General Council at Oberlin in 1948, will seek the guidance of Almighty God to lead us in ways wherein we may help bring into existence the federative union of many denominations. This is the time in church history when American Protestantism should form new bonds of fellowship for more cooperative Christian work to advance the Christian life of our country and forward the Kingdom of God in all the world.

Complete Statement of the Evanston Meeting

1. Interpretations of the Basis of Union

We have noted many different oral and written interpretations of the Basis of Union. Dr. Frank M. Sheldon, Chairman of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations and Christian Unity when the merger was first considered, and who has been a member of the Committee which developed the Basis of Union, attended the Evanston Meeting at our invitation. He gave an address and was accorded full privileges of speaking throughout the Evanston Meeting, as were others who wished to speak in behalf of the merger.

We also had available the answers to eighty-four questions given in writing by Dr. Douglas Horton. As we listened to their statements, we concluded that we can accept personal clarifications and interpretations only when they have been incorporated into a revised Basis of Union.

The various interpretations are sincerely given. We know that those who in an official capacity have helped to write the Basis of Union have certain individual insights and understandings that may be important. However, we see ambiguities, contradictions and omissions in the Basis of Union, and the personal interpretation of any Congregational Christian official cannot be accepted without the express approval of the Evangelical and Reformed officials.

We believe the Basis of Union constitutes a threat to the autonomous way of our Congregational Christian Churches. In our deliberations we have had to do exactly as churches must do. We have ignored all private and personal interpretations and have based our conclusions, so far as possible, on the printed words of the Basis of Union.

We believe that a vote in favor of the Basis of Union according to oral or written interpretation could result in our yielding the autonomous formation of our Congregational Christian Churches and in a short time finding that our churches have been moved from their place as a fellowship of churches into a centrally organized denomination. If this should happen, the only recourse of our churches after the merger is voted would be to create a minority group of churches using the congregational way within the United Church, or to seek fellowship outside the United Church. We know there is the thought in the minds of some that, if the merger is voted, those of the former Congregational Christian Churches will strive to make the United Church congregational. It is reported

that some Evangelical and Reformed people, if the Basis of Union is voted, will strive to make the United Church centrally organized and presbyterial. We are convinced that the Congregational Christian people have certain concepts in mind when they consider the Basis of Union and the Evangelical and Reformed people have different concepts. We believe that to the people of the two groups the language of the Basis of Union means different things.

Personal interpretations of the Basis of Union; the dangers that are within it because of its ambiguities; the opportunities that are afforded those of either group to develop the United Church into a presbyterial or congregational form with consequent tension and strife; and the widely different opinions of many as to what the United Church will be like, all bring us solidly to the conclusion that the Basis of Union must be considered inadequate and must be rejected by those who rely on its printed and official word.

2. Ambiguities, Etc., in the Basis of Union

We point out that the Basis of Union contains many ambiguities, contradictions and omissions. Some of these matters have to do with fundamental differences in the theory and practice of church life as differently conceived by the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The final interpretations of these differences will not depend upon the words themselves but upon the habits of thought and the presuppositions that color the minds of the two groups. In due time interpretative decisions will have to come out of the silent background of the thought and experience of the two groups. Particularly will these conflicts arise in building a constitution. We foresee untold difficulties in reaching common agreements. Unless and until such common agreements are reached, the United Church would become a handicap to itself, to the cause of cooperative Protestantism, and to the world we are called upon to serve.

3. The Basis of Union if Accepted Will Take Away the Autonomy of the Local Church

We call attention to the fact that the provision in the Basis of Union for the autonomy of the local church (Article III, F, H, I) is actually rendered meaningless by other provisions of the document.

How can it be said that the freedom and autonomy of the local church are maintained when a Congregational Christian Church which does not vote on this merger or which votes negatively is cut off from the fellowship of which it has been a part, and with which

it has cooperated according to the usage of the Congregational Christian Churches? Its autonomy is interfered with when it is deprived of any of its present rights as a local church and its present relationships with its association, conference, the General Council and the various Societies of our churches which it has helped create. How can it be said that the freedom and autonomy of the local church are preserved when some other body assumes authority to determine its ecclesiastical relationships? How can it be said that the freedom and autonomy of the local church are maintained when the Basis of Union proposes to change the character of the local church by incorporating it into an organic, centrally organized denomination? How can it be said that the autonomy of the local church is to be preserved when the local church, according to the Basis of Union, is to be subjected to the terms of a superior constitution; when it must secure approval in the calling, settling and resignation of its ministers or bear the onus of seeming to be abnormal, irregular and uncooperative, and actually treated as a minority group?

We find additional specific ground for urging a negative vote on the present Basis of Union in that it includes Article III-G, setting up a judicial system foreign to our congregational way.

We suggest that churches deciding to vote "Yes" on the Basis of Union attach to their vote an explicit statement as to how they understand their autonomy. According to the Basis of Union their autonomy includes the right without prejudice to make use of the alternate way of calling and ordaining ministers. It includes the right of declining to vote on ratification of the constitution or on approval of the statement of faith. They should further declare that they understand that churches declining to vote on constitution or creed will nevertheless retain full standing in the United Church.

4. Centralizing Tendencies

We view with dismay and alarm the tendency on the part of Congregational leaders (perhaps quite unconsciously) to take to themselves the kind of power that rightly belongs only to officials in a presbyterial system. We foresee in a merger with the Evangelical and Reformed Church, where such procedures are normal, that this tendency toward centralization of control will be disastrously increased, to the detriment of our congregational freedoms.

By way of illustration, the Joint Committee which was appointed by the General Council did not report directly to the General Council but to the Executive Committee. While such procedure may be legal, according to the constitution of the General Council, we hold

that in a case of such grave import as the proposed merger, the Executive Committee should have declined to take the responsibility of receiving the report and sending it to the churches for voting, but should have referred it to the General Council. If this had been done, there would have been no need for such a gathering as the Evanston Meeting.

We believe that the Basis of Union should have been first submitted to the General Council which ordered it, so that a representative assembly gathered from all parts of the country could consider the document in full detail, make any desired changes in it and only then, if satisfied with it, submit it to the churches for a vote.

5. Ministers in the United Church and the Autonomy of the Local Church

We call attention to the fact that the Basis of Union provides two alternative ways of ordaining, calling and placing ministers (Article VI A, C). We believe two ways had to be proposed because it proved impossible to effect a compromise between contradictions. One of these ways is that commonly used by Congregationists. The other is the presbyterial way of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The Basis of Union declares that in the United Church the standard way shall be the presbyterial way of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The Congregational way is permitted, but the United Church will appeal to congregations and ministers to adopt the presbyterial way. Such an appeal seems to imply the use of a subtle kind of pressure upon churches and ministers who do not conform to the preferred presbyterial system.

This provision of the Basis of Union threatens to destroy the Congregational conception of the minister as a layman elected by the churches to the office of minister. The standard way recommended in the Basis of Union of calling a minister nullifies the place of a local church as a completely autonomous part of a fellowship of churches.

6. Funding Ministerial Annuities from Missionary Giving

We call attention to the provision in the Basis of Union according to which money will be set aside from missionary giving to fund ministerial annuities (Article VIII-G 6, 7). This sum has been estimated at various times as from \$132,000 to \$500,000 annually. This amount will be withdrawn annually for about thirty years from the missionary money of the two denominations. We strongly sup-

port ministerial annuities. We recognize that in the long run the proposed plan will save money. But we believe the critical issues and urgent problems confronting the world and the churches in the immediate present are too grave to justify our subtracting this sum yearly from the apportionment. We dare not weaken the work of missions at home and abroad, and the work of education and social action, by decreasing their shares in the missionary giving of our people.

7. Merger of Home and Foreign Missionary Boards and Other Agencies of the Two Groups

We question whether any benefits are to be secured from the organic union of the respective Foreign Missionary Boards, Home Boards and other national agencies, as proposed in the Basis of Union, even though legal and other difficulties of adjustment may not make such organic merger impossible (Article VIII). We see no reason to believe that such merger will make for progress in programs, service and the securing of increased giving. We understand that the uncompleted mergers of certain Evangelical Boards and Reformed Boards present difficulties and doubtful financial pictures which have not been revealed to our members.

8. An Ill Timed Move

If the Merger goes through, we shall have to divert much of our energy and leadership to the task of working at the multiple adjustments necessary to crown the merger with success. Hitherto the merger negotiations have withdrawn from the main tasks of Christian service a relatively small number of our people; mostly, until very recently, the members of the Joint Commission. But, if the Merger should be consummated, every individual Church, Association, State Conference, and the General Council, as well as our several Boards, will have to spend a vast amount of time and energy working out the big and little problems involved in integrating the new denomination into a functioning unity, intermeshing of denominational machinery, preparing an acceptable constitution and creed, etc. This time and energy will have to be taken away at a crucial time from the main tasks which confront our churches in these critical days,—namely to present the Christian faith and way to those who know not Christ, to steady the nerve of faith in those who call themselves Christian, and to increase the cooperative action of American Protestantism at home and abroad. Congregationalism's strategic leadership lies in the wider, not the narrow, horizon.

9. Voting For the Merger Will Not Mean Fewer Local Churches

The proposed merger of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church will not result, except in a few isolated instances, in the merger of local churches of the two orders, since the patterns of distribution of the two groups are diverse. Then too, there are cultural differences in some communities where there is now a local Congregational Christian and a local Evangelical and Reformed Church, making their merger difficult. Therefore there will be no appreciable gain through the uniting of two weak local churches to form a strong unit, nor any material decrease in the total number of churches in a community.

10. Legal Considerations To Be Examined Before Voting

We call upon individual churches and conferences, before voting, to examine their charters to determine whether, as in some instances appears to be the case, there may be legal obstacles to an affirmative vote; and to make sure that an affirmative vote will not jeopardize trust funds and property interests, and even the retention of the charter itself.

We point out that a vote in favor of the merger is a consent to a contract which may give up essential rights long held by individual Congregational Christian Churches and cause legal reversions of titles. The extent of this loss of rights is a question dependent upon varying interpretations of ambiguous phrases in the Basis of Union. We strongly recommend that, before waiving its rights, each church safeguard itself with competent legal advice.

As an example, a church voting favorably on the Basis of Union might be interpreted as accepting an invitation to leave the fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches and join with another and different body of churches, thereby ceasing to be an independent Congregational Christian Church. The members of such a church who voted favorably on the Basis of Union might be declared to have seceded from the membership of that Congregational Christian Church and joined with another body. It is a question also as to whether any number of Congregational Christian Churches voting favorably on the merger can in any way decide that Congregational Christian Churches which vote "No" on the Basis of Union shall become other than what they are now.

11. The Need of a Comparative Financial Statement of the Two Groups

We call upon the Finance Committee of the General Council to provide a condensed comparative statement of the assets and projected annual commitments of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches, according to the instructions given it at the meeting of the Executive Committee at Cleveland in January, 1947. Large corporate interests are involved in the proposed merger. Our constituency should have at its disposal this basic information before being required to pass judgment upon the merger.

12. We Ask for a Constitution and By-Laws and the Statement of Faith Before Voting

We observe that many provisions of the Basis of Union can be given widely different interpretations. There are several important questions with which the Basis of Union does not deal at all. Thus there is no way for us to know what actually will be the principles and procedures of the United Church.

We call, therefore, upon a Church that desires a constitution which will settle these matters, to insist that a specific constitution and major by-laws be worked out before it votes favorably on the merger. This constitution should include definite statements upon procedures and practices on fundamental issues about which the Basis of Union is either ambiguous or silent (Article IV, A).

We also call for a statement from the Joint Committee to explain why any over-all constitution is actually needed. Congregational Churches have managed for well over three hundred years to get along without an over-all constitution. Such constitutions as we have are limited to specific bodies and agencies within our fellowship. That is why Congregationalism has had singularly little appeal to the legalistic mind, which finds a happy hunting ground in constitutionally minded denominations. We call for the maintenance of our freedom from the standardizations, authoritarianism, and rigidities which a constitution tends to impose.

We make the same request for a Statement of Faith at this time, which the churches may have before them prior to a vote on the Basis of Union.

13. Adequate Study Should Be a Requirement for Voting On the Basis of Union

We call upon every Church, Association and Conference not to vote until it has examined both sides of the merger. The subject matter of this study should be, first of all, a historical study of Congregationalism, and upon that background, the Basis of Union itself, so that it may be intelligently understood. The second subject should be a consideration of the fundamental issues involved in the proposed shift from a Congregational fellowship of churches to a more centrally organized and controlled church, such as the Basis of Union proposes. Attention should also be given to the meaning and function of Congregationalism as it now exists and its importance for the future. (We recommend "An Adventure in Liberty", Pilgrim Press, 10 cents.)

These study meetings should not be testimonial meetings in general glorification of Christian unity. We all take Christian unity for granted. They should be meetings devoted to the analysis of the document and to an understanding of the alternative and mutually exclusive theories of the church on which we must cast our vote. If we propose to move over toward a presbyterial theory of the church, we should do so understanding fully what we are doing.

Full recognition should be given to the right of Christians to differ, which is part of the genius of the Congregational Christian fellowship.

14. The Wider Interests and Possibilities of the Congregational Christian Churches

We call upon each minister and layman to consider before voting not only his particular interest and geographical situation, but also the long Congregational heritage of which he is a part by birth or adoption, and the importance of a fellowship of autonomous churches in the wider interests of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

15. Education Instead of Propaganda and Promotion

We call upon the Executive Committee and the various Boards and agencies, including publications, of our fellowship to recognize that their function is not to promote the merger but to inform the constituency, both adult and youth, about the nature of the fundamental issues involved and what can be said on both sides. We believe their task should be that of education, not propaganda.

16. Recommend Use of the Secret Ballot, Etc.

We recommend that every vote be taken by secret ballot.

We recommend a vote of "No" against the merger by those churches which believe our considerations in the Evanston Meeting regarding the Basis of Union and the values of Congregationalism for our Protestant faith are valid.

We recommend a vote of "No" against the merger unless a person feels confident the merger will not destroy or weaken vital services Congregationalism can render to the Christian cause and to American democracy at this time.

We recommend a vote of "No" against the merger unless a person believes we are justified in the present world crisis, in spending the time and energy on the innumerable problems of mutual adjustment which the merger will lay heavily upon us all.

We point out that a vote of "No" against the merger in its present form is not a vote against church unity, nor even against merger with the Evangelical and Reformed Church on terms that more adequately safeguard the service Congregationalism can render to the Protestant faith and way in these tragic times and in the long years ahead.

17. For Attention of Churches Not Voting or Voting "No" On the Basis of Union

We call attention to a proposal made on the floor of the Evanston Meeting, that churches, in voting, use another ballot than that submitted by the Executive Committee, as follows:

- 1) Resolved that the Church (Association, Conference) finds the Basis of Union unsatisfactory in its present form and, therefore, rejects the merger proposed in said Basis of Union.
- 2) Resolved that the Church (Association, Conference) having voted to reject the merger, proposes to continue as a Congregational Church (Association, Conference) in fellowship with all like-minded Congregational Christian Churches, Associations and Conferences, to the end that the historic General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Boards and agencies which have been created by the Congregational Christian Churches, may be maintained and continued.

18. Our Youth and the Merger

We express our concern for the youth of our churches to whom the leadership of our fellowship will pass in a few years. We believe this proposed merger is contrary to the trend of the creative Christian life of our time. Our fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches as now constituted has the great opportunity of effective leadership to bring into existence the federative union of many denominations. We believe such federative union can transform the life of our nation and the world if vigorously sought under able leadership. We pray that the young people of our churches in the years to come may be a part of that leadership in cooperative Protestantism that will develop stronger local churches, a united American Protestantism and full cooperation with the World Council of Churches.

19. We Desire Federative Union With Many Denominations

We call for strong leadership on the part of the Congregational Christian Churches, in which we hope the Evangelical and Reformed Church will share, to explore and vigorously promote ways and means of bringing about a federative union of Protestantism. Congregationalists can appropriately take the lead here for our Congregational Christian fellowship is in itself a federation of churches.

We heartily approve the revolutionary move the General Council has already made along this line by inviting other denominations which accord one another mutual recognition of ministries and sacraments to participate in a plenary conference to consider the possibilities of closer unity.

We call upon our churches to put their strength behind this movement, in even greater force and vigor than has been devoted to the merger. We urge that our leaders in this enterprise be instructed to accept as their task the achievement of unity according to the federative rather than the organic principle.

We call upon our churches to lift their eyes away from secondary matters and see this wide and hopeful horizon: a federative union in which many denominations will have a part. Its federative structure will express the fellowship and catholic unity of Protestantism and conserve the rich and diverse treasures of the bodies constituting it. Such unity can become a more adequate instrument in the Hand of God for the bringing in of His Kingdom.

Such a federative union will indeed deserve the magnificent name of the United Churches of Christ in America.

Findings Committee of the Evanston Meeting

Mr. S. T. Roberts, Chairman, 4916 Cottage Street, Philadelphia 24, Pa.
Rev. Hugh Elmer Brown, 1820 Asbury Avenue, Evanston, Ill.
Mr. Raymond H. Fiero, 32 Court Street, Brooklyn 2, N. Y.
Mr. Horatio Ford, The Williamson Building, Cleveland 14, Ohio
Mr. Stanley S. Gillam, 632-636 Builders Exchange Building,
Minneapolis 2, Minn.
Rev. Niel E. Hansen, 19 South LaSalle Street, Chicago 3, Ill.
Rev. Charles F. Jacobs, 312 Home Park Boulevard, Waterloo, Iowa
Rev. William A. Keith, 709 Edgemoor Avenue, Kalamazoo, Mich.
Rev. A. C. McGiffert, Jr., 5757 University Avenue, Chicago 37, Ill.
Rev. George W. Shepherd, 85 Grand Avenue, W., Highland Park, Mich.
Rev. Max Strang, 74 S. Grandview Avenue, Dubuque, Iowa

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1948

Pulpit and Office:

Salary Pastor.....	\$6,600.00	
Salary Church Office.....	2,100.00	
Salary Assistant Treasurer.....	360.00	
Office Supplies.....	200.00	
Postage and Printing.....	2,000.00	
Pulpit Supply.....	400.00	
Pastor's Contingent Fund.....	200.00	\$11,860.00

Religious Education:

Salary Director.....	2,400.00	
Church School Budget.....	600.00	3,000.00

Music:

Choir and Director.....	3,000.00	
Junior Choir.....	800.00	
Choir Robes.....	500.00	4,300.00

Benevolences:

Missions.....	1,200.00	
War Victim's and Reconstruction.....	1,248.00	
Apportionment.....	2,494.00	
State Projects.....	1,294.00	
	6,236.00	
Short 1946 Benevolences.....	1,350.00	7,586.00

Upkeep of Plant:

Salary Janitor.....	2,100.00	
Supplies Janitor.....	100.00	
Telephones.....	175.00	
Fuel.....	1,600.00	
Power, Light, Water, Gas.....	650.00	
Removal of Ashes and Garbage.....	80.00	
Repairs, Church and Parsonage.....	1,500.00	
Painting Auditorium.....	1,000.00	
Insurance.....	586.00	
Maintenance of Parsonage.....	500.00	8,291.00

Contingent Fund..... 600.00

Association Dues..... 150.00

Endowment Fund..... 1,000.00

TOTAL..... \$36,787.00

Less: Current Plate Collections.....	\$2,500.00	
Easter Collection.....	1,000.00	
Church School Collections.....	500.00	
Women's Assembly.....	900.00	
Rentals.....	250.00	
Back Pledges.....	1,500.00	6,650.00

To Be Raised By Current Pledges..... \$30,137.00

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Twenty-third Avenue East and Fourth Street
Duluth 5, Minnesota

March 8, 1948.

Dear Fellow Members of

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH:

This letter is addressed to each member of Pilgrim Congregational Church, wherever located. It pertains to the proposed merger of the Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Please vote the enclosed ballot and return it promptly to the Ballot Commission at the church office.

The enclosed secret ballot is your opportunity to express your opinion upon the question of the proposed merger.

Your vote must be received on or before 12 o'clock noon, March 27, 1948, to be counted.

Place it in the ballot envelope, following exactly the instructions set forth on the face of that envelope and then enclose the ballot envelope in the return stamped envelope, after having written in your name and address on the outside of the return stamped envelope.

The ballots will be opened, counted and tabulated by the undersigned Ballot Commission, consisting of proponents and opponents of the plan. A report of the result will be made to the members of the Church at the regular Sunday morning service on April 4, 1948.

We urge you to vote as it is hoped that a heavy ballot may be cast.

Respectfully yours,

Ballot Commission,

D. M. Bellows, Chairman,

Ray G. Palmer,

Mrs. B. S. Savin,

C. D. Stillman,

Mrs. M. H. Tibbetts.

Summary Of Reasons For Voting "No" on Present Merger Proposal

1. Loss of "Congregational" name, symbol and source of the best in our own heritage.
2. Change of primary emphasis from local churches to the denomination as a whole.
3. Religious and cultural differences. Creedal emphasis of E. and R. Church. Refusal of its ministers in some areas to mingle with our men. Unwillingness of E. and R. congregations to trust our theological training.
4. Greater emphasis in the United Church upon a uniform statement of faith.
5. Debts of E. and R. Church, which have not been clearly explained to us. The new methods of money-raising which will come with the merger. More pressure on us for money goals set at the top.
6. Breaking fellowship with our own. Strongest opposition to merger is in States where the E. and R. predominates. Forcing merger would impose E. and R. control on our churches there or make them break with our denomination.
7. Idle talk of our "taking over" the E. and R. Under-cover assumption that we will run everything because of our money and numbers. Unworthy attitude and not true.
8. General apathy and failure of our churches to appraise real changes for us in the union. Danger that merger will go through by default. Neither group really happy about the plan. False goal of mere size and numbers.
9. Power of General Synod to change the BASIS OF UNION at will. A blank check.
10. Our loss in freedom as independent churches. Definite provisions that would curtail autonomy of local churches and pave the way for increasing power at the top.
 - a. Law-making General Synod, with power to re-define and limit our rights.
 - b. Master Constitution over all churches, associations, and conferences.
 - c. Removal of authority from churches and associations; greater power for the conferences and General Synod.
 - d. An ascending series of ecclesiastical courts; each church compelled to act as a court upon complaints from any of its members.
 - e. More rigid control over ministers and ordination from higher up.
 - f. Acceptance of the "leadership principle." Assumption that our leaders can decide things for us better than we ourselves. Government by an "aristocracy" of leaders, along lines of presbyterian thought.
11. This merger a step of far-reaching and revolutionary significance, the nature and consequence of which have not so far been fairly presented to the churches or adequately considered by them.
 - a. Sentimental appeals seeking to force a quick, unreasoned decision.
 - b. Holding back of constitution and other details until after vote on merger.
 - c. Refusal to grant hearings and full discussion at last two General Councils.
12. Congregationalists always poor at theory, more sound in practice. This merger may prove a more costly blunder than plan of union with Presbyterians in 1801. Danger that we will accept merger as a beautiful theory, then balk at its actual provisions in practice. Too late then to save our fellowship or trust funds. Better to insist now on details and foresee the practical difficulties.
13. Road to general church union through organic mergers leads to forced and narrow uniformity. Voluntary cooperation through Federation is the permanent answer for Protestants to Christian unity, through freedom and mutual respect.
14. If this merger goes through it will be the last time that our churches vote individually on a union. After this merger the General Synod and Conferences would have power to vote us into other mergers and to make further compromises of our particular heritage until our freedom in religion is gone.

Following Are The Official Resolutions Suggested By Headquarters:

1. "Resolved that this.....* hereby registers its decision upon the proposal to unite the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches into the United Church of Christ, in accordance with the Basis of Union dated Jan. 22, 1947, by the following vote:

Approved

Disapproved

2. "Resolved that in the event of the consummation of the union this.....* hereby undertakes to continue the same relations with the United Church of Christ that it now holds with the fellowship of the Congregational Christian Churches.

Approved

Disapproved

*** Conference, Convention, Association, Church, or Ecclesiastical Society."

WHAT DO THESE OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS ON THE MERGER MEAN?

The official resolutions upon which the churches are asked to vote are printed above. What do these resolutions really mean? Like almost everything else about the proposed merger, they are capable of contradictory interpretations.

1. The first resolution asks us to accept the merger on terms laid down in the BASIS OF UNION. But that document is not clear in itself. It tries to promise that our autonomy will be preserved; but it also sets up a system that infringes upon our autonomy and would curtail it in many ways. These contradictory provisions cannot both stand. What remains, so far as the average church is concerned, is the request that the future General Synod have power to amend the BASIS OF UNION in any way that it wants. This would prove the determining factor. By voting favorably to the BASIS OF UNION, therefore, a church signs over its power of attorney to the future General Synod and grants that body the right to solve all crucial questions as it sees fit.

2. The second resolution, considered in a technical sense sounds like voting with reservations, and as such would contradict the first resolution with its acceptance of the BASIS OF UNION. Unfortunately this second resolution is also capable of an everyday interpretation which is the very opposite of the more technical one. How is a church to know, therefore, what it is voting? Why would a second resolution be necessary if the BASIS OF UNION were a genuinely satisfactory document?

If a church "undertakes to continue the same relations with the United Church of Christ that it now holds with the fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches," this might mean that it would simply continue its support and affiliation. This would include sending in its missionary money and electing delegates for State and National meetings.

But these same words, as quoted above, could be looked upon as voting for the merger with reservations. Some people may think that they are saying, "Yes, we are for the merger provided it does not change our status as independent, autonomous churches." This is what "the same kind of relations" would mean in a more technical sense. Therefore underline this obvious fact: **TO VOTE WITH RESERVATIONS IS TO NULLIFY FULL ACCEPTANCE OF THE BASIS OF UNION.** This idea of voting with reservations would logically require a "No" on the first resolution.

* * * *

Churches that want to GUARANTEE the continuance of our democratic, Congregational way will play safe by voting "No" on both of the above resolutions. Be sure to forward information on your vote to your State Conference office without delay. Any above, and not in the form of substitute motions. If you would favor merger on other terms it is necessary to vote "No" on present proposal before way is cleared for new other resolutions that your church desires to pass should be in addition to its vote on the approach. See other side of this sheet for summary of reasons against present proposal.

HOW YOUR MINISTER FEELS CONCERNING THE PROPOSED MERGER

Even a minister is sometimes converted! Last week I had a complete change of mind with regard to the Merger. I was among 350 ministers and lay leaders of our denomination who attended the Mid-Winter meeting of our Missions Council.

I went to Grand Rapids mildly opposed to the Merger. I returned home strongly in favor of it. Let me try to summarize some of the factors influencing this change. This I do, not in an attempt to coerce anyone to think as I do, but because my parishioners have asked, "How do you as a minister feel about the Merger?"

MY PREVIOUS OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

During the several years this issue has been discussed I have not been enthusiastic, because the Merger has seemed to me to be a forced rather than a natural development. That is, I never had heard of the E & R Church before this discussion started. Why should we, an historic group going back to the time of the Mayflower, lose our identity by uniting with a minor body?

I now learn, however, that the E & R's are a people whose historic record in this country has contributed as much to religious liberty as has ours. The Reformed wing settled in Pennsylvania at the time of William Penn. The Evangelical wing immigrated into Missouri around 1825. These people were the deciding factor which kept several border states in the Union during the Civil War. Their heritage was one of freedom rather than slavery. It is always sobering to learn that there are many people in the world one has never met with whom he might well be proud to be associated!

My opposition rested in part upon the feeling that it would be better strategy to get some other groups to come in on the Merger also, and make a truly "United Church". Our proposed plan seemed inconsequential in relation to the bigger problem of Christian unity. After all, there are eight million Methodists, six million Baptists, three million Presbyterians. For one million Congregationalists and seven hundred thousand E & R's to speak of forming "The United Church of Christ" seemed as presumptuous as it would be for Greenland and Czechoslovakia together to organize a "United World Government".

However, I realize now that our Merger is crucial at this very point. The other liberal groups are looking toward us. Ours is a test case. If we can merge, there are several other groups who will come in quickly. If we reject the plan, the cause of Christian unity will be set back twenty-five years. People will say that though churchmen "talk" about unity, they let selfish partisan interests stand in the way of effective action. We have the opportunity to form a United Church whose doors will stand open to receive other like-minded communions.

Finally, my previous opposition rested in large measure upon my pride as a Congregationalist. I was born one, and I expect to die one. I believe completely in the liberty and freedom for which we stand. Religion has been at its best when the Congregational way has prevailed. America has been at its greatest when our emphasis upon the liberty of the individual has been stressed.

But pride is unworthy if blind. It is self-defeating if it stands in the way of true progress.

WHAT CONGREGATIONALISM MEANS

I now believe that we shall not lose Congregationalism in this Merger, but will in fact strengthen the very treasure we have. If we will stop to analyze what we mean by Congregationalism; we shall discover that it has three emphases, none of which will be lost.

In the first place, it is a name. We are proud of it. We do not want to give it up. And we do not have to. Every local parish may retain its present name, adding that it is a part of the United Church of Christ. Let us remember that the E & R people have names that they, too, love dearly. Each of us shall retain its own. We shall be "The First Reformed Church of Lancaster", "The First Church of Christ in New Haven", or "Plymouth Congregational Church"; but we will be knit together in the larger fellowship of "The United Church of Christ". If anyone asks me, "To what church do you belong?" I can reply after the Merger, "I am a Congregationalist, and you know, I hope, that we stand for Christian unity and are a part of the United Church of Christ".

The second thing which Congregationalism means is the independence of the local church as being a fellowship of believers similar to the fellowship of the disciples, free from outside ecclesiastical control. We believe that this is the New Testament pattern for Christ's church, and we should like to have every parish in Christendom organized on this simple, democratic, free basis. The Merger gives us our greatest opportunity to strengthen this free church movement. The polity of the United Church is to be clearly Congregational.

A third thing for which Congregationalism stands is liberalism in theological thought. We would not want to impair that. And we shall not. There are, of course, varying shades of opinion among the E & R group even as there are among our fellowship; but their major emphasis is liberal in the same way that ours is. The new church will grant the same freedom to differ which we now grant.

Some of my best friends in Plymouth Church will not agree with what I have just written. They are opposed to the Merger. They do not believe that the proposed United Church as set forth in the Basis of Union will actually be Congregational in polity. We differ in interpretation of this document. It seems perfectly clear to me, for example, that Congregationalists will not lose their name, but some of my friends feel equally certain that we will.

I know personally our national leaders who have framed and who advocate this Basis of Union. They in turn know the E & R leaders with whom they have worked. I trust their integrity when they reiterate that their purpose has been to write a document that preserves the Congregational way. We must remember that we are being led by Christian gentlemen whose word is worth something. Furthermore, there are lawyers, such as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Connecticut, who say that the Basis of Union does fully protect Congregationalism.

Yet I have full respect for the rights and opinions of my friends who disagree. It is up to each person who votes to read the Basis of Union and reach his own conclusion. I am perfectly willing to abide by whatever decision the majority of you register. Whichever way we vote, the independence and rights of our local church will be unaffected. The General Council has no authority over us, and we can later decide whether or not we want to join the Merged Church.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS CAN DISAGREE

You know that one note persistently reiterated in my preaching is that Christian friends can disagree on specific issues without affecting either their personal friendship or basic loyalties. I know that there are differences of opinion within our fellowship concerning the Merger; but I am equally confident that we shall discuss the issues in good spirit and mutual respect, knowing that each person is trying only to lead Plymouth Church into its most effective witness of Christ's kingdom.

This is His Church, and we are His servants and fellow-workers.

HOWARD CONN

Duluth, Minnesota.
March 16th, 1948.

TO THE MEMBERS OF PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF DULUTH:

The undersigned members of Pilgrim Congregational Church of Duluth, representing a larger group of like-minded members, support with enthusiasm the proposal for the merger of The Congregational Christian Churches with The Evangelical and Reformed Church on the terms outlined in the Basis of Union heretofore submitted to you.

We believe the conditions of our time call for unity of action on broad religious and social problems rather than for diversity of doctrinal opinion and unless we are ready to meet those problems, we run the risk of losing our purpose for existence as a church. We also believe The Congregational Christian Church has made and is presently making a notable contribution to the religious life of this Country, first in the idea of democratic action and individual responsibility and secondly, in affording a present-day religious medium for the person of independent mind and habits. We cannot see that the principles upon which the Congregational Church was founded and has consistently acted will be prejudiced by the proposed Basis of Union and on the contrary, having entire confidence in the integrity of the leaders of the great churches who are parties to the proposed merger, we believe they will be carried forward into a larger field without disadvantage to the membership of The Congregational Christian Church or the individual churches in that body as now constituted.

Enclosed for your consideration is a copy of the statement of Rev. Howard Conn, the Pastor of our neighboring Plymouth Church at Minneapolis, stating why he believes the proposed merger should be accepted. We urge your vote in support of the merger in the plebiscite now being taken among the members of Pilgrim Congregational Church.

Respectfully submitted,

ARTHUR ROBERTS
MRS. MARK TIBBETTS
MRS. EDWARD C. CONGDON
MR. and MRS. RICHARD W. NORTHUP
MRS. T. F. PHILLIPS
MR. and MRS. A. C. OTT
MRS. WILLIAM VAN EVERA
ARTHUR M. CLURE
MR. and MRS. W. D. AVERY
MR. and MRS. JARL W. HANSON

MEMORANDUM ON THE "BASIS OF UNION"

I. The Question now presented.

It is essential to keep in mind the precise question upon which the churches are asked to express themselves. That question is not whether church unity is a thing to be desired. It is not whether we ought to aim at a closer coordination of Protestant energies, at a higher degree of federation and cooperation, at the avoidance of duplications, at the elimination of rivalries, etc. All these ends, it may readily be agreed, ought to be pursued most earnestly. This, however, has little to do with the immediate issue, which is whether this particular scheme, if adopted at this particular time and under these particular circumstances, is calculated to attain them. Because the purpose is commendable, it does not follow that any particular scheme is a good one. History is full of tragedies resulting from attempts to do the right thing in the wrong way. Hence there is every reason for subjecting the present proposal to close scrutiny before adopting it.

It cannot be too strongly insisted that a highly articulated scheme of this kind ought to receive the same penetrating and unimpassioned examination that would be given, for example, to a scheme for a consolidation of railroad companies. If an emotional urge should be allowed to cause such a thorough analysis to be omitted, the result might well be as disastrous as it might be if a church should, let us say, allow itself to be swept by an eloquent sermon into buying a piece of real estate without first having the title examined.

II. The Name "United Church" is calculated to give just Offence.

In a footnote to the Basis of Union(p.4) it is sought to forestall objection to this preposterous name by suggesting that in a few years it will be generally recognized that it really means nothing. This is hardly a convincing reason for adopting a name which cannot fail to give offence.

It will be recalled that some years ago the High Church element sought to have the name of the Protestant Episcopal Church changed to "The American Church". The adverse comment on this presumptuous suggestion was general. It is now proposed to do substantially the same thing. If a particular body calls itself the "United Church of Christ" the natural inference is that all other denominational bodies are dis-united and schismatic. Either the Methodist Church or the Presbyterian Church, as a matter of fact, has a far better right to the name, since each represents a merger on a much larger scale. How this piece of arrogance will promote the cause of Christian unity is not apparent.

III. The Method of Voting on the Basis of Union

The proposition is that the plan shall take effect if seventy-five per cent., not of the Congregational Churches generally, but of the Congregational Churches voting approve the Basis of Union. This proposition is, to say the least, highly objectionable. Nobody has any right to compel a Congregational Church to vote either "Yes" or "No" on any particular question. Nevertheless the scheme is so rigged that a Church can stand on its rights and refuse to take a vote on the subject only at the risk of seeing our Congregational order turned upside down on the strength of action taken by much less than seventy-five percent. of the Churches. It might happen, for example, that in the result 50 per cent. of the Churches voted "Yes", 15 per cent. voted "No" and 35 per cent. declined to vote at all. This would obviously be a most inadequate foundation for action of the revolutionary character contemplated, yet the promoters of the plan apparently intend to drive ahead at full speed if they can get even this purely technical backing. If this is Congregationalism, all that one can say is that that term is remarkably flexible.

IV. The Probability that Schism, rather than Unity, Will Result.

Assuming that the number of Churches voting in favor of the Basis of Union is sufficient to satisfy the technical requirements of the plan and that it is therefore declared operative, what becomes of the Churches which do not assent? Obviously these Churches remain independent, self-governing bodies, retaining, so to speak, the "apostolic succession" and rightly describing themselves as Congregational Churches, whereas those Churches which have approved the plan, according to the express language of the Basis of Union, will have ceased to be Congregational Churches and will have become Congregations of the United Church. Thus the result will not be that one denomination will take the place of two, but that there will be two distinct denominations, just as at present, although the line of demarcation will run through what are now the Congregational Churches, instead of running between the Congregational Churches and the E. & R. Church, - a line, moreover, which will represent a high degree of bitterness and will be much more difficult to disregard for purposes of common effort than the line existing between the Congregational Churches and the E. & R. Church today.

It may be said that the number of non-assenting Congregational Churches will not be sufficient to have serious results. This, however, seems very improbable. A plan vigorously opposed by denominational leaders like Dr. Rockwell H. Potter and President Arthur C. McGiffert, - to mention only two out of many, - is not likely to receive anything like the unanimous support of the churches. Hence there is every reason to expect that the setting up of the so-called "United Church", far from bringing nearer the

time when "they all shall be one", will have just the opposite effect.

V. The Effect of the Plan as Closing the Door to Union with other Churches.

If the Congregational Churches, as the plan contemplates, cease to exist as such and convert themselves into subsidiaries of a quasi-Presbyterian organization, the possibility of union with other bodies which follow the Congregational polity is virtually cut off. The Congregational and Christian Churches were able to unite because both followed this polity; hence the consolidation of their denominational organizations did not disturb at all the rights or status of the individual churches. If the Congregational Churches adhere to their historic position, there is good hope that in time they will be able to unite with other denominational groups, such as the Universalists, the Baptists and the Disciples of Christ, which are similar in polity. If, on the other hand, the Congregational Churches abandon the position for which they have fought through the centuries and become, as it were, cats of a wholly different color, it is manifest that unions like those just suggested will be virtually barred. The groups mentioned have always insisted most earnestly upon the independence of the individual church as fundamental and will not, in all probability, take any interest in a so-called "United Church" which is a single nation-wide organization and with which they could unite only by surrendering this basic principle.

Similar considerations relate to the "Community Churches" which are now becoming common. Such churches, composed of people of many different persuasions, often enter the Congregational fellowship, because they can thus get the advantage of identification with the Church Universal and yet retain their status as self-subsisting organizations. How many Community Churches are likely, if the present plan goes through, to reduce themselves to the status of precincts of the "United Church"?

VI. The Unnatural Character of the proposed Union.

Reference has just been made to the groups with which the Congregational Churches might coalesce with a minimum of disturbance in the course of a normal movement towards church unity. What is now proposed is, on the contrary, a union with a body utterly foreign to Congregationalism. It would probably be difficult to pick out among what may be called the "legitimate" evangelical bodies one with which the Congregationalists have less in common or with which they have had less contact. Such a union may be likened to a marriage between a Hottentot and an Eskimo; it may conceivably turn out well, but the chances are very strong that it will not.

VII. The Absence of any Exigency making such a Union necessary.

The Congregational Churches have been doing business for more than three hundred years without so much as knowing that the E. & R. Church or its predecessors existed. The E.&R. Church has carried on through many years with equally little attention to the Congregationalists. Certainly there is no such crisis among the Congregational Churches as to make it necessary for them to grasp at the proposed union as a tabula in naufragio. There is, likewise, nothing to suggest that the E. & R. Church is in any difficulties which call for heroic measures. If, however, the E. & R. Church felt the need of support by a stronger body, its normal course would be to seek union with one of the Presbyterian bodies, since the E. & R. Church represents a species of Presbyterianism. Why the E. & R. Church should seek to swallow the Congregational Churches, when every consideration of history, polity and tradition is against the project, does not appear.

VIII. The Basis of Union represents a Surrender by the larger Group to the smaller.

The Congregational Churches are roughly twice as numerous as the congregations of the E. & R. Church. A similar proportion obtains in the matter of membership. By all accepted criteria, the Congregational Churches constitute decidedly the stronger group. It might be supposed, therefore, that, if the price of union was the adoption by one group of the other's polity, the plan would provide for the raising of the E. & R. congregations to the status of self-subsisting churches, not for the Congregational Churches' reducing themselves to the status of administrative precincts of a single, nation-wide body. The fact, however, is just the reverse. It is proposed that for the privilege of entering into this unnatural union the Congregational Churches shall surrender their historic polity and merge themselves in what will really be the E. & R. Church under a different name. No reason for this inversion of values is suggested. If the E. & R. Church is as keen as represented to get under one roof with the Congregationalists, let it come under the Congregational roof, where there is ample space for all Christians of evangelical tendencies.

Those who favor the "merger" call attention to the fact that in the General Synod of the E. & R. Church the vote was something like 12 to 1 in favor of the plan. It is said that, if the smaller group is so nearly unanimous, the larger group ought to be even more so. It is no wonder, however, that the E. & R. Church should be willing to enter an arrangement which, as just suggested, approximates a swallowing up of the larger group by the smaller. The near-unanimity of the General Synod constitutes, if anything, a reason for caution on the part of the Congregational Churches. If the plan is so favorable to the E. & R. Church that it meets with little opposition in that

quarter, it is only appropriate to consider whether this may not reflect a belief that that Church is not making any substantial concession.

IX. Disturbance of the Status of Ministers.

During the past three centuries there has grown up, partly through long-continued usage and partly through decisions of the courts,--a great body of precedent respecting the ordination and professional standing of Congregational ministers and with regard to the relations between a Congregational Church and its pastor. The Basis of Union is plainly calculated to upset these precedents and yet is so inconclusive in dealing with the subject that neither ministers nor "congregations" can know where they stand until a new body of precedent has been painfully evolved. When the camouflage is removed, the theory of the Basis of Union seems to be that, while it will not be technically unlawful for a "congregation" to choose a pastor in such manner as it determines, the "congregations" will be under such heavy pressure that for practical purposes their pastors will be chosen for them by what is called "the Church at large". This is not, of course, what the Basis of Union says, but it is hard to see why its provisions will not work out in this way. Few things could cut more deeply into the roots of Congregational usage.

X. The Basis of Union seems to have been framed without Consideration of the serious legal Questions which it raises.

The development of this point requires a somewhat detailed analysis of the Basis of Union. The language is in some respects so obscure that the actual effect of the plan can be extracted only with difficulty. It is, however, clear that what is proposed is not a mere uniting of denominational agencies or societies, but the merging of the 6,000 odd Congregational Churches with the E. & R. Church so as to form a single nation-wide organization to be called the "United Church of Christ." The 6,000 Congregational Churches,--each of which is now an independent, self-subsisting organization,--and the E. & R. Church are in effect to be put into a melting pot, whence will emerge a unitary organization in which the Congregational Churches will be, so to speak, drowned. The name "United Church",--not "United Churches",--in itself indicates that this must be so; 6,000 churches cannot be fused into a single church without losing their individuality. The Basis of Union by its express language shows that the Congregational Churches which accept it cease to be such when it speaks (p.7) of ratification of the proposed Constitution by "two thirds of the former Congregational Christian Churches voting".

The Basis of Union is not clear as to how this fusion is to be accomplished. Of course, no Congregational Church

can be thus fused except by its own affirmative act. The Basis of Union provides for the effecting of the union by joint resolution at the first meeting of the General Synod. How the delegates to the General Synod are to get the power to fuse the Congregational Churches is not specified, but apparently the theory is that any church which votes to approve the plan impliedly grants to the delegates who shall attend the General Synod a sort of power of attorney to drop it into the melting pot. Whether it is legally competent for a Congregational Church thus to delegate the power of life and death seems questionable, but the following discussion is based on the assumption that the delegation is effectual.

Before going further reference should be made to a statement in the Basis of Union (p.4) which is exactly contrary to the fact, -so palpably wrong, indeed, that it is hard to understand how it got by the sponsoring committee. The statement in question reads, "This name (i.e. 'United Church of Christ') stands for the accomplished union of two church bodies each of which has arisen from a similar union of two church bodies." The plan, as just shown, does not contemplate the union of "two" church bodies, but the union of some 6,000 individual church bodies with a nation-wide body. The more serious error, however, lies in the use of the word similar. The union of the Christian Churches with the Congregational Churches was not in the least similar to the union of the Reformed Church in the United States with the Evangelical Synod of North America. The former represented a mere union for purposes of fellowship and cooperation, each individual Church retaining its independence unimpaired. The latter was a union of two nation-wide bodies of quasi-Presbyterian character and involved no substantial change in the relation of the local congregations to the central authority. What is now proposed is that 6,000 churches now wholly independent shall, as indicated above, fuse themselves in a single unitary body. To speak of such a revolutionary change as "similar" to either of the other two unions is, to say the least, highly misleading.

It may be that the statement referred to results from the failure of the promoters of the "merger" to appreciate the implications of their plan. That these gentlemen are themselves blind to the real nature of the organization which they are seeking to set up is strongly indicated by the two resolutions which are proposed for the consideration of the Churches, apparently with the idea that Churches which register approval under the first resolution will then proceed to adopt the second.

"Resolved, that this Church hereby registers its decision upon the proposal to unite the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches into the United Church of Christ, in accordance with the Basis of Union dated January 22, 1947.

"Resolved, that in the event of the consummation of the union this Church hereby undertakes to continue the

same relations with the United Church of Christ that it now holds with the fellowship of the Congregational Christian Churches."

The promoters are seemingly unconscious of the obvious fact that no Church which had recorded its approval of the "merger" under the first resolution could adopt the second without neutralizing its approval. A Church which went into the "merger" could not by any possibility maintain with the United Church the same relations that it now holds in the fellowship of the Congregational Christian Churches, for the simple reason that the Basis of Union contemplates a relation of the local bodies to the United Church fundamentally different from that which the Congregational Christian Churches now sustain to one another. In the same way a vote to adopt the second resolution is equivalent to a rejection of the "merger", since a radical alteration in relationship constitutes the very pith and marrow of the plan.

The status of the "Congregations" into which it is proposed that the assenting Churches be transmuted is, indeed, as different from that of the existing Congregational Christian Churches as is light from darkness. The Congregations are not self-subsisting, independent bodies which may, as they see fit, delegate powers to other agencies for the good of the cause. They are mere subordinate precincts, bearing much the same relation to the United Church as that which cities and towns bear to the respective States. A city or town may enjoy a large measure of self-government, but, if so, it is only as a grant from the State and what the State gives it can likewise take away.

The Basis of Union (p.6) contains various recitals as to the rights of the "Congregations". It is hard to see how these recitals are to be applied in practice. At present the Congregations of the E. & R. Church do not enjoy the same measure of autonomy as the Congregational Churches. If, when the Congregational Churches are transmuted into Congregations, they are to be self-governing to the same extent as at present, then there will be two classes of Congregations, one much more nearly autonomous than the other.

This leads to a query as to the status of any new Congregations which may be organized after the plan takes effect. Will they have the rights of the former E. & R. Congregations or those of the former Congregational Churches or rights of yet some other kind not now specified? Apart from this, however, the fundamental point is that it is one thing to enjoy rights inherent in a self-subsisting organization and a very different thing to enjoy similar rights as a grant from some higher authority.

After a Congregational Church has drowned itself in the United Church, any rights it may have must necessarily be of this derivative character. The assurances of local autonomy appearing on page 6 of the Basis of Union are of little real value for the simple reason that they can all be swept away

by the exercise of the unlimited power of amendment which the plan contemplates (Basis of Union, Art. X, Sec. G, p. 20) and the Congregations thus reduced to the state of conquered provinces except as they may be protected to a certain extent, not by anything in the Constitution of the United Church, but by provisions in the Constitutions of the respective States. (See Master v. Second Parish of Portland, 36 Fed. Supp. 918, 926, applying Section 3 of Article I of the Constitution of Maine: McNeilly v. First Presbyterian Church of Brookline, 243 Mass. 331, 339, expounding the Eleventh Amendment to the Constitution of Massachusetts.) Exactly what the section referred to means can only be guessed; the language is at least consistent with the idea that a bare majority of the General Synod, with the concurrence of a bare majority of the Conferences, can change the Constitution in any way they think fit. If this is the intent, - as seemingly it is, - any so-called "guaranty" which may be contained in the Constitution is a snare and a delusion.

It is further to be noted that the Basis of Union itself contains provisions which infringe upon the autonomy of the local bodies. The section as to "appeals" is very difficult to interpret. The subject is one obviously requiring the utmost precision of statement. What matters may be made the subject of an appeal or complaint and how the right of appeal may be exercised are, however, left wholly undefined. The provision seems, indeed, to be one more specimen of camouflage. The underlying thought apparently is that, while decisions rendered on such appeals will not technically bind the Congregations, they will, nevertheless, put the Congregations under such pressure that the effect will be much the same. The idea of giving an individual member of a local body the right to have a supposed grievance passed upon not only by a superior body, but by a whole hierarchy of appellate tribunals is right in the teeth of elementary Congregational principles.

Again, the Basis of Union (p.6) provides that "men and women enjoy the same rights and privileges in the United Church". In one aspect this provision is unimportant, because there cannot be any Congregational Churches which do not now accept this principle. The point is that here, - just after affirming the right of the "Congregations" to regulate their internal affairs, - the central authority assumes to leave them with no choice in such vital matters as the right to vote and the right to hold office. Whatever else this may be, it certainly is not Congregationalism.

All these considerations lead up to the basic inquiry, Is it legally competent for a Congregational Church to transmute itself into a subordinate precinct of a unitary body and virtually to put itself at the mercy of this central authority? This question necessarily depends upon the law of the State in which the particular Church is established. The following discussion deals with the law of Massachusetts. It is believed, however, that similar principles obtain in most, if not in all of the States in which any

considerable number of Congregational Churches are located.

In Massachusetts a Congregational Church is generally organized in one of two ways. Some parishes still maintain the old dual organization, the title to the property being held by an incorporated "society" and the church existing alongside as an unincorporated body. The Supreme Judicial Court has held that in such a situation the relation of the church and society is like that of Siamese twins. The church cannot separate itself from the society and has no life except as an attachment of the society, though the members of the church, if disaffected, may, of course, walk out and leave the church a mere shell (Baker v. Fales, 16 Mass. 488; Stebbins v. Jennings, 10 Pick. 172). It is certainly hard to see how a church which subsists on this basis can consistently with the law not merely cut itself free from the society, but transform itself into a subsidiary of a different organization.

This question, however, is not so important as the question respecting the legal position of churches incorporated under G.L. (Ter. Ed.) c. 67, ss. 47-54, sometimes called the "Quint Act" because enacted in 1887 at the instance of Dr. Alonzo Quint of Chelsea. Many of the Congregational Churches of Massachusetts, -probably most of those which are at all active, -have become incorporated and have taken over the property and functions of the respective societies. Each Church so incorporated receives from the Commonwealth a certificate of incorporation, - or "charter", as it is commonly called, -specifying its purpose and powers. It is, of course, elementary that a corporation must keep within the terms of its charter and cannot lawfully engage in undertakings not fairly within the purpose which the charter specifies.

While there is no fixed form, the charters granted to Congregational Churches follow pretty much a single pattern. The following phrasing of the purpose (appearing in the charter of the Old South Church in Boston) may be taken as typical:-

"Establishing and maintaining the public worship of God in accordance with the principles and doctrines of the Congregational Churches."

The question is, therefore, whether it is legally competent for a Church thus required by its charter to adhere strictly to "the principles and doctrines of the Congregational Churches", -i.e., to maintain strict independence first, last and all the time, -to convert itself into a subsidiary precinct of a single nation-wide body and to put its rights and powers, -even to a limited extent, -at the mercy of this central authority. There is no decision directly in point and, until such time as the Supreme Judicial Court may deal with the question, no opinion can be given with complete assurance. The answer would seem, however, to be plain, unless the promoters of the plan have up their sleeves some

means of exempting the incorporated Churches from the rules of law which apply to corporations generally.

It is, indeed, possible, though not perfectly clear, that an incorporated Church might obtain authority to change its corporate purpose by going through the very cumbersome proceeding for which provision is made in the general law governing non-profit corporations, -G.L.(Ter.Ed.), c. 180, ss. 10, 11, as amended by St. 1937, c. 151, ss. 1, 2, and St. 1943, c. 549, s. 6, - or by obtaining a special act of the legislature. To accomplish such a result, however, specific action would have to be taken by the Church in question. No vote merely expressing concurrence in the Basis of Union would be sufficient. It does not seem likely that any large number of the Congregational Churches would feel moved to go through with either of the procedures just suggested simply to gain the privilege of committing corporate suicide.

Even assuming, moreover, that the Congregational Churches managed by some means to attain the right to drown themselves in the United Church, serious legal difficulties would remain. Many of our Churches are the beneficiaries of trust funds established to promote church work of different kinds under Congregational auspices. With respect to some of these funds, the donors have specified that, if the Churches in question cease to maintain their Congregational affiliation, the funds will be forfeited. If the Basis of Union is adopted there will, -except with respect to the non-assenting Churches, - be no Congregational denomination and no Congregational Churches. What is going to become of trust funds given on conditions like those just suggested? The promoters of the Basis of Union seem to have ignored this question altogether, but it does not seem likely that the courts would do so, if the question were agitated.

A cognate problem arises with respect to endowments established to advance the cause of Congregationalism in one way or another. Andover Theological Seminary, founded for the primary purpose of providing an "able and learned ministry" for the Congregational Churches, furnishes a convenient illustration. In the so-called "Constitution" of the Seminary the founders specified that every professor must be "in communion with some Christian Church of the Congregational or Presbyterian denomination". With regard to a professorship established subsequently the donor required that the occupant of the chair be "an ordained minister of the Congregational denomination". If the Basis of Union should be adopted, there would ensue the curious result that the Trustees, -unless suitable men happened to be found among the members of the non-assenting Congregational Churches, -would be obliged, when appointing professors, to choose Presbyterians or, in the case of the specially restricted professorship referred to above, to leave the chair vacant. These particular provisions are, of course, peculiar to Andover Seminary, but there must be many endowments which present similar problems. How do the promoters of the "merger" propose to get over these difficulties?

They do not tell us; so far as appears, they have never given the matter any attention.

The questions under discussion are not now raised for the first time. The compiler of this memorandum ventured to contribute to the January, 1946, issue of The Reporter (published by the Laymen's Committee of the Massachusetts Congregational Conference and Missionary Society) a short article in which these questions were outlined and in which the suggestion was made that, before the Churches were called upon to act on any scheme of "merger", the promoters of the scheme ought to see that the legal aspects of the proposal were thoroughly explored and that the Churches were given due assurance that no legal complications would arise.

So far as appears, this suggestion was never adopted. If the promoters of the "merger" have ever had the scheme dissected by competent counsel and obtained an opinion as to its freedom from danger of legal entanglements, they have never given the Churches the benefit of this information. It is, moreover, manifest that legal advice has not been taken, since no experienced lawyer would be willing to pass over the inconsistencies, uncertainties and ambiguities which crop out so frequently throughout the Basis of Union.

It may be, of course, that there are satisfactory answers to all the questions now indicated and that the discussion of the Basis of Union may proceed on the assumption that, in its legal aspects, the scheme is water-tight. Considering, however, the great importance of the subject and the serious consequences likely to ensue if legal difficulties develop, it is the plain duty of the Churches to give the scheme no encouragement until they have reasonable assurance that, if it is carried out, no legal complications need be feared.

H.S.D.

Harold S. Davis, Atty.
of Palmer, Dodge, Chase & Davis
Boston, Mass

May 25, 1941.

I called Western Union.

Their records are destroyed after
being kept six (6) months only.

Office receiving message would have
no record after one day.

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Twenty-third Avenue East and Fourth Street
DULUTH 5, MINNESOTA

COPY

The Board of Deacons of Pilgrim Congregational Church,
2310 East Fourth Street,
Duluth, 5, Minnesota.

We, the undersigned members of the Ballot Commission of Pilgrim
Congregational Church, Duluth, Minnesota, hereby certify as cor-
rect the following vote on the Merger of the Congregational -
Christian and the Evangelical and Reformed Churches.

The ballot being closed at 12 o'clock noon on March 27.

The ballot results are:

Disapproval.....⁵²⁴.....

Approval¹⁷⁶...

Votes voided⁷.....

Signed:

D.M.Bellows
Mary McG. Tibbetts
Isabelle J.Savin.

Copy to:

Mr. W.H.Mitchell
Mr. H.U.Moore
Mr. Arthur Roberts.

the account of

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WESTERN UNION

1206

JOSEPH L. EGAN
PRESIDENT

CHECK
ACCOUNTING INFORMATION
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Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

Duluth, Minnesota, March 29, 1948

Executive Committee of the General Council
of Congregational Christian Churches
287 Fourth Avenue
New York 10, New York

Copies to:
H.U. Moore
Mrs. H.G. Manley
Dr. Ernest W. Colling

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH ADDRESS DULUTH MINNESOTA COMPLETED
ON MARCH TWENTY SEVENTH SECRET MAIL BALLOT OF ITS MEMBERSHIP ON
PROPOSED MERGER RESULTING ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-SIX BALLOTS FAVORABLE
AND FIVE HUNDRED TWENTY FOUR OPPOSED OUT OF TEN HUNDRED FIFTY
BALLOTS MAILED AIRMAIL LETTER CONFIRMATION FOLLOWS.

WILDEY H. MITCHELL, CLERK

Chg. Rad 1190

Executive Committee of the General Council of
Congregational Christian Churches

orig telegram

March 29, 1948

Mr. Wildey H. Mitchell, Clerk
Pilgrim Congregational Church
702 Alworth Building
Duluth 2, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Mitchell:

The Ballot Commission appointed by the Board of Deacons of Pilgrim Congregational Church, Duluth, have reported to me through their Chairman, Donald M. Bellows, the following final figures on the secret mail ballot cast by the church membership in connection with the proposed merger of Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church:

176 ballots in favor of the merger
524 ballots opposed to the merger
700 Total ballots cast
(1,050 ballots mailed out)

In your official capacity of Church Clerk, please report these figures by telegram today to the two following offices, confirming the report by air mail letter forwarded to the same addresses:

Executive Committee of the General Council of
Congregational Christian Churches
287 Fourth Avenue
New York 10, New York

orig telegram

Dr. W. Ernest Collins, Executive Secretary
The Congregational Conference of Minnesota
429 Palace Building
Nicollet at Fourth
Minneapolis 1, Minnesota

Copy of telegram

Would you mind mailing carbon copies of these reports to Mrs. Manley and to me, for our files. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Robert M. Moore

Senior Deacon
Pilgrim Congregational Church
Duluth, Minnesota

HUM:BD

March 30, 1948

Executive Committee of the General
Council of Congregational Christian Churches,
287 Fourth Avenue,
New York 10, N.Y.

Gentlemen:

This letter will confirm my night letter of
March 29, 1948 reading as follows:

"Pilgrim Congregational Church, address
Duluth, Minnesota, completed on March twenty-
seventh secret mail ballot of its membership
on proposed merger resulting one hundred
seventy-six ballots favorable and five hundred
twenty-four opposed out of ten hundred fifty
ballots mailed Airmail letter confirmation
follows.

Willey H. Mitchell, Clerk"

Yours very truly,

WHM-C

Copies to:

Dr. W. Ernest Collins, Executive Secretary
The Congregational Conference of Minnesota
429 Palace Building, Nicollet at Fourth
Minneapolis 1, Minnesota

Mr. H. U. Moore
Mrs. H. G. Manley

C O P Y

THE CONGREGATIONAL CONFERENCE OF MINNESOTA
429 Palace Building
Minneapolis 1, Minnesota

Rev. W. Ernest Collins, D. D.

March 28, 1949

Mr. Hubert U. Moore
First & American National Bank
Duluth 2, Minnesota

Dear Hubert:

I have your letter of March 26 this morning.
We have a copy of the telegram which was sent on March 29,
1948, to the Executive Committee in New York, signed by
your clerk.

In the record which we sent on to New York,
we reported 126 approval - 524 disapproval; no vote on the
second item of the ballot. This is on the original which
we are keeping in our files of the votes of the churches
sent on to New York. I do not understand how there can be
any question regarding the official report since Duluth was
forwarded exactly the same as the other churches in the
State.

With best wishes.

Cordially yours,

Ernest (Collins)

DOMESTIC SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent as a full rate telegram	
FULL RATE TELEGRAM	SERIAL
DAY LETTER	NIGHT LETTER

WESTERN UNION

JOSEPH L. EGAN, PRESIDENT

1206

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent at the full rate	
FULL RATE	DEFERRED
CODE	NIGHT LETTER

NO. WDS.-CL. OF SVC.	PD. OR COLL.	CASH NO.	CHARGE TO THE ACCOUNT OF	TIME FILED

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

COPY

Duluth, Minnesota, March 29, 1948

Executive Committee of the General Council
of Congregational Christian Churches
287 Fourth Avenue
New York 10, New York

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH ADDRESS DULUTH MINNESOTA COMPLETED
ON MARCH TWENTY SEVENTH SECRET MAIL BALLOT OF ITS MEMBERSHIP ON
PROPOSED MERGER RESULTING ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-SIX BALLOTS FAVORABLE
AND FIVE HUNDRED TWENTY FOUR OPPOSED OUT OF TEN HUNDRED FIFTY
BALLOTS MAILED AIRMAIL LETTER CONFIRMATION FOLLOWS.

WILDEY H. MITCHELL, CLERK

Chg. Rad 1190

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Why the Basis of Union Is Not A Valid Document

An address given by Rev. Malcolm K. Burton at the special meeting of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches, at Cleveland, Ohio, on Feb. 4, 1949.

The Basis of Union, dated Jan. 22, 1947, is the fundamental document of this whole proposal for a merger of our Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Is it a valid document?

Our churches were told that they could remain the same under the Basis of Union as they are now. In like manner the people of the Evangelical and Reformed Church were told that the merger would mean no fundamental change for them. Here is our whole difficulty. What are the rights and freedoms under the two systems? Can they be combined through the Basis of Union without loss to either side?

The Nature of the Evangelical and Reformed Church

The Evangelical and Reformed Church, as a national denomination, is a body politic and corporate. It is clearly recognized in the courts of the land as a "general" type of church, to which certain definite powers and authority accrue.

That the denomination as a whole is a "body politic and corporate" is shown first of all in its name. It is a "Church", spelled with a capital "C" and in the singular, of which all of the parts are but subsidiary units before the law. The local unit is a "congregation", not a church.

Secondly, this national "body politic and corporate" is bound together by a central constitution, which declares that the E. and R. Church "ordains this constitution to be its fundamental law and declares the same to have authority over all its ministers, members, congregations, and judicatories."

Third, the E. and R. Church is incorporated under the laws of the land as a single, national "body politic and corporate," and its constitution is recognized in the courts as having authority over its constituent parts.

Fourth, the E. and R. Church, as a national "body politic and corporate," recognizes a system of legislation by which its fundamental law and other regulations can be amended and altered for the entire church. It operates

under a system of representative assemblies, as a kind of ecclesiastical republic, along lines commonly recognized as presbyterian.

Fifth, the Evangelical and Reformed Church, as a national "body politic and corporate," recognizes a series of judicatories, through which a constant pressure can be maintained upon its members and constituent organizations to keep them in conformity with the central laws and purposes of the church.

Because of the foregoing character of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, as a national "body politic and corporate," certain advantages accrue to persons who like that kind of set-up. It makes for the law and order of which Presbyterians have always been proud.

In the realm of faith this law and order finds its expression in a Creed for the church as a whole.

Another advantage, for those who like this system, is that no minister can be called to a congregation without the approval of the Synod. Such approval becomes a matter of routine with ministers who have proved themselves obedient servants of the denomination. But it also stands as a threat for those who might be led by conscience in some new or unapproved way.

Lastly the congregations themselves can be kept in line. They cannot, according to a recent court case in New Jersey, divert their missionary giving simply to objects of their own choice. Neither can they withdraw from the denomination and get out from under the authority of this national, corporate church without the probable loss of their property.

Within such a framework of law and order many freedoms can be enjoyed at the discretion of the church as a whole. Through its constitution the denomination can set forth certain rights and liberties as the prerogatives of semi-autonomous units. In their own spheres they can enjoy whatever range and latitude of freedom is assigned to them by the "body politic and corporate,"—that is, by

the denomination as a whole. All such freedoms and autonomy, however, are within the basic framework of the church as a whole. These rights and freedoms can be amended, revised and limited by the same "body politic and corporate" which grants them in the first place, without the necessity of approval by each local congregation. Elected assemblies of a so-called representative nature have the final say.

The Nature of Our Congregational Christian Churches

Having considered the essential rights and responsibilities within the Evangelical and Reformed Church, let us now look at the facts concerning our own fellowship.

Congregational Christian Churches are not a "body politic and corporate" on a national scale. Not even the General Council is incorporated.

We are not a Church, in a single national sense, but Churches, voluntarily associated together.

No central constitution has authority over our ministers, members, Conferences, Associations or churches.

We have no system of legislatures, nor do we recognize the authority of any representative assemblies over our independent churches. As Mr. J. D. Fackenthal has pointed out, "There is as to a Congregational Church no higher authority than the membership of the particular church in meeting assembled."

We recognize no system of judicatories. Historically our churches have taken their stand against any ascending series of ecclesiastical courts. As the Year Book of our Congregational Christian Churches has long pointed out, the local church "is the final arbiter of all questions relating to its own life."

Because we are not a "body politic and corporate" in a denominational sense, or on a national scale, and because we do not have a central framework of law, nor any legislatures capable of amending that law, nor any judicatories to enforce that law, certain definite benefits accrue to persons who like our kind of voluntary fellowship.

Our freedom and autonomy are not limited or defined by any central constitution. We are not asked to approve any denominational

creed or statement of faith. Our churches are not required to get approval on their choice of ministers. Our churches can not be penalized by any ecclesiastical authority for any cause whatsoever, nor can their property be confiscated through the courts if they refuse to follow denominational directives. In all of the foregoing our set-up is the direct opposite of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The advantages of law and order which accrue to its members are absent with us. In like manner the advantages and rights of our independent churches are of a different order from those which accrue to the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

The essential genius of Congregationalism depends upon the whole series of negatives which we have suggested above. Congregationalism is like a mighty "double negative" whose great positive force is compounded out of the many restrictions which it denies. We want to be free,—not just within certain limits prescribed by a national church,—but free under God. We can do this only by denying the powers of a national church, by denying the rights of judicatories, by denying the validity of elected assemblies, by denying the imposition of creeds or man-made laws,—in short by denying the concept of a church as a national "body politic and corporate."

Does this make Congregationalism a negative thing? Think for one moment of how we try to explain to a little child the infinite powers of God. We explain to that child that God is not limited according to time. He is not limited in space. He is not limited in wisdom or love. To unfetter our concept of God, we are compelled to resort to a whole series of negatives, so that we can free Him from all sense of ordinary human limitation. Does that mean that God is a negative? No. God is the most positive, creative force in all the world.

In like manner Congregationalism gains its most creative freedom by those negatives which protect it and describe it as completely unfettered. We may be weak on the order and law of presbyterianism but our genius is freedom, unlimited and uncircumscribed, under God.

When our forefathers drew apart from the established order of their day they did so with deep conviction that Christ is the only Head of His church. They believed that, "Where two or three are gathered together in His name," there Christ is. True ecumenicity is that Spirit which binds together all Christians, whatever their name or sign, under the one true Headship of our Lord.

Organization is never the Church. The more organized it gets, the more dangerous it becomes to those freedoms which are in Christ. Our forefathers insisted on their right to establish churches "gathered" without sanction of Bishops, Presbyteries, or Synods. Their doctrine of the Church is ecumenical and all-inclusive. It is a valid doctrine.

This freedom under Christ—without benefit of Bishops, Presbyteries, or National Church—has been the guiding principle of Congregationalism these three hundred years.

Dr. Gaius Glenn Atkins sums up the meaning of this, our freedom, in his brief little account, "Adventure in Liberty." He declares that:

"If one stands far enough away from the massive and entangled action of Protestantism, he sees throughout its course a growing quest for realization of the independence of the spirit-guided Christian life, both in theory and practice."

"Protestantism," continues Dr. Atkins, "was bound by the very genius of it, when the right time came, to try the experiment of the liberty of a Christian man with all its implications and issues, completely and at all costs."

This liberty, of which Dr. Atkins speaks, tried out in all its implications and issues, completely and at all costs, is Congregationalism; and, continues Dr. Atkins, "Whatever else is built, must be upon this foundation."

Let us see whether the Basis of Union builds on this foundation.

Main Framework of the Basis of Union

What are the principal features of the Basis of Union?

Art. I. The name, "United Church of Christ," in the singular.

Art. II. Beginnings of a Creed, to be submitted for approval by General Synod, Conferences, Associations, and "congregations."

Art. III. 1. Congregations as subsidiary units.

2. Limited spheres of autonomy, with definite powers for the Synod.

3. Government for the entire church.

4. Provisions for representative assemblies.

5. System of judicatories.

Art. IV. 1. Powers of General Synod over entire church.

2. Provision for central constitution.

Art. VI. Standard procedures for the calling and ordination of ministers.

Art. VII. Membership in a national church.

Art. VIII. Centralized powers over all Boards.

Art. X. Power to amend the constitution through representative assemblies.

Art. XI. Amendments to Basis of Union by General Synod.

What Do These Provisions Mean?

Are these provisions Congregational? Are they intended to insure the liberty of a Christian man with all its implications and issues, completely and at all costs? Or are they the provisions for the establishment of a Church, on a national scale, which shall be a "body politic and corporate" with recognized powers before the law? All the principal features of the Evangelical and Reformed Church are incorporated in this central framework of the Basis of Union. Is this the foundation on which Dr. Atkins would have us build?

Words about Congregational usages and practice (which were lifted out of their anomalous position in the Basis of Union and quoted so freely while our churches were voting) lose their meaning when dropped back into this framework of the Basis of Union. The change from a fellowship of free and independent churches into a "body politic and corporate" makes all the difference in the world.

A "congregation" is not the same as a "Congregational Church."

"Autonomy in its own sphere" is not the same as "autonomy."

For a congregation to "hold and operate"

its property within a "general" Church is not the same as an independent church that owns its property.

It is not enough to say that we shall retain all "our present rights and freedoms." The Basis of Union would give the power to define these rights and freedoms to the future constitution, which could be progressively amended without consent of the individual church.

Elected assemblies which write or amend a central constitution derive their powers from a "body politic and corporate." For us to recognize such powers is to accept the principle which would creatively determine all the rest and would put an end to our present kind of freedom.

These changes reflect a concept of Church which is alien and hostile to Congregationalism. They make the framework for a denominational Church with power (and let's not be fooled on that point),—with real power over all of its constituent parts.

Neither the Oberlin Interpretations, nor any other promises or assurances can alter this main framework of the Basis of Union. They cannot restore to Congregational words and phrases therein the meaning which these concepts enjoy in our free and voluntary fellowship.

Our churches were told that they would remain the same under the Basis of Union as they are now. They were asked to vote on such phrases as seemed to prove this point, not upon the main framework of the Basis of Union (which they did not understand) or upon any realistic proposition for merger.

The Basis of Union is contradictory and self-nullifying. It cannot perform according to its promises. It is not a valid document. It never solved the fundamental problem confronting it,—the conflict between two contradictory and mutually exclusive polities. It never told our people that they would have to give up anything. Neither did it indicate to the E. and R. members any fundamental change for them. Since it is not a valid document, the so-called votes obtained upon it cannot be valid either. We have, therefore, no valid proposition before us upon which to proceed.

Comments on the Cleveland Council

At the Cleveland Council the proponents of merger claimed that an overwhelming majority favored the union and that this majority is steadily increasing. But at the same time they insisted (to quote Dr. Truman Douglass) that "any further delay means rejection of the union."

Laying aside for the moment all other questions, ask yourself whether the above is valid from the standpoint of either sanity or religious conviction.

If an overwhelming majority wants the union, and if that majority is increasing, a delay which permits working out a better plan could not possibly endanger the union. In like manner if God wants this merger He will not abandon it if we pause momentarily to get more light from Him.

To insist that both God and the majority wants the merger, and at the same time to express intense fear of its rejection if delayed, is to show neither sanity nor faith in God. Rather it is like an unstable person who is filled with his illusions of grandeur and strength at one moment and then seized by the terrors of persecution and fear of death in the next. The vote at Cleveland was a sign of weakness and not of strength on the part of those who want the merger. It sprang from fear and a sense of imminent defeat, not from confidence and a trusting faith. There was no applause when the result was announced. The vote of 757 to 172 was the kind of "statistical victory, and moral defeat" against which Dr. Fred Meek warned us at Oberlin.

Add to the above the following and then decide for yourself how much validity the Cleveland decision really enjoys:

1. Only 51% of the total number of Congregational Christian Churches approved the merger on any terms.

2. Most votes for the merger were obtained on the understanding that 75% approval (among churches voting) would be required, which percentage was not obtained.

3. Congregational Christian Churches are not a body politic, and therefore any so-called voting among them has no more power over them than a Gallup Poll would have.

4. The General Council has no authority to merge either our churches or itself into any new denomination, particularly not if the polity is different.

5. It has never been either affirmed or denied whether the "United Church of Christ" would incorporate as a national body.

6. The whole merger action will be reviewed in the courts and all fundamental questions (which have thus far been evaded) will ultimately have to be explained.

7. Opposition within the General Council increased from 12 votes at Oberlin to 172 at Cleveland; all suggestion that harmony had been reached or a solution found has disappeared; and in trying to force a union on their present ill-conceived plan the proponents of merger have shown themselves willing to create a new division within Protestantism,—in the name of church unity!

—Malcolm K. Burton

27 Broad Street, New London, Conn.

Duluth, Minnesota
September 1, 1948

Dear Fellow Congregationalist,

The accompanying letter is from an Illinois layman who, since the Oberlin General Council meeting, has been instrumental in effecting an organization of the free Congregational Christian churches of that State who remain definitely opposed to the E and R merger. This organization is successor to the Evanston Meeting group, now disbanded. Similar organizations already are being formed in Michigan, Iowa and the Pacific Coast and are planned for each State in the Union, in spite of the alleged unanimity reported by Advance and other pro-merger propaganda.

Although, since early February, 1948, Dr. Horton and his followers have known that under no circumstances would Dr. Goebel and the E and R leaders, representing one of the contracting parties, accept or recognize any modification or "interpretations" of the Basis of Union but only the document itself, and in spite of their word sent out to all CC churches promising to recommend that no action be taken at Oberlin on the merger, the Executive Committee nevertheless permitted such action to be taken, based on certain rewritten "interpretations" they knew the E and R leaders are not bound to honor and which therefore are meaningless.

Because of this conduct and the many other devious methods employed during the past months by the merger proponents to gain their end at whatever cost, opponents of the merger are more determined than ever to remain free and independent Congregational churches.

Democracy indeed is on trial in Congregationalism, as well as in the world. However, this is no "trial marriage" you have been asked to enter; it is an indissoluble union based on an irrevocable contract involving millions of dollars of hard earned trust funds and the individual freedom and authority enjoyed for more than 300 years by lay members of Congregationalism. You are urged neither to be intimidated nor cajoled into voting again on the Basis of Union but to take courage and identify yourself and your church with the rapidly growing substantial group of independent, non-merger churches. These churches will carry on the Congregational name and tradition.

Such a group is in process of organization at the present time in Minnesota, the details of which you will learn in due time. Meanwhile, if you wish to communicate with Mr. Edmunds, who is spearheading the free church movement, he should be addressed as follows:

Mr. Palmer D. Edmunds,
LaHogue, Illinois

Yours for a Congregational Christian Fellowship
of Free churches,

Duluth Committee
A. Laird Goodman, Secretary
1011 Torrey Building,
Duluth 2, Minnesota

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1949

Pulpit and Office:

Salary Pastor.....	\$7,500.00	
Salary Church Office.....	2,400.00	
Salary Assistant Treasurer.....	360.00	
Office Supplies.....	200.00	
Postage and Printing.....	1,500.00	
Pulpit Supply.....	450.00	
Pastor's Contingent Fund.....	200.00	\$12,610.00

Religious Education:

Salary Director.....	2,000.00	
Church School Budget.....	700.00	2,700.00

Music:

Choir, Director and Care of Organ.....		3,400.00
--	--	----------

Benevolences:

Missions.....	1,200.00	
Apportionment.....	6,800.00	8,000.00

Upkeep of Plant:

Salary Janitor.....	2,400.00	
Supplies Janitor.....	125.00	
Telephones.....	200.00	
Fuel.....	2,000.00	
Power, Light, Water, Gas.....	700.00	
Repairs, Church and Parsonage.....	2,000.00	
Insurance.....	600.00	
Maintenance of Parsonage.....	500.00	8,525.00

Contingent Fund..... 900.00

Conference Expense and Dues..... 200.00

Endowment Fund..... 1,000.00

TOTAL..... \$37,335.00

Less: Plate Collections.....	\$3,000.00	
Back Pledges.....	1,500.00	
Women's Assembly.....	900.00	
Church School Collections.....	400.00	
Rental.....	250.00	
Easter Collection.....	1,000.00	7,050.00

To Be Raised By Pledges..... \$30,285.00

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Twenty-third Avenue East and Fourth Street
DULUTH 5, MINNESOTA

November 26, 1948.

Dear Christian Friends and Fellow Members:

This letter is to advise you of the annual church budget for the year 1949 and of the Every-Member Canvass for Funds which will occur on the afternoon of Sunday, December 5, 1948.

Those in charge of the canvass are Douglas Walker, Director, who has two Assistant Directors - Frank L. Mahler and Robert M. Smith. Under them are twelve Captains heading twelve teams.

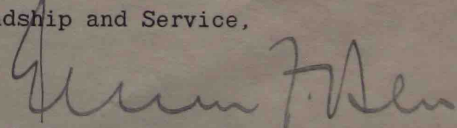
A copy of the tentative budget is enclosed for your careful perusal. As you know, the final budget will not be determined until set by the members of the church at the annual meeting in January. From the tentative budget you will observe some suggested changes in various items but the amount "to be raised by current pledges" for 1949 exceeds the amount to be raised by pledges in 1948 by only \$148.00.

The "Pulpit and Office" expense is increased because the Board of Trustees felt the necessity of increasing certain salaries in order to keep abreast of an almost universal rise in salaries and cost of living. The "Religious Education" item is lower only because the Religious Director will avail herself of an extended summer vacation without pay. The expense of "Music" will be less but music of a high order will be maintained as usual. The amount for "Benevolences" is to be increased substantially. This increase is apparent when consideration is given to the fact that in the 1948 budget there was included in benevolences a shortage of \$1,352.00 for 1946 benevolences. The item for "Upkeep of Plant" will be increased only slightly, mainly because of the necessity of securing a new stoker for the parsonage. There has been a small increase in the "Contingent Fund", but the increase is precautionary and will not be spent unless some emergency arises. All other items remain substantially the same as in 1948.

It is important that our giving for 1949 be not curtailed. Pilgrim Church must not remain static; it must go forward to greater usefulness and service; it must not deteriorate into principally a social organization for mutual pleasure; it must continue to be a militant and crusading organization, increasing its missions, extending its benevolences and enlarging the Kingdom in this restless world. All this must be done in the Master's name!

I bespeak for the canvassers who will call upon you on the afternoon of December 5 the utmost courtesy and consideration. They have an arduous task to perform. If you will do your part and meet them in a Christian spirit, their burden will be easy and their yoke light. Your cooperation in this respect will be greatly appreciated.

Yours in Friendship and Service,


Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Duluth, Minn.,
December 30, 1948

Miss Helen Kenyon,
Moderator of the General Council,
Congregational Christian Churches,
287 Fourth Avenue,
New York 10, N. Y.

Dear Miss Kenyon:

Thank you for your letter of December 9, 1948.

We appreciate your gesture of friendliness but are mystified by the spectacle of a leader who pays lip service to the cause of peace and harmony while persisting in a course of action which most certainly will rend asunder and destroy one of the oldest and most honored church fellowships in Protestantism.

God alone knows and therefore can judge human motives, but the rank and file of lay men and women of our fellowship reserve to themselves the right to judge and if need be denounce the actions of their leaders.

A lay woman, you have chosen to associate yourself with power-seeking Ecclesiasticism which by its very nature always has been and still remains the arch enemy of the freedom, dignity and authority of the individual human soul. By lending the prestige of your high office to help extinguish the light and genius of Congregationalism and of free America, you do yourself and countless millions of your fellows a tragic disservice. We hope The Father of Lights, in Whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning, may be able to forgive you.

In a letter to the writer dated January 6, 1948, Dr. Russell Henry Stafford of Hartford admits, "I do not believe that there is any overwhelming benefit to be derived from this proposed union." Never, to our knowledge, has the accuracy of his statement been disproved, yet thousands of dollars of denominational money have been expended by our supposedly honorable leaders to finance a program the fundamentals of which are highly questionable.

No longer are the merits or demerits of the Basis of Union, or Interpretations, the most important issues in this devastating struggle. The integrity and common honesty of our leadership are at stake. Time and again during the past year the truth loving laity have been shocked and grieved beyond measure by the bad faith, chicanery and utter disregard of and contempt for truth displayed by pro-merger advocates holding high offices in their denomination. Most of these persons, as you know, are "Men of the Cloth". After 50 years' experience in the field of finance I can testify without reservation that such evasiveness, bad faith and outright disregard for truth on the part of a borrower would destroy immediately and utterly his credit with any bank.

If you challenge the truth and accuracy of these allegations regarding your chosen colleagues, the sickening details can and will be furnished, upon request. The latest and most flagrant of such instances we deem to be the deliberate and gross misstatements made by Truman Douglass on the recent Town Meeting of the Air program when, in substance, he denied flatly that the proposed E. & R. merger is causing widespread disharmony and schism in his denomination, and made the wholly unwarranted statement that this projected enterprise already has been approved by an overwhelming majority of C. C. Churches. You know and he knew, then, that

Miss Helen Kenyon

-2-

12-30-1948

approximately one-half of the Churches of our fellowship either have voted "No" or have failed and refused to vote at all! Consistency and Integrity may, to you and your colleagues, be the "Hobgoblin of Small Minds", but before you have finished your term as Moderator, you will discover these qualities still are held by the majority of our membership to be the "Crown Jewels of the Ages".

Those in our fellowship who detest and abhor Ecclesiasticism - and they are legion - are awaiting with keen interest a categorical and unequivocal answer to the letter which Mr. S. T. Roberts addressed to you and your colleagues on November 27, 1948, as well as to Dr. Burton's recent "Open Letter". There is more involved in all this than mere personalities, more even than the fate of two Protestant denominations, as I'm sure you and the other leaders know.

If the foregoing words seem harsh, it is because the occasion demands sternness. No merger proponent, to our knowledge, has dared to claim that Congregationalism, for more than 300 years the Beacon Light of free America, has proved a failure, yet you are quoted as hoping to go down in history as its last Moderator and have been willing to employ exceedingly questionable methods to attain that end. How you can avoid being ashamed of your part in lowering the standards of our leadership is a mystery indeed.

Sincerely yours,

Hubert U. Moore

Care of First & American National Bank
Duluth, Minnesota

REPORT OF THE CHURCH CLERK
1948

To the Members of Pilgrim Congregational Church:

The following summary of changes in membership and a brief statement of the meetings held during the year 1948 is submitted as the Report of the Clerk:

During the year 1948 the membership of the Church increased from 1003 as of January 1, 1948 to 1031 at the close of the year. New members welcomed into membership and fellowship in the Church totaled 60 in number. Losses in membership were 32, of which 13 were occasioned by death and 19 by transfer to other Churches.

The following letters of transfer were issued from this Church in 1948, which require the approval of the membership at this time:

Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Luce to Grace Methodist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
Mr. Wilbur Bagley to Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
Miss Pearl Loos to Riverview Congregational Church, St. Paul, Minnesota.
Mr. H. P. Ingebritson to First Presbyterian Church, Davenport, Iowa.
Mrs. Helen Meyer Isberg to First Presbyterian Church, New Castle, Indiana.
Mr. R. Bruce Scott to First Congregational Church, Burton, Ohio.
Mr. Elmer M. Matter to Pilgrim Congregational Church, St. Louis, Missouri.
Mrs. David McKnight to Church in The Highlands, White Plains, New York.
Mrs. Maurice R. Clark to First Methodist Church, Jackson, Michigan.
Dr. Calvin Gold to First Congregational Church, Berkeley, California.
Mrs. A. R. McGuire to First Congregational Church, Fresno, California.
Mrs. A. C. Ronstrom to First Presbyterian Church, Bozeman, Montana.
Miss Margaret Sellwood to First Congregational Church, Los Angeles, Calif.
Mrs. J. F. Lewis to Lakeside Presbyterian Church, Duluth, Minnesota.
Mrs. Preston P. Austin to Woodland Methodist Church, Duluth, Minnesota.
Mrs. John Hanft to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Duluth, Minnesota.
Miss Laura Mae Bagley to First Baptist Church, Boulder, Colorado.
Mr. William G. Bolter to Pilgrim Congregational Church, Des Moines, Iowa.

During the year 1948 there were:
27 births recorded
24 baptisms
13 marriages performed
13 deaths

The following meetings of the members of the Church were held in the year 1948:

Date	Purpose of Meeting
February 4	77th Annual Meeting
April 25	Elect delegates to the meeting of State Conference in Minneapolis May 11-13, 1948.
May 23	To appoint committee to select Director of Religious Education.
October 3	To approve action of committee elected to serve as Director of Religious Education.

Respectfully submitted,

Wiley H. Mitchell

Wiley H. Mitchell, Clerk

January 17, 1949

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
REPORT OF TREASURER
YEAR 1948

Receipts

Current Plate Collections	\$ 2,459.04
Current Pledges	26,273.56
Back Pledges	1,471.75
Church School Collections	321.35
Women's Assembly	966.46
Rentals	160.00
Easter Collection	877.20
Organ Fund	50.00
Broadcast	382.55
Miscellaneous	50.00
Total Receipts	<u>\$33,011.91</u>

Disbursements

<u>Pulpit and Office</u>	
Salary, Pastor	\$7,500.00
Rental, Parsonage	900.00
	<u>6,600.00</u>
Salary, Church office	2,100.00
Salary, Assistant Treasurer	360.00
Office Supplies	182.94
Postage and Printing	868.25
Pulpit Supply	460.00
Pastor's Contingent Fund	123.94
	<u>\$10,695.13</u>

Religious Education

Salary, Director	\$2,226.67
Church School Budget	<u>752.46</u>
	2,979.13

Music

Choir	\$2,463.62
Junior Choir	<u>500.00</u>
	2,963.62

Unkeep of Plant

Salary, Janitor	\$2,188.75
Supplies, Janitor	137.81
Power, Light, Water, Gas	794.71
Telephones	195.89
Maintenance, Parsonage	526.18
Fuel	2,208.54
Repairs, Church	2,875.65
Repairs, Parsonage	345.79
Insurance	612.68
Ashes and Garbage	<u>68.00</u>
	9,954.00

Benevolences

Missions	\$ 1,200.00
War Victims & Reconstruction	1,248.00
State Office	<u>2,431.50</u>
	4,879.50

REPORT OF THE CHURCH CLERK
1948

To the Members of Pilgrim Congregational Church:

The following summary of changes in membership and a brief statement of the meetings held during the year 1948 is submitted as the Report of the Clerk:

During the year 1948 the membership of the Church increased from 1003 as of January 1, 1948 to 1031 at the close of the year. New members welcomed into membership and fellowship in the Church totaled 60 in number. Losses in membership were 32, of which 13 were occasioned by death and 19 by transfer to other Churches.

The following letters of transfer were issued from this Church in 1948, which require the approval of the membership at this time:

Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Luce to Grace Methodist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
Mr. Wilbur Bagley to Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
Miss Pearl Loos to Riverview Congregational Church, St. Paul, Minnesota.
Mr. H. P. Ingebritson to First Presbyterian Church, Davenport, Iowa.
Mrs. Helen Meyer Isberg to First Presbyterian Church, New Castle, Indiana.
Mr. R. Bruce Scott to First Congregational Church, Burton, Ohio.
Mr. Elmer M. Matter to Pilgrim Congregational Church, St. Louis, Missouri.
Mrs. David McKnight to Church in The Highlands, White Plains, New York.
Mrs. Maurice R. Clark to First Methodist Church, Jackson, Michigan.
Dr. Calvin Gold to First Congregational Church, Berkeley, California.
Mrs. A. R. McGuire to First Congregational Church, Fresno, California.
Mrs. A. C. Ronstrom to First Presbyterian Church, Bozeman, Montana.
Miss Margaret Sellwood to First Congregational Church, Los Angeles, Calif.
Mrs. J. F. Lewis to Lakeside Presbyterian Church, Duluth, Minnesota.
Mrs. Preston P. Austin to Woodland Methodist Church, Duluth, Minnesota.
Mrs. John Hanft to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Duluth, Minnesota.
Miss Laura Mae Bagley to First Baptist Church, Boulder, Colorado.
Mr. William G. Bolter to Pilgrim Congregational Church, Des Moines, Iowa.

During the year 1948 there were:

27 births recorded
24 baptisms
13 marriages performed
13 deaths

The following meetings of the members of the Church were held in the year 1948:

Date	Purpose of Meeting
February 4	77th Annual Meeting
April 25	Elect delegates to the meeting of State Conference in Minneapolis May 11-13, 1948.
May 23	To appoint committee to select Director of Religious Education.
October 3	To approve action of committee elected to serve as Director of Religious Education.

Respectfully submitted,

January 17, 1949

Willey H. Mitchell, Clerk

C O P Y

NIEL E. HANSEN
Room 1302, 19 S. LaSalle St.
Chicago 3, Illinois

March 21, 1949

Mr. Hubert U. Moore
First & American National Bank
Duluth 1, Minnesota

Dear Hubert:

I believe you will be interested in the following:

As you know, we made a statistical study for presentation at Cleveland, the information for which was obtained from reports sent to us by Dr. Arthur Wheelock's Committee of Fifteen and by Dr. Philip Widenhouse of the "287" staff. In that there was a rather large discrepancy between the total "Yes" voting churches as reported in our study and the total according to the Summary presented by the Committee of Fifteen, we did considerable checking of the work in order to find the reasons for the difference. We wrote Dr. Wheelock, calling his attention to various items which we had discovered. One of the matters which we called to his attention was that about thirty churches which had previously been reported to us as having voted "No", were not included in the lists of voting churches sent to us by Mr. Widenhouse, and that included in these thirty churches was Duluth, Pilgrim.

I have a reply from Dr. Wheelock, dated March 10th, in which he includes the following paragraph:

"As for churches that 'according to reports which you had before Oberlin had voted No but were not included in our reports or those received by Mr. Widenhouse', the answer is that of course no churches could be recorded unless an official report of ballot was received. I was informed, for instance, that a number of churches in New York State had voted Yes but when I checked with both the New York Conference office and the General Council records, I found no ballot or report had even been received. This may have been due to oversight by the church clerk or some other reason, but we could not accept a vote unless it was official. This is true in the case of Pilgrim Church, Duluth. No record of a vote by that church has ever come to headquarters. Why, I do not know. But since we had no official report we naturally could not record it."

Knowing of the careful procedure followed by your church in taking its vote last year, It was very much of a surprise to us to find that there was no record of it at "287", and we thought we ought to pass this word on to you.

With cordial greetings, I am

Yours very truly,

Niel

FIRST AND AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK
OF DULUTH

DULUTH, MINN.

April 19, 1949

Mr. Frank F. Moore, Assistant Treasurer
The General Council of C.C. Churches
287 Fourth Avenue
New York City, New York

Dear brother Moore:

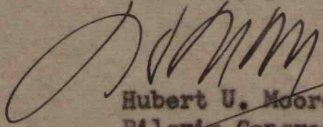
I am informed by our minister you were in charge of statistics relating to balloting on the E & R merger a year ago, hence this letter.

You will observe from the enclosed correspondence, the result of the vote of Pilgrim Church of Duluth, 524 against the merger and 176 in favor, was never tabulated by your office. Although you received a telegram and an air mail letter from Wildey H. Mitchell, our church clerk, and official reports from Dr. W. E. Collins, Minnesota State Superintendent at Minneapolis.

For the benefit of those of our members who might be tempted to suspect this was a deliberate omission, would you mind explaining to me how it all happened.

Awaiting your prompt response, I remain

Sincerely yours,


Hubert U. Moore, Senior Deacon
Pilgrim Congregational Church, Duluth

Address:
Care First & American National Bank
Duluth, Minnesota

HUM:BD
Enc.

April 20, 1949

Frank F. Moore, Assistant Treasurer,
The General Council of C.C. Churches,
287 Fourth Avenue,
New York City, New York.

Dear Sir:

Mr. Hubert U. Moore, Senior Deacon, Pilgrim
Congregational Church of Duluth, has sent to me a copy of
his letter to you dated April 19, 1949 regarding the recording
of the vote of Pilgrim Congregational Church of Duluth on the
proposed merger.

I would appreciate it if you would answer
Mr. Moore's letter either to him or to me, but be good enough
to send me a copy of your answer. I frankly cannot understand
this situation, as I thought I had done everything in my power
to see to it that the vote was properly recorded.

Yours very truly,

Willey H. Mitchell, formerly Clerk
Pilgrim Congregational Church, Duluth

WHM-H

April 21, 1949

Mr. Hubert U. Moore
First and American National Bank
Duluth 1, Minnesota

Re: Pilgrim Congregational Church

Dear Mr. Moore:

I have your letter of the 19th with enclosures. Perhaps it would be advisable to review the method of voting by the churches on the merger.

The churches were requested to report the result of their meeting to the Conference office and the registrar of the Conference tabulated the reports and furnished the Judges of Voting with a signed report covering the summary.

At the request of the Judges of Voting I tabulated the registrar's reports and my report to the Judges of Voting was spot checked by them.

Superintendent Collins sent us his final report dated May 14, 1948 which we received on May 17. The figures from this report are shown on the enclosed report dated June 3rd.

Judging from the copy of the letter to you from Superintendent Collins dated March 28, 1949, it would appear that the vote of your church was included in his report. The registrars were then requested to forward all the church reports to the Judges of Voting and these individual reports were filed in this office but the responsibility for making the total report for each state rested with the registrar and I did not check the individual church reports to determine whether the registrar's report was correct.

The individual church reports were then ordered turned over to Mr. Widenhouse of the Board of Home Missions and were also turned over to the Committee of Fifteen. My connection with the matter ended with the report of June 3rd which is enclosed.

It therefore seems to me that your church report was included in the tabulated report of Superintendent Collins and that any contrary opinion by the Committee of Fifteen is due to some misunderstanding. If Superintendent Collins retained his work sheets from which his report of May 14th was made up, he might be able to verify the matter still further.

Cordially yours,

Frank F. Moore

FFM/lek

TABULATION OF VOTING FROM REGISTRARS' REPORTS BY JUDGES OF VOTING.												June 3, 1948
STATES	TOTAL		VOTING		RESOLUTION #1				RESOLUTION #2			
	Ch's.	Membership	Ch's.	Membership	Churches	Members	Members		Churches	Members	Members	
					For	Agnst	For	Against	For	Agnst	For	Against
Cal.No.	99	22,916	81	18,676	74	7	3,558	683	79	2	3,773	362
Cal.S-S.W.	137	35,629	103	33,100	82	21	5,382	3,466	75	12	4,941	1,753
Colorado	77	14,948	57	13,394	48	9	2,326	646	50	7	2,408	538
Conn.	314	89,248	274	82,173	170	96	13,036	7,126	201	49	14,120	4,492
Florida	34	4,665	26	3,762	22	4	916	175	22	3	906	152
Inter.Mtn.	40	5,013	30	3,862	15	15	527	682	20	7	590	226
Illinois	325	73,599	258	61,585	123	134	10,694	8,797	146	69	8,623	3,587
Indiana	178	19,729	138	16,875	69	68	3,354	2,542	76	45	3,539	1,687
Iowa	204	35,502	163	36,563	76	87	3,497	5,815	103	53	4,545	3,620
Kansas	75	12,601	69	11,333	54	15	2,531	1,088	57	12	2,743	777
Maine	241	22,867	190	20,178	93	96	3,144	3,053	115	41	3,325	1,544
Mass.	589	162,977	432	116,932	308	124	17,356	7,627	312	70	19,471	4,573
Michigan	218	51,344	183	45,178	64	117	5,484	8,646	102	65	6,707	4,181
Middle Atlan.	76	24,700	64	23,664	52	12	4,653	872	46	3	4,286	432
Minnesota	159	29,645	129	27,124	98	30	6,002	2,555	106	18	6,324	1,037
Missouri	39	9,152	33	8,828	25	8	1,967	1,054	28	3	2,123	666
Montana	46	6,151	38	5,410	31	5	1,154	256	36	1	930	89
Nebraska	120	17,970	108	17,085	76	32	3,290	2,385	85	16	3,645	1,382
New Hamp.	170	21,663	117	19,448	75	42	2,839	1,199	90	19	3,024	760
New York	347	66,236	214	53,889	148	64	8,136	4,415	146	36	7,953	2,024
No. Dakota	121	8,811	64	6,578	54	10	1,557	545	54	10	1,310	198
Ohio	329	67,545	221	56,452	187	34	12,734	2,670	193	22	12,499	1,562
Oregon	47	8,471	44	7,587	34	10	2,049	914	34	5	2,076	547
Penn.	108	18,410	91	17,398	38	53	2,722	3,781	48	40	3,110	2,972
Rhode Is.	36	10,503	32	10,132	30	2	2,129	196	30	2	2,082	155
So. Central	29	2,967	18	3,123	9	9	325	363	9	9	268	371
So. Conv.	184	32,789	125	22,437	94	30	3,204	1,323	103	16	3,345	661
So. Dakota	149	12,870	90	9,398	62	27	2,548	1,095	55	12	2,194	495
So. East W	126	8,336	41	3,587	20	21	638	502	28	13	849	236
So. East C	225	20,213	48	4,320	27	21	950	880	28	20	1,026	732
Vermont	183	19,220	157	18,809	129	28	3,579	278	129	28	3,234	217
Washington	124	16,843	82	13,021	49	30	2,011	1,557	57	15	2,217	762
Wisconsin	178	37,671	163	37,005	89	74	7,583	5,712	113	47	8,119	2,859
Hawaii	114	14,990	53	5,187	33	17	1,216	605	42	11	1,375	460
Puerto Rico	22	2,509	18	1,638	18		1,130					
	5,463	1,008,703	3,954	835,731	2,576	1,352	144,221	83,503	2,818	781	147,680	46,108
			72.4%	82.8%	65.5%		63.3%		78%		76%	

The Congregational Conference of Minnesota

429 PALACE BUILDING
MINNEAPOLIS 1, MINNESOTA

AT NEW

April 26, 1949

Dr. W. Ernest Collins, Executive Secretary,
The Congregational Conference of Minnesota,
429 Palace Building,
Nicollet at Fourth,
Minneapolis 1, Minnesota.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find copy of a letter to Mr. Hubert U. Moore dated April 21, 1949. I would appreciate it if you would read this letter and advise me whether you have the work sheets and whether they show that the vote of Pilgrim Congregational Church was included in your report which went on to New York. I have checked our work sheets and we do not have the vote of Pilgrim Church was included in our report which was sent. Please return these enclosures to me. I enclose which was signed by you, as Clerk of the Pilgrim Church, which was a second evidence of the reporting of the vote of your church.

Yours very truly,

You will note that in our last paragraph which Mr. Moore writes in his letter indicates that one record was included in the tabulated report. I do not understand how error crept in.

WHM:H
encl.

cc: Mr. Hubert U. Moore

Cordially yours,

W. Ernest Collins

WEC:JB

The Congregational Conference of Minnesota

429 PALACE BUILDING
Nicollet at Fourth

Minneapolis 1, Minnesota
AT. 5902

REV. GEORGE E. STICKNEY
Director of
Christian Education

REV. RAYMOND H. EWING
Field Superintendent

REV. OMAR J. FLUGUM
Twin Cities Superintendent

REV. KENNETH E. WADE
Minister to Students

REV. W. ERNEST COLLINS, D.D.
Executive Secretary and
Registrar

MR. CLARENCE CHANEY
Conference Moderator

DR. DONALD J. COWLING
Chairman,
Board of Directors

MR. HARRY L. BERGQUIST
Treasurer

MRS. JEANETTE BUSHMAN
Assistant Treasurer

April 27, 1949

Mr. Wildey H. Mitchell
Alworth Building
Duluth 2, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Mitchell:

We have checked our work sheets and we do find that the vote of Pilgrim Church was included in our report which was sent to New York. We also have a copy of a telegram which was signed by you, as Clerk of the Pilgrim Church, which was a second evidence of the reporting of the vote of your church.

You will note that in the last paragraph which Mr. Moore writes in his letter indicating that our report was included in the tabulated report. I do not understand how the error crept in.

With best wishes.

Cordially yours,

WEC:JB

W. Ernest Collins