The Unitarian Church
FOUNDED 1859
NORTH EAST ST., AT EAST JEFFERSON
BLOOMINGTON, ILL.
"The Church af Lincoln's Friends"

AFFILIATED WITH:
AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION, ORG. 1825
THE WESTERN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE, ORG. 1852

KENNETH C. WALKER, MINISTER

"Last-S

"Adlai Stevenson last S nday joined the Presbyterian Church in Lake F rest. S far as his office knows, this doesn't affect his membership in the Unitarian Church in Bloomington, or vice versa. He isn't expected to join any more churches even after he announces his Presidential candidacy next month. While Governor , Stevenson often attended the First Presbyterian Church in Springfield."

From THE CHICAGO DAILY TRIBUNE
October 15, 1955.
a paragraph in the column
Political Outlook.

October 18, 1955.

My dear Governor Stevenson:

Amy Hefferman showed me a clipping from the Chicago Tribune stating that you had joined, I presume formally, the Evanston Presbyterian Church and that your office had indicated that it would not alter your status here as a member of this Unitarian Church.

Apparently Amy is about the only one here who has seen the article. However, the probability is that when someone in the newspaper field picks it up it will get out generally.

We know that newspaper accounts are not always in accord with the facts; that statements and acts are sometimes taken out of context and words are given a different meaning from the accepted meaning. So, it may be with this account. However when the news does break we will probably be asked for an answer to the question, "How can he still be a member of a Unitarian Church and a Presbyterian? Before that question is answered it would be well for us to have a formal statement from you.

We can point out, of course, that so far as our Constitutional requirements on membership are concerned a Presbyterian could join a Unitarian Church. But I suspect he would want to leave behind some of the doctrines still officially on the books.

And as Channing said "No one could be excommunicated from this Church except by the death of goodness in his own breast." So, although Unitarianism may still be considered heretical in the Presbyterian heirarchy, we can draw a circle and take them in!

I am wondering, however, if Presbyterians remain loyal to their doctrines they can in all honesty accept a person who still maintains his membership in the Unitarian church? I still remember that Rev. Eugene Carson Blake, now head of the National Council of Churches in America told a young couple who had been coming to our church in Albany that they could be just as liberal there as in the Unitarian Church. Also Dr. Stoddard told me that they did the same with him. However, he told them that it wasn't possible and never joined.

We would like to have a statement from you as to the exact status so that when inquiries are made we can speak from first hand knowledge.

Sincerely,

C Ø P Y

ADLAI E. STEVENSON
231 S. La Salle St.,
Chicago 4, Illinois.

Dictated
October 28, 1955.

Dear Kenneth:

The story about the church business is not complicated. While in Springfield there was no Unitarian church and I attended the Presbyterian Church, and became a devoted admirer of Dick Graebel, the minister, whom I believe you know. Somewhat at his instigation, when I returned to Lake Forest, there again being no Unitarian Church, I attended the Presbyterian Church from time to time where my old friend Bob Andrus is the pastor. Feeling the want of some church identification thereabouts, I concluded to formalize my membership. Meanwhile, I shall continue to go to, when circumstances permit, to the Unitarian Church at Highwood; and I consider myself no less a Unitarian than before.

I hope there is nothing wrong with this. My understanding was that Unitarians have no objection to membership or association with other churches. I could add that, while living in Chicago, before moving to my little farm in Lake County, I used to attend the Fourth Presbyterian Church where Ray Harrison Anderson, my friend is the minister. There is no Unitarian Church in that vicinity, as you know. Moreover, as you also know, my father's family have been Presbyterians for generations.

I had not thought this would cause any anxiety, and my Presbyterian friends seem to have none.

I hope some time we can talk this over and I shall call Mr. Hilton, who has telephoned me, at the first opportunity. If you want a little formal statement of some kind in addition to the foregoing and feel there is necessity for one, I shall be glad to try to prepare something.

Cordially,

s/Adlai

Rev. Kenneth Walker
Unitarian Church,
Bloomington, Illinois.

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Cordially,

s/Adlai

Rev. Kenneth Walker
Unitarian Church,
Bloomington, Illinois.

COPY OF HAND WRITTEN LETTER TO KCW

Original filed in safe.

ADLAI E. STEVENSON
231 S. La Salle St.,
Chicago.

Dear Kenneth:

I have seen your letter of 11/13 to Miss Evans, my secretary, but I have not seen the letter from Mr. Caldecott. At all events, your letter prompts me to drop what I am doing (writing my ~~Acceptance~~ Announcement) and write you at once.

I assume you are my friend and anxious to help me. My chief need as a Christian is and has been, since I lived on my farm West of Lake forest, identification with a Christian Community within convenient reach. There is, as you know, no Unitarian Church in Lake Forest or Libertyville, and I have gone to the Pres. ch. in L.F. from time to time for many years. I did the same in Springfield for four years.

I hope you will understand if I say to you now that my chief need as a human being is to have my friends understand this and not complicate my very complicated life with dogmatic controversy.

I would also hope that you (underscored) might help put an end to all the inquiries, talk and what not that you mention.- and even pray for me!

Cordially,

Adlai E. Stevenson.

Nov. 15, 55.

November 17, 1955.

My dear Adlai:

There is so much that ought to be said and so little space and time to say it! And there are so many opportunities for misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

I will sould very trit to say, but I believe you will understand "Life is so very complicated these days!"

I will, of course, do what lies in my power to interpret the news about your church situation. Actually I haven't known what was the best procedure to follow. To present your reason as given in your recent letter, or to give the matter - as they say -"the silent treatment."

This much I do know, I don't want this issue to hurt your possibility of securing the nomination. Quite frankly many of us feel that you are the only suitably qualified candidated from all points of view, but mostly from what I shall call the philosophical point of view, as well as your grasp of all that is involved in international relations, plus your practical experience

As to my ability to influence peoples' opinions or attitudes in this particular denominational issue I can only say I feel it is very local and very limited. And as you have already learned it is precisely in this area, unfortunately, that reason seldom reigns supreme!

It has been suggested that I meet with as many of our people as care to, to hear the facts traight from the original source, namely your letters. This meeting has been sggested for next Sunday. As yet I have had no final confirmation.

I believe we now have enough factual material to provide proper replies to the questions raisde. And, again, as you well know there are those for whom there is no "proper answer". They don't want the facts.

One thing I am sure about. This is about the toughest time in history to be running for the Presidency! Taking over after the present administration's policies and practices, a world in upheaval(including religion) and personal problems. You have a right to all the moral and spiritual support any and all of us can offer.

If this letter is less than satisfactory it is because I have been trying to compose it in an office which is now cashier's office for the Fair, and information headquarters, employment bureau, etc. Floy Fleming is the cashier and Bob Price, asst.

Ever sincerely,

R C W.

December 7, 1955.

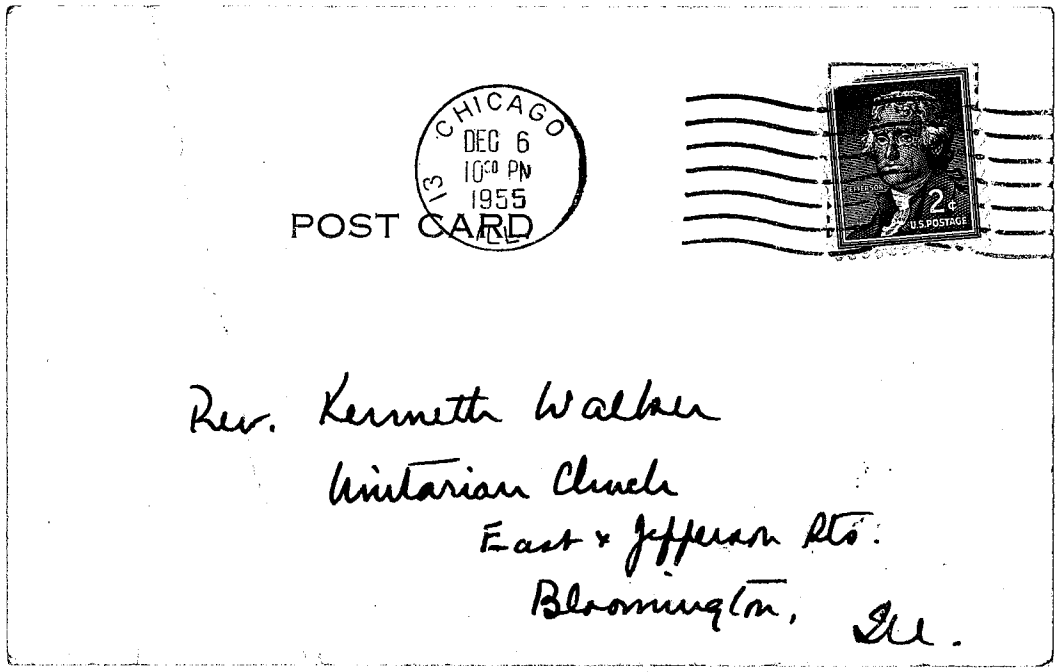
My dear Adlai:

Filling in the date - December 7th., an anniversary of Pearl Harbor - I expect you feel as though it was being ennacted all over again. It is most unfortunate that in the midst of this all important task you have to get involved in what I suppose we can call a sectarian battle.

I will do my best to be on hand the 15th., and will hope that Jack can meet with us. I'll see if we can't have a little preliminary conference before arrivingat your office. My plane gets in in ample time to get me down into the loop for a talk with Jack.

If the plane should be gxounded then I'd be sunk for the first train up is No. 2 at 11.51 which gets in at 2.05! However, if the weather is really threatening the night before I might try and make No.6, which leaves here at 4.00 a.m!

Sincerely,



Rev. Kenneth Walker
Unitarian Church
East & Jefferson Sts.
Bloomington, Ill.

x 231 No. La Salle St. Room 887

ST. MARYS ROAD LIBERTYVILLE, ILLINOIS

Dear Kenneth – In order to resolve this church business which seems to have grown to unexpected proportions, I'm asking Dick Graebe and Bob Andrus (Lake Forest) to meet in my office* at 11 on Dec. 15 to talk it over with me – and with you, I hope – and help me work out some sort of uniform statement as answer to the inquiries. I think I'll ask my old friend Jack Mendelsohn too. Can you make it? Yrs, Adlai

Urbana + Alton replied by phone

December 9, 1955.

To Ministers at Alton, Evahston, Chicago,(Pennington) Urbana, St. Louis. Cedaxx Rapids, Louisville, Ky

Dear

Adlai Stevenson has asked me to meet with him in his office on the 15th to discuss with the Rev. Mr Graeble, Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Ill., and Rev. Robt. Andrus of the Lake Forest Presbyterian Church the situation created by his "formalizing" his connection with the Lake Forest Church. (Presb.) I am assuming that this meeting is for the purpose of formulating some sort of answer to inquiries and criticisms regarding the dual nature of his Church Membership.

I believe it would help me if you would summarize the comments, criticisms, etc., you have heard within your Church and what people in other churches are saying; particularly Presbyterians.

At the same time I will pass on to you the facts in regard to this dual relationship.

First of all, we have been informed that the Presbytery at Lake Forest did not require the traditional procedure, namely, subscribing to the Westminster Confession of Faith and the later revisions. Nor did they see any obstacle to his "formalizing" his relationship with this Church while still maintaining his membership in the Unitarian Church of Bloomington.

In addition we need to take into consideration the fact that his father and grandfather were life-long Presbyterians. His mother was a devoted Unitarian. His sister writes in the Ladies Home Journal that he, they both, attended the Sunday School as young children. And while Adlai was Governor of the State he signed the Church Roll. When the Sunday before election day came he volunteered to attend service at this Church. And he has been a subscriber for a long time.

However, in addition to the fact that his father's side of the house were Presb., he was married in the Fourth Presb. Ch. of Chicago. When he took up his residence in Libertyville since there was no unitarian Church n ear than Evanston (40 m.) he did attend the Lake Forest Presb. Ch. The "formalizing"of his connection with this Church at this time was prompted because he felt the need of some connection with a Christian Community.

I will contact you after this meeting.

Ken Walker.

the unitarian church of evanston

Homer A. Jack, Ph. D., MINISTER

Pub. his letter form
Statement for ministerial
consumption + newspapers
to parishioners

December 13, 1955

To press - or give artist treatment

Rev. Kenneth C. Walker
The Unitarian Church
North East Street at E. Jefferson
Bloomington, Illinois

Dear Ken:

We have all been disturbed by the rumors and then the firm reports of Adlai's switch, if it is a switch.

At first I couldn't believe the rumors; and then when the news was given in the papers, I felt that perhaps I was responsible for not trying to tie him into the Evanston church, even though we are at some distance from Half Day. I felt reluctant to pressure him even to coming here, let alone trying to snuggle up to him--ecclesiastically.

One reason we helped establish the North Shore Fellowship was to serve outlying Unitarians, although we didn't have him principally in mind. Soon after it was organized, they approached him and, as you know, he came on rare occasion. I think it fair to say that any new fellowship is not the best foot foreward, although the North Shore Fellowship has not needed to have lay ministers and is quite a respectable show as Fellowships go. Certainly, however, it cannot compete with the Lake Forest Presbyterian Church, either in architecture, program, or socialite membership.

I don't know what his motives are to make this switch. I would hope they are not quite the same as Eisenhower's in joining the church in Washington. And yet whatever happens, I myself would try to be understanding of Adlai and would try to transmit this to my people--several of whom have already raised eyebrows at the news.

Certainly, and above all, you should not feel that you have failed to do your all. He has been away from Bloomington these four--or eight--years and it has been beyond your power. If he cares to talk

to other Unitarians about it, I'm sure Preston Bradley would be persuasive, and I know him slightly. Certainly, he won't gain many if any votes by a major switch at this late date; as I get the temper of the American people, 1955 variety, it is for a politico to be a member of some church, any church, even Unitarian, rather than no church. He himself told us in late 1952 that his Unitarian label really didn't hurt, except in one or two places in the south.

Good luck--and keep me informed of the outcome.

Kindest regards.

Cordially,

Homer

Homer A. Jack

REPRODUCTION OF A LETTER TO ADLAI E. STEVENSON DRAFTED AS A RESULT OF CONFERENCE OF FOUR SIGNATORIES.

Dear Governor:

We, your friends and pastors most intimately familiar with your church affiliations, want you to have our views.

We believe you feel a sincere and profound need for religion, and that your Unitarian rearing has deeply impressed you with the importance of translating religious and ethical values into concrete forms of civic responsibility. We know, too, that from wife experience and in keeping with the best in Judeo-Christian tradition you feel that men of good will everywhere and under whatever religious banner share common spiritual aspirations for honor, dignity and fulfillment.

While we understand that you respect theologians, we know that doctrinal rigidity has never limited the comfort you find in Christian faith, worship and fellowship. So, while Governor of Illinois, there being no Unitarian Church in Springfield, you attended the Presbyterian Church. Confronted with the same situation when you returned to your farm home, we Presbyterians urged you not only to use, as you had from time to time for many years, but to be a member of the nearby Presbyterian Church of Lake Forest. Your membership was accepted with the understanding that you would maintain your life-long affiliation with the Unitarian Church of Bloomington, your home town.

We understand and approve your feeling that there is no inconsistency with a broad religious outlook, in continuing to draw strength from your Unitarian heritage while worshipping with your Presbyterian friends and neighbors, and, on your travels, in other Protestant churches as well. Descended from active Unitarians on your mother's side and equally active Presbyterians, including many ministers, on your fathers side, we understand perfectly that you have found a local church home without forsaking a lifelong commitment and that you have also united your praental religious endowments.

We hope that your concern will be, as always, that your fellow Americans shall find in their varying religious faiths the spiritual confidence to enable this nation to provide firm moral leadership in a deeply troubled world.

Please never hesitate to look to us for help if we can give it to you in our ministerial calling as Presbyterians and Unitarians.

s/Richard Paul Graebel
First Presbyterian Church
Springfield, Illinois.

s/ Robert Andrus
First Presbyterian Church
Lake Forest, Illinois.

s/ Kenneth C. Walker
Unitarian Church
Bloomington, Illinois.

s/ Jack Mendelsohn
All Soul's Unitarian Church
Indianapolis, Indiana.

December 15, 1955

Mr. Adlai E. Stevenson
231 South La Salle Street
Chicago 4, Illinois

Dear Governor:

We, your friends and pastors most intimately familiar with your church affiliations, want you to have our views.

We believe you feel a sincere and profound need for religion, and that your Unitarian rearing has deeply impressed you with the importance of translating religious and ethical values into concrete forms of civic responsibility. We know, too, that from wide experience and in keeping with the best in the Judeo-Christian tradition you feel that men of good will everywhere and under whatever religious banner share common spiritual aspirations for honor, dignity and fulfillment.

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Please never hesitate to look to us for help if we can give it to you in our ministerial calling as Presbyterians and Unitarians.

Rev. Richard Paul Graebel
First Presbyterian Church
Springfield, Illinois

Rev. Kenneth Walker
Unitarian Church
Bloomington, Illinois

Rev. Robert Andrus
First Presbyterian Church
Lake Forest, Illinois

Rev. Jack Mendelsohn
All Soul's Unitarian Church
Indianapolis, Indiana

the unitarian church of evanston

Homer A. Jack, Ph. D., MINISTER

December 21, 1955

Rev. Kenneth Walker
201 E. Jefferson Street
Bloomington, Illinois

Dear Ken,

I was glad to receive your letter and the enclosed release, although I read part of the release in Sunday's Chicago Sun-Times.

Yes, this situation has been difficult for you. I would be glad to hear further from you about the point you raise in your letter about dual membership. I, in my own mind, am not clear, and I should be because many of my own members are asking what I think about the Stevenson thing. I feel I must write an editorial on it in my church newsletter and am even thinking about preaching on the situation in January, for--as I need not tell you--it has vast public interest, since it combines politics with religion, either one which can raise an emotional lather.

Please tell me, for the record or off the record, what your feelings are in the matter. I want to be fair to Adlai, but also to Unitarianism; and I know there is a tendency on the part of some of us to try to snuggle up to Adlai just in case he does become President someday and perhaps then he'll remember us favorably--and invite us once to the White House if not make us Secretary of State! But the thinking on this should be straight, and without any other ulterior considerations.

I would cherich your comments. And a Merry Christmas.

Cordially,

Homer

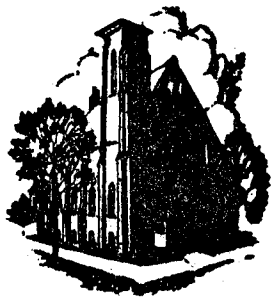
Homer A. Jack

1405 Chicago Avenue • Evanston, Illinois • Telephone GReenleaf 5-0757

Sixty-three years of religious liberalism on the North Shore

Affiliated with the Council of Liberal Churches (Universalist-Unitarian)

The
PEOPLES CHURCH
THIRD AVENUE AT SIXTH STREET, S.E.
CEDAR RAPIDS IOWA
WALDEMAR ARGOW MINISTER



December 22, 1955

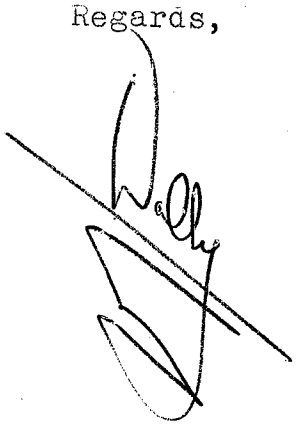
Dear Ken,

This is just a line to apologize profusely for not having answered your letter of December 9 before now. I had intended to reply to it immediately, but it got buried in one of those piles of correspondence that builds up at this time of year, and this apology is the sad result.

My answer will come too late to be of any help with the problem you raised, but my feeling about it, anyhow, is this: I have no objection at all to the idea of dual membership, and neither do our people here. In fact, I think it might often help us a good deal in our liberal churches. We frequently have people attending our services here and very much interested in the church who are members of more orthodox churches. Usually for family reasons, they don't like to sever ties with the other church. If they didn't have to, thanks to a dual membership arrangement, the problem would be lessened considerably.

Best of wishes to you for the holiday season and the new year!

Regards,



December 26, 1955.

Dear Homer:

Your letter has gone unanswered for a few days as Nan died early Thursday morning last. Death came rather suddenly and rather unexpectedly for she had seemed so much better this last monthor so. In fact we were planning to go to New Jersey for her niece's wedding on Christmas afternoon.

According to the autopsy death was due to hardening of the bloodvessels in the heart. There is, of course, some consolation that she did not have to linger and suffer. I am sure that this last month was the happiest since her first heart attack.

It is not going to be easy to carry on, but I do have a good many friends and interests so I'll get along.

Of course this religious situation has been disturbing. Primarily because the only concl sion I can come to is that Adlai just does not understand the Unitarian position. He, like many others who, supposedly have gown up in a Unitarian church are ignorant of its history, of the influences that brought the movement into being. Possibly they may know it factually, but they do not comprehend nor appreciate its substance.

I think he really believes he is a Unitarian. He gave me the impression of being somewhat amazed that this act of his has caused so much concern. Sometimes I have had the feeling that he is more naive in some respects than we usually expect of a man that seems to be of his intellectual calibre.

It is my conviction that he has been taken for something of a ride by the Presbyterian boys. Graeble particularly. I had the feeling that Andrus was too happy about it. Graeble is, to my way of thinking a typical Rotarian and something of a politician. I cannot accept a man who will say that - as he did - in my presence that "After all there is no real difference between Presbyterians and the other Protestant churches, except polity." That statement savors to me of abmysmal igorance of Unitarianism, or willful effort to distort the picture.

I strongly suspect that this move of Adlai's was motivated more by a desire to be with friends who have common interests and perhaps common social standing. I doubt if politics was primarily the motive. At least consciously.

There were other aspects of the meeting that I didn't like. Sometime when I see you I may reveal them.

Sincerely,

October 18, 1955.

Dear Frederick:

You may, and you may not have heard that Adlai has apparently joined the Lake Forest Presbyterian Church. This news came out in the CHICAGO TRIBUNE last Saturday in a column on political forecasting, or something like it. One ofour parisheners happened to pick it up. And she has been a close friend of Adlai's.

As it happened Randall and Gladys were stopping over on their way back from Alton so when I told him about it he said he would make inquiries when he got back. He called Carol Evans, Adlai's personal secretary and she did not come out flat footed and say he had joined formally but did say that it was assumed it would not alter his status in the Bloomington Church! That was brought out in the newspaper account.

Strangely enough no other paper seems to have picked it up and I called our local editor to see if anything on it had come through on the wire services. He had seen nothing as of Monday.

What Adlai will have to say when he gets back from New York remains to be seen. Randall is going to try and reach him before he goes (Randall) to Iowa City.

However, if it does get out on the wire services, etc., you will probably be questioned as to what it means. How come a Unitarian can join a Presbyterian Church, and still hold his membership in the Unitarian Church! That is, in a sense, the $64,000.00 question! From all that he has written and said publically about liberalism I find it a bit hard to see how he could formally join a Presbyterian Church. Unless the Presbyterians have told him he could be just as liberal in the Presbyterian Church as in the Unitarian. This Eugene Blake, when he was in Albany did with one of our couples. And they told Dr. Stoddard the same thing. Dr. Stoddard, however, told them in no uncertain terms that you couldn't be and never went near them.

Adlai's sister told me last winter or spring that Graeble the Presbyterian minister in Springfield tried his best to get Adlai to join the Presbyterians. Then he decided not to. I suspect that they may have followed this procedure in Chicago. But as you know his father was a Presbyterian. And so far as I can find out his direct contact with this Church was very slight and quite intermittent. To be sure his mother was a member and he did hear a good deal about the Unitarian Church and something of Unitarian principles. But actually there was little influence there that would have impressed itself upon his mind and heart, so far as I can determine. He has never come under any extended direct influence of a Unitarian Church since arriving at adulthood. Moreover, he married a non-Unitarian Furthermore, in his social life he has had little contact with Uni-

So far as I can gather this particular move has been stimulated, I expect, by the fact that, as Carol Evans told Randall, so many of his friends are in Lake Forest and go there. And Bill Blair is a member of the Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago and Adlai has gone there frequently.

But I strongly suspect that another influence is political consideration. From what one has been reading lately I gather he is out to get the nomination and will be more politically minded than before. And we know his religious affiliation at that time was a hindrance in some places so they soft peddaled the fact that he belonged to the Unitarian Church.

And I think it is no help to Unitarianism that his sister is more of a Christian Scientist than Unitarian although her name appears on the book. She thinks we are a "godless" bunch here. And her husband has told one of our parishoners quite frankly that Adlai is no Unitarian, but much more of a Presb terian. Ernest was in pretty close contact with him while he was Governor and has, naturally been close to the family by virtue of being his brother-in-law.

The above account will give you something of the background so far as his religious outlook is concerned. Oh, Yes, Carl Voss told me when he was out here last year that Adlai is a great admirer of Niebuhr. Well, Neibuhr and Unitarianism don't seem to go along to my mind.

I presume it is perfectly legitimate for Unitarians to say that a Presbyterian could join our Church, but for a Presbyterian to say a Unitarian could join the Presbyterian church and still remain a Unitarian is not, to my way of thinking, legitimate. If this breaks in print I'm wondering if we shouldn't challenge this. And I must say if this proves to be true I wonder about his intellectual honesty and if you question that there is always the feeling that it could go further!

His connection with this Church and contact with my ministry has been so tenuous I have never felt that I could, in the full sense of the word think of myself as "his minister" So I haven't felt that I could function in that capacity. In other words, this means that I don't feel I could go up to Chicago and counsel with him on this situation. Or at least to point out what such an act implies.

When we hear further we will let you know.

Sincerely,

November 2 1955.

Dear Frederick:

Here is a copy of the letter that came from Adlai today.

To me it is not very satisfactory. Perhaps the motivation that led him to "formalize" his membership at Lake Forest was a normal one - if his primary interest is in "identification" with some church, to be attached to some church, rather than none.

It does raise the question whether "formalizing" membership in this way is the result of depth of conviction in regard to the principles and purposes for which a church stands.

Moreover, it seems to me it reveals a rather fuzzy knowledge of what Unitarians stand for. In other words, it seems to me, if he had a deep conviction for the worth of complete freedom of thought, the unrestricted use of reason and the practise of generous tolerance he wouldn't feel completely honest it signing up with the Presbyterians.

And if the minister and the Presbyters of that Church were that lenient that they could admit a Unitarian into "formal" membership in a Presbyterian Church they are virtually saying these doctrines don't mean anything.

Well, he is to be in town Saturday when they have a tea for him at his sister's home and we have been invited so I may have a chance to talk with him; probably very briefly.

If anything further develops I will let you know.

I would be glad to have your evaluation of this step of Adlai's.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
25 Beacon Street Boston 8, Massachusetts

FREDERICK MAY ELIOT
PRESIDENT

November 4, 1955

Dear Kenneth:

Thank you for your note of November 2, with the copy of the letter to you from Adlai Stevenson.

It seems to me that you are entirely right in saying that this incident reveals "a rather fuzzy knowledge of what Unitarians stand for." Perhaps when you see Governor Stevenson at his sister's home, you can start a process of adult education that will result in a firmer stand. However, I am inclined to think that politics is the main cause, and Unitarians don't control very many votes -- if any!

With grateful appreciation to you for keeping me in touch, and with a real sympathy for the difficult situation that this incident has put you in.

Faithfully yours,

Frederick

Rev. Kenneth C. Walker
The Unitarian Church
North East Street at East Jefferson
Bloomington, Illinois

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
25 Beacon Street Boston 8, Massachusetts

FREDERICK MAY ELIOT
PRESIDENT

November 15, 1955

Dear Kenneth:

Your letter of November 9 with the enclosed carbon copy of a draft of a letter to Governor Stevenson reached my desk yesterday and I have been giving a good deal of thought to it, thus far without any definite result. The situation is certainly delicate and it would be very easy to do more harm then good - both to Governor Stevenson and to the Unitarian cause.

Once the question of his religious affiliation is raised in the public press, there will probably be a considerable number of unofficial comments that may recieve wide circulation. It would be my suggestion that there might also be at that time two official comments - one from you, as minister of the Unitarian church of which Governor Stevenson is a member, and the other from me. The two statements ought to be completely consistent with each other and I think they should also be brief.

It seems to me at the present moment that the point which we should both carefully avoid raising is the question of intellectual and spiritual integrity. If that question is to be raised at all, it ought to come from the orthodox side. From our point of view, as I see it, the basic principle is the complete sovereignty of the individual mind and conscience which membership in a Unitarian church affirms and reinforces without even the slightest attempt to prescribe how any individual will work out his own answers to religious and ethical questions. We retain, of course, the right to differ with the answers themselves, but our primary concern is to acknowledge the inalienable right of the individual to make his own decisions with respect both to his religious beliefs and his own line of conduct.

All this is obviously elementary, but it seems to me the sole ground on which a Unitarian church or a spokesman for the body of our churches can safely stand.

Won't you give me the benefit of your thinking on this whole matter, especially my suggestion of two statements. I have reached no conclusions whatever as to the wise course to pursue and I am really thinking aloud as I write this letter to you.

With grateful appreciation,

Faithfully yours,

Frederick.

Rev. Kenneth C. Walker
Unitarian Church of Bloomington
North East St., at East Jefferson
Bloomington, Illinois

November 19, 1955.

Dear Frederick:

You are quite right. Whatever public statement is made should be in accord with each other.

The proposed letter I mailed was essentially written to sort of clarify whatever thinking I could do on the subject, and to form the basis of a possible statement by our board.

The Chairman of our Board, John Kinneman, is strongly in favor of giving the whole matter the silent treatment. Well, maybe we won't be able to. Certainly I am not in favor of stirring up unnecessary controversy over this.

Now I wrote to John Wolf, a former member of our Church and one time Presbyterian. Now minister at Meadville. I thought he would know from first hand knowledge the Presbyterian practises with regard to such procedure. What he wrote me was interesting, not only from the point of view of Presbyterian practises, but from shedding a different light upon this matter of joining the Lake Forest Church.

I will quote from that letter.

"Dear Ken,

I was glad to hear from you although not so pleased at the contents of your letter. I had begun to suspect from some things I head while still in the Chicago area that such a thing was in the offing. I mean by this particularly a conversation which Wallace Robbins had with Stevenson upon the occasion of Wallace's preaching at the Highland Park Fellowship once a year ago this fall. Stevenson apparently expressed at that time his feeling of need for 'spiritual' sustenance. As I recall he was reported to have said that his illness, not to mention his defeat in the presidential election, together with some corresponding emotions tied up in the fact that even at the pinnacle of his prestige he felt that underneath girding him up he needed the "everlasting arms" had led him to question his Unitarianism, especially in so far as that Unitarianism incessantly spoke of man's ability for self-reliance and confidence.

I don't mean to imply that this <u>was</u> or <u>is</u> his underlying motive in joining a Presbyterian Church. Nevertheless, I think that we should face up to the <u>possibility</u> that there is an element of political expediency involved, and that the case may be that he has not joined the Presbyterians so much to appear religiously acceptable, as he has retained his nominal ties with the Unitarians to avoid an unpleasant scene. Or to put it bluntly; his motives add up to the fact that he wants to join the Presbyterian Church for personal reasons and retain his tieswith us for political ones."

A week or so back Ernest Caldecott wrote me enclosing a letter he wanted Adlai to have. I forgot to give it to him when I went to the tea that "Buffy" had for him. Then I forgot to enclose it in a letter I wrote to Carol Evans, his personal secretary. And finally found it again and sent it on. In that letter I put in an appendage regarding the situation down here which read as follows:

"Apparently the fact that the Governor has become a member of the Lake Forest Presbyterian Church has begun to spread around. Inquires are beginning to come in on "How come a man can be a member of a Unitarian CHurch and a Presbyterian Church at the same time?" People are beginning to ask me how one who was brought up in the Unitarian faith can accept Presbyterianism. In the mnds of most people what the two faiths stand forare so far apart that they seem to contradict one another. I believe it was a mistake politically to have 'formalized' his connection with this Church. The plain fact of the matter is that Presbyterianism and Unitarianism are not alike by any means, in the conception of the nature of religion and the basis of membership. This is highlighted by the fact that the Presbyterians are accepted in the National Council of Churches of Christ in America and Unitarians and Universalists are not. The one is orthodox, the other liberal; at least so far as the official statements of the Presbyterian Church are concerned. The Westminster Confession of Faith is still the foundation stone ofPresbyterianism and this places membership on a creedal basis. This is what the average person in the street associates with joining the Presbyterian church; subscribing to a creed and therefore he is going to find it a bit confusing to say the least, that a man can be a member of the Unitarian household of faith and then join a Presbyterian.

Many people are not going to put the interpretation upon it the Governor would like to have. The motivation which prompted this move will be, in fact is being interpreted, in other way's than the Governor explains.

His friends may understand, but both orthodox and liberal church members will not and I suspect his political opponents may make capital out of it.

Sincerely,

s/ Kenneth C. Walker.

A few days later I received the following handwritten letter.

Dear Kenneth-

I have received your letter of 11/13 to Miss Evans, my secretary, but I have not seen the letter from Mr. Caldecott. At all events, your letter prompts me to drop what I am doing (writing my "announcement") and write you at once.

I ~~assure~~ assume you are my friend and anxious to help me. My chief need as a Christian is and has been, since I lived on my farm West of Lake Forest, identification with a Christian community within convenient reach. There is, as you know, no Unitarian Church in Lake Forest or Libertyville and I have gone to the Presbyterian Church in L.F. from time to time for many years. I did the same in Springfield four years.

I hope you will understand if I say to you now that my chief need as a human being is to have my friends understand this and not complicate my very complicated life with dogmatic controversy.

I would also hope that you might help put an end to all the inquiries, talk and what not that you mention - and even pray for me!

Cordially -

s/Adlai E? Stevenson.

Nov. 15, 1955.

Then I drafted a reply which I showed to some of our people, both of them close personal friends of Adlai. (Now apparently in all the confusion of of this office being used as Fair headquarters, cahsier's office, information center, etc., I have apparently either sent the carbon along with the original or misplaced it. If and when it turns up I'll send it on so as to keep your file complete. The gist of the letter was to the effect that I would do all in my power to prevent misunderstanding and misinterpretation. I pointed out that my influsnce was local and limited and that there are people when presented with the facts still prefer to believe what they want to.

I am surprised that more papers haven't taken it up, but the campaign isn't under way yet. However there are several people here who are quite disturbed and fell let down.

I will keep you in touch with any developments that appear in this area.

Sincerely,

December 7, 1955.

Dear Jack:

With your lett this morning came a handwritten card from Adlai asking me to take part in a "meeting at the summit" with Graeble from Springfield, Andrus from Lake Forest and yourself. The purpose of this conference is to formulate some kind of statement to give to the public- I presume) on his dual religious affiliations. Criticism, apparently, has grown (quote "to unexpected proportions." I suspect this is from both sides. That is some Presbyterians as well as some Unitarians are critical of his dual relationship.

I thought maybe I better write you what my thinking is on the matter so that we won't be too far apart!

My first thinking in the matter so far as the Unitarian position is concerned is to use the statement in the AUA Constitution on who may belong and who may not. Then our own Statement of Purpose and Bond of Union and statement as to Membership aulificatiens for legal status.

Possibly it would be well for us to also consider the use of Earl Morse Wilbur's statement regarding the characteristics of the Unitarian movement, namely, Complete freedom of Belief, Unrestricted use of Reason, and the Practise of Generous Tolerance.

And as I wrote Adlai when we first read about this in THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE, there is nothing in our Constitution that would prevent a Presbyterian from becoming a member of our Church, but I suspected he would want to leave behind him some of the doctrines still officially on the books!

I also quoted Channing's well known statement, "That no one would ever be excommunicated from this church except by the death of goodness in his own heart."

I have pointed out, nowever, that the contrast between the two interpretations of religion and the basis of membership is high lighted by the fact that Unitarians are not accepted in the National Council, whereas , Presbyterians are.

It seems to me that all we can do, or the most that we can do is to state the basis of membership in this Unitarian church and indicate that there is no doctrine, official ruling, canon, or what have you that prevents a member of this church from becoming affiliated with any other church , provided their official basis of membership permits it and the person doesn't have to violate the basic principles of Unitarianism.

I shall consult with some of our people for I shall, of course, be speaking in the name of this Church.

I shall have to fly up for we don't have any good train service. My plane from here - if it isn't grounded - will get in in time for me to get down town well in davnace of the 11 o'clock appointment. I could meet you in the waiting room of the Union Station - I presume you would be coming in on the Pennsy. We could then plan our statement and strategy.

This whole thing could have been avoided if he had only consulted with some Unitarian minister before making this move. I think we would have advised making any formal connection with the Lake Side orLake Forest Presbyterian Church - at least until after the campaign was over.

And I can't get away from the thought that if he <u>really</u> understood the Unitarian position in religion he would see that Presbyterianism and Unitarianism are not in the same framework of thought at all. Of course, everyone tells me this fellow Graeble is a ~~very liberal~~ <u>preacher</u>, and has taken some courageous stands on controversial issues. None the less <u>officially</u> Presbyterianism is still pretty orthodox and its <u>official</u> basis of membership is creedal in nature. To be sure there is as I understand it an associate membership category which doesn't require a person to subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith. That is, to me, tantamount to saying, "Well, we don't take these doctrines too seriously. So, we won't insist upon subscription to them." All right. If they are outmoded, a nusiance, etc., than why not demand that they be rescinded! In other words if you don't like a law, disregard it.

Gene Blake told Stoddard he could be just as liberal in the Presbyterian as in the Unitarian. Stoddard told him, in no uncertain terms, you couldn't. They have told that same story to some of our people's friends and then when they came up for membership slipped over the doctrinal requirements.

And, of course, this procedure isn't peculiar to Presbyterians. A lot of other churches do it.

Well, we have gone afield from Adlai's needs, etc., but I doubt if we even make a statement it is going to change the attitudes of those who are already critical, and some hostile. They are not going to understand the underlying motive that prompted this move.

Until the 15th., we'll be thinking it over. I might say if the weather should be stormy and the plane grounded I just wouldn't be able to make it. The first train out of here after No.8., is No. 2 which leaves at 11.51 and gets in at 2.08.

Sincerely,

November 9, 1955.

Dear Frederick:

The more I think about this move of Adlai's and what he told Randall - in addition to my letter from him - the association is very much a matter of convenience as well as politics. I mean by that that apparently the Prebytery didn't gag adding Adlai to the roll even when he explained he still considered himself a member of the Unitarian church.

That stand, to me, savors very much of making a compromise with the official rulings in regard to membership. It would seem that the Wesminster Confession of Faith was more honored in the breech than in the observance.

But what keepspopping up in my mind is that when a public figure like Adlai does a thing of that kind it becomes a public matter and therefore people are going to ask, in fact they are, "How come; Adlai can belong to a Unitarian church and a Presbyterian church simultaneously?" This means that our own people, i.e., members of our church here, should be briefed on what membership requirements in both churches are and the basis upon which he was admitted to the Lake Forest Presbyterian church. The orthodox are going to wonder - for if he had been a bona fide Unitarian they would know he couldn't become a Presbyterian.

When this business breaks in the press, as it most surely will when the campaign starts there will be various reactions moving all the way from credulity, confusion, to scepticism and hostility. For this reason it seems to me we are in duty bound to make some sort of a public declaration and somehow I feel we ought to point out the contrast between the two attitudes of mind regarding the basis of membership and perhaps bring out that while the Presbyterians are accepted in the National Council of Churches Unitarians are not. I am proposing this procedure to our board.

Since the Unitarian church has been brought into this I believe we must clarify our position in someway. Would be glad to have you comments on this proposed procedure.

Sincerely,

December 12, 1955.

Dear Frederick:

To keep you in touch with developments regarding Adlai's dual-membership.

A few days ago I had a handwritten request to join with Mr. Graeble and Mr. Andrus, Presbyterian ministers at Springfield and Lake Forest, together with Jack Mendelsohn to work out some kind of joint statement!

I immediately wrote Jack what was on my mind as to the kind of statement to be presented at this conference from the Unitarian point of view. In the meantime I have received a statement from Jack. I enclose copies of both.

I recognize in Jack's statement a broader approach and one that has considerable finesse - shall we say political finesse. I think he must have been born a diplomat. I would be willing to go along with it for a public statement.

However, since we have corresponded NEWSWEEK of Dec. 12th has come out with a statement to the effect that Adlai was admitted into membership through baptism and confession of faith. He told Randall that he signed nothing. Something is screwy somewhere. Moreover at the conclusion Bob Andrus states that "Mr. Stevenson feels at home in both households of faith." Very broad position on his part, but what are converted Presbyterians and other orthodox converts going to say? Can you be at home in both households of faith? And to me this situation raises the question as to whether or not Unitarianism does represent something unique and distinct, or is it just a little more liberal wing of Protestantism. If it is this then why bother to maintain a separate organization? Why subject oneself to the criticisms, if not smears, that have been flung at Unitarians. Why does the National Council of Churches of Christ in America exclude us?

I have intimated to Jack in my last letter that I felt we should not sanction any statement for public consumption until we presented it to you, or to Randal. I felt we should not give the impression to the public that we are speaking for Unitarians without your having at least a chance to see what had been formulated.

I will let you know immediately what happens. I suppose, too, a copy should go to the Public Relations Div. of CLC.

Sincerely,

CLASS OF SERVICE
This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION
TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS
DL=Day Letter
NL=Night Letter
LT=International Letter Telegram

(44)

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

SA115 BB175

1955 DEC 14 AM 10 48

B ZJA027 PD=ZJ BOSTON MASS 14 1143AME=

REV KENNETH C WALKER=

201 EAST JEFFERSON ST BLOOMINGTON ILL=

PLEASE EXPRESS TO GOVERNOR STEVENSON MY WARM PERSONAL REGARDS AND MY VERY EARNEST HOPE THAT THE SPRITUAL BONDS OF THE UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP MAY INCREASINGLY PROVE SIGNIFICANT TO HIM AND TO US=

FREDERICK MAY ELIOT=

Adlai; happens kind —

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

December 16, 1955.

My dear Frederick:

While I asked the Governor to send you a copy of the enclosed it may not get to you for a few days they are so busy there.

This is largely the product of Jack Mendelsohn's mind. It was modified some at the meeting.

You will note that in paragraph two the statment that "we Presbyterians urged you etc." This I was glad to see.

This letter is supposed to go to those who make inquiries about his dual relationship. How much beyond that it will go I don't know. I am still uncertain in my own mind as to whether or not Unitarians should come out with a statement setting forth their own position in the matter. That I realize is a difficult one for in a sense there is no "official position." But this theoretically, at any rate, is supposed to represent a statement of the ministers involved, and not the churches, or Unitarians.

How this statement will be received by both Unitarians and orthodox people remains to be seen. He has had a lot of correspondence and I gathered that this has surprised him.

I was annoyed to have Gaeble say that "actually there was no difference among Protestant churches and Presbyterians except the basis of polity. That was not the time nor the place to attack that statement or position. And I was disturbed that Jack apparently agreed.

As I have said before I think position needs to be challenged. I think it is basically unsound - and untrue, or else I have been terribly misled in my upbringing.

If the CLF Public Relations Div., needs copies I guess the best place to get them would be from Gov. Stevenson's office. 231 S. La Salle St., Suite 887, Chicago 4, Illinois.

The Governor appreciated your telegram.

Sincerely,

December 7th, 1955.

Dear Frederick:

You will be interested in the following copy from a card just received from Adlai:

221 S. La Salle St., Rm. 887.

"Dear Kenneth:-

In order to resolve this church business, which seems to have grown to unexpected proportions, I'm asking Dick Graeble and Bob Andrus (Lake Forest) to meet in my office at 11 on Dec. 15th, to talk it over with me and you. I hope - and help me work out some sort of uniform statement or answers to the inquiries. I think I'll ask my old friend Jack Mendelsohn, too. Can you make it?

Yours, /s/ Adlai.

Of course I will make it. I felt you should know this is coming to pass and if you have any suggestions to make in regard to the AUA, that is, Unitarianism at large, I'll be glad to have them. After all, whatever statement is made, will involve more than the local church in the minds of the public.

As I see it now all that Jack and I can do is make a statement as to the position of Unitarianism and for myself, more particularly, this Church.

I presume what we have to make clear is that there is nothing in the Constitution of this Church which rules against a man seeking a church home in other than a Unitarian Church. One becomes a member of a Unitarian Church by being in general agreement with a stated purpose and the Bond of Union. He is not required to accep- subscribe to a statement of belief formulated by an ecclesiastical council. And we might quote Channing' well known statement that no one could be excepted excommunicated from this church ecept by the death of goodness in his own heart."

I would like to add that there is nothing in the basis of membership in a Unitarian church that officially excommunicates a member because he joins another church unless membership in that church would violate the basic principles of Unitarianism, freedom of thought, unrestricted use of reason, and the practise of tolerance of differing views and usages.

Sincerely,

c c. Randall.

December 18, 1955.

Dear Frederick:

Since our local paper has come out with a statement covering the results of our conference in Chicago the 15th I presume this came from the wire services.

By this time I presume you have had a chance to read the statement itself. The wire service account did not bring out the fact that when Adlai returned to Libertyville "We Presbyterians urged him etc." which reveals that some pressure was put upon him.

Nor did the account, obviously, state the Unitarian position in the matter, namely, that there is nothing in the basis of membership of this Church that would call for withdrawal if a person joined any other church in any other city.

What is going to be difficult to get across - particularly to the public generally - is a satisfactory answer to the question, "How can a person who has been a life-long Unitarian become a Presbyterian?" Many of our staunchest members are firing that at me. And Presbyterians will be wondering how he could be accepted.

We have started some display ads stating how one can become a Unitarian, what membership involves.

I am still stumped as to how to reply to Presbyterians who say you can be just as liberal in the Presbyterian Church as in the Unitarian. However, I have thought of the devise of an open letter to Graeble, but more particularly to Andrus, who was the one who said in NEWSWEEK that "Mr. Stevenson feels at home in both churches." asking him if he could with his Presbyterian training and environment feel at home in a Unitarian church and then outline Unitarian position in some detail bringing out approaches that do contradict the Presbyterian philosophy and theology.

If you think it is necessary to make a public statement I believe I would go along with whatever you and Mel and, I suppose, representatives from CLC would formulate.

Hastily.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
25 Beacon Street Boston 8, Massachusetts

FREDERICK MAY ELIOT
PRESIDENT

December 21, 1955

Dear Kenneth:

Thank you very much for sending me the copy of the letter to Governor Stevenson following the conference of the four ministers.

It seems to me that you have done a remarkably good job in a very difficult situation, and my own impulse is to let the matter rest just where it is unless and until there is some further "break" in the publicity realm.

Your reference to the "C.L.C. Public Relations Division" leads me to believe that you are not aware of the fact that C.L.C. is no longer actively engaged in what it has called "external public information." The New York office has been closed and Mr. Gammon ceased to be an employee of C.L.C. on November 1. In effect the whole program has been tossed back into the laps of the separate denominations primarily because of wholly inadequate financial resources.

With most cordial good wishes for the holiday season,

Faithfully yours,

F. R. Eliot

Rev. Kenneth C. Walker
201 East Jefferson Street
Bloomington, Illinois

72 Symphony Road
Boston-15-Massachusetts
(Suite-14)

December-21-1955

Rev. Kenneth Walker

Dear Mr. Walker:

I thought you might like to flick an idle optic over an article from the Boston Globe - after all these years.

As a Unitarian, I can readily see the reason for Mr. Steyhnson attending Presbyterian services or even becoming a bonafide member, as Unitarianism is really a Way of Life; and ~~XX~~ by so doing, he is able to work more effectively for the good of the community, and is thus living up to the Unitarian belief, which is creedless. However, it seems to be stirring up something of a furore. I wonder how it will react in the coming election. It might mean more Catholic votes, for in 1952 the Catholics smeared Adlai by circulating stories that as a Unitarian, he was not a Christian. Soon after the last election I saw an article in the New York Times in which Jim Farley stated that it was the Catholics who elected Eisenhower, switching to Ike in preference to Adlai. As an astute Politician and an ardent Roman Catholic (he was recently decorated by Franco), Jim ought to know. If Adlai gets the nomination - and I shall vote for him "early and often" - I trust he wont ~~xxxxxx~~ compromise by taking on a Roman Catholic as a running-mate.

Although brought up as a Roman Catholic, I became a Unitarian some years ago and am a member of the Second Church. I recall hearing you preach when you were here at Arlington St. Church where Dana Greeley now presides.

I note you have reversed the old saying: "The Fatherhood of God; the Brotherhood of Man; and the Neighborhood of Boston;" having chosen to go West. How is the Bloomington Church doing? Flourishing, I hope. How about the general condition of Unitarianism throughout the Middle West? Although growing quite rapidly, Unitarians are still so few in number.

Do you know Mr. Barth, recently appointed Minister at Kings Chapel? Also his background? I understand that he is a former Roman Catholic; therefore, ancient and exclusive Kings Chapel should be quite a feather in his cap.

I wish you all the Blessings of the Christmas Season.

Daniel E. Moran

ALL SOULS UNITARIAN CHURCH
4500 WARWICK BOULEVARD
KANSAS CITY 11, MISSOURI

RAYMOND B. BRAGG
MINISTER

JEFFERSON 1740

January 3, 1956

Rev. Kenneth C. Walker
201 East Jefferson St.
Bloomington, Illinois

Dear Ken:

It is a disgracefully long time since we have corresponded. I feel ashamed for my part in that lack.

I am prompted to write by Adlai Stevenson's recent move into a Presbyterian church. There is no impulse in me to be critical. The news reports seem to indicate that some Unitarians have acted boorishly. And of course all Unitarians are interested to the point of asking questions. Since I have no idea of the situation other than what has appeared in the press, I wonder if you would give me an inkling as to what it means. I'd appreciate it much.

I hope you've all had the nicest kind of Holiday Season. We certainly have had.

Sincerely yours,

Raymond B. Bragg

RBB/s

Route 1, Box 58
Stuart, Florida
January 4, 1956

Mr. Adlai Stevenson
231 South La Salle Street
Chicago 4, Illinois

My dear Mr. Stevenson:

We do not want to harass you with argumentative letters, but we had so pinned our hopes on you that we are sick with dismay. It is not as though you were an unimportant private citizen who could join two, three or a dozen churches and nobody care. You are a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, and Millions of Americans look to you for moral guidance and a resolute steadfastness in spiritual integrity.

Certainly a Conscientious Protestant Christian can "worship God" in any Protestant Christian Church; but according to the published reports, you "joined" the Presbyterian Church by Baptism and Confession of Faith. According to Mr. John Sutherland Bonnell, Minister of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York, answering the question "Do Presbyterians accept the Virgin Birth?" he said "Yes. A Majority of Presbyterians, among whom this author is included, undoubtedly believe that the entrance of Jesus into our world was by a miraculous birth as related by St. Matthew and St. Luke. This doctrine is set forth in the Apostles' Creed, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and in the Doctrinal Statement of the Basis of Union of Presbyterian Churches. All Presbyterians believe in the Incarnation--That God was made flesh and came to Men in Jesus Christ." Mr. Bonnell further answered "Yes" to the questions "Do Presbyterians believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" "Do Presbyterians believe in the Trinity?"

To each of these dogmas, the Unitarian answers "No."

Yet the four Ministers you name, two Presbyterians and two Unitarians, tell the people that Mr. Stevenson can belong to both churches without "inconsistency." How these four Ministers can reconcile the irreconcilable <u>yes</u> with <u>no</u> and <u>no</u> with <u>yes</u> is beyond our comprehension. What a pity John Knox did not apply this same ecclesiastical legerdemain in the case of Dr. Servetus in 1555. He hated to burn Servetus at the stake, but of course it was necessary because when Servetus was asked if he believed in the Trinity, he said "No!" because (to quote Thomas Jefferson in 1820) Servetus "could not find in his Euclid the proposition which has demonstrated that three are one and one is three."

I fear that the four Ministers who so wholeheartedly and graciously encouraged your dual membership in their churches have done you an ill service, Mr. Stevenson. If they had joined with the committee of the Republican Party planning campaign strategy, they could not have devised a scheme more likely to embarrass Adlai Stevenson.

Regretfully yours
Alfred C. Morneweck
Mr. and Mrs. Alfred C. Morneweck
Evelyn F. Morneweck

cc-Rev. Richard Paul Graebel
" Rev. Robert G. Andrus
" Rev. Kenneth C. Walker
" Rev. Jack Mendelsohn

MRS. O. H. FREELAND
BROCKLAND FARM
MASON 3, MICHIGAN

July 14, '56

The Rev. Russell C. Walker, minister
Unitarian Church
Bloomington, Ill.

My dear Mr. Walker,

This is to thank you for your part in the handling of the Hon. Adlai Stevenson - Unitarian - Presbyterian situation.

I read of it in Time Jan 2, p 13, and was impressed by it similarity to my case - Wasely, Early American (Colonial) Unitarian and Presbyterian background also the need for a local church home & doctor.

Not being acceptable to the nearby Presby Church - tho I am not an extreme liberal - I, years ago, joined the Unitarian church and feel that my work as one of a committee of 5 for "World Fellowship" in the Ch. of the Larger Fellowship is important and non-denominational.

Feeling more & more the need of a local church home and encouraged by the few people with whom I talked, including a devout Catholic friend, I asked for an interview with Mr. Paul Arnold, minister of the Mason, Mich. Presby church. He was kind but so fundamentally creed bound he seemed to consider me outside the fold.

It is inconceivable that in this day & age this is so!

After reading and rereading the fine letter to Mrs. Stevenson, I am sure a long stride has been taken in the right direction, tho my own case is hopeless.

Thanking you again for the inspiration given me.

Most sincerely yours
Mrs O. H. Freeland

72 Symphony Road
Boston-15-Massachusetts
(Suite-14)

October-9-1956

Rev. Kenneth Walker

Dear Mr. Walker:

Sometime ago I wrote you regarding Adlai Stevenson's change to Presbyterianism despite his life-long affiliation with your Unitarian church; but you failed to reply for some reason.

I wonder if I'll have better luck this time? Two weeks ago Mr. Stevenson spent the week-end in Washington where the President was resting. The papers reported that Mr. Eisenhower went to Sunday services at the Presbyterian Church but altho it said that Mr. Stevenson also attended church, it didn't specify the church. Last Sunday it was reported that he "attended church" in New York City, but failed to specify.

Could you tell me the church he attended in each of those cities? I am unable to get the information at the American Unitarian Association at 25 Beacon Street.

Sincerely,

Daniel E. Moran

United Nations Day

My dear Mr. Haverfield:

The facts of the situation are these:

As Mr. Stevenson has frequently said, "He inherited the politics of his father and the religion of his mother." The religion of his mother was Unitarianism. In short, the Church was established by Jesse W. Fell, a forebear of the Governor's. His name appears, i.e., his signature, appears on our Church Roll.

About a year ago he felt the need, as he expressed it, of a more formal relationship with the Lake Forest Presbyterian Church and therefore, spoke to the Presbytery here about becoming more formally associated with that Church. He made clear to them that he would still maintain his membership in the Unitarian Church here. This, the Presbyery at Lake Forest, ruled was possible.

He had, as a matter of fact, for some 20 years attended that Church whenever he was in Libertyville, partly because it was near, more particularly because there were many of his personal friends there and he liked Mr. Andrus, the minister.

So far as regulations concerning church polity are concerned, there is nothing that would prevent a Unitarian from becoming a member of another Protestant Church. That is to say, there is no creedal test demanded of a person joining a Unitarian church. The basis of membership is determined by each local parish. For example, the founders of this Church set as the basis of membership, "The study and practise of Christianity." And at the time of voting to build this building a resolution was ~~unanimously~~ unnanimously passed to the effect that this congregation should never would require a theological test as the basis of membership.

It is interesting to note in this respect that the Rev. Mr. Graeble, minister of one of the Presb terian Churches in Springfield, Ill., said in my presence, when we had completed the public statement concerning Mr. Stevenson's dual religious affiliations, "After all there is no fundamental difference between Presbyteriansim and other Protestant churches except the basis of polity."

If you have not seen this statement you probably could secure one from his Chicago office 231 S. La Salle St., Suite 887, Chicago 4, Ill. It appeared in several newspapers and bothin TIME AND NEWSWEEK.

Very truly yours,

October 12, 1956.

My dear Mr. Moran:

The reason I did not answer your letter is due to the fact that about that time the public statement about The Governor's religious position appeared in most of the dailies and TIME and NEWSWEEK.

Mr. Stevenson, at that time, insisted that he still considered himself a member of this Church.

I know he attended our Church in Washington for the Chicago Tribune gave an abstract of the sermon Dr. Davies preached on "Joe Smith". I assume, but do not know, that he attended All Souls (Unitarian Church) in Manhattan.

Recently, I am told, he attended the services of the newly formed Unitarian group in Lake Forest.

There is a discussion at Democratic Headquarters in Chicago concerning the advisability of attending church here the Sunday before election.

Very truly yours,

[illegible] E. Second Ave.
DuBois, Pa.
October 22, 1956

To the Pastor of the Unitarian Church,
Bloomington, Ill.

Dear Sir,

Until recently I have been under the impression that Mr. Adlai Stevenson was a Presbyterian, but lately I learn he is a member of your church. Will you please set me straight on this matter?

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ross M. Haverfield

Ross M. Haverfield

Nov. 23.

Mrs. William B. Hurlburt

2606 Forest Drive, Des Moines 12, Iowa

Minister
Unitarian Church.
Bloomington, Ill.

Dear Sir: Would you be so kind as to tell me if Gov. Adlai E. Stevenson belonged to the Unitarian Church in your city. Also, approximately when he joined, and did he attend regularly?

I have great admiration for this gentleman, and was very disappointed at his poor showing in the Nov. elections.

Thanking you in advance for any information about his church affiliation, I am Sincerely Yours,
Mrs. W. B. Hurlburt
above address.

November 27, 1956.

My dear Mrs. Hurlburt:

As you have probably read in the papers or periodicals, Governor Stevenson's mother was a life-long Unitarian. His father was a Presbyterian. As a youth growing up in this city he attended the Church School.

His name appears on our Church Membership book therefore he is a member in good standing in this Church.

He has also served on the board of the national Unitarian Laymen's League.

After graduating from college and taking up a law-practise in Chicago he lived in Libertyville, forty miles from Chicago. There, whenever he was home he would attend the Lake Forest Presbyterian Church where many of his friends were members. Whenever he visited Bloomington, if it included a Sunday he almost always attended the service here.

He very definitely considers himself to be a Unitarian.

Very truly yours,