REPORT OF THE SCRIBE FOR THE 1946 CONVOCATION OF THE HUMILIATI

Subject: The Philosophical Bases of Liberal Religion

Monday Afternoon

All the brothers but Harkins and Vickery arrived. Word was received that Brother Harkins was tied up with work in his local church and would be unable to attend. It was disclosed that Rev. Mason McGinness, who was to have been our guest had declined. Brother Albert F. Ziegler conducted the service of installation and investiture of Abbot Gordon B. McKeeman. Abbot McKeeman then read the Rule of the Order.

Monday Evening - "Religion - What It Is"

Since McGinness was not present to present his paper an open discussion was held. The Abbot introduced the topic by references to Foedick's "As I See Religion."

Religion is a psychological experience in the individual. This idea was discussed at some length and resolved into the word "IMPULSE." That is, there is the psychical equipment in man for religion; religion is natural to man, being present in all men as an impulse to something greater than themselves. It is an urge in man; it is natural for him to worship the highest he can conceive or "something greater than himself".

It was pointed out that John Dewey refers to religion in three stages: (1) the individual psychological experience which he calls "religion" (2) the defining and institutionalizing of particular religious ideas or theological systems which he identifies as "A Religion" and (3) the "religious" which was interred to mean religious living or the manifestations and results of "religion" as a known and given direction by "a religion".

It was suggested that all men need a cosmic story. The Judeo-Christian story is inadequate today because all modern life is based upon reason and upon the findings of scientific investigation. These refute the Judeo-Christian cosmology. Hence men do not understand the world and their relation to it. They are confused and baffled, their lives lacking integration. They don't know "where they are going." Life lacks purpose.

It was suggested that this lack of purpose is true because men cannot see a purpose in the universe, i.e., they lack a cosmic story. They cannot see "one far-off divine event toward which all creation moves." It was affirmed that this is a purposeful universe, that there is purpose in the universe and since man is part of the universe, there is purpose in man. It was further affirmed that man is impelled by that universal purpose. Determinism here raises its beautiful or ugly head, however this point was not pursued far at this session.

Conclusions: Religion is not effective today because it does not find adequate direction in "the religions." The third or religious stage is consequently not achieved for most men.

Liberalism lacking a cosmic story lacks dynamic.

Hence: the need to find and proclaim dogmatically the best cosmic story we can discover based upon the facts (scientific truths) as far as those facts are now known, leaving room for adaption.

This is based upon a pragmatic test of truth. If it is
functional, it is true. We cannot wait for absolute truth, else we will never function. We must use the truths we have and declare them dogmatically, even though they are only relative truths. It is the truth for us - now.

References to Duncan Houcht: need for cosmic story. Made reference to his cosmic story which was not recalled in detail. Reference to catachism being written by Max Kapo. Reference to Sorokin and Holmes interpretation of Sorokin. Need for new religion to give dynamic to new culture. Perhaps U.S. is not the right soil for the new Universalism. Perhaps liberalism will not find its true field in U.S. - ie. will grow faster elsewhere where new culture is coming most rapidly.

When Vickery arrived the next day he questioned the validity of our basic assumption regarding the natural impulse in man that urges him toward unity.

Tuesday Morning

Brothers Harrison and McKinney had final exams so no session was held.

Tuesday Afternoon - Book Review - "A Christian Global Strategy"

Brother Cole.
The Early Christian Church was a universalist church. The fire in Christianity has died. People have no interest in religion. Universal elements of Christianity died with the birth to the Protestant sects. Christianity must wage war on two fronts:

A. The Home Front
   Churches must unite - are now uniting in part.
   a. Unification must come through cooperation on "work." i.e. Peace relation, labor problems, social gospel, etc.
   b. Religious education failures responsible for wave of juvenile delinquency.
   c. Through public relations. Compares Protestant weakness in this field to Catholicism's public relations activities.

B. The World Front
   1. Europe: Protestants should make no emphasis of denominationalism. Must protect Protestant minorities in Italy, etc. It would be foolish to insist upon denominational emphasis in Protestant countries.
      In Russia: Must establish working connections with Russian Orthodox Church. Practically no other church in Russia. Might be a field for denominationalism but that is not important. There is a promise of religious freedom in Russia - Will it be fulfilled?
   2. World Strategy must be based only upon adherence to Christ.
      a. Creedal differences not important if only Christ is accepted as divine saviour.
      b. Importance of evangelism - Need for missionary zeal. Churches are ingrown and self-centered. Evangelism must be joint Protestant missionary work.

Discussion:
Our global strategy must also have a theological basis.
Therefore we must have a clearcut theological basis. Job is not one of organization but of inspiration.

Estimate of book: Many good ideas but dangerous because it appears to be a liberal book with emphasis upon social action, etc. It is limited by the Christology of the author. It is not really universal in its strategy.

Tuesday Evening - Paper by Brother Vickery
"The Nature of Truth, the Methods and Places of Finding It"

Truth is that which conforms to fact or reality. Assuming that we cannot accept this brief definition let us consider the criteria for truth.

I. The non-philosophical basis for truth. Those judgements which are claimed to be true by assertion.
   a. by appeal to authority.
   b. by appealing to feeling
   c. by appealing to intuition
   d. by appealing to self-evident axiomatic principles.

The criticism of these criteria are that they appeal to dogma or are inconsistent. We readily can see how authorities, feelings, and intuitions conflict in men's processes of thought and testimony. Self evident truths are not self evident. Majority agreement is more often wrong than right. The liberal is not often lost in this field of truth. His worship of certain philosophical schools or mental giants does occasionally result in a wholesale acceptance of these without question as to their approach to reality.

II. The philosophical basis for truth.
   a. The coherence theory. This asserts that to be true which fits into a harmony.
   b. The correspondence theory. This asserts that an idea is true if it accords or conforms to the actual situation.
   c. The third type of philosophical criteria of truth is pragmatism. A truth is a judgment which works. 

III. Criticism of Pragmatism.
   a. To say that an idea works can mean:
      1. It satisfies
      2. It works for most people
      3. name for successful adaptation (Dewey)
      4. experimentally justified (Laboratory technique)
   b. Are there no truths which lie beyond the demonstration of workability?
   c. May not a lie work?
   d. Is not satisfaction even to a large number as precarious as the acceptance of truth because of social agreement?

IV. Truth vs. Myth
   Much of the liberal's trouble lies in his failure to distinguish between myth and truth. Wieman finds that the myth is generally believed to be a statement of fact by the people who use it. The error lies in taking the myth to be truth. A myth is not a truth, but neither is it to be regarded of
necessity as false. It is a mistake to say that an effective myth is a kind of truth. Rather it is a stimulus to required behavior in dealing with some important reality. Effectiveness and not truth is the criterion to be applied to a myth.

Most realities cannot be apprehended in the way required for our welfare unless we act in some appropriate manner. (Wieman) We appropriate the air and transform vital energy without our knowing the truths involved. Tradition, habits, and automatic reflexes do this for us. However, in the case of some intimate important and profound realities, the automatic reflexes are not sufficient and must be supplemented by myths. Further, when myths are insufficient, truth must be added. Truth is only sought and used as a last resort, and even then is never adequate to guide us but must always be supported by the automatic reactions and the myths.

When one single, coherent and inclusive tradition shapes the lives of all in the group, this tradition is like a channel guiding them to whatever reality is accessible by this route. In such case truth is not needed. All they need is some stimulus to drive them to follow the ways of the tradition. Myth serves this end. When however the guiding tradition breaks down, as all inclusive traditions are breaking today, the myth may lead to disaster. Truth must intervene to take its place.

We in the liberal camp are equally guilty of giving the the authority of truth to myths. Myths no longer serve their purpose in a world in which traditions are crashing on every side. Liberals have a surprising lack of intellectual clarity. We continually rationalize our position when we need to restate our common faith in terms of scientific philosophy. The liberal if he has the courage of his convictions will view religion as devotion to the ideals discoverable in human experience. Our problem is to remove this synthesis of knowledge and aspiration from its limited appeal among the severely intellectual and philosophical into a living religion for the masses. The old myths are being discarded. We can present truth to fill that vacuum if we but dare.

Discussion: The discussion revolved around the question of absolute truth vs. relative truth. It was asserted that truth must be functional. Whatever works is true. (Dewey) What we call "myth" was a truth in a previous day. The Judeo-Christian cosmology is a myth but for a previous time it was truth. It was truth until it was disproved by science and reason. But it worked in its time. Great cultures were given dynamic by it. A myth can only be identified as such in retrospect.

We should today use the truth we have (admittedly partial truth) acknowledging that it is not the absolute truth, but asserting it dogmatically as the truth in order to give it power. Vickery and Cole were in basic disagreement at this point. A myth is still a myth and should not be dogmatically declared as truth. Until we have the truth and can be certain of it, we must admit that we do not know the truth. We cannot build a cosmic story on a hypothesis, because it is not true. The point remained unresolved, they not agreeing with the pragmatic test for truth. We must wait until we have the absolute truth before we can be dogmatic. Ziegler and others declared all truth to be relative and therefore no such thing as absolute truth exists.
II. Attacking Enemy Supply: Philosophy of Machievelli, Hardy, Nietzsche, and Dewey. Tsk! Tsk! They lead to totalitarianism, secularism, and humanitarianism.

III. Tactics not Strategy: Emphasis of church has been upon social gospel, pacifism, and ritual. These are only tactics not strategy that needs to be employed.

IV. Maneuvers: Union of Protestants. Not based on creedal uniformity. Differences are important. Religious leaders should stick to their own business. Leave tactics and operations to those whom they can inspire. Points out the importance of the individual.

V. The High Command: Supernatural effect upon the universe. God cannot be proved but must be believed.

VI. Beyond the Objective: Without immortality the universe is irrational. The alternative to immortality is atheism.

Discussion:

Many good ideas: Religious leaders should stick to their own business; importance of belief in supernatural (or more than natural as man understands it); importance of theological basis.

Estimate of book: Book based upon narrow theological concept with insistence upon creedal uniformity regarding Christology. Not always sound in his facts. An attack upon liberals but probably aimed at liberals in the Methodist Church.

Wednesday evening: * Paper by Brother Ziegler

"The Problem of Evil"

Based upon the idea that underlying the dual concepts of good and evil is a fundamental idea of monism which is the basis of confidence. Man needs to be sure - confident of great value.

Reference to Hosea Ballou - Evil is finite - limited. Denies existence of evil as something which ought not to be. Evil is a lesser good. The final result of evil is to produce good.

Purpose in the universe is movement toward perfection - never to be reached.

That which we call evil is really a good and is necessary for the development toward perfection. Impulse toward unity. This means striving for adjustment with the universe which is moving toward perfection. Concept of growing God. This is to be achieved not by attacking evil but by creating the good and working toward the good. We must, we are impelled, to do that which we see as the highest good. (Brotherston) "We are free to choose the Good." But we must see the good. Reference to Plato, "Evil is ignorance." Therefore we must show others what the good is - we must lead them to a knowledge of the good and they must do the good. This is heart of Ziegler's determinism. We are not free to choose. We are impelled to do the good.

We achieve unity in the universe by seeking harmony with it. We cannot do otherwise. Therefore exhortation is of no value. We must teach. We must show others what the good is.

Much discussion of these points. Discussion stalled over same basic differences. Some were not convinced that evil does not exist. Specifically two questions were asked by Cole:

1. How do you know that the impulse is toward unity?
2. How do you judge which is the greater good?

Brother Cole said that he hoped to make a study of other religions to determine whether there is anything really unique in Christianity and to improve the philosophical basis of his humanism before another convocation.
Thursday Morning: Paper by Brother McGeehan
"Shall we Believe in Immortality"

Nothing either proves or disproves immortality.
The starting point in literal religion is a belief in the supreme
worth of every individual personality.

Metaphysical: Consciousness is the religious impulsion of the
human species. Religion (cosmology) is the expanding of this
consciousness and the equation of it in all directions. (possibil-
ties apparently infinite)

Platonic: Consciousness attribute of all beings - pure form.

In everything - tree is more than sum of molecules, it is an idea.
Tree consciousness (ideal of unity). Consciousness is transcen-
dent of what are considered restrictive physical conditions.
The body (brain) function is productive but permissive. (James)
Consciousness is not destroyed with physical destruction. Cut
down tree and burn it - turn molecules into energy but you have not
destroyed the idea of the tree (consciousness). This consciousness
is the essence of the tree - likewise man.

What becomes of consciousness? I suggest Brighton's concept of
a "Growing God". Continuing development until consciousness even-
tually becomes merged with All-Consciousness which is God.

Supreme worth of human personality is imperative because it alone
allows development of consciousness to the fullest possible
extent.

Is this immortality personal or impersonal. It is my opinion that
it evolves from one to the other. Personal does not suddenly
become impersonal. But the personal is particular and will tend
toward the impersonally universal. When Ziegler consciousness
becomes man-consciousness, then it ceases to be personal.

Heaven is knowledge. Hell is ignorance.
Hegel's categories: personal to men to nature to cosmos to God.

Certain misconceptions which bar the way.
Immortality is "otherworldliness" - Obviously it is now. It's
honesty is implicit. Act for eternity of evolution now.
Discontinuity of consequence - effect.
Evolution stops with death - immortality (Not heaven, but hell)
Difficulty of conceiving idea without embodiment. Physical heaven.

Discussion:
Discussion over the definition of consciousness. Is it energy?
No. Energy is a manifestation of consciousness. Consciousness is
the universe power. What is the need for a belief in immortality?
Immortality of effect. We do not act for today only. Consciousness
and self-consciousness. Man the only self-conscious animal.

Thursday P.M.
Presentation of this summary and review of conflicts. Business
session. Selection of guests for 1947. Investiture of Brother
Ziegler as Abbot by past Abbot McGeehan. Impressive closing
candlelight service. Departure.
THE CONVOCATION OF THE HUMILITI FOR 1950

Held at the
First Universalist Church
Orange, Massachusetts
February 7-10, 1950

Abbot Raymond Charles Hopkins presiding

Attending Brothers: Albert Ziegler
Gordon McKeehan
Frederick Harrison
Keith C. Munaon
Earle McKinney
David H. Cole, Scribe of the proceedings

SESSIONS OPENING WITH HOLY COMMUNION BY CHAPLAIN EARLE MCKINNEY

THE FIRST ORDER BEING REVIEWED BY BROTHER HOPKINS:

Within by Sir Francis Young Husband, 1910

The author, a soldier, has written some 30 volumes. He was born and raised in India. Began his serious thinking during a 2½ years hospitalization. His question was "Why Suffer?" There can not be an all powerful, merciful God. He recounted Christian and other arguments for suffering. Suffering also destroys as well as makes good. God could find a lot better ways to make people perfect. Must be a limited God. This was not satisfying either. The only explanation he finds that makes sense—must be part of the conditions of evolution. Hope someday will not be necessary.

How do we know the will of God? No personal God who will creation of man. Deep resources of mind not explored. May show that think God is, Evolution and progress not the same. Not all evolution is progress. He thus concludes that we are not under external Providence as individuals or groups.

You can only trust yourself. Is possible that all are motivated by spirit. Found good unites us. Inner impulse rolling through all things. Indwelling, limitless spirit. Urges all thinking things to creativeness. So then traces the impulse through evolution.

PRAYER—implanted on deepest, innermost self. Determine to do your best as you see it. Collect one's self. Open soul to flood gates of spirit. Giving out in great gusts to things hold as highest.

IMPELLING SPIRIT—good in whole. A few main impelling spirits in self: hunger, preservation. To give away the self—to fulfill the self is one's purpose. Sees evidence in evolution and history of impelling spirit. All things from this spirit good. NO CHOICE—have to act because inherently believe this is good for us.

THE GREAT IDEAL—improvement of conditions not an end. Neither is courage nor power. Self-preservation insufficient, but essential (he seems slightly confused here—quote RCH). Freedom, for what? Happiness not the highest.
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nor power. Self-preservation insufficient, but essential (no seems slightly
confused here--quote RCH). Freedom, for what? Happiness not the highest.
Holiness as piety is not it either. Creation of beauty not it. **Love is the great end.** To enrich our life and all humanity through loving, independence and equality of woman is necessary for this to make love equal. Marriage laws need change. Union in love is his end.

**THIS IS HIS FARTHEST POINT. IN ONE PLACE HE SAYS FULFILLMENT IS END, BUT HE NEVER DEVELOPES THIS. GETS SIDE TRACKED IN LOVE WHICH PROBABLY WAS HIS SELF-FULFILLMENT. HE UNIVERSIALIZED IT. SELF-FULFILLMENT IS AN INDIVIDUAL THING. LOVE FOR HIM, BUT SOMETHING ELSE FOR OTHER; IS THE ANSWER. HE NEVER SEES.**

A REVIEW BY BRO. HARRISON OF:

*The Mature Mind* by H. A. Overstreet

No mind is mature, only maturing. Criteria of maturity:

1. Knowledge linkage; 2. Sense of responsibility linkage;
2. Lord linkage; 4. Sex linkage; 5. Empathic linkage;
6. Wholeness of meaning of life.

Mature insights are lost on immature people. Misunderstood and distorted. "The chief end of man is to mature toward wholeness of life. Create a new and more enticing vision of adulthood."

**Tuesday Evening:**

**BRO. HARRISON ON**

*The Purpose of the Ministry*

The ministry is not our primary purpose. It is secondary. When it becomes primary, we are guilty of violating the fulfillment of our self. Our primary purpose is to establish our integrity. Saving others is secondary to saving our own souls. We are in the ministry because we don't know any other better way.

To save ourself by losing ourselves. Get lost in running church, and in ministering. Humiliati is the rescue squad which brings us back. Repriming by bringing back the primary purpose—a most necessary function. Must take more time to consider self.

**BOOBYTRAPS—must prevent people from feeling of wholeness. Must never arrive, always be in transit.**

What is the wholeness we try to lead people in direction of? Here we are weak. Lead them into our own ways, make them want to be ministers. Illus—Christians going as missionaries to save heathens. Illus—in F's Church of man getting more concerned about saving others than saving self. Lay—woman who is trying to live up to ideals of education.

**HOW DO WE SAVE SOULS? Provide sufficient challenge to get them to question themselves. Mediocrity, complacency in lives of people, unawareness of solvas as growing souls. (Some few need direction) How to challenge them is the problem. The continue challenge? Maybe worship? Then give them**
insights into maturing process. Keep them at purpose—fulfillment and commitment. Providing security through fellowship with other people who are growing. (As get out of adjustment with old world, need a new one.) Building churches not part of our purpose. If you have a few souls in transit, what about our relationships to those not going anywhere? What happens to our soul if most of our people are not going anywhere?

END OF PAPER, followed by discussion:

Can we find wholeness through saving souls?

RAY: None of us are sure. Answer: If you don’t get fulfillment from the ministry, get out. Everyone is going somewhere.

MAC: Purpose of ministry is self-fulfillment. All of us in varying stages of maturing. Assume all have same purpose. Not so. People in different phases of maturity will have different concepts of ministry.

OBJECT FROM MAC AND RAY: “Prevent them from feeling of wholeness.”

Settled finally as language difficulty. Not the momentary feeling of wholeness in worship.

Buddha—can never reach Nirvana. If you are fully committed to means—to ministry—you will fulfill yourself.

(Creat release for several point-up spirits here—left over from last year’s vacation.)

They had felt that could never reach fulfillment through saving souls. Fulfillment not what we want, fulfillment is. This can be done through the ministry.

MISS—does not matter if no one comes. Do it for the glory of God and fulfilling of self.

GLORY OF GOD—your own fulfillment. Speak French to French. God means nothing unless someone acts God. This is Existential philosophy.

DISCUSSION ON:

Dynamics of Orthodox
History of Humiliati:

Started with philosophy—we were going to educate everyone. Tufts gave us insight that worship is important. Appeal to the emotions. Orthodox technique. Old words appeal to the emotions.

Wednesday Morning

CONTINUING DISCUSSION ON PURPOSE OF THE MINISTRY

How do you save souls? Is challenge important? Purpose of our life is self-fulfillment. Means is in ministry. Purpose of the ministry is to save others. Only ways to save souls is through religion. Basic intent is to save yourself. Only way is to save others. The ministry is only way to save yourself. (Does it seem that we want in circle to you too?) Many kinds of ministry. Raising potatoes to the Glory of God. Teaching school to the Glory of God. Self-fulfillment can be many things, depends on individual. As long as he does what he does religiously.
One can not worship without a creed. Shall the Church hand on the truth? Truth is relative. Long discussion followed.

A REVIEW BY BROTHER KEITH ON:

The Dynamics of Learning by Nathaniel Cantor


NEED IN SOCIETY...new standards which majority of people can support. Will have new society based on democratic planning.

CRISIS IN SOCIETY—people unaware of interdependence of people. Must set up new social system. Still following old customs. People do not know what they are living for. Healthy minded people in sick society are looked upon as abnormal. Educators work is promotion of human capacity for self-develop-ment and self-realization. Change is necessary.

Author talks of resistance to change resolving self's guilt conflict. 1. Artist who creates escapes; 2. neurotic who wants to be different becomes inactive; 3. identification with group value--told how to respond. This is done with children. Make them conform. Not express real self. STUDENTS are educated by the life they live. CLASS room is not place for professor to solve his emotional difficulties. All education is self-education. But public schools are authoritarian.

Wednesday Afternoon

BRO. ZIEGLER GIVES PAPER ON: "Methods of the Ministry"

Methods for the saving of other people's souls

Attitude and climate necessary

Must understand, accept, and love the people for what they are.
Must be accepted and loved by them

Done on ground of common agreement

Cannot use methods of contention until loved

Should not attempt to reveal self to others except in their terms

Differing terms to differing people

Intellectual Integrity

not mean anything using same symbols, words, slogans to explain self to all people

Emotional makeup of people

perverts words you say

even perverts your own interpretation

talk to their emotional level

1. Instill in them confidence in single progressive power that transcends human endeavors

2. Confidence that they are agents of that Universal Power

3. Confidence that others are agents of it too

4. Instill confidence that Church and ministration are efficient aid to effective expression

To do, need basic core of theological belief and ritual

Minister must never at any time be open to criticism by laity, or to reason
Communion or Mass is basic type of worship
Mass must express the fundamental theology
   Emotionalize it to give fleeting sense of wholeness—kind in which
   see yourself as fulfilled
Must insist that it is essential to salvation to carry out mass. No com-
promise -- can only compromise in means of administration
   Formal and precise
   Remote
Capsule for shut-ins
Insist on worship center in home

Off-center Cross wrong for symbol—must give assurance
Definite rites for home—prayers for all occasions
Ought to have fast days—definite holy times
MISS REGULARLY
   Formal presentation for every occasion (fishing season, golf clubs?)
Service on Sunday popular. Short sermon
   Informal services during the week
   Opportunity for self-expression, participation
   Educational

SUPPLEMENTARY CONSIDERATIONS
Off the beam if do not aim at serving great mass of people.
Liberal Church serves intelligencia is snobbery. Assumed all people
have reasonable intelligence in religion. They are emotional
In religion all people are reached basically in some way. All
emotionally liable to some stimulant.

When religion stripped of all superstition, have no knowledge to replace the
myth. The myth was closer to the emotional need. If only ethic left, nobody
gets excited about it. Need all kinds of symbols.

DO WE NEED CHRIST? A human representation of what we shall become. God in-
carnated in man. Immediacy between actual and the perfect toward which we
reach.
NEED—provision for release from fears which society gives, with sanctuary
   guaranteed. Can not judge what people need by seeing what they respond to.
Sensate or color responses. Have to win them against their conscious
   judgment of what they need.
WHAT ABOUT OURSELVES? I am representatives of the perfection of this worship.
As such we can never let up, or distinguish between our natures; one the priest,
one the man.

DISCUSSION: Where are we going to do this. Episcopalian Church or Anglican
has the form, but not the content. Universalist Church has the content (some-
what) but not the form. Bro. Mac suggested these were questions under his topic.

Wednesday Evening

BRO. DAVE GIVES A BOOK REVIEW ON:

   Education for What is Real by Kelly

The only thing that is real is the perception in the individual mind.
   Each mind sees differently
None sees as it actually is
Pick out those things that one's environment and experience directs
one to pick out
Illustrations of distorted rooms
Implications for education:
  Folly of teaching facts
  Authoritarian teaching methods inadequate
  New methods of learning for living called for
Implications for worship discussed

Thursday Morning

BRO. MAC GIVES A REVIEW ON: The Mass of the Future by Gerald Ellard

THE MASS OF THE PAST:
A Liturgical group wants to change mass back to original
5 stages in Pre-Christian Sacrifice
  1. Bring forward victim
  2. Placing of hands on victim (transference of guilt)
  3. Slaying
  4. Burning of flesh
  5. Sacrificial Banquet
Prophets, Psalmist, Macedians lifted Sacrifice to height but had no
power to purify worshipper
  God too far from man
With Christ, God gave man assurance that it is possible to be God
  (Mac's interpretation)
Augustine—There you are on altar table and we are there with you
  But then people were excluded from mass
Congregation changed from the offerers to communicants
  Communion only occasionally
Once people said as much as Priest
  Then only the priest had spoken part
  Responses developed naturally
Once people brought bread and wine as matter of convenience
  Then coins brought to buy bread and wine

If had realized that such a turmoil would be raised over the TRANSFORMATION
the scholars could have prepared an answer. Question was never asked
To the theologians, transference did not mean magic of infusion of spirit
  Only in unlettered mind (catholic and non-catholic)
It represents it, depends on attitude of worshipper
  Perception takes place in your mind

THE MASS OF THE PRESENT
Non-attendance—32% attend
Use same Protestant excuses
  not all pray the mass when they go
Church is very inclusive
  accepts all kinds of prayer, but understand only some prayers
teaches faithful to pray as the church prays
Not all contribute more than money
must give themselves--take communion to get fullness
Mass will be sacrificial for us when have made an offering of ourselves
Not all seek social union in communion
through communion one finds unity with other people
seeing others at communion, know that same force moves him--
dignity of all man
Not all at ease with Latin
some Popes have given permission for some parts of Mass to be said
in the vernacular

THE MASS OF THE FUTURE
Need a new name -- word does not express anything
Sacrifice a bad term -- unfortunate connotations for people. No one enjoys it

EUTER: Perfect expression of love.
Fix date for Easter
Say Mass in English
Move altar away from wall
in past have pushed altar away from people
put rail, Choir in way
now should put Choir around table
Priest to stand in back
More singing to done by congregation
Money given to God does not enrich God
elevate coin collection to height of love offering
Illus- kids write resolutions for good deeds and put in offering
Sacramental intercommunication
All kinds united in Christ
Mass for special groups
Labor for the glory of God
Requiem rationed if need be
Fruits of Mass for living more than for dead

BRO. AL GIVES A REVIEW ON: The Meaning of Culture by John Cowper Powys (1921)

Philosophy uses many symbols
Become ingrained with age--wide meaning
To be a cultured person, is to be some kind of person with an original personal philosophy
Everyone has some kind of patch work philosophy
Cultured--to be conscious to banking up philosophy of your own
Protect against disintegrating elements
Guiding its channel through jungles of brutality
The last word is a poetic free humanism, not dominated by science or traditional religion
To philosophize is not to read philosophy, but it is to feel philosophy, not to believe, but to select and reject
No skepticism goes far enough until it has reached the point where any magical interpretation seems truer than any scientific one(?)
Temper of true culture is closer to the logical explanation of the world

LITERATURE--Use it and not be used by it
Gift of spirit of poetry to your secret culture is gift of peace(wholesomeness within)
A CULTURED PERSON IS RELIGIOUS

Purpose and end of culture is full happiness of response to life
   True nature of culture is substitute for religion where faith
   is unattainable. By good of religion, not mean morals; something
   disturbing and elevating; something superstitious
   Keep your culture to yourself until you win your freedom

HAPPINESS—the aim of life

OBSTACLE—cynicism
Almost all conversation when not between lovers or book lovers is an interpretation
of the ecstasies of life
No one can be cultured without treating every human person as an interesting
and respected member of the human race.
Truc culture is always personal, --forget the tedious torture of life

BE A CHILD—
1. Born again every day
2. Absorption in the miracle of the moment
3. Thirst on your most cherished discovery

Thursday Afternoon

BRO. MAC GIVES A PAPER ON

The Instruments of the Ministry

Suggests: Go back to purpose of the ministry
Impelled to save souls for self fullment

Methods:
   Enabled to move from one wholeness to larger wholeness
   through worship
   Is church only instrument attempting to move people through
   worship? Lodges? (Grange is religious expression of the
   farmer)
   Psychiatry

Mixed emotions concerning church:
   Families attached to Universalist Church
   Occupational ties--friends
   Gratitude to Universalist Church
   Loyalty to Universalist Church
   Committed to its message by public utterances.
   Conditioned against some other churches
      Rationalism, anti popery
      So that they are difficult to change

Might start a new church
Material and financial difficulties in the way

Psychiatry
   Its technique is good for people who are tangled, blocked in
   growth
   Goes backward, leaves them at point where block occurs
   Unifies them on low level
   Has no mass appeal—only individual

Suggestion of Monastery
Field of Education suggested
DISCUSSION:
If people took more time for withdrawing to think about things, they would get deeper within.

AL: Have to go to church everyday because one gets so little out of it. (Not this had to do with paper, I don't know)

Thursday Evening, following dinner with Women's Group

BRO. KEITH GIVES A PAPER ON:

"The Disciplines for the Ministry"

PERSONAL
1. Worship
   Be one in a congregation. Get away from techniques
2. Confession
   Need a priest; relieve tensions
3. Requirements for living
   Physical concerns
4. Never hurt or angry (at least not show feelings)
5. Salary—expect only what church can pay
6. Family—times when they come first
7. Need discipline to group life of Humiliati and Ministers Association

MINISTRY
1. Improve personal qualifications
2. Daily schedule—definite times for definite things (study, work, etc.)
3. Honesty with people. False colors, let people know your policy
   (Some questions were raised on this point—Intellectual integrity)
4. Recognized Protestant Church as layman's movement
   (Some questions raised here)
5. Finish job in one church before go to another
6. Do what is necessary to create functional church
7. Commitment to democratic policy
8. Minister to people where they are. Intellectual honesty not necessary when meeting person’s needs.

ABBOT RAYMOND IN HIS QUIET MANNER BURST GROUP WIDE OPEN BY RECITING DISCIPLINES AGREED UPON AT SPECIAL CONVOCATION IN DUNVEG. After reading all the weaknesses and minimum disciplines agreed upon, asks why have not we lived up to them? Discussion on "Steps on Path". Some tried to show progress in some things.
THE FOLLOWING IS THE SENSE OF THE DISCUSSION THAT FOLLOWED:

Earle: Worship is the greatest discipline.
Can you see the vision and not see the method?
If you do not see the method then you see the vision imperfectly.
When you see the vision and commit yourself to it, the group expectation can help you keep it.
In the light of "Education for what is Real" is there really group expectation? Only your expectation of what you think they expect. When you see the vision clearly, you see the way to achieve it and you do not need disciplines to follow vision. There are areas where disciplines are needed. The group expectation is a discipline before and after commitment.
There is strong group expectation, but it is diffused. Expect many things, but do not know exactly what. Do expect:

1. Will come to meetings
2. Will follow rule

In diffusion it is more intense

Does the Group expect conformity?

Yes, in several things. The important things in which we are in agreement: The Philosophy, The Worship.

Friday Morning

BRO. EMILE GIVES A REVIEW ON:

"You Can Change the World"

Book is about the Christopher Movement which began in 1945. It concerns itself with a life that will overcome Communism. It attempts to draw people to laws of Christ to augment life. Develops personal responsibility, love for all people based on Christian love—for all, even those who crucify him.

The first Christopher was seen at the well.
The chief obstacle to peace is the attitude that everything is all right in Kokomo. Even if this true, must reckon with the world. But all is not all right even in Kokomo.

Power of each individual pointed up. Lights in Hollywood Bowl.
Everyone is a child of God. Drive our rights from God. Mass established to protect these rights.

The cure for America is more Christophers (Christ bearers). More light bearers. See the image of Christ even in enemies. Sense of dedication beyond oneself. The movement tries to reach the many.

Four basic areas in which Christopher must move to love all.

1. Education. Schools do not teach religion of the west. There must be education for goal of one's life—namely to serve God and to love.

2. Government. Maintenance of the State, a God given right. Must mix in with politics.

3. Labor-Management relations. It is not necessary for those to be hostile to each other.

4. Communication. Power of the written word must be reckoned with. Too much of it is cheap, insincere, tawdry.

In order to write, be inspired by higher ideals than making money. The function of writing is to show what life really is. Write with faith, and it will be read.

This is a text book for what to do if in one of several fields for religious living. Shows you the field and what you can do. If you will, you can change the world.

DISCUSSION: This is a technique the Humiliati could use. Perhaps even join the Christophers. Or have a like order in our churches for devoted people.
Business Session

Question of Records. Left to new Abbot. No decision

Absentee Members. Should they be asked to withdraw?

Pointed out that we can not dismiss them.

No decision made.

New Members. Decided that they must have common areas of agreement with us.

There can be no black sheep.

Frank Anderson proposed. Decided to invite him.

Appointments for next year:

Abbot: Cole

Abbot's Delegate in Massachusetts: Hopkins

Chaplain: Hopkins

Scribe: Munson

Treasurer: McKinney

To pick location for 1950 Convocation: Munson

Meeting time: Second week in February

Contribution plan for next Convocation

Left to Treasurer to implement

Convocation closed with Communion and investiture of new Abbot.

All items or subjects for consideration for next year's agenda should be sent to the Abbot immediately.
A report from the scribe of the Congregationalists, set down in humble spirit and in earnest endeavor to assimilate the thoughts and prayers of the brethren, meeting in Holy Convocation at the Parish House and Shrine of the First Universalist Church of Orange, Mass. on the 30th day of January to the 2nd day of February in the year of our Lord 1951.

Tuesday morning

As it is written and so ordered, the Abbot, Brother David, read the Rule to the brethren assembled: Albert, David, Earle, Frederick, Raymond, and Keith. Brother Gordon arrived later in the day having been detained to pray for a departed spirit. Brother Charles arrived Thursday afternoon for a brief stay with the assembled.

Chaplain Raymond celebrated Holy Communion.

Tuesday afternoon

Brother Albert presented his paper on The Significance of Creeds, in his he said:

"The keystone of the liberal church is individual freedom of belief -- but, the laymen will not, cannot, make his own creed, because of lack of scholarship and interest -- thus no definite beliefs.

This brings liberal religion into difficulty -- must have a creed -- so attempt to arrive at one democratically (Washington Ayoval) -- but.

The essence of religion is commitment, surrender, relinquishing your freedom, to something beyond your control or your understanding -- Lincoln didn't want to do this, didn't want to be moved -- Dr. Rose at Christmas time accepts and believes -- what unbelievable facts you submit to are unimportant as long as the psychological effect is moving to you -- reluctance to accept any statement of theology is revolt against any religious commitment --

Religion means an imposed creetal system outside of you which you cannot touch or change -- freedom may be valid in the application of theology, but theological freedom is not valid -- theology is an aid to religious living, an activator -- conversion comes at the point of surrender --

Religion is not to be understood but accepted -- religion is commitment -- religion is superrational, supernatural -- beyond realm of belief or reason."

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Brother Keith presented a book report on "Man, Real and Ideal" by E. G. Conklin, in which it was stated:

"Organisms are fundamentally teleological.

The satisfactions of the intellect and the satisfactions of the emotions are reached by different routes. -- The affairs of men are directed and determined by emotions rather than by reason or science -- The emotions of men are not only older and more potent, but they are much more uniform than their reasoning --

What is matter? Never mind! What is mind? No matter!

The chief function of science is to cultivate reason and to know the truth, that of religion is to cultivate the emotions."

**********
Tuesday evening

Brother Gordon presented his paper on The Essential Elements in Ancient Creeds. Three stand test of survival against others -- Apostle's, not composed by the apostles but in process in early days of Christianity; became fixed and stable by the sixth century -- Nicene Creed, 325 AD, not settled until 381 AD, and in the eleventh century caused the permanent split between the Eastern and Roman churches over "the Son" -- Athanasian Creed, not written by Athanasius; never too popular; used extensively only in 13th century --

Essential elements are:
1. Trinitarian in theology
2. Source of the belief is not stated, nor the belief justified
3. Non-ethical in content; completely theological and limited to belief in God
4. Most striking is the positive tone
5. Essential beliefs for salvation
6. Brief enough for use in public worship
7. Begin in first person singular 'I' indicating personal acceptance

Creed has authority only in authoritarian churches -- while not our task to refute them, must meet need met by them in their day."

Abbot David gave a book review of "On Being Human" by Ashley Montagu.

"Man is not a competitive animal, but a social being -- Principle of cooperation is involved in evolution -- natural selection favors cooperation -- nature of life is cooperative. The way mothers raise their children makes nations and war. To bind self to self is the essence of social life. Society is based on love -- hope of society is education." Said Abbot David: "I submit that this was interesting."

Chaplain Raymond led evening meditation with readings from Thomas a Kempis' "Imitation of Christ".

Wednesday Morning

Worship to begin the day -- breakfast, after considerable confusion
Formal worship -- (the ecolyte dropped the bell) -- a discussion of the Mass --

The morning was devoted to a presentation of creeds prepared or unprepared by the brethren.

Brother David:
Felt he had to relate himself to the universe -- cannot violate my concept of the universe -- may transcend it -- need to develop a basis of confidence within the individual --
Had to show reason for living -- individual and social purpose -- wholeness --
Tried not to be specific, but movement toward universal values --
His creed was:
"I believe in God, the creative force of the universe and in the power of God within me, impelling me through its power to grow toward wholeness.

I believe in my salvation which shall come as I commit myself to the way of God and give birth through me to things of goodness, nobility and loveliness, and progressively grow toward the fulfillment of the wholeness that lies within me.

I believe in all men as manifestations of the power of God and that I shall fulfill my life as I develop harmony and unity with an increasing circle of humanity and with God.

I believe my life shall live forever through its progressive growth toward oneness with the divine.

I believe in the worship of the church and that it alone can lead me to commit myself to the way of God."

Rebuttal: no salvation outside of the church -- that is source -- there is also the ethic: ethics is the fruit, without the tree no fruit -- football players going to Mass before the game -- church only institution that deals with 'the whole man' and his total relationship to the universe.

Brother Raymond's:
Interpreted job to write creed for Universalist church -- so wrote a functional creed for Brockton church, as follows:

"We believe in One Eternal God, the Creator and Sustainer of life: the divine power in, through and under all things visible and invisible; sovereign in power, perfect in holiness, invincible in purpose.

We believe that God is absolute sovereignty the growing life of man, having a good intention in every volition of man, and a good purpose in every act of nature.

We believe in Life, divine gift of the One Eternal God.
We believe that life achieves true significance and meaning only when it is lived in complete obedience and dedication to its source, its power, and its hope - the One Eternal God.

We believe in the Universalist Church, founded of God to bring salvation to men, by bringing them to at-one-ment with themselves, their universe, and their God.

We believe in the continuing revelation of truth, made known by the One Eternal God in many ways, by many prophets, in many times.

We believe that the chief end of man is the fulfillment of self to the glory of the One Eternal God.
We believe that holiness and happiness are inseparably connected and that salvation depends upon the fulfillment of self that results from the maintainance of moral order and the practice of good works.

We believe in the final harmony of all life with the One Eternal God."

Brother Earle:
"I believe in God, the eternal and creative spirit of goodness who made heaven and earth, and continually seeks to order all things to his divine purpose; and in man, born in love, unique in personality, and destined to fulfill his highest vision, that he might find wholeness and express the will of God.

I believe in the universality of life, the worth of every human personality, and the inevitability of growth.

And I believe in the power of love, the efficacy of prayer, the
strength of faith, the joy of salvation, and the consummation of life. Amen"

Brother Keith:
"A person cannot write his own creed -- incapable of writing one for the Humiliati -- didn't prepare one for the UCA."

Brother Gordon:
Felt he had to express the God that is in him -- the impulse toward wholeness --

"I believe in God which is in all things; that God is in me impelling toward holy obedience; that Jesus is the best example of the divinity to which I may rise through obedience to God. I believe in the Church as the revealer of God, and in its sacraments as a means for my growing into harmony with God. I believe in the immortality of good."

Wednesday afternoon
Brother Charles arrived for the day. Brother Gordon made squash pies. Brother David continued his movements.

Brother Albert:
presented the necessary contents of a creed, with the understanding that a creed is a complete statement of a religious system, not an explanation but a statement:

1. belief in a Creator
2. description of the nature of that Creator (indefinite, purposeful force, supernatural)
3. belief in a definite personality who is raised to divinity and completely divine and completely human
4. belief in intermediaries, male and female
5. belief in supernatural establishment of religious institution with your duties and its rights
6. multitude of devotional aids -- portable religion

intermediaries do away with need to bring faith down -- channel through which get at it -- numerous and all kinds -- someone for every approach --

Brother Frederick:
"I believe in God, the Creator and Sustainer of all that is. I believe in the divine nature of all men, upon whom is laid the necessity of finding salvation in the imitation of God. I believe in the power of love, the authority of truth, and the way of peace."

Note: The Scribe is not responsible for the exact wording of these creeds. The pen works much slower than the tongue. He would appreciate receiving any corrections which the brethren wish to make.

Brother Frederick led the assembled in a period of coordination, beginning with an explanation of the haunted heating system to Brother Charles.

Brother Raymond presented a review of Brother Albert's paper. We then became involved in various points: the inevitability of growth, Holy Mary. Brother Albert: "What we need is a new myth. But we do not have time to create it, and if we did then would not be any essential difference. So let's take the present myth for it can save us."
Free time was declared by the Abbot, and the following notes were taken during the "free" discussion:
"Roll back your disbelief and there is belief underneath it", Brother Frederick.

Much concern was expressed over the seeming necessity for the brethren to agree. "Why is agreement necessary? Because it is the basis of our fellowship. We find it difficult to tolerate each other's disagreement, because we do not take into account the growth process."

The Abbot read excerpts from old epistles. (What a lot of fun! "Did I write that?" "Now aren't we clever!" )

By this time the proposed schedule was completely divorced. Even the Chaplain and his acolyte were not sure when to 'lute' in the Chapel. The brethren continued to consume large quantities of food and talk much about many incidentals. Brother Charles informed the brethren of his work, and the conditions in the western sector of Germany. Blessings were given unto him as he left to catch a train.

Wednesday evening
At 9:30 Brother Earle presented a book review of "Seeds of Redemption" by Bernard Malouf.

"In this power-ridden culture our need is to develop a spiritual prospective of the living process -- we are hampered by the desire for knowledge, exactness, and success -- need to develop life of sensitivity -- important is imagination -- be aware of a Creator God -- suffering has spiritual significance; life is not without tragedy; Christianity leads to the cross; suffering is the way thru which we enter the kingdom -- chief end of man is to glorify God"

Brother Raymond: "He knows what, but not how."
Brother Gordon: "Take into account the suffering that comes from not growing."

The day closed with the Chaplain reading from "Imitation of Christ."

Thursday morning
Even before breakfast did we gather in front of the dead ashes, and even in the absence of some heard more of Thomas a Kempis. Formal worship with the Missal (no belldropping)
9:30 am we continued our session under Brother Frederick's guidance to prepare a creed. What creed? 1. for the UCA; 2. our own churches; 3. the Humaliti. First for the UCA. Much work, but not complete.

Thursday afternoon
The Document complete it was proclaimed official as a creed for the Universalist Church of America:

"I believe in the one, eternal God who rules all creation with absolute sovereignty, having a good purpose in every process of nature and a good intention in every volition of man.
I believe that man's salvation lies in cheerful submission to the will of God, and that Jesus best exemplifies such holy obedience.
I believe in the Church Universal, and in the power of love, the efficacy of prayer, the strength of faith, the joy of salvation, and the life everlasting. Amen"

Note: "The Life Everlasting" was added on Friday morning and included here to make this creed complete at this point.
with the setting of the sun many worshipped with the aid of the organ.

Thursday evening

A secret session of the Abbot and two best abbots was held and Brother Gordon was elected Abbot for 1952. It was further recommended that the policy of electing an Abbot for life be considered. By unanimous agreement this policy was adopted.

Much time was spent in developing a creed for the Humilisti. But, we were not together in this even from the fundamental point of believing that we needed a creed, much less expressing a willingness to accept. Some were still wondering if a person could write his own creed. We did get this far:

"I believe in God, creator and sustainer of all things visible and invisible, whose nature is indefinite, universal, impersonal, omnipotent, ubiquitous, incorporeal, ineffable, purposeful, supernatural............whose perfect incarnation in Jesus Christ, complete humanity and absolute deity, saves me to eternal bliss.

I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, one and indivisible in faith and purpose, repository of the blessed sacraments essential to salvation, and in the saving power of her saints...."

Impasse came over incorporating into this creed 'the essential maternal nature of the universe' (Virgin Mary). Other things suggested for inclusion were: "incontrovertible will of God; intermediaries: validity of sainthood; incarnation: assurance of fulfillment by the complete manhood and absolute divinity of Christ; immortality: portable aids to worship; infallibility of the abbot."

Business session:

It was ruled that we present a gift to the Orange Church. The brethren were to give $2.00 each to Brother Earle who would work with Brother Frederick in paying for an appropriate gift.

The publishing of Brother Raymond's thesis was discussed. (The Scribe was somewhat concerned over the comments of the brethren. This will be discussed soon in an epistle from the Abbot.)

Brother Leon's desire to be dropped from membership was discussed and the Scribe was instructed to communicate with him our position in this matter.

Relative to the impasse in the Humilisti creed Brother Albert expressed this faith which was concurred in by the members: "I believe in the sufficient efficacy of the Abbot to invoke a creed as in all other matters touching the Humilisti, and sincerely pray that he so bless us during the current convocation year." The brethren were warned of the implications of this statement.

Devotions followed led by Chaplain Raymond.
We had scrambled eggs with turkey giblets. (Burp!)

Friday Morning

Many chores putting the house in order -- Holy Communion was celebrated by the Chaplain, and the new abbot, Brother Keith, was invested. A brief session was held to change the UCA creed by substituting "life everlasting" for the "consummation of life", and the brethren departed.

"And there was evening and morning...."

Brother Keith
Scribe