

Despite the unhappiness created by the departure of the Reverend McGreaham, the work of the church went forward with little interruption. Indeed, a children's campaign to add members to the Sunday School resulted in the largest attendances in recent years. The Session and the trustees foresaw the needs of the congregation and provided weekly for full worship programs. Each Sabbath found a pastoral candidate in the pulpit. Some were from the East, some from Ohio, and some from cities or towns in southern Michigan. On a Sunday early in August, the Reverend William H. Long of Ludington, Michigan, preached at both services. "There is prospect of his being called to this pulpit," said a church reporter, "his sermons. . . having pleased the congregations very much." Two weeks later Long accepted a call to First Presbyterian.

The Reverend Long began his three-year pastorate on September 5, 1909. Ten days later a large proportion of the membership attended a reception for the new pastor and his wife in the newly-finished church social hall. "Everyone," the Presbyterian correspondent dutifully reported, "was impressed by the cordiality and the friendly spirit which pervaded the entire evening." After four months without a spiritual leader, the congregation could now look confidently to the approaching fall and winter when opportunities for religious expression were at their fullest.

During the Reverend Long's ministry, the First Presbyterian Church made steady if not spectacular progress. Reports submitted at the annual meeting in 1910 revealed a church membership of 116 and a Sunday School enrollment of 129. A dedicated group of fifty-five women comprised the Ladies' Aid Society which had now set higher goals than ever before. The Presbyterian choir contributed much to the effectiveness of religious observance. Early in 1911, "assisted by ten of the best soloists in the city and a picked chorus," it presented the cantata, "The Coming of Ruth." In that year, too, the church experimented and discovered that students preferred to meet for Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. rather than 12:00 noon. Although it numbered no more than eighteen members, the Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society, organized in 1906, planned in advance and carried out a full year's program of aid to those less fortunate.

In the spring of 1912, the First Presbyterians for a time refused the use of their church for a series of evangelistic meetings, but at length consented. For two weeks thereafter, revival services were held nightly in the sanctuary. "Mr. Barnes," said the church reporter, speaking of the meetings and the evangelist who conducted them,

has laid a strong hold upon his hearers at every service.  
He has shown himself to be a preacher of unusual ability. . . .  
No clap-trap methods have been employed. They have not drawn  
a crowd of curious people simply seeking entertainment.  
They have however been well attended and universally people  
have gone away saying that the service was helpful.

Though sincere, the First Presbyterian approach to evangelism was less emotional than that of some denominations. In a published statement descriptive of its aims and beliefs, it expressed the hope that by cooperating with other faiths and competing with none, all who lived in the community might "be given privileges of Christian worship and work." The message of Christianity was of such "real and practical helpfulness" that proclaiming the gospel must ever be the "principal work" of First Presbyterian. It

undertook to "assist its own poor and to help all its members at times of need." In addition to its local mission the church also contributed to "preaching, teaching, and healing in other lands." Any in the community who had not affiliated with another church organization, it cordially invited to become "one of this company of Presbyterians."

Many students and faculty members of Central Michican Normal School accepted the invitation to worship at First Presbyterian. As the years passed, these newcomers to Mt. Pleasant became ever more involved in church activities and programs. Charles T. Grawn, the president of Central, had long served First Presbyterian as an elder and a trustee. At the Grawn home in Mt. Pleasant in June, 1912, the Reverend Long officiated at the wedding of the president's daughter, Hildegarde, to James T. Milliken, a Traverse City merchant. Fifty-nine years later when the First Presbyterian Church celebrated its centennial, a son of this union, William G. Milliken, would be governor of the state of Michigan.

After the usual late summer lull, church activities resumed in September, 1912, at a time of mounting excitement over approaching state and national elections. The Progressive Party and its reform platform found staunch supporters among the Presbyterians--especially the women. Largely through the efforts of Governor Chase Osborn of Michigan a referendum granting women the right to vote was to appear on the state ballot in November. In Mt. Pleasant the Presbyterian women spearheaded a drive to win support for the proposed amendment to the state constitution. Equal Suffrage clubs soon sprang up in town and throughout Isabella County. Reverend Long and other local pastors supported the referendum from their pulpits and from less elaborate rostrums in outlying schoolhouses and rural centers. When the results of the balloting were tabulated, the Progressives among the Presbyterians may have felt chagrin that their candidate, Theodore Roosevelt, had lost the presidency to Woodrow Wilson, but they were overjoyed with the news that voters of Michigan had approved the equal suffrage referendum. To celebrate, the Equal Suffrage clubs of Isabella County scheduled a victory banquet at the Presbyterian Church. "Come," said the announcement of the affair,

no matter whether you worked for equal suffrage or voted for it or only prayed or wished for it. The only quali-



A party enjoyed by Mrs. Kendall P. Brooks' Sunday School class, 1913.



fication for attending this jollification is that you are glad that Michigan men did the handsome, gallant thing in promoting their women from the minor and idiot class . . . . Come anyway, even if you have a grouch and expect the state to go plumb to the deminition bow-wows. . . .

On the 18th of November, 1912, jubilant supporters of equal suffrage packed the Presbyterian social hall to partake of a twenty-five cent oyster supper and to toast the great victory. At this "intellectual as well as instructive feast" leaders of church and community delivered prepared addresses regarding the social significance of equal suffrage:

The Reverend B. A. Hills

"The woman voter and her relation to the social evil."

Susie L. Chatterton

"Joint citizenship and its effect on domestic life."

Anna Hawkins

"Equal pay for equal work."

Dr. E. C. Rowe

"The woman citizen and her response to the burden of war."

Dr. Amanda Holcomb

"The woman citizen's opportunity in relation to child labor."

Reverend W. H. Long

"Woman citizenship and the liquor traffic."

Lucy A. Sloan

"The new citizen and the men who made her so."

When all had spoken and the joyful diners had returned to their homes, the women could look with anticipation to the spring election in 1913 when they could cast their first ballots. But it was not to be! A few weeks later, as a result of a recount initiated by opponents of equal suffrage, came the sad news that the referendum had lost by the slim margin of 760 votes out of a total cast of almost 500,000. At the election the next spring, the male voters of Michigan decisively rejected a similar referendum. Not until November, 1918, would the women of Michigan win the franchise and no longer be classed with minors, idiots, and prison inmates.

At a meeting on the Sabbath evening preceding the equal suffrage "victory" jubilee, the congregation regretfully accepted the Reverend Long's unexpected resignation as pastor of First Presbyterian. The minister's action, apparently, was forthcoming—not because of dissatisfaction with his pastorate, but for personal reasons. He did not again occupy the Presbyterian pulpit. In a week's time he had moved his family to his brother's farm in Gratiot County, and had exchanged the pulpit for the plow. With Long operating the farm, the brother and his wife would be free to take their sick child to the west coast to escape a Michigan winter.

The First Presbyterian Church was extremely fortunate in its next choice of a pastor. For several months after the departure of the Reverend Long, faculty members of Alma College served the church, but only at morning service. During this time a pulpit supply committee carried on its search for a new pastor. Instead of inviting candidates to Mt. Pleasant to preach to the congregation, the committee delegated members to attend worship services at churches in nearby towns and cities. At a Session meeting on March 2, 1913, the committee recommended that the congregation call the Reverend Joseph H. Green, pastor of a church in St. Charles, Michigan. A week later, after Ralph O. Doughty, chairman of the committee, had made "some explanatory statements" regarding its choice for the pulpit, the congregation voted "unanimously" to issue a call to the Reverend Green. He accepted the First Presbyterian pulpit and in April arrived in Mt. Pleasant to begin his duties.



The Reverend Joseph H. Green in uniform as chaplain of the Student Army Training Corps of Central Michigan Normal School 1918. The manse on Main Street is in the background.

Green, who would serve longer at First Presbyterian than any of his predecessors, had been born and reared in England and educated in English schools. Before coming to America in 1909, he had preached for five years in his native land. He came "from a stock of preachers." His father had been forty years in the pulpit and three of his father's brothers also had long careers as ministers. After coming to America the younger Green had served the church at St. Charles for four years before receiving the call to First Presbyterian.

Within weeks of his arrival, the new pastor had won a host of friends and admirers, not only in the church but in the community as well. "His devotion to the cause he serves," said a newspaper account some months after his arrival, "his sincere and earnest speech combined with his oratorical ability have filled his church to the doors at every service." He had been in Mt. Pleasant only a month when he was asked to deliver the principal address at Memorial Day exercises in the courthouse square. A few weeks later, at Central Michigan Normal School, he "lectured before Miss Tate's class in English literature . . . on the subject of Dickens." The demand for his services as a speaker or preacher soon reached far beyond Mt. Pleasant.



Although the Reverend Green had received theological training and had preached for a number of years, he had yet to be ordained by the Presbytery and installed as pastor of First Presbyterian. This impressive ceremony took place on a Monday evening before a congregation of church members and well-wishers who occupied every seat in the sanctuary. At the close of the ceremony, the Reverend Green stepped to the front of the chancel and pronounced the benediction.

The Presbyterians and the community, too, expressed much interest in a second ceremony soon to take place in which the Reverend Green would again be a participant. Some time before his arrival in Mt. Pleasant, the parents of Miss Adeline H. Thurston had announced the engagement of their daughter and the Reverend Green. Miss Thurston, a Chesaning school teacher, had attended Central Michigan Normal School for four years and had many friends in Mt. Pleasant. The marriage took place in the First Presbyterian Church at noon on Monday, November 24, 1913. "The church," stated the newspaper account of the wedding, "was beautifully decorated, the rostrum being heavily banked with potted flowers, ferns and greens, the organ and piano being almost hidden from view. From the ceiling were suspended two large bells encircled by wreaths . . . ." Before the wedding took place, a representative of the congregation presented the pastor with a purse containing nine twenty-dollar gold pieces. Dr. H. R. Stark of Saginaw, who two months before had presided at the ordination and installation of the Reverend Green, performed the ceremony. After a brief honeymoon Green and his wife returned to Mt. Pleasant to a church reception in their honor. The new Mrs. Green, commented the local press, "is possessed of a delightful personality, is a thoroughly educated lady, and will be of great assistance to her husband in his work."

With the Reverend Green providing dynamic leadership, the First Presbyterian Church continued to grow and prosper. For some time past, however, members of the congregation had expressed concern with the financial affairs of the church. Despite the "good times" of recent years and a substantial increase in membership, First Presbyterian had taken no action to retire or even to reduce the \$3000 mortgage that had "burdened" its real estate since 1909. Many in the congregation fretted, too, that during these years nothing had been done to provide the church with a modern pipe organ. The basic design of the new church called for the installation of the instrument, but at the time of construction, money for such a luxury was unavailable. At the dedication of the new church in 1907, a piano alone had provided music and accompaniment. A few days later, however, the building fund treasurer paid a wagoner ninety cents for transporting to the new church the old hand-pumped pipe organ which Mrs. Dwight May had long ago given to First Presbyterian. Since that time it had occupied a portion of the space reserved for a larger instrument.

The Reverend Green was much impressed with the Ladies' Aid Society and its many contributions to the church. Apparently, at his urging the Men's Goodfellowship Club sought to render similar service. At a church dinner soon after Green's arrival, a humorous feature of the evening's program consisted of brief talks by men and women of the congregation. Each woman related what she would do for the church if she were president of the Goodfellowship Club. In turn, each man told what his program would be if he were president of the Ladies' Aid Society. As the months passed, Green did all he could to nurture a friendly rivalry between the two organizations.

At a meeting of the Ladies' Aid Society in January, 1914, the secretary read the terms of a challenge issued by the men's organization. If, within the next three years, the women of the church would purchase and install a new pipe organ at a cost of not more than \$2,500, the men of the church

would raise the \$3000 needed to retire the mortgage. The women agreed to the challenge and prepared a formal acceptance to be read from the pulpit on the following Sunday. Before adjourning, the Society started an organ fund with \$60.50 in pledges.

At a subsequent meeting, the Ladies' Aid Society appointed an organ committee consisting of Mrs. Daugherty, Mrs. John Kelly, and Mrs. Ralph O. Doughty. Mrs. Doughty immediately called upon her husband to assist the committee in the difficult task of selecting an organ that would meet the needs of the church and cost no more than \$2,500.

Ralph O. Doughty was a son of former elder Wilkinson Doughty and Mary F. Doughty, one of the twelve original members of First Presbyterian. He was born in July, 1871, only a few weeks before the founding of the church; he had grown to manhood in it, and had long served it as a trustee. As treasurer of the building committee of the Board of Trustees, he had faithfully attended to the bulk of the detail associated with the construction of the new church and its subsequent completion. To his mind the church would never be complete, however, until a great organ occupied the space in the chancel provided for it. For the next eighteen months, Doughty, who appreciated music but was not a musician, devoted every spare moment to a study of organs and to a survey of organ manufacturers. Untiring in his efforts, he was determined that First Presbyterian should have the best organ that available money could buy. To this end, he corresponded not only with organ manufacturers, but also with such outstanding masters of the organ as Earl V. Moore of the University of Michigan. Late in April, 1915, the A. B. Felgemaker Organ Company of Erie, Pennsylvania submitted a proposed contract and a bid of \$2,560 for an instrument meeting Doughty's specifications. After more investigation and additional bids, Doughty advised the pipe organ committee to accept the Felgemaker offer. On June 2, 1915, the Ladies' Aid Society met to consider the committee's recommendation. After hearing Doughty and Moore testify to the high quality of the Felgemaker instrument, the Society agreed to the company's offer and immediately signed and forwarded a contract calling for the manufacture, delivery, and installation of the organ before October 1, 1915.

To introduce their most recent gift to the church, the Ladies' Aid Society invited the congregation, and the public as well, to attend an "Inaugural Recital on the Pipe Organ" on the evening of September 30, 1915, with the aforementioned Earl V. Moore at the console. On a program already printed for the occasion was a description of the organ which as late as September 24 had not yet arrived in Mt. Pleasant. Much to the relief of the Ladies' Aid Society and Doughty, too, the thirty boxes and crates containing the disassembled instrument arrived the next morning. Within a day or two the Felgemaker technicians had installed the organ and prepared it for use.

On September 30, a large and appreciative audience filled the Presbyterian Church for the inaugural recital. Two days later in a letter to the Felgemaker Company, Doughty expressed "delight with the organ" and declared that he and the Ladies' Aid Society wished to acknowledge their complete satisfaction "in every respect" with the transaction. The Society made a down payment of \$700 on the organ and tendered in payment of the balance a one-year note and a two-year note, each for \$930. On the next day, Sunday, October 3, 1915, the Reverend Green and a grateful congregation dedicated the new instrument. The pastor said:

Nearly half a century ago this organization came into being. During those years God has sustained and added to its membership. Ten [sic] years ago this beautiful church was erected. To perfect its equipment and add to its efficiency in ministering to the best life in this



city, this splendid pipe organ has been installed. Last Thursday evening Professor Moore of Ann Arbor demonstrated its power and sweet tonal quality. That it may best fulfill its mission, we now proceed to dedicate it to the worship of God and the service of man.

The Presbyterians could indeed be proud of their new organ and thankful to the Ladies' Aid Society for the gift of it. A year later Professor Moore expressed his pleasure in returning to Mt. Pleasant to present a second recital. In his opinion the First Presbyterian organ was "the finest of its size in the state." On March 6, 1919, less than three and one-half years after its installation, the Ladies' Aid Society made the final payment on the instrument. The women of the church had completed their commitment.

For their part of the bargain with the Ladies' Aid Society, the men of the church conducted a special pledge campaign in November, 1914, to raise the funds needed to retire the mortgage. By the spring of 1915, pledges had been received amounting to more than \$3,500. According to the terms of the mortgage, payments on the principal could be made only at half-year intervals. Payments during 1915 reduced the mortgage to \$2,000 and in another eighteen months it had been further reduced to \$1,100. A little more than a year after the Ladies' Aid Society completed payments on the organ, the men of the church retired the mortgage.

Meanwhile, the outbreak of war in 1917 provided the pastor and the men and women of the church with new avenues for service. During the war years, the Reverend Green spoke often and eloquently in support of bond drives and at rallies honoring departing volunteers and draftees. The women of the church frequently gathered in the social hall to do Red Cross work. In company with Christians everywhere, all prayed for peace. When the armistice came in 1918, Presbyterians helped swell the ranks of the 15,000 citizens who marched in a long victory parade, but many in the great assemblage soon afterwards found their way to their churches to give thanks that the bloodshed had ended.

During the war years the men of the church seemed to take special pleasure in doing honor to their pastor. In 1917, they celebrated the commencement of his fifth year at First Presbyterian; in 1918, they feted him on the ninth anniversary of his arrival in America. All church organizations had prospered during Green's ministry, but none more strikingly than the Men's Goodfellowship Club. In 1919, the citizens of Isabella County also honored Green by presenting him a medal "similar to those given the soldiers" in recognition of his many contributions to the county war effort.

The continued prosperity of the First Presbyterian Church was further revealed at the annual meeting in April, 1919. At this meeting the congregation received with pleasure the news that the Reverend Green would remain as pastor. Perhaps in appreciation of his decision, the congregation authorized the purchase of a manse on the southwest corner of Normal (University) and Wisconsin Streets.

Later in the year, to demonstrate its regard for two long-time elders and their wives, the congregation scheduled a special "Appreciation Service" for the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Charles Slater and George W. Snyder had served as elders for forty-eight and thirty-eight years respectively, and their wives had demonstrated equal loyalty and devotion to the church. Unfortunately, Henry Bouton, a founder of the church and its first elder, had died three years before.

Early in 1920, the congregation heard with pleasure that the Reverend Green's elderly father planned to visit America and spend a year with his son in Mt. Pleasant. When the Reverend John Green arrived in the city in the spring, he quickly won the love and respect of the congregation. During his year in Mt. Pleasant he preached frequently to appreciative audiences in the First Presbyterian Church and became a highly essential member of the Men's Sunday School Class. A year later on the eve of his departure for England, the church honored the venerable clergyman with a testimonial dinner and many gifts.

During the time of the Reverend John Green's visit to Mt. Pleasant, joy and good fellowship in all church activities seemed to prevail as never before. But the church was to know sorrow, too. In September, 1920, at the very commencement of First Presbyterian's fiftieth year, and his, too, death took Ralph O. Doughty, the "beloved trustee" who had labored so long and so ardently for the church.

The fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the First Presbyterian church was celebrated over a three-day period beginning on Sunday, November 20, 1921. At the morning service on that Sabbath, the Reverend Green preached a sermon, "Building for God." The choir sang a special anthem, "How Lovely are Thy Dwellings." At this service, too, in the early months of its fifty-first year, the church received into membership a class of fifty-one "splendid people." That evening the pastor spoke on "The Program of the Church," and the Central Michigan Normal School orchestra and choir provided the music. All Sunday School classes presented specially prepared semi-centennial programs. On Wednesday evening, November 21, the Reverend H. W. Fisher of Saginaw preached a sermon, "We Have Lived," to an overflow audience. The celebration culminated at a potluck dinner on Tuesday evening, November 22. At this affair, Charles Slater, the dean of the Session, recalled in his talk, "The Church Yesterday," the trials of the early years when a handful of dedicated Presbyterians struggled and sacrificed to keep the church alive. Mrs. Eva Doughty, who had been a member of the Ladies' Aid Society since its founding in 1869, told with humor and pathos the story of that organization's faithful service to the congregation. After representatives of other church groups had given brief talks on "The Church Today," the pastor responded to the toast, "The Church Tomorrow." In his remarks he pointed out that the church was presently in "splendid condition" and that it could look to a future with limitless possibilities for service to God and man. At the conclusion of his remarks, he announced that all church indebtedness had been paid in full. Those in attendance at this last evening of the semi-centennial celebration were especially pleased to receive congratulatory messages from former pastors and friends. When the program ended, the large audience was dismissed with prayer. Thus ended the fiftieth year celebration which, said the local press, "will be long remembered by all who were privileged to attend."

The first years of First Presbyterian's second half-century seemed to bear out the pastor's prediction regarding the future of the church. During Green's ministry membership had doubled and benevolence contributions had quadrupled. The Sunday School now could claim the largest average attendance in its history. During the year just past, the Young People's Society expected as many as one hundred of the town's youth to be present at each of its programs. Total yearly receipts of the church now averaged \$8,000. At the conclusion of a joyful weeknight service during the Christmas season in 1921, B. L. Parkhill, treasurer of the Board of Trustees, read a financial statement which formally reported a fact already known—the First Presbyterian Church was free of indebtedness. Thereupon, "while the audience sang the doxology," Charles Slater burned the mortgage papers.



No longer in debt for the building and its fine organ, both the Board of Trustees and the Ladies' Aid Society could now give attention to improving the church and supplying long delayed needs. In March, 1922, as men of the congregation made the rounds of the city for First Presbyterian's every member canvass, they could observe men at work installing in front of the church "a first class bulletin, with interchangeable steel letters under glass." A few weeks later, the Ladies' Aid Society, which could now realize as much as \$200 in receipts from a one-day fair, provided "a beautiful Wilton carpet" for the church auditorium and classrooms. Indeed, significant changes had taken place and continued to take place at First Presbyterian during the ministry of their beloved pastor.

During his years at First Presbyterian, the Reverend Green had traveled extensively in central Michigan. Enthusiastic audiences greeted him whenever and wherever he spoke--from other pulpits, at commencement exercises, at service club meetings, and even before chambers of commerce. In November, 1921, an Adrian newspaper commented on Green's appearance before the local Rotary Club. "There have been few speakers in Adrian," it said,

who have won such universal praise and a feeling of good fellowship with a single talk as did Mr. Green. All who heard him are either quoting from his speech or singing his praise. If Mt. Pleasant people don't want to lose Mr. Green they had better keep him at home. . . .

Unfortunately for Mt. Pleasant and for the First Presbyterian Church, the demand for Green's services as a preacher or speaker continued to mount. Late in October, 1922, came the sad but not unexpected news--the Reverend Green after "careful and prayerful thought" had submitted his resignation as pastor of First Presbyterian to accept a call to the Presbyterian church in Ionia, Michigan. He preached his farewell sermon on the morning of November 9, 1922, attended a reception honoring him and Mrs. Green in the afternoon, and a week later began his new pastorate.