

LIVE FOR A HUNDRED YEARS

A History of the
Maine Christian Association

by

Dorothy Clarke Wilson

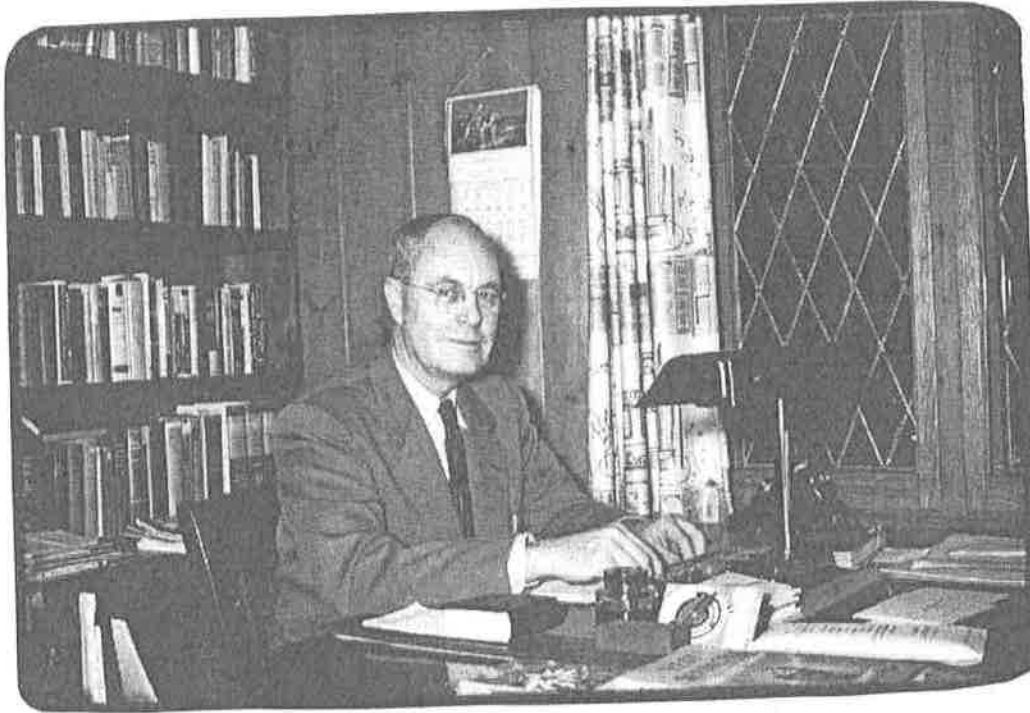
There is a salutation used sometimes in India when one wants to pay special honor to a person or a group or an organization. They say, "Live for a Hundred Years!".

I used this as a title some years ago for a pageant which I wrote for use at the Methodist General Conference celebrating a century of Methodist mission work in India. It is appropriate to use it again for this history, for, as you will see, Protestant student work at the University of Maine started in the eighteen nineties, just about a hundred years ago. With the help of the Endowment Fund Campaign, which is now being carried on, we hope to insure the stability and usefulness of the Maine Christian Association for the future, even for the next century.

Orono, Maine
1996



Dorothy Clarke Wilson



Reverend Elwin Wilson

History of the Maine Christian Association

ONE

Since I am one of the few persons still living, perhaps the only one, intimately involved in the founding and early history of the present Maine Christian Association, it is fitting that I should record this brief history while there is still time. I use the latter phrase purposely, for I just celebrated my ninetieth birthday and am beginning to be forgetful.

In addition to personal recollections, I hope to explore all resources available - interviews, correspondence, reports of the Association and denominational agencies, a few diaries, though many of these have unfortunately been destroyed.

In 1947 my husband, Rev. Elwin Wilson, came as pastor to the Methodist Church in Orono, leaving the superintendency of the Portland District a year early because of a keen interest in Wesley Foundation, work with Methodist students at the University of Maine which was then being conducted at the Orono church. We worked for three years with an active group of students, holding suppers and discussions each Sunday evening at the parsonage, attending student conferences, both Methodist and interdenominational, cooperating as far as possible with other religious groups on campus. We enjoyed a friendly relationship with Rev. Charles O'Connor, Director of the Maine Christian Association at the university, affiliated with the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association and an integral part of the campus curriculum. We also organized an active student couples' group, which held its own supper meetings and discussions.

I was researching for a book in India in 1950 when my husband wrote that a new organization was in process of formation by Protestant denominations in Maine to take the place of the existent Maine Christian Association and that he had been approached to become its Director. Because of his interest in and concern for student work, he was definitely interested. What did I think? I arrived home in May, and plans developed with a rush. We were ready to take over the work in August of 1950.

A new work, yes, but, as I said before, its predecessors had a long history. Before proceeding with the development of the new organization, it will be valuable to chronicle as much as can be learned of these activities which had preceded it.

They began, according to available records, in 1890 with the formation at the University of Maine of a Young Men's Christian Association. At the same time, or possibly a little later, a Young Women's Christian Association was also formed. Both were branches of the two state and national Associations. Together they provided religious and social activities for the university students. Thanks to Thelma Crossland Robie, who searched out details of the two organizations from the university PRISM, we have pictures and outlines of their activities dating back to the 1920s.

At some period the two organizations joined forces and became the Maine Christian Association. In 1945, as a result of an increase of Jewish and Catholic students, the Hillel Foundation and the Newman Club were formed. In 1949, the Episcopal Canterbury Club became a campus organization. All cooperated to some degree in promoting religious work on campus with the MCA becoming more distinctly Protestant in its emphasis.

As I said before, the Director of the Maine Christian Association, when we came to Orono in 1947, was Rev. Charles O'Connor, a Baptist minister. Judging by the PRISM reports, he came to the university in 1944. We knew him as an extremely capable administrator, outgoing, creative, caring. In 1945 the YMCA and YWCA were combined into a single unit, the Maine Christian Association.

In copies of the PRISM covering this period are pictorial records of activities during Charlie O'Connor's period of leadership.

For further details of this parent organization during this time, we are indebted to several students during the later 1940s, chiefly Thelma Crossland Robie and Ruth Fogler Goff, both of whom were active workers during those years. Ruth loaned us scrap books which contained pertinent information of MCA activities during those years.

Where was the work based? A quote from Ruth's invaluable scrap book:

"Gather 'round, chillum. History lesson for the day. Way aback in 1870 there stood a white frame building on the site of Oak Hall. It was the Commons, with chow lines, 1870 version. By 1914 the chow line moved out and things academic moved in ... Estabrooke Hall, if you please, with English and speech classes. In 1917 the classes moved out and the army in. A hospital of World War I reserves. In 1924 the MCA moved in. About 1935 the building moved out! Its aging frame was carefully and tenderly deposited just northeast of the Print Shop, and the Maine Christian Association carried on. We've been here except for three interludes of dormitory service for the homeless.

"And here we are today . . . making like a Student Union as a sideline . . . unofficial headquarters for off-campus students, coke guzzlers and after campus fires.

"This building is yours, as you can plainly see. Downstairs Reading Room for browsing and relaxing, the Red Room for ping pong and Mississippi and the MCA office. On the second floor the Upstairs Lounge, the Little Chapel, the kitchenette, and the office of the *Maine Campus*. And way upstairs, the PRISM and Pine Needle offices. Mary Dirks and Nap Spenard '50 are house managers.

"In between times - - some time after the janitor's arrival and the evening supervisor's departure, the MCA secretaries are on duty --- Charles O'Connor and Morla Timberlake. They are available, just any time you can catch them, for nonprofessional counseling, for consulting about how MCA can best serve the campus."

Good publicity - what? Another page tells: WHAT GOES ON OF A WEEKDAY:

"MCA Breakfast Club: Each Wednesday morning at the crisp and inviting hour of 7:00 a.m., a group of hardy souls meets at the MCA for a brief, student-led worship service in the Little Chapel -- prayer, meditation and inspiration, followed by breakfast in the kitchenette. Guaranteed safe first hour classes?"

"FROSH CLUB, an introduction to the MCA program, launched by upper class advisors Elinor Hanson '50 and Bob Preble '50 and carried on by you frosh, to do what you will. Usually one of the liveliest."

"300 CLUB . . . special MCA club for upperclassmen, meeting every other week in the Reading Room. Planned by and for you upperclass folk, Powers '50 and Ed Boggs '49 in charge."

"NEWMAN CLUB . . . an organization for Catholic students, headed by Dick Gagnon '48, which meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month somewhere about campus -- speakers, discussion and sociability."

"CANTERBURY CLUB . . . for Episcopalian students on campus. Bo Warren '48 and Dick Schonland '50 are the men to see, if you are interested in joining this fellowship."

"CABINET" . . . Policy-making and program-promoting bigshots of the MCA which meets weekly at the building. All ideas, suggestions, comments and gripes are welcomed by this austere group, which wants 1947-1948 the best."

"HILLEL FOUNDATION . . . Cultural and social meeting and Friday evening religious service for Jewish students, let by Rabbi Milton Elefant. Stan Miller '48 is the president."

"And on Sundays:"

"ROMAN CATHOLIC SERVICES . . . Father Francis LeTourneau, Chaplain, for Catholic students. Conducts Roman Catholic Mass each Sunday morning, Father Edward A. Sheehy assisting, 8:00, 9:00 and 10:00 in the Little Theatre."

"PROTESTANT . . . At 11:00 each Sunday, there is a student-led, non-denominational church service in the Little Theatre for Protestant students. Guest speakers deliver the sermon. Peg Preble '48 plays the organ, and James G. Selwood conducts the Chapel Choir. Betty Baker '48 and Ed Happ '49 are students-in-charge."

"CHAPEL CHOIR . . . for the Protestant service. Rehearsals each Sunday morning at 9:45 in 17 North Stevens. A chance for all songbirds - - and those who would like to be."

"PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE . . . We call our group Koinonia, the Greek name for fellowship. It meets each Sunday night in the MCA for informal discussions of campus and religious problems ... a lively addition to campus bull-sessions. Jane Sibley '49 steers the group."

So much for their regular activities. But, as the next section of this interesting brochure reads, THE MCA GETS AROUND.

"MCAers are not stay-at-homers - - climb down from the Ivory Tower for all sorts of activities:"

"COMMUNITY SERVICE . . . MCAers help with the hot lunch program in the Orono school, assist with Saturday night recreation program for Orono and Old Town teenagers, help with local Sunday Schools and Boy and Girl Scouts. Saturdays, fellows and gals, properly flannel-shirted, adjourn to the Orono woodlot to wield the axe and saw for the benefit of the village's needy. Well, this is just a sampling of our Community Service. For more ideas and your place in the setup, see Pat Rozzi '50."

"CONFERENCE . . . Our MCA is just a part of something much bigger, the Student Christian Movement of New England. Maine is well represented at New England conference: Rip Haskell '48 on the World Relatedness Commission, Nap Spenard '50 on the O-At-Ka Planning Committee, Bryce Lambert '48 on the General Committee; Betty Hempstead '49 and Dr. Charles F. Virtue on the Christian Reliefs Commission; Charlie O'Connor, advisor on the Community Responsibility Commission; and Morla Timberlake on the O-At-Ka Committee."

"O-AT-KA. The popular annual New England area YM-YW conclave which comes after school is out each spring, and which you might like to be thinking of attending. 'Best week of my life!' some have said."

"EMBASSY is our Annual Religious Emphasis Week, this time associated with the University Christian Mission, March 15-19."

"FOREIGN SERVICE. For those who really want to get around. The MCA has information about possibilities of careers in religious, social, or educational work overseas."

"THINGS SOCIAL. Every year the MCA, besides the informal drop-ins when you feel like it, sponsors some open houses, social dances, and club parties. Fun guaranteed."

"SOCIAL DANCING CLASS. For those who aren't quite sure of themselves on the floor, the MCA sponsors a social dancing class, led by someone who can really show you how it's done. Alert yourselves for coming announcements."

In this brochure evidently designed for incoming freshmen, there follows a budget totaling \$1,400, containing small items for all these various activities. Evidently membership dues were paid, according to this notation:

"Yes, it takes a little money to do all these things. The university provides us with a building, lights, heat and a janitor. The MCA Advisory Board sees that Morla and Pat and Charlie are on duty, and that the building is equipped with furnishings."

"And for the program, all that comes out of the student membership drive. Need we say more? We need your membership support."

Ruth's scrap books gave specific information about various MCA events during the forties. Some are worth quoting.

In 1944, with Charles O'Connor the General Secretary, and Margaret Ostrander, his associate, students were invited to a get-acquainted party on October 11, by means of this intriguing ditty:

"This invitation, couched in verse,
Is muchly to the point and terse.
To wit: if you like cider, sips,
And fun with freshmen far from drips,
'May I present?' and 'How d'ye do?'
This cider sips your dish -- O-kay?
We'll see you at the M.C.A."

1945 featured a retreat at Camp Tanglewood, a 300 Club Dance; 1946 a Student Christian Movement Conference on "Campus and the World Claims of the Christian Student"; a conference in Cambridge on "Community Responsibility"; a Christmas party.

1947 saw students participating in another conference at Cambridge on "Effective Christian Citizenship"; another at MIT on "Christian Citizenship". The Student Christian Movement in New England held training weekends for cabinet members at Bangor Theological Seminary.

The cabinet elected in 1947 consisted of: Bryce Lambert, President; Betty Barker and Ed Hap, church service; Ruth Fogler, publicity; Martha Coles and Ralph Barnett, Embassy; Thelma Crossland, Wednesday morning fellowship; Robert Rendall, WSSF; Jean Cunningham and Bernard Prescott, social committee; Mary Dirks and Nap Spenard, house committee and library; Jane Hansen and Pat Rozzi, community responsibility; Rip Hashell, world relatedness; Betty Hempstead and Henry Wyman, deputations; Kay Kennedy and Bob Beale, personal; Eleanor Hanson and Bob Preble, Frosh Club advisors; Teddy Powers and Ed Boggs, 300 Club advisors; Jan Sibley, Koinonia.

Thelma Robie and I wrote to some of the active participants during these years, asking for their personal memories of activities. Several of their replies are worth recording as a part of this early history.

Bruce Folsom, one-time President: "Charlie O'Connor and I were good friends, and he would have to be one of my role models during that part of my life."

Ruth Folsom Goff: "I was quite surprised to realize how few specifics I remembered about my own involvement in MCA. My first thought, though, was of tuna fish, cream of chicken soup and crushed potato chip casseroles! That was a favorite thing to make ourselves for supper at the MCA Building, before settling down for a good meeting or program."

"It's the intangibles I remember. Friendships came easily in that setting and developed into great fellowship; that we reached out to others and it felt good, that working together there was fun; that the worship and learning we participated in helped us grow and brought us joy."

"The combination of the principles and purposes of the MCA and the great leadership we were blessed with made this possible, I think. Charlie O'Connor was fun to be with. His happy nature, enthusiasm, and friendly guidance helped us plan and carry on worthwhile projects and events. His example helped us realize that there were happy times in working to accomplish these things, as well as the fun and relaxing times. Margaret Ostrander (I seem to remember her as Margo) and Morla Timberlake, who succeeded her as associate secretary, seemed to understand and enjoy us, too. They were helpful and encouraging."

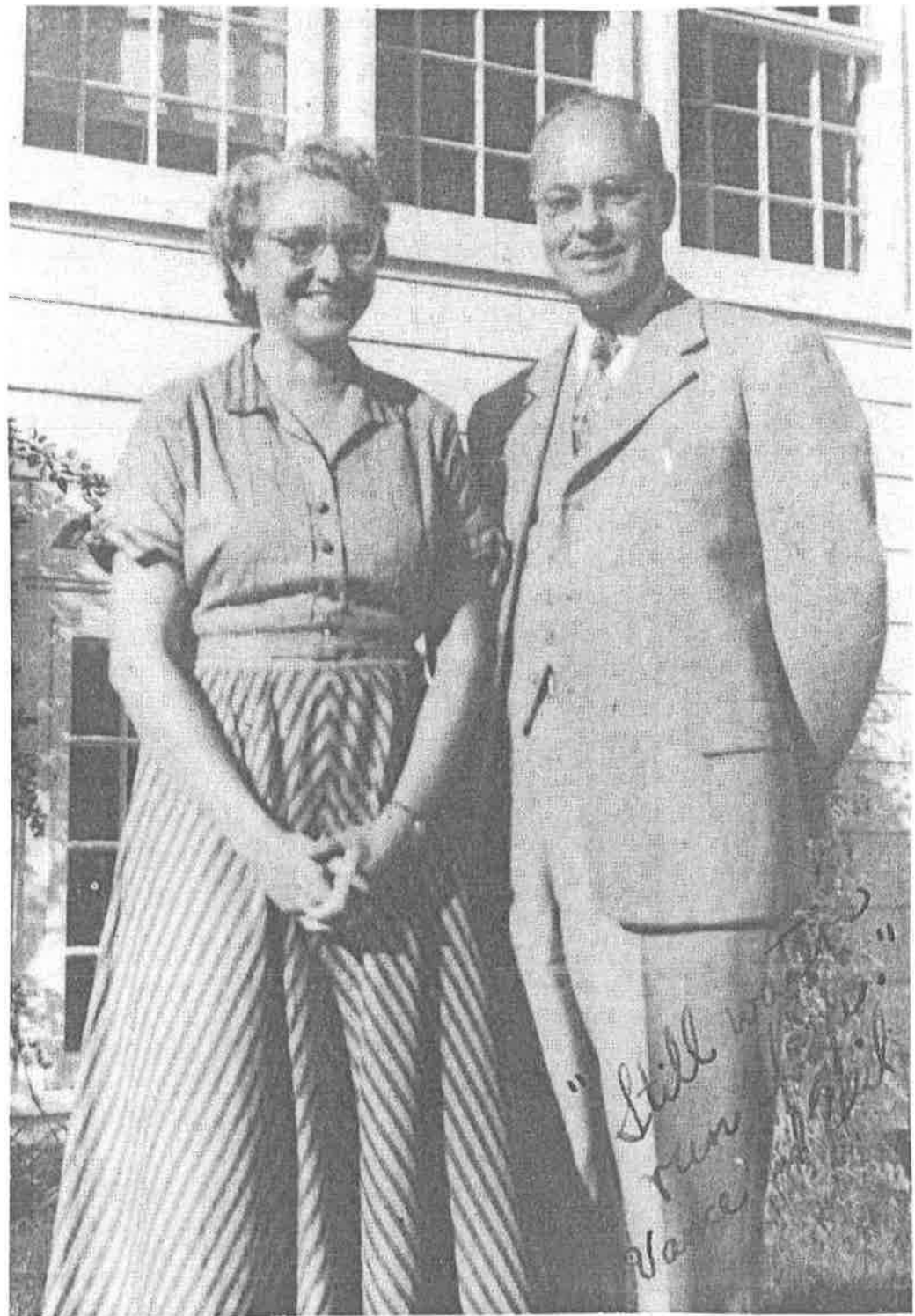
Betty Hempstead Dexter: "I was active in the MCA my four years of college - 1945-1949. My first real involvement was with their deputation team my freshman year. I particularly recall the one to the Veazie church. Both Thelma and I went to a New England Conference for a week at O-At-Ka one summer. There I had my first alcohol sacramental wine at the communion service . . . My most significant experience at MCA came in their sending me to the Christmas vacation conference of the Student Volunteer Movement at the University of Illinois at Urbana in 1947. Why is it that young people readily give three years of their lives to sign up for wars that would be unnecessary if people understood each other better? 'Where the needs of the world and your abilities cross you have a challenge to make a difference.' Those words really stayed with me and prepared me to react when MOTIVE magazine next fall ran the back page ad for I 3's, and you know the rest of my story in that regard."

I certainly do. So it was the influence of MCA that inspired Betty to sign up as a three-year missionary to India, where I met her in 1950 in Hyderabad, where she was teaching and ministering to students in one of our Methodist schools!

So much for the predecessors of the present Maine Christian Association. A wonderful heritage and a formidable challenge!



Maine Christian Association -- 1947



***Dorothy and Elwin Wilson -- 1952
Outside of the M.C.A. House on Riverdale***

TWO

Back to 1950, where we started. As I said before, changes were afoot. Several of the Protestant churches of Maine -- Congregationalist, Methodist, Baptist -- were uniting to organize a new Maine Christian Association, and because of his success with student work through the Wesley Foundation, my husband Elwin was invited to be its first Director. The YMCA already established on campus was most cooperative, and as a result, Charles O'Connor, its executive secretary, was to become the head of a new Student Religious Association, which would promote cooperation among all campus religious groups. For the new MCA there was no parsonage, no student center, only the barest bones of a new organization. It meant starting entirely from scratch.

A professor at the university, Dr. Frank Foster (in the Education Department) and his wife Catherine came to our assistance. They had a house on Riverdale, off College Avenue, which they felt would make an excellent student center. They would be willing to sell it to us for what they had paid for it, move out, and find other living quarters for the good of the cause.

It was not the first time that ways had seemed to open for us in a rather remarkable way, though it was not like our move from New Jersey, where Elwin had been studying at Princeton Theological Seminary, to a student charge in Maine. At that time, as he had remarked, God had seemed to open one door for us only to kick us out through the other! Another fortuitous circumstance provided some of the necessary funds. Just before I had left for India in 1949 to research a book for the Methodist Board of Missions, my novel *Prince of Egypt*, a story of Moses, had won the Westminster Religious Fiction Prize of \$7,500. This, together with additional savings, enabled us to pay the purchase price of, as I seem to remember, \$16,500. I always called it "The House that Moses Built".

I quote now from my book *Union in Diversity: The Story of Our Marriage*:

"The house at One Riverdale, though small, made an adequate student center after a few alterations. There was a large basement, half garage and half recreation room. We closed in the garage door with glass blocks, built a sink and cupboards, installed an electric stove in one end of the room and put stout tiles on the cement floor. I had the big Hardman piano on which I had taken lessons and practiced in childhood and youth brought up from my father's house in Gardiner and installed before the glass blocks had made its entry impossible. (I assume it is still there, forty and more years later, since it would have been hard to move it out, though I heard to my grief that its beautiful mahogany wood had been painted white!). We added a dozen card tables, to be fitted later with red and white checked tablecloths. A set of green glass dishes and some over-sized cooking kettles completed the accoutrements. When college opened that fall of 1950, we were ready."

We kept existent bodies of the previous organization active as far as possible. The Cabinet remained mostly intact, with a very capable student president, Frank Butler, as its head. It helped plan the program and managed many of the student activities. There was a governing Board, consisting of delegates from the cooperating denominations, faculty, etc. I find the following names of Board members on the list during our years of service, 1950-1955: John Coupe, William Small, Robinson Spears, Louise Stedman, F.H. Steinmetz, C. Wentworth, Mrs. John Stewart, Roland Carpenter, Walter Cook, A.M. Craig, Charles Crossland, Clarence Day, Richard Hoff, Mrs. Henry Doten, Edgar Fehlan, Alger Geary, Edwin Giddings, Esther Martin, Milton McGorrill, Matthew McNeary, Duncan Moores and Horace Pratt. (I have omitted proper titles, i.e., Dr., Rev., Prof. etc.).

The Sunday morning worship service was still held in the Little Theater, thanks to the cooperation of the University. It was very well attended, with an average of about 250 each week. Ministers of the cooperating denominations and others were invited to conduct the services. Elwin would usually preach once a month. The original denominations involved were increased during the first few years to include not only Methodist, Congregationalist and Baptist churches, but also Universalists, Presbyterians and Lutherans. A student musician was usually organist for the service. During several years this post was filled by our niece, Laura Wilson, who was making her home with us

and became an active participant in the whole program. In her last year she acted as cabinet President.

The report which Elwin made in 1953 to the Maine Conference of the Methodist Church furnishes a very good key to the organization and its activities during this period. I quote from this report:

"The Maine Christian Association has been financially supported during the year by Congregational, Methodist, Baptist, Universalist, Presbyterian and Lutheran denominations. The budget totals about \$5,500, which covers the salary of the director, rental of student center, equipment, insurance, retirement plan, telephone, travel, etc."

"The student organization has been recently summarized in a flier which was sent to all members, and I think the best way to present a report this year is to give you that summary. Here it is:

"What is the Maine Christian Association?"

- PURPOSE:** The constitution of the M.C.A. states its purpose in these words: "The purpose the Maine Christian Association shall be to encourage religious interests and activities among the Protestant students at the University of Maine and to cooperate with other faith groups through the Student Religious Association."
- MEMBERSHIP:** Any student may become a member by filling out a card and paying the one dollar membership dues.
- OFFICERS:** A president, vice president, secretary and treasurer are elected by the membership just prior to the spring recess each year. Nominations are made by a nominating committee, and additional nominations for any office may be made by a petition signed by ten or more members.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The officers, with the director, compose the executive committee. The executive committee chooses the chairmen of the standing committees and has oversight of the work of M.C.A..

CABINET: A cabinet is made up of the officers, the chairmen of standing committees and the S.R.A. representative.

COMMITTEES: These standing committees carry on most of the work of M.C.A.:

1. Membership Committee. This conducts the membership drive in the fall and tries to increase the membership in other ways.
2. The publicity committee publicizes the M.C.A. activities.
3. The deputation committee sends out groups of students to conduct services in local churches. This group may include discussion and recreation leaders for youth meetings, worship leaders, musicians and speakers for Sunday services, etc.
4. The Sunday morning worship committee plans services for the Little Theater each Sunday at 11:00 a.m., secures speakers, provides organist, choir director and ushers, etc.
5. The Sunday night committee arranges for the Sunday evening meetings at M.C.A. House, including worship, program, refreshments and recreation.
6. The Friday night supper committee plans and prepares the suppers each Friday night.

7. The committee on effective citizenship promotes study of community, social, educational, economic, and political problems, and initiates programs for social improvement.
8. The Student Christian Movement coordinating committee cooperates with state, regional, national, and world student movement, promotes attendance at conferences, etc.
9. The committee on cabinet activities plans and prepares cabinet suppers and meals at the spring planning conference, cabinet parties, etc.

FINANCES: The student budget comes from membership fees and offerings at Sunday meetings.

DIRECTOR: The director is employed by the Advisory Board and his salary is paid by funds received from the Protestant denominations.

ADVISORY BOARD: This board is made up of adult members appointed by the supporting denominations or chosen from the alumni and faculty administration. The M.C.A. student officers are also members.

M.C.A. HOUSE: The headquarters at One Riverdale is made available through the Advisory Board with money supplied by the denominations.

AFFILIATION: M.C.A. is affiliated with the YMCA and YWCA, cooperates with the Student Christian Movement and is closely associated with the Protestant denominations.

"M.C.A. IS YOUR STUDENT CAMPUS CHURCH"

I think it would be appropriate to continue with Elwin's report for the following year while we are considering these general features:

"The college year 1953-54 is the fourth year I have served as director of the reorganized Maine Christian Association. During this time the M.C.A. has carried on a varied program, as outlined in last year's report. There have been successes and increases in some phases of the work and partial failures in other aspects. This is the same as in church life anywhere."

"This year the attendance at the Sunday morning services in the Little Theater is higher than usual. At one or two meetings in the fall, the congregation overflowed into the hallway, meaning that there were about 350 in attendance. On many Sundays we have 250 or more. A variety of speakers from different denominations helps to make the meetings interesting and valuable."

"Participation in the Friday night supper and game night each week has been good. Our peak attendance was 55. On Sunday nights, the meetings have been smaller than some years, but we are trying to build a program that will meet the needs and capture the interest of students better."

"This year, for the first time, there has been an interest in classes in Bible and the Christian Religion. During the first semester there was an average of about ten or twelve students who took a study of the introduction to the Old Testament. At the beginning of the second semester, there are six who are studying the beginnings and beliefs of Christianity. We are using the book *I BELIEVE* by Harner in connection with this study. Classes meet in the Memorial Union Building on Tuesday afternoons."

"The Advisory Board is making a survey of the property needs of M.C.A. It is hoping to determine the foreseeable needs of the organization, discover what building facilities will be necessary, and then raise money to secure the necessary property. The first step would probably be the purchase of the property now being used at One Riverdale and belonging to the Director and his wife."

"The M.C.A. not only furnishes a church and pastoral care while our young people are away from home; it also gives to as many as possible actual experience in churchmanship and training in religion."

To continue with more pertinent details about features somewhat described in this outline of activities:

The Sunday night meetings held at M.C.A. House were, of course, much more informal than the morning church services on campus. There was a worship service, followed by discussion on some pertinent subject, sometimes with guest consultants. Discussions were lively, frank and often controversial. We found students during the early fifties eager, responsive, alert to social issues and, in the hopeful aftermath of World War Two and the international concord of hope and idealism, before the disillusionment and rebellion of the sixties or the permissive and cynical materialism of the eighties, full of optimism and commitment.

Fellowship and sociability were also important, and during those years one of the most popular activities was the Friday night supper. We held it each week--a simple supper with a charge of twenty-five cents (It would cost a couple of dollars now!), followed by group games and social activities. The meal was my province, with the assistance of a student committee, different members who volunteered each week. I still have the notes in metal covers which we used for menus. Most of them are for groups of varying size and so marked, i.e., for 10, for 20, for 30, for 40, for 50. There are pages for main dishes: Italian spaghetti; Blushing Bunny; corn, tomato and cheese scallops; Welsh rarebit; cheese strata; chicken a la king (usually for a small group of 20 or so, perhaps a cabinet luncheon or supper); chile con carne; chop suey; pea and salmon wiggle; tuna fish and noodles; etc. Here is one sample:

Italian Spaghetti

	<u>20</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>50</u>
Spaghetti	3 lbs.	4 1/2 lbs.	6 lbs.	8 lbs.
Cans grated cheese	1	1 - 2	2	2 - 3
Magic Chef Spanish Sauce	7	10-12	14	18

Along with it is a similar recipe for tomato sauce, which included tomatoes, chopped onions, sugar, bay leaves, whole cloves, garlic buds, margarine, flour and pepper.

Other sections in the notebook were earmarked: cake, pastry, desserts, drinks, eggs-cheese, salads, soups, etc. We used them all. Attendance at the Friday night suppers ranged from thirty to fifty.

Another quote from my book *The Story of Our Marriage* relating to this period at M.C.A.:

"I soon found that counseling college students was quite different from counseling juniors and high school kids at youth camps. It was the students who educated me on that score. The first time we took a group for a weekend retreat I rather expected to apply the same rules of curfew and strict regime which we had used at Methodist Camp. Not so. One of the group, a senior, wanted to take a short walk after the evening meeting with the girl of his choice. At my remonstrance he counseled me kindly but firmly. College students were adults, and they should be treated so. I owe a lot to that student. Later he married his girl; and they have become some of the most loyal supporters of the Association, as well as deeply committed Christian workers."

In fact, the MCA itself proved itself during those years to be one of the finest dating agencies for students of mutual high ideals and aspirations. I could count at least a half dozen and more couples who formed their first ties during those Friday night suppers and Sunday periods of worship and fun, who have remained faithful both to each other and to their Christian commitment. We have kept in touch with most of them through the years. Why not mention them by name? Frank and Ruth Butler, Harry and Faye Henderson, Ted and Ruth Durst, Fred and Alma Otto, George and Wendy Ricker, Ken and Connie Tryon, Dick and Betty Nevers, Dick and Libby Eustis, just to mention some of them. I am sure there are others.

As long as names are being suggested, there are many I recall who were especially active on cabinet and committees, such as Ida Moreshead, Jan Griswold, Neil Littlefield (now a well-known lawyer), Lynn Josslyn (a minister here in Maine); Dave Collins; Nancy Littlefield; Bev Pettengill;

Vance Williams (became a Baptist minister); Dave Collins; Larry Crosby; Norma Jose; Tom Lindsley; Charles and Gorham Hussey; Maurice Keene; Laura Wilson; Sylvia Johnson; Charles Hoyt (became a Methodist minister); Dave Drake; Henry Colby; Fred Lyons --- and so many others whose names are not so familiar to me.

Parts of a letter I just received from one of those students, who met her husband during these years at MCA are worth quoting:

"I was actively involved in MCA from September, 1951 until graduation in June, 1955. I was a commuter student my first two years, and MCA provided one of my primary social interactions with other students. The Friday night suppers were a major recreational time, a fun place to be with others with similar values, especially for someone like me who was slow to get into the dating game. In addition, MCA gave me my first opportunity to get to know a few African-American students, then a rarity in Maine."

"The Sunday evening worship service and discussions helped me re-examine my beliefs and restructure how I saw religion. As someone from a mixed background -- exposure to fundamental Baptist faith by grandparents and the more liberal philosophy of the Orono Church of Universal Fellowship of my parents, I needed to reconcile those values and sort out my own convictions. My earlier adolescent rebellion had been to become 'more Christian' in a fundamentalist way than my parents! Uncle Elwin and Aunt Dot were instrumental in helping me to integrate my beliefs and move to a more reasonable middle ground. Uncle Elwin's informal Bible study one semester exposed me to some of the historical aspects of the Bible's development that I did not know. Aunt Dot's books and a play of hers that we did for the 'new' television station in Bangor conveyed their own message of humankind's evolution in understanding God's message. Their patient love for all of us carried its own message. Methodist publications for college students also influenced my growing awareness of social issues and their relationship to the Gospel. As the McCarthy era developed, I sometimes worried if my acquaintance with conscientious objectors could become a hazard for me -- that was a scary period of time. But the interactions were valuable in helping me test my own choices in dialogue with people who had very different views from my own."

"When I lived on campus my junior and senior years, I became involved in the Sunday morning worship services at the Little Theater. I was in charge of lining up student leaders and the visiting ministers my senior year. I spent the summer borrowing books from Uncle Elwin and reading about the concept of worship and how different aspects of the service developed these themes. The poor students came back in September to a revised order of worship. I carried out my convictions, but without the understanding I have later developed of the psychology of change.

"Through MCA I was also involved in several New England Student Christian Movement conferences, significant opportunities to meet people with many values and outlooks and have some good clean fun. We even attended a national conference in Boston where the leader of the World Council of Churches spoke. Broadening horizons in these ways counteracted the potential isolation of growing up in Maine and going to college with Maine students.

"These many experiences contribute to my strong desire to continue to explore the work of the Maine Christian Association. Since I am now retired from full-time work as a school psychologist, my gifts may not be large. But the wishes are strong. I was delighted to see that my own church, the North Windham Union Church (UCC), is one of the contributors as well."

Thank you, Wendy (Margaret) Dow Ricker, for a wonderful tribute to those years you spent with us!

Elwin's report of 1953, from which I quoted, mentioned the Student Religious Association. This was the university organization which, like the original Maine Christian Association, combined service to all religious groups on campus.

During the first years of our work at MCA, the SRA Director was Rev. Charles O'Connor. In 1954, when he retired to become principal of a school, the office was filled by Rev. Richard Batchelder. I wrote to Dick, asking for comments about his work during the three years he remained in that position, from 1954-1957. I quote from his reply:

"There were four groups in the Student Religious Association in my day: the Maine Christian Association, Newman Club (for Roman Catholic students), Hillel (for Jewish students), and Canterbury Club (for Episcopalian students). I worked with an Advisory Board, which had faculty and/or lay leaders as well as the Chaplains (and perhaps a student or two) from each of the religious groups. I also worked with an SRA student council, with representatives from each of the four groups.

"To recreate the situation, one must remember that this was before Vatican II and the breakthrough which represented the Catholic Church in ecumenical affairs. In addition, Father LeTourneau was French Canadian, and of the more conservative elements within Catholicism. Although he was pleasant enough on a social basis, I never had any sense from him that he did more than tolerate the work of the SRA. The Hillel chaplain, Rabbi Milton Elefant, was an Orthodox Jew. That is most unusual in Hillel, where most of the Rabbis are either Reform or Orthodox, both more liberal than the Orthodox.

"I can't recall the name of the Episcopal priest who served as Chaplain of the Newman Club. He was Rector of the Episcopal Church in Old Town but lived in the Canterbury House in Orono. Professor Charles Virtue of the Philosophy Department was a member of that church and also was President of the Advisory Board when I came. Even though the name of the Canterbury chaplain eludes me, I can picture him in my mind. He was tall and rather formal. His first name was John, and I think his wife's name was Betty. I referred to him as 'Jack' once in a conversation with Dr. Virtue, and he looked a bit startled, saying he couldn't imagine anybody being informal enough to call him 'Jack'. Anyway, the Old Town church was High Church (I guess 'Anglo-Catholic' is the correct term), and they insisted that since they were neither Catholic nor Protestant, they should have full representation on the SRA as a fourth faith group, on equal footing with Protestants, Catholics, and Jews.

"So I worked with representatives from the MCA, together with those from three very conservative groups, each conservative even in its own tradition. We planned cooperative campus-wide programs including Brotherhood Week and Religious Emphasis Week. Besides special progress in each of the religious groups, Religious Emphasis Week had

a major speaker (taking turns each year among Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Episcopalian) for an official University Convocation in the new auditorium.

"I think perhaps my greatest contribution was to suggest to the SRA Student Council a system of two-level voting: a majority vote on procedural or program issues, but veto power over issues of faith and of conscience. The students from Newman Club had been boycotting many of the planning meetings of the SRA. When I was able to meet face to face with their representative, she told me that she feared being outvoted on an issue which she might consider to be one of faith or conscience. I think she was startled to have me, a Protestant minister, agree with her. I said something like: 'Of course issues of faith or conscience cannot be decided by a majority vote. It isn't just the Catholics. Every religious group should be assured of ironclad guarantees that their faith will not be compromised. Like the Security Council of the United Nations, every faith group should have veto power over issues of faith or conscience so they will never have to worry about being outvoted.' Once that position was adopted as official policy, the air was cleared and permitted Newman Club to participate fully and give enthusiastic leadership to the SRA.

"The office of the SRA was on the first floor of the new Student Union Building, in the left hand corner. Mildred Pearce, a student's wife, was my secretary. My memory on financial arrangements is not clear. I do not recall any financial support from the four religious groups. I think the contribution of office space and part of the annual budget (perhaps the salary of the office secretary, mine, too, plus a bit more) was the extent of the university support. As I recall, I did not have official faculty or staff status and was definitely not a part of the university health or retirement program. The SRA sent out fund-raising appeals yearly to university alumni, with help from the Alumni Office headed by Don Taverner.

"The SRA also made money by operating the Book Mart. SRA's outer office was lined with bookshelves floor to ceiling. Students could bring in their used textbooks and sell them there for something like 66% of the new price to next year's students. I think the SRA got 10% of the sales.

"In addition to the religious groups, I worked with the International Club and the overseas students. In addition to regular monthly meetings, we had some special projects. One I recall planning and chaperoning was a charter bus trip over the Thanksgiving weekend to New York City which included a visit to the United Nations. Several American students went along, too. For many of the latter, this was the first time they had ever left the State of Maine, and it was an important milestone."

I found this full account helpful as it related to the overall emphasis of religious work on campus during the years when we were at MCA.

I remember an effort on my part to reach more of the students. During one year I called on each student in the girls' freshman dormitory, telling them about the work of MCA and asking how we could be of service. Perhaps it aroused a little interest. It's hard to tell.

Letters were sent out also to ministers of various Maine churches asking that names of students coming to the university be sent to the MCA Director. A group of married couples was also instituted, with suppers and programs conducted by specialists in marital relationships.

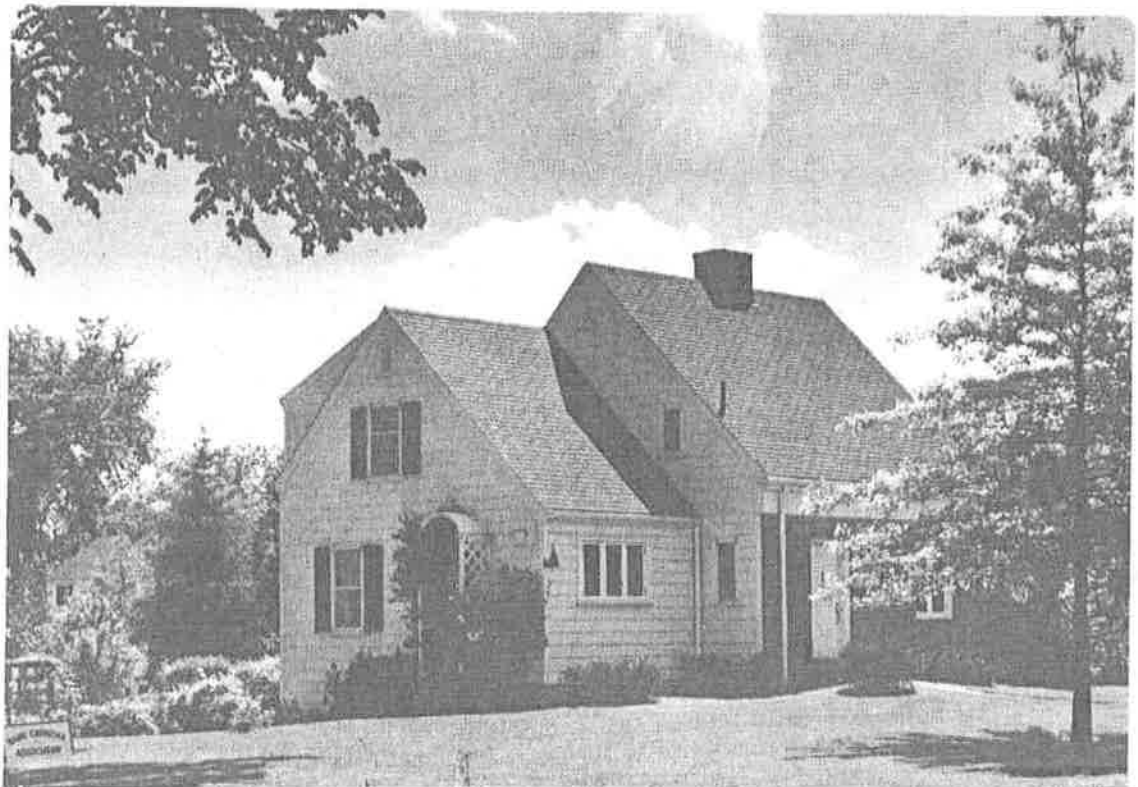
Like its predecessor, MCA during these years was actively affiliated with the Student Christian Movement of New England, sending delegates to many of the state, area, and national conferences. In 1954 the University of Maine hosted one of these conferences, featuring as speakers Dr. Newton Thurber of the Student Volunteer Movement and Dr. William Stringfellow, well-known leader in social action.

Students were often sent out on deputations, as formerly, to conduct services in many of the churches in the area.

As all through its history, the main governing agent of MCA was the Advisory Board, with its representatives from each participating denomination, from the university faculty, and from members of the student body. I recall that during the latter part of this period the chairman of the Board was Dr. Matthew McNeary of the university faculty. Denominational representation on the Board was based on the

number of students expressing denominational preference, one representative for each one hundred per denomination. Its duties were manifold and have remained constant through the years: to determine policy, raise and dispense the necessary funds, secure new leadership when the need arose.

In 1955 circumstances seemed to dictate a change for us, and at the Maine Methodist Conference that year in May, Elwin was appointed Superintendent of the Bangor District of Methodist churches, and we moved to Bangor, selling the house at One Riverdale for approximately what we had paid for it. The Advisory Board hired Rev. William McGinnis, a Baptist minister, as the new MCA Director.



Maine Christian Association House - One Riverdale



*M.C.A. Council Eating at Camp Roosevelt
May 26, 1951*



M.C.A. Cabinet Support - December 1951

THREE

On July 7, 1955 the Maine Christian Association purchased the property at One Riverdale for approximately \$18,000. At that time the President of the Board of Trustees was Professor Matthew McNeary. Rev. William McGinnis moved into the house on August 10, with his wife Ida and two children. Young, enthusiastic, to the students they were soon "Bill" and "Ida", doubtless a welcome change from the middle-aged "Uncle Elwin" and "Aunt Dot".

In his report to the Maine Methodist Conference the following year, Mr. McGinnis stated that "through the generous support of the Methodist and several other denominations, we are rapidly reducing the debt incurred by the property purchase."

Further items in his annual report for the past year indicated that programs already in progress during the previous five years were continued with equal or more significant progress.

"The warm spirit so magnificently demonstrated by the denominations is also seen at work among the students. While there is no membership this year, the voluntary contributions received at the Sunday morning chapel service and the Sunday night programs have underwritten the rising costs of an expanding program. The enthusiasm of the Student Cabinet and Activity Committees is shown in the following attendance figures: Sunday morning, 300-325; Sunday evening, 40-45; Wednesday night Discussion, 20; and Friday night 25-cent suppers and informal recreation, 40-45. In addition there are a great many students with whom the Director carries on an extensive personal counseling at the MCA House and on campus.

"Considerable time has been spent in an effort to determine the needs of the students as a logical foundation for the building of future programs. One of the several new projects has been the encouragement of sorority and fraternity participation in the chapel services.

This has proved to be very popular. A Christian Family Study Group is being organized. In keeping with the concept of a campus church, the

Director has preached every Sunday with a few exceptions when various denominational leaders have served as guest speakers."

The report in 1957 on the previous year's activities indicated initiation of other important programs.

"Some of the highlights were: beginning two identical services on Sunday morning; sending a Deputation Team consisting of forty students to Swan's Island; sponsoring an International Festival; showing the film Martin Luther for the whole campus; also conducting several study programs of 'Eastern Religions', 'Prayer', and 'The Principles of the Christian Faith'.

"The response of the students to our program is evidenced by the following average attendance figures: Sunday morning worship in the Little Theater, 300-500; Sunday evening, 30-50; Wednesday night Discussions, 15-25; and Friday night Supper and Recreational Program, 40-55. In addition there is a large number of students with whom the Director carries on an extensive personal counseling. The enthusiasm of the students to the program has put a great deal of pressure on the present facilities at the MCA House. The Board of Trustees has appointed a special committee to study this program of inadequate space in the face of an expanding program and a rapidly growing student body.

"Through the general support of the Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Lutherans, we have reduced the property deficit to \$10, 635. We appreciate the support and cooperation which is being given us in our ministry to more than 2,300 Protestants now designated at the university."

The report of the following year, 1958, indicated active participation in the same programs, as well as a further need of planning for more adequate facilities.

"Suggested plans are being drawn up which would provide areas for worship, study, small and large meetings, social activities, adequate kitchen space, and a well-equipped office for counseling and administrative work. Although the balance of the mortgage on the MCA House is \$7,650.00, the trustees and students are confident that the

denominations will realize the challenge of this ministry and help us liquidate our debt and build a Protestant Center for a greater contribution to the needs of students at the University of Maine."

These plans had evidently been formulating in some detail during all of the preceding year, for my husband's diary recorded that on September 26, 1957 he went to the MCA House and saw plans for the new building. During all of those years when Bill McGinnis was Director, Elwin was a member of the Advisory Board.

In 1958 Rev. Harvey Bates succeeded Richard Batchelder as Director of the SRA, the Student Religious Association. On November 4 of that year, my husband reported a meeting of the Board which included Bryant Drake, Presbyterian student worker from Cambridge; Neal Clark, representing the Congregationalist denomination in Maine; and Elmer Bently, representing the Baptists. Elwin, of course, as a District Superintendent and member of the Board, represented the Methodists. Together they considered the plans calling for a new \$16,000 building. And on December 16 the Trustees at another meeting considered revising the plans. On October 20, 1959 the Trustees met and voted to buy sections of the Dow property adjoining that of the MCA House.

Activities of the MCA expanded further in the years 1959-1960.

"Currently," it was reported, "the MCA program includes two services of worship on Sunday morning; a Sunday evening fellowship meeting; a Bible Study Seminar on Tuesdays; Vespers on Wednesday evenings; and Friday night suppers followed by social and Christian action programs. Mr. McGinnis carries on an active program of student counseling. In addition to these regularly scheduled activities, MCA with the International Club sponsors a campus-wide International festival each fall. It participates in the inter-faith activities on campus and sends Deputation Teams to many nearby churches. MCA members attend Student Christian Movement conferences."

In 1961 Rev. William McGinnis requested leave to pursue further studies in the Boston area, and the Rev. David Rich was secured as Interim Director. He was young, innovative, and soon became exceedingly popular. With his wife Ginny he continued a program much as before but exhibited an unusual capacity for participating in the overall life of

students on campus. I recall that the birth of their first child was an event of campus-wide interest and delight. And he had a lot of new ideas for program.

Dave Rich's report to the denominations for 1962 gives an excellent summary of the organization and fundamental role of the MCA on campus.

"The Maine Christian Association represents the Protestant Church at the University of Maine. Supported by the major Protestant denominations, its ecumenical approach is unique in that the MCA does not attempt to be 'another organization' but to be the church in a fragmented society - the community of obedience to Jesus Christ as the Lord of the World.

"The Board of Trustees, composed of representatives from the supporting denominations, faculty and administration is responsible for the overseeing of the program and the raising of funds. The Student Cabinet, with the assistance of the interim Director, carries out the work of the church in the university. The Director is to have a year of study at Boston University.

"The Maine Christian Association sees its role as the church to be threefold:

"TO BE THE CHURCH IS TO WORSHIP. It is to be the people gathered to worship where the reunion of God to man and man to man takes place. Two services are held each Sunday in the Little Theater building. Guest ministers such as Philip McKean, Harry Kruener, Lewis Beckford, Harvey Bates and William Thompson have participated in our services. The Student Cabinet has also purchased robes for the choir.

"TO BE THE CHURCH IS TO STUDY. Within the context of the life of the student the message of the church must be 'relevant and meaningful.' This year an increased emphasis has been placed upon small group study seminars. Study groups concerning contemporary theology and concerning the theological implications of contemporary drama have been developed. Bernhard Anderson's study booklet *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* has been used with three groups. A Freshman Forum group was started to meet the needs of freshman students. A Seminar of Inquiry was begun for upperclassmen in the attempt to show the relationship of

contemporary man to the message of the church. Dinner meetings are held each month with pre-theological students.

"TO BE THE CHURCH IS TO WITNESS. The Gospel is not a string of sentences piously repeated. It is a reality as we live in relationship with persons. Through involvement in classes, fraternities, and campus activities, the student is called to be a witness - to be a person concerned and aware of the world around him. Away from the campus students participate in deputation teams to local churches and have undertaken a project with the Bangor Children's Home in the attempt to bring some meaning and love into the lives of kids 'who ain't got it so good'.

"The Maine Christian Association is not a 'food, fun, and fellowship' organization nor is it a haven from the University community. Rather it is the church where the 'reunion of man to man is pronounced, confessed, and realized, even if in fragments, weaknesses, and distortions'."

That the Board of Trustees was active during this period is indicated over and over in my husband's diary for 1961 and 1962.

"The Board . . . Trustees . . . Executive Board . . . Lunch with Personnel Committee . . . Board at Union Building, etc., etc."

In 1962 Bill McGinnis requested time off for another year of study, and Dave Rich was asked to return for another year as Interim Director.

In his report for the year 1962-1963, he reiterated the emphasis made in his previous report concerning worship, study, and service, adding in some of the areas.

"The KERK EN WERELD study seminars on Sunday evenings have included courses on 'The Church and Communism', 'The Church and Contemporary Man', and 'Ethics in a Secular America, Possible or Impossible?'.

"In the area of concern -- the area of service -- MCA has developed the COFFEE HOUSE, which is a place where people can be themselves and creative conversation can be encouraged. Students are also involved in projects with the Bangor Children's Home and the Penobscot County Jail in Bangor. It also is sponsoring, with the Church of Universal Fellowship

in Orono, the Bishop's Company's presentation of 'Cry the Beloved Country'."

The Coffee House here mentioned was one of the most innovative and valuable projects of Dave Rich's ministry. It was located in a small building at a corner of Grove Street on the edge of campus. It was entirely Dave's idea, though members of the Board had much to do with its organization and administration. In April, 1962 the trustees began discussion of the idea. The following month my husband became President of the Board and appointed a committee to explore it. According to his diary for that year, the committee recommended to the Board that the project be tried, and it was voted in the affirmative thirteen to one. (No record of the source of the dissenting voice!) The committee kept meeting through June, July and August of that year, often at the Coffee House itself in what was called the Superette Building. On September 18 a large group of nearly fifty met to prepare for the opening of the Coffee House on the following night. On that evening it was open from seven to nine, with about forty people coming and going. After this many entries in the diary bear witness to visits, for Elwin was intensely interested in the project.

Since I found no denominational reports of the Director for the year 1964, I am relying on my husband's diary for information, plus my own rather hazy memory of proceedings. I do recall that Elwin felt that Dave Rich had made such a remarkable contribution to the work that he should be hired on a permanent basis, but others on the Board felt that the interim status, in accordance with college decorum, should be maintained. Dave was not rehired. But apparently it was also decided that William McGinnis should be asked to resign, and he was so notified. This was in December of 1962. I quote again from the diary.

"After long discussion the Board of Trustees decided that changes in program and philosophy of student work in the last two years made it advisable for its present Director to resign, so voted accordingly. A Committee of the President, Elwin, Cecil Brown, the Vice President, and Tyler Dudley, student President, was to convey this feeling to Bill McGinnis. A meeting was arranged to meet Bill at Howard Johnson's between Routes 2A and 22 on Route 28 in Massachusetts."

This meeting took place, and the resignation was submitted and accepted.

The Board at this time included in addition to the above three: John Coupe, Edward Ernst, Kenneth Teal, Margaret Thompson, Lewis Beckford, Robert Allten, Edwin Bates, Carl Bergquist, Mrs. Richard Dolloff, William Burger, Robert Graves, Edwin Giddings, Wofford Gardner, Herbert Houghton, Matthew McNeary, Ralph Kelley and Horace Pratt.

Meanwhile the new building project was proceeding slowly toward execution. On April 10, 1962 the Building Committee met with Mr. Bates from the Alonzo Harriman Building Company, and the trustees on the same day voted to go ahead at once with the building plans, starting the actual work in August. The basic building was to cost \$56,730, work on the site \$3,875, the architect 6%, or about \$3,400. Plans had been modified by this time to include a student center with offices. The chapel originally in the plan, it was felt, could be added later.

However, it was not until September of that year, 1963, that definite action was finally taken. After a coffee session at three, MCA met at 3:30 with a good attendance. Several new members were present. It was voted to accept the new recommendations of the Building Committee and go ahead with the new Student Center. There was not a dissenting vote. My husband wrote in his diary, "HISTORIC MOMENT".

Not only in the building program but in the organization itself, 1963 was a crucial year. A new Director must be chosen. On April 13 of that year, my husband, as Board President, Cecil Brown, Sandy Moores, Al Arch, and Dale Worthen, members of the Personnel Committee, traveled to Newton, Massachusetts to interview candidates. Two were chosen as possibilities - John Pickering and Hal Cooper. On the 26th the Coopers came for an interview, and he preached that Sunday in the Little Theater. On May 4 and 5, the Pickerings came for a similar session. On May 9 the trustees met and decided on John Pickering, who accepted the position. John and his wife Marisue moved into the student center at One Riverdale in time for the opening of the university that fall.

By a coincidence, the day after I finished retyping the preceding pages of Chapter Three, I received a telephone call from Allan Arch, an alumnus who was very active during these early sixties. He is now President of the

Gear and Machine Company in Miami, Florida. You will remember that he was one of the Committee who went with my husband to Massachusetts to interview the two applicants for the chaplaincy.

Since I don't have one of the self-correcting devices in order to insert his comments where they belong (At age ninety I consider myself too old to learn to use a word-processor and still stick to the antique media of typewriter and copier!), I will add them here. His enthusiastic comments are too good to miss.

He regretted that circumstances had prevented his answering my letter earlier, but he hoped he was not too late. Most of his memories were of Dave and Jinny Rich's short period in the chaplaincy during his first two years at the university. Dave had evidently been a profound influence in his life. At one time Allan had even considered becoming a minister though his real forte seemed to be in other areas. He especially recalled Dave's dynamic personality and his genius in promoting religious interest and activities among the students on campus.

Attendance at the MCA House meetings, he remembered, had increased so dramatically that the students used to overflow the living room, and there were some sitting on the stairs in the hall. (This was before the A Frame Building, of course.) A retreat at China Lake was an event which had influenced Allan's whole religious life. He was on both the Student Cabinet and the Advisory Board. He had one grave criticism of the Board. When a vote of consequence was to be taken, the student members were sent out and not permitted to cast their votes. Evidently the denominational heads and faculty representatives intended to keep their power intact.

Who knows? Perhaps if the students had been allowed to vote, a very capable and committed interim chaplain would have been allowed to remain. I know that my husband Elwin, who was President of the Board at that time, tried hard to keep Dave. He felt that the work was the important thing, not a college-oriented concept of tenure.

Allan applied one very pertinent and perceptive word to describe the personality and achievement of Dave Rich as chaplain. He had CHARISMA. I have known personally all of the campus ministers, and I know of only one other than Dave whose service could warrant that

descriptive word, Charisma. That one also had a very short term, and it was terminated not by decision of the Board but by a freak and very tragic accident. You will hear about that later.

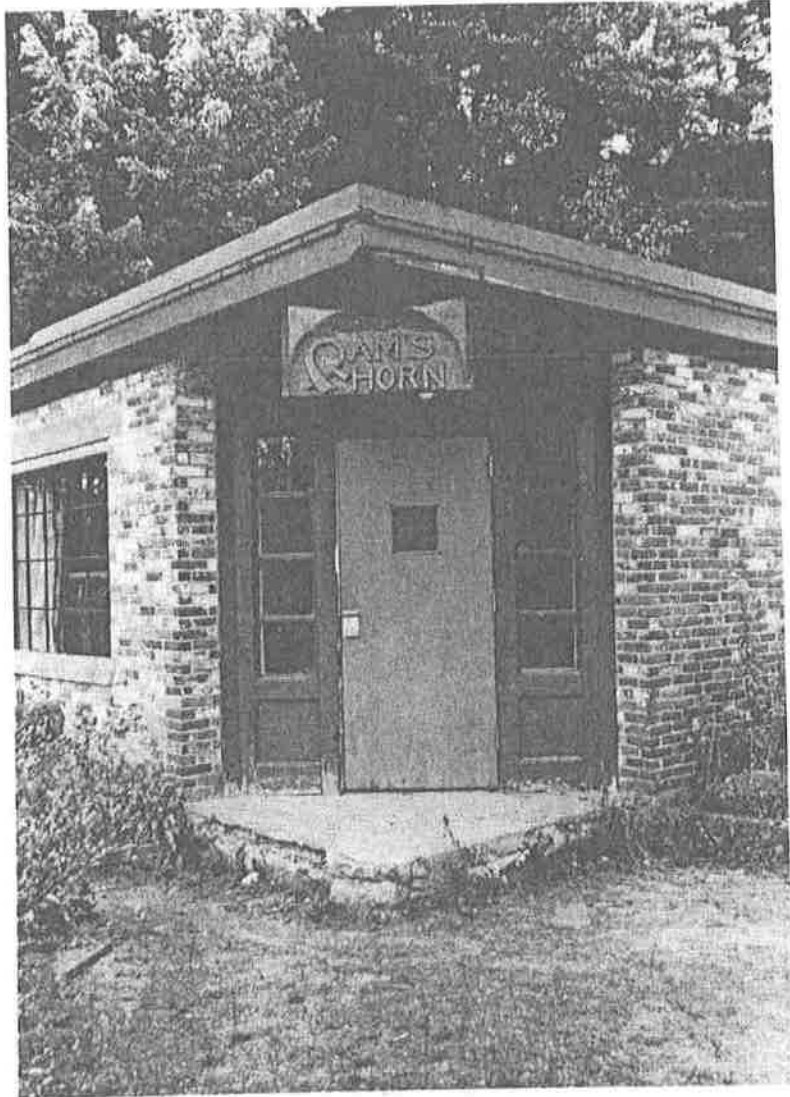
Many years later, in 1986, when word had been received of the death of Dave Rich's wife Jinny, Tom Chittick, who had been a student during Dave's chaplaincy and was himself now the MCA Director, wrote a tribute entitled, "I Remember Jinny". Excerpts from it are worth quoting.

"On September 29, 1985, Jinny Rich died after a long struggle with cancer. I remember Jinny. I remember her cookies. Maybe some of you do, too. Whenever we'd go to the parsonage at One Riverdale Place for MCA student meetings, invariably Jinny had cookies for everyone. Jinny was always on hand for our heady theology 'discussions', knitting and rocking and 'in there' with her own thoughts and observations. Like Dave, she had just concluded studies at Andover-Newton Seminary and was up on the latest theology of the day. She was also pregnant with Martha (soon to be a junior at Slippery Rock University). So I remember Jinny becoming a mother.

"In all of this I remember Jinny as a women of grace and gentle hospitality, not easy characteristics to maintain when your home is periodically taken over by a gang of students! But it was these qualities, along with her own open faith, that made those long evening discussions seem welcome and expected.

"It was she who designed the logo (a cross superimposed on a globe), which is used in our Maine Christian Association *University Times*. Her faith continued to question and to grow . . . Indeed, I remember Jinny, even in the 60s, as someone who back then began to bear the marks of being 'in herself' - comfortable and honest."

Such comments from "remembering" students through the years are priceless proofs of the abiding influence which the Maine Christian Association and its fellowship and faith-nurturing witness have exerted in the lives of students.



FOUR

John Pickering, who became Protestant chaplain at the University in 1963, remained for eight years, the longest continuous term of any Director of the MCA to date. A native of Lancaster, Ohio, a graduate of Boston University School of Theology, he was a clergyman of the Methodist denomination, following William McGinnis, who, after his leave of absence for study, was now serving as associate pastor of the Madison Avenue Baptist Church in New York.

At this time the organization of the MCA continued to consist of a Board of Trustees, with representatives from each of the supporting denominations, plus members of faculty and selected students; also a Student Cabinet. My husband Elwin was a member of the very active Board, in fact its President. Other members during the 1960s were John Coupe, H. Travers Smith, Edward Ernst, George Dow, David Trafford, Archibald M. Craig, Carl A. Bergquist, Edward L. Giddings (Treasurer), Kenneth Teal, Fred T. Hayes, Margaret Hatch, Clifton Davis, John Neff, Mervin M. Deems, who served on the Board for twelve years. Ron Beard was actively involved during Pickering's last years. (Once more titles are omitted.)

In 1964 donations from the denominations ranged \$150 (Baptist) to over \$2,000 (Methodist, the Presbyterian and Lutheran contribution and United Church of Christ, somewhere in between). The total expenditures for the year totalled \$12,575.14. By 1967-68 the annual budget had increased to \$16,763, with corresponding increases in the denominational donations.

Rev. Harvey Bates still served as head of the Student Religious Association, and there was increasing cooperation between MCA and the Episcopal and Catholic organizations. At this time Rev. Ted Lewis was the Episcopal chaplain, with student work at Canterbury House. The Catholic chaplain was Father LeTourneau, later Father Archambault and Father LaVoie. Joint programs were held featuring discussions and lectures. A film series was well attended. The three groups combined in several ecumenical services. Members of the different boards occasionally met together.

In the summer of 1964, the new A-frame building was completed, and two students took up residence there, acting as caretakers. Dedication of the building took place on the afternoon of February 7, 1965, with Allan Arch, the student Cabinet President, leading, and Elwin, as President of the Board of Trustees, conducting the litany of Dedication. It was named the Maine Christian Association Building. The meeting was followed by a joint session of the Board and Cabinet. Student members attending were Pat Hayden, Gifford Stevens, Jill Guinon, Marylie Huston and Rich Sousa. Since all of these were extremely active during this period, it is well to record their names. I have written to many of them and received most interesting replies, some of which are quoted in this chapter.

It was decided to hire Hal Lendwehr from Bangor Theological Seminary as an additional worker, especially in the Coffee House.

The new building was immediately put to good use for group meetings, discussions, luncheons and suppers, and social events. It was often used for weddings, various college club activities, and other university gatherings. Though it offered immeasurably larger and better facilities than the old basement center at One Riverdale, it was already evident that the decision to modify the plans and relinquish the idea of building a chapel had been the part of wisdom as well as expediency.

The emphasis in student work was changing. In accordance with a general trend, it was moving toward a program more centered on campus than on separate non-campus facilities. Both the Board and the Cabinet were exploring new ways in which the organization could become a more integral part of the student body.

Of course the Sunday morning services had always been an important step in this direction. For about a year after John Pickering's arrival, they continued in the Little Theater, then moved to Hauck Auditorium in the new Memorial Union. Attendance continued to run about three hundred. Representatives from the participating denominations and others preached at many of the services, among them Harvey Bates, James Allen, William Thompson, Archie Craig, Charles O'Connor and Elwin Wilson. A Friday morning communion service was held in the Drummond Chapel of the Memorial Union Building.

The Coffee House, on the edge of campus but so close it seemed to the students a part of it, assumed even greater importance because of this new emphasis. It continued to be a place where students could come at will and share their ideas and concerns with others. Members of the faculty often came to speak and conduct informal discussions. One of the students to whom we wrote, Pat Hayden Herrick, sent me her wonderful scrap book with quotes from the Campus which were taken from articles called "Grounds for Coffee", which told of Coffee Shop activities. Drama was encouraged, and short plays were often read or presented, some written by students. It was a medium for study as well as social activity.

For the Maine Christian Association, which defined itself as the Protestant Church at the University of Maine, saw its role as existing in three different areas: first, THE CHURCH IS TO WORSHIP. Second, THE CHURCH IS TO STUDY. "The message of the church," John reported at the end of his first year, "must be communicated in relevant and succinct terms to a community that values sound study." Small groups had met throughout the year to discuss "Contemporary Theology", "The Authority of the Bible", and to study a book *The Extraordinariness of the Christian Life* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, followed by a study on another book entitled *The Role of Women*.

"In fact," Gifford Stevens, student President, reported in 1965, "during the fall semester of 1964 the Cabinet functioned primarily as a study group. Robinson's book *Honest to God* was distributed, and one chapter per week was assigned for discussion. Perhaps the main reason for the failure of this book was the inescapable fact that the members of the cabinet were not honest to God with each other. We all knew how we felt - we just didn't care. The hour or less was not enough time for a heterogeneous group of people with divergent activities to become homogeneous in thought. But several members attended the Poverty Conference in Springfield, Massachusetts. One member attended the Student Christian Movement Conference in Pembroke, New Hampshire."

But brainstorming took place, and many new ideas were set in motion for the following year: A Maundy Thursday service in the round with students and professors in chairs and on the floor, with elements placed

in the middle of the floor - novel and very effective; a movie program followed by discussion; a work session for planting trees on campus.

In following years there were small groups studying other concerns: "Christianity and Prejudice", "Poverty", "The Ethical Dilemma", and also groups which discussed writings of Paul Tillich. A weekend retreat at the China Lake Conference Center provided the basis for a deeper awareness of an informed and trained community.

The third declaration was of equal, if not greater importance: TO BE THE CHURCH IS TO SERVE. "In order for the church to have any effect in the lives of people in society," John affirmed, "it must become involved in the lives of these people . . . The Maine Christian Association is committed to involvement in the depth of life and thus to be the Church in the World. It's not a place to retreat and become separated from the world and the university. It is called to discover the worth of life and to approach living through the context of the Christian faith."

Specific avenues of service were the Coffee House, the Bangor Children's Home, a project that involved visiting patients in the Bangor City Hospital, where they selected several patients and visited them once every other week. And by 1966 the MCA was sponsoring a Greek foster child, Basil Koutsothasis.

One of the students I wrote to, Jill Guinon Slocum, has sent me her impressions of the influence MCA had on her life.

"As with many young people going off to college, it was a time when I questioned the religious training I had received as a child, and it was very fortunate that the MCA was there to guide and enhance this period of my life. This was a crucial time for me concerning my religious beliefs, and the MCA provided stepping stones for me toward a more mature understanding of what faith meant to me and what it was all about.

"One year I became the organist and choir director for the MCA service which was held in the Student Union Auditorium. John Pickering and

his wife Marisue provided a haven of tranquility in the sometimes chaotic lives of college students."

And Pat Herrick, another very active participant during these years, sent me the following comments:

"My memories center around the Sunday night meetings at the MCA House when Dave was there and during John's time. For me it was especially important to be in someone's living room. It helped to break the isolation from the real world. During Dave's time I remember fantastic Sunday services with wonderfully inspiring and relevant sermons. We also did a lot of activities with children from the Bangor Children's Home. Dave and Ginny were wonderful caring people, and I remember being puzzled and dismayed when they were leaving, and I heard that they did not want to leave.

"During the time that John and Marisue were there, the programs continued, and the new building was built. I remember personally wondering why it had been built. It took away the personal touch of meeting in the minister's living room, but I'm sure it was better in the long run.

"We started sponsoring a foster child from Greece, and this was later extended to the whole college community. I remember working in an ecumenical conference that was held in the spring of my senior year, 1965. I remember especially a trip to Boston to work in the Freedom House in Roxbury. There were a few of us who went with John and Marisue, and I learned more in those two days about racial justice than I will in a lifetime."

Thank you, Pat, for these comments as well as for the excellent information in your notebooks. They are invaluable.

At frequent intervals in its history, MCA has endeavored to define its Aims and Purposes in concrete terms. This was done in 1965.

"The Purpose of the Maine Christian Association shall be to encourage religious interests and activities at the University of Maine and to

cooperate with other faith groups through the Student Religious Association."

It also attempted to define its Aims:

1. Realize and assist others to realize, a full and creative life through fellowship with God and devotion to Him.
2. Live in fellowship with Jesus, and win others to discipleship.
3. Achieve fullest fellowship with others.
4. Mutual aid, encouragement, inspiration, transformation of life.
5. Promote Christian nurture and growth.
6. Evaluate, judge, and reconstruct society.
7. Service to others, carrying out Jesus' purpose of love.
8. Training and supplying leadership for these tasks.
9. Administering the sacraments.

But towards the end of the sixties, the mood of the campus and of students was drastically changing. It was a period of disillusionment and of social turmoil. Institutions which sought involvement, including religion, were coming into disrepute. For several years in succession, attendance at the Sunday morning worship service dropped drastically, so much so that by 1970 they were being held in the very small Drummond Chapel in the Memorial Union. After six years of John's regime even the popular Coffee House had reached the stage when the MCA relinquished its sponsorship, and the project was taken over by another organization.

This estrangement from or indifference to religion was part of the general unrest and disillusionment with institutions which were affecting youth all over the country in the later sixties, partly in reaction to the Vietnam War, resulting in demonstrations, sit-down strikes, even outbursts of violence on some college campuses. One such episode of protest occurred at the University of Maine in the spring of 1970 when invasion of Cambodia was threatened by the government. So publicized was the disturbance that John Pickering sent a letter to the leaders of the supporting denominations, entitled, "To the Friends of the MCA". So well does it describe the changes taking place among students, that it may be valuable to quote it in its entirety:

"These past two weeks have been ones of enormous importance for our country and for the universities of our nation. It is extremely important that we think clearly and deeply about what has happened. My reason for writing this is to share my reflections about the events at the University of Maine.

"The one overwhelming fact of these two weeks is that it is impossible to generalize about the positions or actions of the students, or the faculty, or the administration. Ideological and political issues were involved in those events, and people were aligned along all points of what happened here. Put simply, we have been wrestling with the question, 'Can the University as an Institution act in such a way that all the desires of all its members will be met?' The answer we came to was 'no'. There were so many conflicts of positions and interests that even some compromise did not please a large number of people. Despite the unhappiness there was an acceptance of the fact that a decision had to be made by the President which would stand as an official position. This helped.

"Throughout the two weeks the President was available to anyone, and honest about his position. This helped greatly in the process of coming to a decision about grades for students wishing to leave their classes. Despite the disagreement on the issue of grades, I feel that a great deal has been accomplished which has been very positive.

"Virtually every person in the university has had to confront the existence of the war in Vietnam and the present policy of engagement in Cambodia. It has been confronted at a level far deeper than ever before. Despite the anti-war sentiment expressed by the majority, there has been a strong stress on having people make up their minds and do what they must do no matter which side of the issue they were on. I have been impressed with the lack of intimidation of those who disagreed with the minority.

"A decision has been made to open the university through classes and workshops to community people who want to find out about the war. I am very excited about this action. The university has always tried to be of service to the citizens of Maine. This says concretely that it is possible for the university to be really open to people who need its

resources. This has wide-ranging implications for the future since we still must confront the issues of rural and inner city poverty, pollution, and the rights of minority groups.

"Another thing which pleased me greatly is to see the students going into the communities of Maine to knock on doors and talk with people about the war. To me this appears to be a new awareness of the potential power of the democratic process. These are the people who make decisions about the war. The students have said they wish to talk with them. They wish to understand the positions of these people, and they want their own positions understood. They have also formed an organization which is designed to talk with clergy and their congregations about the war and the actions of students within the university. I would hope that those of you who are clergy would take advantage of this resource whenever possible. Feel free to contact me if you wish to have people talk with you or your congregation.

"Finally, I am deeply impressed by the ethical sensitivity of many, many students. They value life and have constantly worked through these two weeks to be as responsible as possible in their dissent. These students have a message for all of us. They are acting on their convictions that there is nothing more important than ending our involvement in Indo-China. I, too, am committed to working for this objective. However, I would urge you to work actively for whatever your convictions are. We are at a point in our history when active involvement either pro or con is essential."

This episode certainly shows the increasing involvement of students in MCA with problems of the day and a Christian commitment to action on social issues.

In spite of the decrease of interest in some of its activities, MCA was finding new avenues of service during these years. A project developed in cooperation with the Tribal Council of the Penobscot Indians on Indian Island whereby students tutored young Indians in need of extra work in their school subjects. Friendships made in these encounters caused the students to mature in their understanding of problems faced by the Indians, and they became involved in helping to solve them. They raised money to send the tribal Governor to a nation-wide meeting

of Indians. This experience also helped them understand better some of their university courses which had seemed only to theorize about such problems.

In 1970 MCA cooperated with other faith groups in bringing Michael Novak, author and theologian, who had been active in the resistance movement against the draft and the Vietnam War, to the campus for a week of lectures. Other cooperative efforts included a pre-marriage course for engaged couples; sponsorship of a movie, "The War Game", attended by 4,500 people on campus; discussion groups composed of students, faculty, and clergy to develop skills in interpersonal conversation and care; dormitory "bull sessions" with the clergy on many issues from failure of the church to pre-marital sex; a student group interested in urging fellow students to write to Congressmen and Senators to express opinions on the more pressing social issues; service to the community through a Student Action Corps, for tutoring, work with Cerebral Palsy patients, visits to hospitals, and work with the Boy and Girl Scouts; and many other activities.

In 1970 John Pickering wrote and distributed a very fine paper entitled "HUMANIZATION OF THE UNIVERSITY, A Case Study" as an approach to ministry at the University of Maine, in which he defined the personal skills and limitations of the campus minister, and attempted an analysis of the most crucial needs for the University of Maine at its present stage.

In response to this challenge, in 1971 the Board decided to spend a year of self-study and evaluation to determine the needs of the campus and how best to meet these needs during this period of societal unrest. The Center became a meeting place for seminars, discussions, study groups and course offerings, John leading in this exploration, while the major emphases of the ministry on workshop, study, and service through social action continued with even more intensive zeal, though with diminishing numbers of students.

John also was experiencing frustrations with the work of MCA, and his attempts to carry out some of his innovative theories in campus ministry seemed to run counter to university policy. Also, questions of his own spiritual commitment to it were becoming increasingly disturbing. By

the first of 1971, he was sure that it was time to move on, especially since there seemed to be an opening more to his liking elsewhere. In many ways it had been a satisfying eight years. Two sons had been born to them, Paul and David. Marisue had enjoyed her part-time position in the University Speech Department in speech therapy, but she was anxious for further training. In a letter to the MCA Board, he expressed something of his present convictions and concerns.

John has been very helpful to me during the composition of this period in MCA history. He returned to Orono some years ago and has been active in educational work here. Marisue continued her graduate work in speech therapy and has had a distinguished career both in the Speech Department and as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University, where she is Assistant to the President. One of the sons is running a successful restaurant business here in town, and the other is completing a Master's degree in Speech Communication at the University of Maine. John now has an educational consulting business and teaches courses at the University.

FIVE

The year of evaluation instigated by the Board in 1971 resulted in experimentation with an entirely new method of organization and program. Since this was such an important step, I think we should include a list of the Board members at this particular time. They were President, Rev. Clifton G. Davis; Vice President, Mr. Craig Shinn; Secretary, Mrs. Edward Johnson; Treasurer, Mr. Ralph E. Clifford. For the Baptists - Rev. Richard Smith, Rev. Louis George; Lutheran - Rev. Karl Moll; Methodist - Rev. John Neff, Rev. Gordon Buzza, Rev. Edward Allen, Mrs. Edward Johnson; Presbyterian - Rev. William J. Burger; UCC - Rev. Clifton Davis, Rev. Charles Ryder, Rev. Robert Fiske; Alumni - Mrs. John Darrah, Mr. Roger Leach, Mr. George Ritz, Mr. Alan Lewis; Faculty-administration - Dr. John Hakola, Dr. Ralph Hjelm, Mrs. Margaret Hatch. Student members were: Ron Beard, Sue Percival, Jim Hynson, Paul Adamus, Craig Shinn, Greg Holman, Chris Fisher and Debbie Holmes.

The Board committed itself to a program of volunteer service, with decisions of program and procedure to be made by a core group of persons resident in the Bangor and Orono area plus students and faculty. This group would designate a chairman and decide its own procedure for ministry to the University for the following year. Temporarily at least the work would be carried on by a Core Group rather than by one staff person.

Therefore, 1971 was a period of transition, not only because of the absence of a Director, but because the Board was engaged in this thorough evaluation of its ministry.

In the spring of 1972, Clifton Davis, President of the Board for many years, made this report to the cooperating denominations:

"If there is no Campus Minister, can there be a Maine Christian Association? The answer to this question is a resounding 'Yes', for the members of the Board of Trustees have been actively involved in the work of campus ministry.

"The work of ministry has been carried on by a Community of students, faculty, administration, and Board members who live in the vicinity of Orono. Meetings have been held on a weekly basis to discuss, plan, and execute programs. Creative, innovative worship services have been held each Sunday morning and have helped participants to explore issues of faith and life. Individuals have carried their commitments into areas of the university where they are directly involved.

"The semester experiment has produced some tangible results which cannot help but affect campus ministry in the future. A decision has been reached which acknowledges that a professional staff person is needed. An outline of a job description is nearly completed. Our experience has shown that a ministry in the name of the Maine Christian Association must be carried on by people in community, a working Board to support and be supported by a professional worker. The Board has recognized the importance of establishing relationships with area churches and is pursuing that goal. The Board recognizes the responsibility of working with ministry groups on other campuses within the University system.

"The task of ministry is before us. Together representatives from the major denominations in our state are attempting to meet that task."

In the report made to denominations the following year, in 1973, we find the following:

"We support the work being done by Edwin Hinshaw, new chaplain at Orono and are pleased to announce his availability to campus situations and help as a resource and advisor. We encourage local pastors to make use of his experience and talent."

Ed Hinshaw came to MCA in July of 1972 with his wife Dorothy and four children. He had previously spent some years of service with the Society of Friends (Quaker) in Indiana, Kenya, and other places in New England. He was well prepared for the position, having completed two graduate degrees at Boston University School of Theology, which had opened wide to him the doors of ecumenical activity and involvement. This experience had led him to look into work with other denominational groups than the Society of Friends, of which he was a

member. His major studies and interest had been in Christian Education with a special emphasis on youth and adult work.

He found an active Board resulting from its self-study, which indicated that they too must join in the campus ministry of the MCA. The Board had a genuine sense of commitment to the work within the University community and realized that the work was not the burden of the campus minister alone.

"Hinshaw's being a Friend brought a new orientation for most members of the Board of Trustees," reported Clifton Davis in his report for 1974, "but any underlying fears harbored by Board members were soon dispersed by the quiet prodding and openness, and by the sincerity, simplicity and thoroughness with which Ed began to assume his duties. His unassuming manner gave him easy access to individuals and readily won their respect.

"The first year under his leadership was spent in getting to know the University while following the lead of students and other Board members in developing relevant and meaningful programs. Ed joined ongoing institutions such as the Abenaki Free School. He offered such seminars as 'A Journey of the Spirit', and pre-marriage sessions with some success. Pastoral and priestly functions were still maintained, but there was more of an understanding that the MCA must live out its Christian life in community with the University setting. Ecumenical cooperation became a primary concern.

"The MCA saw itself, moreover, as a line of communication between students and the local church. The University was a new experience for many families. Ed Hinshaw and MCA students utilized a well tested form of outreach and communication to build bridges between the University and the local churches. Deputation teams were organized to provide ministry through the spoken word, music, and drama. One special event was inviting Bar Harbor High School to the University to a performance of Godspell in Hauck Auditorium for families of the area and local churches. This was a big success, filling the Auditorium twice.

"In order to discover what various people were involved in at the University and to keep abreast of current concerns, weekly luncheons were scheduled for all to share as they were free to participate. This led to MCA's hosting an evening's discussion with University administrators concerning a University Trustees' report on directions and goals for the University. The significance of the program led to a fortnightly Forum discussion the next year. 'Education for What?' was the theme of an overnight discussion, and planning retreats rounded out the program.

"Ed's second year began with an attempt to learn from the experiences of the first - that significant programs be pursued, that meaningless ventures be let go. A retreat in the spring of 1973 led to the decision to drop Sunday morning worship services, which had been poorly attended the preceding year. Community worship for MCA would then consist of Sunday evening meetings -- dialogues with time for sharing, singing and prayer. These have been especially meaningful times and seem to justify the shift. The change has made possible local clergy involvement in MCA worship, freedom for students to attend local churches, and the opportunity for the students to lead worship programs around the state.

" 'Fortnightly Forums' continued to offer discussions of contemporary topics with recognized leadership on the subjects. These have been of considerable interest. The program is coordinated by a paid student member of the MCA Board who works with Ed and a steering committee.

"Ed continued to offer courses through the Abenaki Free School. Faculty-student dinners are occasionally held and are well received times for a variety of persons to share perspectives. The Board of Trustees meets monthly as it has since January, 1972 in open sessions for reflection and decision-making concerning programs and direction for inquiry.

"One wonders if the MCA model for campus ministry can be applied to other campuses throughout the State of Maine, particularly where little or nothing is being done at present. The future is open. Yet Maine does

have the potential to develop a unique approach to campus ministry that could serve as a national model for campus situations."

I have had the privilege of knowing Ed Hinshaw well and of conferring with him on his years of service here, which were all too brief. Some of the following includes features of an outline he made for me of his work as chaplain here.

"One must recognize," he reminds us, "that the love of God is expressed through the lives of many who join hands in Christian ventures such as MCA. We must turn to the list of Board members to see those names of individuals who cared enough to serve. Ron Beard, a graduate student and chair of the Board, provided such leadership. MCA residents, Lina Dunning, George and Sylvia Ritz and others, contributed to friendly hospitality at the MCA Center. Alison Shamlan and Barbara Baker provided inspiring music for MCA worship and deputations. The list should go on and on.

"A value aspect of the MCA ministry was enabling student couples to marry at their university within a caring and spiritual community. Christian students and others from different traditions found in the MCA a support which welcomed their marriages as well. One such marriage received considerable publicity and involved many local and university groups. As reported in the Portland Press Herald on March 29, 1974, 'Eiko Kojima and Yuki Haru Tsutsui were married in a simple western wedding arranged for them by Rev. Edwin Hinshaw. Eiko had been a student at UMO. The University arranged for the printing of a special certificate which was signed by all who attended the unusual wedding.' The Old Town Rotary Club arranged for flowers and a reception. Many newspapers covered the story, and once the word was out, John Benoit reported that townspeople began calling, volunteering to help. Eiko said in the *Press Herald*, 'There were many nice people in this country, but the people in Maine were most friendly and kind.'

"Later in the summer, Ed Hinshaw participated in a ministers' exchange and was the morning preacher at the Methodist Church in Orono, speaking on 'Called to International Living'. The ministry of MCA was being reflected in many directions.

"Not all was easy during the seventies." Ed continued. "During my tenure the gay students at UMO called for recognition. Official recognition had been granted to an on-campus group. That group wished to hold some of its meetings and a social at the MCA building. The chaplain and Board were asked to grant approval. The policy of the MCA was simple. 'Any recognized student group may schedule the MCA building.' Being consistent with the policy and recognizing the civil rights of all persons, gay students were granted permission to use the MCA building. Needless to say, this was not easily accepted by many individuals and local churches. The Maine Christian Civic League was especially displeased and proceeded to tell all about the position taken by the MCA."

Some interesting items appeared in Ed's 1975 report to participating church leaders.

"Last spring," he noted, "in an attempt to define program policy, I suggested that the MCA is a facilitator of religious life at the University and a person-centered ministry. This we are doing well.

"Particular programs that have continued to be most worthwhile are: Worship-Dialogue, Agape Meal, Special Potluck Dinners, and Retreats. Marriage enrichment needs to be expanded into the Orono-Bangor community, as well as being available at UMO. Fortnightly Forums are not working out. There is still need for an opportunity to clarify and discuss ethical issues, but we may need a new approach. This past semester I have been disappointed with the lack of ecumenical activities at the University. The very effective and meaningful activities of '73-'74 seemed to drop by the wayside. But I have been encouraged with the renewed communication with MCA supporting denominations.

"What about the year ahead? With the cutback in time available from the Director, I see a stabilizing of our somewhat traditional programs, such as Worship-Dialogue and the Agape Meal. Innovative programs will come from the MCA Board and the Director as time and money permit, time probably more important than money.

"There is one other area upon which I would like to reflect in this report. What is the purpose of MCA? This is an annual, if not weekly,

question. Members of the Board could give answers which would reflect both a great variety and much in common. Whenever we develop a program we make a statement of purpose. However, there are times when some persons ask for more than that. Sometimes the question 'What is your purpose?' is genuine. Other times it may mean, 'I want to tell you what to believe and what you should be doing.' As you know, I am not one to get excited about statements of faith or purpose. And yet it is good for us to review annually our goals, purpose and faith.

"It seems to me that the purpose of the MCA Religious Life Center is to enable persons and community to live more fully in the Spirit of Christ. To do this we should attempt to:

"Aid the integration of religious thought and personal behavior through reflection, study and action.

Encourage consideration of current moral and ethical issues facing persons, community, and the world.

Provide opportunity for worship and celebrations as an essential aspect of living.

Nurture a sense of health and happiness in every person.

Be an open, loving, accepting, patient and acting community within a mobile population; be available.

"We are called to live our faith and grow in it, in an age when traditions are being questioned and doubts abound.

There are 'blocks' to being Christian and 'Open':

When we think of the Christian faith as a closed system instead of relationship with God;

When we speak as though the 'Christian faith' is synonymous with our own interpretation;

When we shut off communication because we fear sharing our commitments and values;

When we substitute shallow 'good fellowship' for genuine relatedness;

When due to fear of offending we are unwilling to speak the truth in love, and are afraid of religious differences that are important.

Let us be guiders, not stumblers."

A paper written "On the Purpose and Role of the MCA" makes these comments on the years of Ed Hinshaw's chaplaincy:

"Theologically, MCA witnesses a shift in emphasis from being the proclaimer of the Word to the university, to becoming a community in search of a Christian identity and mission within the university. There is more of an understanding that the Christian perspective is not the sole property of MCA. Students and faculty have come out of a variety of churches and continue to maintain their primary ties with those churches. Prophecy and governance, as these relate to the implications of living by the Gospel and concern for the structures under which men's lives are lived, have been concerns of MCA. Yet, rather than hold up Underwood's models for campus ministry as the four possibilities for structure, MCA has chosen to begin by raising questions of what it means to live the Christian life in community with a university setting. Programs are developed from this base of operations, but are not centered on the activities of a small group. There is an ecumenical concern which takes the Newman Center and Canterbury Chapel into account."

The paper goes on to speak of the financial picture. "There have never been abundant financial resources. However, from the New England Commission of United Ministries in Higher Education, MCA received funds to add to those raised within the state so that the annual budgets have ranged between \$15,000 and \$19,000. With decreasing national support for campus ministries and the demise of NECUMHE, the

financial picture at present and the future of MCA rests within Maine's ability to pay its own way. Denominational commitments have to be strengthened.

"United Methodist, United Church of Christ, and United Baptist Convention campus ministry committees have been able to sit together to gain a state-wide perspective on their work and to share insights into their allocation of funds. But even working together they do not meet the budget of MCA. An even broader ecumenical concept of campus ministry in Maine is needed and must be pursued by this group.

"The members of these committees, together with pastors of churches in college communities, college chaplains, Roman Catholic campus clergy and sisters, the part-time Episcopal chaplain at Orono, have formed a working group called Maine Ministries in Higher Education. A meeting of this group was held in December, 1973, which produced positive results and a desire for continued working relationships."

Was it once more frustration with the problems and what he considered failures in achievement which caused another Director to resign? For it was in the spring of 1974, after only three years as chaplain, that Ed Hinshaw submitted his resignation to the Board in order to take a teaching post at William Penn College in Iowa.

Yes, Ed's time with the MCA was short, too short, most of us felt, for he was one of the most caring and efficient Directors. He confided, "Dorothy, the kids, and I have lived in many exciting places, but our time in Orono as chaplain of the MCA was so rich and the friendships so deep, we often feel that we never left. We were loved, and we hope that we returned that love. We surely felt fulfilled in our ministry and regret that lack of funds caused the need for a practical change."

Ed and Dorothy now live in Sumner, Maine, and at present he is an active member of our Endowment Campaign Committee, traveling to Orono for each meeting and rendering most helpful support and advice. He is a semi-retired Headmaster of Sandy Springs Friends School in Maryland.

A poem he once wrote for an MCA Easter service is worth quoting because it illustrates so well the outpouring of his own life and spirit:

"The joyful life is
a life of intention
tempered with spontaneity,

a life of noise, local praise, unapologetic faith
tempered with a quiet simplicity,

a life of quiet introspection
tempered with a warm embracing smile.

We speak of joy at this season and every day
For to do otherwise
we will cry
and stumble
and fall.

So jump and be quick about the Work of Our Lord."

SIX

The later years of the 1970s were a period of change, adjustment, and transition. The Maine Christian Association had become increasingly involved in campus social concerns, endeavoring to provide a Christian perspective to the tremendous social and cultural changes of the decade. The sustaining denominations in the state were becoming less and less able to finance the work, or perhaps more unwilling to, and it was necessary to either cut down on expenses or find new avenues of support.

Ed Hinshaw's letter of resignation expressed his deep regrets. He had been offered a position on the faculty of William Penn College in Oskaloosa, Iowa, where he would be working with close personal friends. But, though he had accepted the position with great anticipation, it was also with mixed feelings. "We have just started to build," he wrote, "and work on the many ideas generated in our Board meetings. Personally and programatically, we have significant and effective ministry at UMO. I do feel bad about leaving when the financial picture is so grim. This may have had some influence on the final decision; I hope not to any great extent . . . Our time together was all too short, but very full and hopefully most meaningful."

During the summer after Ed left, a committee of the Board was given the task of evaluating the situation and working out alternatives for hiring a professional staff. As a result of the meetings, discussions and retreat during the summer, there was compiled a description to the Board calling for a part-time Director/Chaplain. Phillip Crane, a senior at Bangor Theological Seminary, was hired at the end of December, 1975, for one year, it being understood that at the end the part-time position and the Director's performance would be reviewed. Discussions with the Episcopal Church evaluation committee caused an expectation that at the end of the year the Episcopal ministry would be phased out and that a working relationship would be established between Canterbury and the MCA.

After three months of service, Phillip Crane shared something of his views of the work in his annual report.

"After only three months as Chaplain/Director, it is difficult to do much more than say that I'm beginning to feel more at home and beginning to find my way around. Good relationships are developing with other Campus Ministry groups and with the Counseling Center and Student Health programs.

"There are several areas in which I am aware of our shortcomings, and these must become primary areas of emphasis. We need better channels for spreading the word of our activities on campus; we need to be reaching out in visitation to a greater number of students; we need to direct our efforts toward dealing effectively with student and faculty problems which stem from the financial situation of the university system. It has become clear that it is very easy for a part-time Director to get 'locked in' at the Center and spend very little time in meeting new people and in general outreach.

"There are also several things happening which have great possibilities for our future, although these too require continued effort and action on our part. Conversations are proceeding well toward a unifying effort with the Canterbury Fellowship and there is some enthusiasm for an ecumenical effort in renewing regular weekday devotions in the Drummond Chapel. Planning is in progress for a spring retreat."

Some of the on-going successful programs were continuing: on Tuesdays at 6:30, Worship Design and Discussion, exploring the meaning of contemporary faith and means of expressing it; on Wednesdays at 6:30, the Agape Meal, a time in the middle of the week for good conversation and great food; Thursdays at 7:00, Fortnight in Forum, discussion on issues facing the community and the world; Sundays at 6:30, worship, in music, dialogue, drama, and reflection (a time for students and faculty to worship in the peaceful atmosphere of the MCA Religious Center.

The budget foretold income of \$13,250, with expenses running to \$14,250. The salary of the Director was \$4,000. A student assistant would receive \$500, income from the Todd Fund, a gift to the MCA earmarked for a student intern.

In August of that year, the Board had offered the job of assistant to Mary (Mimi) Ward. She had accepted, to begin her work in September.

The year of trial with the interim Chaplain/Director proved so satisfactory that the Board decided to continue the arrangement, and in the following year, we find Phillip Crane again making his report:

"In 1977 a significant part of the work in the MCA was reflected in its program. There were programs coordinated by and directed at many people in the university community. On Monday evening a small but active worship planning group met regularly at Canterbury House to discuss the meaning and direction of worship and to prepare for the Sunday evening worship/dialogue. Wednesday evenings continued as Agape meal night; this mid-week time of food and fellowship served as a perfect preparation for the Bible study group later in the evening. An exciting addition to programming at the MCA has been the development of the 'Equal Time' Program. Every other Thursday evening throughout the fall semester, a different speaker addressed an issue for concern relevant to contemporary Christian faith. People attending had the opportunity to question and challenge the views of the speaker. Worship continues for two different groups of people by providing a Sunday morning traditional form of service on campus and our worship/dialogue service at the MCA House. Our center and the outreach of our community is becoming more and more part of the life of the university. Ecumenical activities continue as the close working relationship with Roman Catholic campus ministries is regularly a part of our planning. The 'visibility' of the MCA is increasing on campus through the efforts of our staff and active students. A new dimension in our ministry has been opened through the establishment of a radio program on the campus station, WMEB-FM. The program called 'Last Call' is a phone-in show which asks people to share the events that are important to them in their day to day living. The show is based on the idea that we can be a caring community and support one another in times of trouble and joy.

"At the opening of a new year, we find the MCA continuing to remain vital through the willingness of its members to struggle for growth. In this time we cannot afford a 'ministry by intent'. Our mission and our charge are far too important, far too complex for that. We must have a

'ministry by intention', one that knows why it exists and its staff must continue to struggle to provide a vital ministry for the University of Maine."

On June 1, 1977 an opportunity was given for an associate campus minister to work with the Director. Qualifications were listed.

After Phillip Crane's two-year period of service as Director/Chaplain, the Board once more advertised for another part-time interim worker. And on July 12, 1978, the position was offered to Gordon Svoboda. The present minister of the Oakland Unitarian-Universalist Church and a student at UMO, he had completed his studies at Bangor Theological Seminary. His father was the minister of the Windham, Maine United Church of Christ church. He was expected to remain at MCA until a full-time Director could be appointed. He was at that time in the process of seeking ordination with the United Church of Christ. He came with an excellent background of training in worship and related planning activities and was interested primarily in pastoral duties.

The Board then voted to plan a job description for a permanent Director. Members present at this meeting were Alison Barr, Lois Johnson, Roger Leach, Evelyn Foster, Russ Whitman, and Alan Stone.

According to Gordon (who signed his reports to the Board as "Gordy"), "the aim of the campus ministry is to 'help' people learn constructive and meaningful ways of living while others are teaching people how to make a living." He accomplished this through the various programs and activities. Each Sunday two worship services were conducted. At 10:00 a.m. there was on-campus worship. As previously, on Sunday evenings students gathered at the MCA Center for a time of dialogue-worship and fellowship. The Wednesday evening Agape Meal continued, the meal being vegetarian pot-luck. After the meal, time was set aside for learning about world hunger. An eleven-week film series was developed by the Chaplain, with films viewed and discussed. Fridays students gathered for a Bible study based on what the Bible teaches about our life-style and the meaning of stewardship in creation. The Chaplain was also available for counseling. The radio program called "Last Call" was also continued.

As Mark Boutilier noted in his Board President's report, "I believe that our task is clear as we enter into the 1980s. We as a Board must use our time and our influence to secure a firmer financial future for the MCA. Our involvement in programming has for the most part been redelegated to the Chaplain and will continue to be so when we go to full-time staff. We must take our responsibilities as stewards more seriously. We must seek out new funds, develop closer ties with the denominations, lobby their annual meetings, plan fund-raising projects ourselves and carry them out.

"All this takes commitment to a more complete, more loving ministry to the university. We have the organizational skills, we have the manpower. We need leadership. And I believe that in the struggle for financial security, in the practical activity, firmly rooted in the real world, we will rekindle the spirit of hope in this Board."

Gordon Svoboda filled the position of interim Director/Chaplain capably until his resignation on December 1, 1979, after he received a call to fill a vacancy in the United Campus Ministry at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb.

"I recognize that the time is short," he wrote, "for the MCA to hire another part-time chaplain, but I remind you that students will not be coming back until the end of January. I would suggest that you consider approaching Walter Cook at BTS concerning other Bangor Seminary students who showed an interest when I was hired."

It had obviously been hoped that by the end of this year, 1979, the Board would have found it possible to support a full-time Director. But with autumn of that year, it was evident that the denominations had chosen not to provide funding, and the Board had been forced to rewrite the budget. Nothing for it but to secure another interim worker!

In 1980 I find an entry in my husband's diary for September 14. "Went to the MCA for commissioning of Chaplains Lana Crane and Karl Duetzmann. These two must be continued as part-time workers until June, 1981." Still the MCA was in the process of transition, the Board once more evaluating the future of the organization. As once before, after careful experimentation, discussion, and appraisal, it was decided

that a full-time Director/Chaplain was a necessity for a truly successful ministry.

But they were still far from achieving this objective. On January 19, 1981, the Board held its annual meeting, members present being Evelyn Foster, Roger Leach, John Neff, Carol Shaw, Dwight Cathcart, Francis Sprague, Vance Dearborn, Peg Warner, Barbara Smith, Sue Swindell, Ann Mawhinney, Helen Neff, Bob Salt, Steve Bost, Reuben Lundeen, Russ Whitman, Lana Crane, Karl Deutzmann, Barbara Hammond, and Sarah Hasbrouck.

The Ad Hoc Committee was in process of an in-depth appraisal of the work through a grant from the Maine Council of Churches. The Study had been carried out through the National Institute on Campus Ministries in Boston.

During this and following meetings, various ways were suggested by which the building might be used on weekdays to bring in funds, such as a nursery school or other activities sponsored by the university. Criticism was made both of the Board and of the two interim chaplains, whom some of the denominational supporters felt to be too untrained for the job. Students felt that the Board was too passive and too willing to pass the work load to the already burdened chaplains. But it was expected that the present arrangement would be retained until June of 1982.

The usual program kept on apace with some success, Sunday worship maintaining a steady and enthusiastic congregation of about twelve. The Agape Meal was going well. There were new features: a noontime campus symposium on "The Role of Women in Western Religions"; an international women's discussion on Eastern religions; a matrimonial workshop; a Pizza/Dialogue with an "interest survey" to discover the programs that most interested the students.

But so great were the frustrations that at the end of the college year in June, the work of the two chaplains was terminated. It was even moved, but fortunately defeated, that MCA be closed and the corporation be dissolved. But the Ad Hoc Committee recommended action during the coming transitional year: that the Board meet quarterly; that the Task

Force meet regularly to administer the program and buildings; that the parsonage at One Riverdale be put on the market; that the Center remain open and available to the public; that a Worship Leader be hired to lead a Sunday Morning Worship Service.

Obviously this period of transition was crucial to the very existence of MCA. That it survived the test and emerged with new strength is indicated by a letter from the chairman of the Development Committee, Bill England, to the participating churches. Here are the high points of the letter, written October 15, 1982:

"Dear Colleagues: Two years ago the mainline Protestant denominations which established the campus ministry at the University of Maine felt that the time had arrived for a careful examination of the ministry. Through a grant from the Maine Council of Churches, a study was carried on through the National Institute of Campus Ministries in Boston.

"The nub of the study came down to the fact that the Protestant ministry on the campus was not effective because the Protestant churches were unable to bring a mature, viable presence to the campus community. This was true even though there are all of 2,000 students, faculty, and staff who are affiliated with the mainline churches. The study concluded that nothing of significance would happen until the churches were able to provide resources sufficient to bring about a first-rate college chaplaincy.

"Each of the denominational bodies supporting the MCA has pledged to making a significant increase in its level of support for 1983.

"The Rev. Thomas Chittick has been called to the Protestant chaplaincy as a result of this commitment." The letter was an eloquent plea for denominational support. It marked a new era of progress for the Maine Christian Association.



SEVEN

Rev. Thomas B. Chittick came as Director/Chaplain to the Maine Christian Association with eminent qualifications. A Maine man, native of Portland, graduate of the University of Maine, 1963, he had served as the Lutheran chaplain at Yale University and at the University of Pennsylvania. Before these periods he had been for three years Pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Gloucester, Massachusetts. While Chaplain at the University of Pennsylvania, he had also been Pastor of the University Lutheran Church. "Of all the sixty or so applicants for the position at the University of Maine," reported Professor Linda Kling, chairman of the Board's Research Committee, "his profile leaped out for its excellence. Also," she noted, "everything that he said on paper was borne out in the personal interviews which the committee had with him, if not, in fact, exceeding."

An additional plus was his being a Lutheran, a participating denomination not heretofore in a position of leadership at the MCA. He came with a deep affection for the state and university which shared his experience and his love, and with a deep commitment to the church and its liturgy. As the Graduate Chairman of the Department of American Civilization at the University of Pennsylvania described him, "Tom Chittick's sense of prayer follows in the steps of Thomas Merton, Henri Nouwen, Soren Kierkegaard, and Huub Osterhause; his God is androgenous, open-to-talk, big-minded, close-at-hand, suffering-with-us, walking toward a joyful tomorrow."

With his wife, the former Mary Hopgood, who was presently finishing her Ph.D. in Social Ethics at Temple University, and their two children, sons of seven and one-and-a-half years, Tom moved into a rent at 6 Pond Street in December of 1982. The parsonage at One Riverdale was still on the market.

The first meeting of the Board after Tom's arrival on February 7, 1983, revealed a fresh enthusiasm and optimism on the part of both Board and new Director. Present were John Hoelter, Edward Micka, Richard Small, Barbara Smith, Heidi Westland, Dean Lindstrom, Vance Dearborn, Ronald Walden, Donna Lambert, Thomas Chittick, and Sarah

Hasbrouck, the MCA Secretary. Tom Chittick's first report fully justified the Board's expectation.

"After what seemed an interminable interlude," he began, "we are finally back in Maine. Three cheers for potatoes, Paul Bunyan, and the Bear's Den. Home at last . . ."

He spoke of his personal pleasure in the challenges of his position and his enthusiastic welcome from faculty and administration. Letters had been sent to 1,900 Protestant students on and off campus. He had spent several days in the Union to make known his presence. He planned to continue Sunday evening worship and add a morning service on campus, also a Thursday noon service of meditation in Drummond Chapel. He had placed an advertisement with a different quotation to appear each week in the *Campus* on Thursdays and Fridays. His long-term priorities included expanding denominational support from Unitarian/Universalists and Baptists. With the support of President Silverman and the officials, the University was willing to give financial support to a conference of Christian and Jewish faculty.

He was anxious that the MCA Building acquire a more distinctive name with signs to indicate more nearly "what we are and what we are doing here. As a name, the Maine Christian Association has a venerable history. It suggests its YMCA origins and ecumenical character. But it doesn't function well as a name for a building which services as a chapel and student center. It doesn't clearly say, 'This is the University of Maine Protestant Center.' It doesn't do anything to connote worship. So I have proposed that we use the Jerusalem cross which appears on the letterhead as a logo, and that between now and the next meeting the Executive Committee will have arrived at a chapel name which we can all agree upon."

This question of a new name was brought up at the next meeting on March 28, and the name "Wilson Chapel" was suggested, in honor of the first Director, my husband Elwin Wilson. I am sure this was Ron Walden's idea, the Orono minister at that time and our life-long friend, and I will spare you the all-too-complimentary speech which he made in its behalf. Questions were raised about the suitability of the word

"Chapel" since services were also to be held on campus, and the matter was referred to the Executive Committee.

Tom's work was progressing with satisfaction. A new Student Deacons' group was meeting with Tom weekly to assist with public worship and plan activities. He had had encouraging meetings with Calvin Moon, Executive Minister of the Maine American Baptists, and hoped for more support from that denomination. A Seder was being planned at Newman Center, two Easter services, a pot-luck supper, and a Saturday outing at Camp Tanglewood. Tom wanted an office on campus rather than in the MCA Building.

Mickey Bent, the Chaplain's assistant, reported on the mission work she had been doing at Bangor Community College. She was holding a short prayer service at noon for commuter students and was a resource person for the Displaced Homemaker Program.

In May, 1983 the Board voted that the MCA Building be named the Wilson Protestant Student Center, the motion passing unanimously. Once more the statement of Purpose was revised to read:

"The Purpose of the Maine Christian Association shall be to encourage and develop Christian life and growth activities within the total University community and to enlist the assistance and cooperation of supporting denominations in a common ministry. The MCA gathers students and other members of the University for mutual witness and celebration of the mighty acts of God, the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord, and the life of the Holy Spirit. In recognition of the University's task of developing the life of the mind, the MCA carries out its mission through worship, service, fellowship, study and outreach. And the Association is committed to the ongoing efforts of ecumenism and espouses an openness to people of other religious traditions."

The Dedication Service for the renamed Wilson Protestant Student Center was held on Saturday, October 1, 1983 as part of the Homecoming program at the University, the following committee in charge of the service: Thomas Chittick, John Coupe, Jane Gall, Edwin Giddings, Linda Kling, Sarah Hasbrouck, Jane Knight, John Pickering, Louis Ploch, Barbara Smith, and Ronald Walden. Both my husband and

I were present for the occasion. Later a plaque was installed commemorating the dedication.

During the following year, 1984, Tom's ministry to students expanded into new outreach. As was reported to the denominational heads, "Rev. Tom Chittick, campus minister at the only campus in the state with a full-time chaplain, is willing to add to his already full ministry. He is willing to be pastor to pastors of the different denominations in all of the Maine college communities. He has begun this by publishing a newsletter and is anxious to be called upon to speak or aid in any way that he might be used."

However, the increase in interest in religion apparent in some other parts of the country did not seem to affect students at the University of Maine. "I don't see it here," Tom reported in the Campus in December, 1986. He did think he had seen an increase of religious interest among some of the older students. "As the overall age of the student population rises because of non-traditional students and population increases," he observed, "they bring with them something of the religious quest. That isn't to say that traditional students aren't asking religious questions, it just seems to be less of a direct concern. Various social liberation movements have also influenced people to seek religious guidance and talk openly about personal issues. Also, people who have had abusive childhoods are more willing to ask the ministry, 'How does one wrestle with problems of the past and present?'."

Besides his activities in personal counseling, Tom was devising new programs sponsored by the MCA. At Christmas there was a tree lighting outside the Fogler Library, with carols, sponsored by MCA with other religious groups, attended by about 100 people, and the lighting of candles (which were blown out by the wind almost as soon as lighted). Then the group moved on to a reception at President Lick's house. There was a Sing-A-Long when MCA students and others went in a body to a church in Belfast; a HOOTENANNY when students from MCA went to Orland to attend a concert conducted by H.O.M.E., an organization established for low-income people of the area who needed jobs.

Other activities were detailed in Tom's report to the denominations in 1986:

"This has been a year of revitalizing the Maine Christian Association student fellowship. At a very productive day-away in September, students assumed responsibility for their program, and they really took off. Exciting plans are in the work.

"Also in September, MCA had its third successful Volunteers' Fair. Other 'traditional' activities took place through the year: Bible study, the MCA Christmas tree on campus, the spring break to Weston Priory in Vermont, the theme retreat at China Lake, the ecumenical Good Friday procession on campus, another beautiful sunrise service at Easter in the university gardens, and the student-lab Baccalaureate service for May graduates.

"Attendance at Sunday morning worship has been disappointing. One factor has undoubtedly been the 'bowling alley' feel of the room in the Union for worship. Next fall we will begin holding services Sunday evening at the Wilson Center, hoping that a more intimate setting and opportunity for informal suppers will help the fellowship grow. Wilson Center residents are again active members of the student fellowship and the Board. Next year's group of four will enjoy a refurnished kitchen and a new ladies' shower, as well as new storm windows, thanks to a \$10,000 grant from the Gallagher Foundation for building renovations. And speaking of grants, we have one from the Lutherans for \$600, to help with the acquisition of computer capability for mass mailings.

"Counseling continues to be a large part of the chaplain's ministry, most of it dealing with personal growth and spiritual issues. One of the Sunday morning worship services this spring celebrated the baptism of a student who had introduced himself as an agnostic looking for someone to talk to. The chaplain visits the Infirmary twice a week and has worked with the health center staff on a relationship between chaplaincy and nursing. He is chaplain to Stodder Complex and this year coordinated Friends of Stodder, a program designed to relate faculty and students in a non-academic way. He served on committees for Bread for the World, Third World Forum, and UMO Day Care Task Force."

A testimony by David Holden, a student in Political Philosophy, who had been introduced to MCA by Steve Ives, another active student deeply committed to the work, was a remarkable testimony to the influence MCA exerted on many in their religious and philosophical development. He cited the Apostle Paul's experience with the skeptical young men of Athens as an analogue for his own process of growth.

"As some of the young men in that crowd of Athens encountered for the first time through Paul's ministry, so I too encountered for the first time through the campus ministry a God not just of the mind, but of the heart, not just of understanding, but of being. While some of the crowd of both that day and today might sneer at the testimony of this ministry, others, myself included, found in it a resource, a place to go when we found ourselves saying, 'We want to hear you again on the subject,' and a life-changing impetus which prompted us to follow a new course of action, thought, and belief."

In 1987, Tom's report to the Maine Methodist Conference was typical of the one to other denominations:

"The MCA continues its work of strengthening its Board of Directors. Methodist members are a big part in that process. Ellen Bridge, Marilyn Robb and Gary Vencill are our official Methodist representatives. Vance Dearborn, Dave Rand, and Ron Walden continue to be Orono Methodist members, Rand having been elected Board President. Lynn Sewell is a student member. Bill Chamberlain has just come on as a fund-raising consultant. The MCA had a good year of growth. As is often true of student work, spurt years are often followed by the unknown. Many of this year's leaders graduate in May."

In this campaign instigated in the fall of 1987, the aim was to raise a quarter of a million dollars. Tom commented, "The endowment which they are seeking to establish would allow us the use of the interest to compensate for the growth in the budget which heretofore denominational and congregational giving have not been able to meet." It was hoped that this campaign would insure the continued financial security of the MCA for future years.

Also in 1987 Tom rejoiced over the reinstatement of MPAC, the Maine Peace Action Committee, because MCA had been actively involved in social problems: Hunger in Africa, Apartheid, people's movements in Central and South America, the plight of Russian Jews.

Tom's report the following year, covering 1988 and part of 1989, consisted of vignettes from his year of ministry which highlighted his work and gave what he considered, "the flavor, the taste of things, the smell" of both activities and accomplishments. These vignettes are so pertinent to both the activities and purpose of the ministry. I am including excerpts below:

"'I don't believe all that stuff about sin.' She said it with emphasis, and I understood her. The church's traditional original sin doctrine had been taught to her with a sledge hammer. I suggested that it was a liberating doctrine if explained with a watercolor paintbrush. A liberating word about the woundedness of life and the brokenness of things. 'Ah!' she said, 'I understand that.' It was a late-night discussion in a dormitory with the unchurched.

"I never met him before. He said, 'Oh, you're Tom Chittick. I get those letters and fliers you send to my dorm room. I always read them. I never come to anything,' he said, 'but I do enjoy them. Thanks for being there.'

"She plays guitar for us every Sunday morning. She hadn't attended church in years until we asked her to help with worship. She said, 'Having to sing religious songs has taught me what my theology is. I have sung myself to decisions.'

"And then there are the awful crises. A weekend with three deaths on campus. A doctoral candidate killed walking down the street, run over by a drunk driver. Over 300 in attendance at her funeral, led by the Protestant ministers at the Newman Center, with a handful of Saudi Arabians placing an incense pot by the altar.

"There are an estimated 200 homeless teenagers in the greater Bangor area. Project Streetlight is a new program designed to identify these young people and find shelter for them. I am on the Advisory

Committee of Streetlight, because campus ministry tries to connect the life of students with the world of human struggle."

Bill Chamberlain's report in *University Times* for July, 1988, told of the progress of the first Endowment Campaign:

"After a two-year period of relying on part-time chaplains, and after the last five-year period with a revitalized Board and full-time chaplain, the MCA Board is excited to embark on this major endowment campaign. Its goal is \$150,000 over three years. The invested income from the fund will augment the other support of the MCA and will be used annually for the work of the campus ministry.

"Under the Board presidency of Associate Dean David Rand, Director of the Memorial Union, the fund has already received gifts and pledges of \$13,000 from early contributors. The development committee is chaired by Betsy Allin, Associate Director of the Student Health Center. Others on the committee are track coach Jim Ballinger; Cooperative Extension Service leaders Vance Dearborn and Ron Beard; Bangor Seminary Professor, Rev. Susan Davies; and Bill Chamberlain. Tom Chittick and Sarah Hasbrouck, MCA Secretary, also serve."

That year of 1988 George and Sylvia Ritz, who had been in Peace Corps work in Paraguay, were on campus. They were another couple who owed much to MCA.

"When I first joined MCA, it was at a time in my life when I had exhausted my resources," confessed Sylvia. "The business of adjusting to a life away from home on a large campus where all the choices and decisions were mine to make was fast overwhelming me. The students, Director and Board which were MCA were the family I had been missing. They were the all-important link with my values that I needed so much. I learned to clarify my values and set personal goals. MCA was an essential part of my education for life."

But once more changes were approaching. In 1989 Tom Chittick wrote in the *University Times*, "The time has come to bid farewell to the University of Maine and to the Pine Tree State, as I and my family move in August. I've accepted the chaplaincy of Muhlenberg College in

Allentown, Pennsylvania, a small Lutheran arts college. The School attracted me because the chaplaincy is a part of the administration, because students and faculty are genuinely concerned about Christian fellowship. It will be an exciting place to work.

"The last six-and-a-half years have been rich and wonderful. My wife has completed a Doctorate and had a year of full-time teaching. Our two sons have had substantial educational and recreational opportunities. Our move will be bittersweet.

"But I am leaving MCA at a time when we are recognizing strengths and progress. The Endowment Campaign is just now going public after a successful in-house project of raising \$23,000 from Board members. Sale of MCA land and parsonage, along with the annual rental of rooms, make the MCA budget nearly overhead free."

There was sincere regret in both MCA and the University because of Tom's decision to leave.

"Tom's presence in our midst," wrote Sue Davies in the *University Times*, "has been a gift. His passion for justice, strong personal faith, liturgical skills, counseling abilities and administrative strength have given us a solid foundation on which to build. His work with the Residential Life and Student Affairs programs has increased the already positive attitude toward MCA on campus. Tom has also been instrumental in the formation of the Orono Campus Ministry, a group composed of the Roman Catholic, Episcopal and MCA chaplains who regularly plan and carry out activities in common. Our building is debt free and in good physical condition, and our office organization and staffing are excellent.

"Tom will be sorely missed in the wider community. His work with the Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen, regular teaching and preaching at Bangor Theological Seminary, and frequent preaching engagements in local churches speak to his involvement beyond the Orono campus.

"Tom and Mary are friends to many of us. We wish them well on their new adventure, and thank the God of all life for the opportunity to know

and be known by them. Tom, Mary, Nathan, Luke . . . Grace to you and peace."

Finance? As equally triumphant? At least, partially. Vance Dearborn, treasurer of the Board, was encouraging in his report.

"For those not familiar with our budget, this year we estimate that we will receive 32% of our revenue from the four supporting church conferences, 20% from individual churches and church groups, 10% from individuals, 13% from interest income, some from rental of the Center, and the balance from reduction in temporary investments. It is this last item that income from the endowment fund must replace. Our expenses are divided approximately 70% for the chaplaincy, 9% for the Wilson Center, 8% for the program, and 13% for the secretarial and office expenses.

"We have been particularly pleased with the strong support we have received from many women's organizations in our member churches this spring. This largely new source has provided the MCA with over \$1,800 at this time."

The house at One Riverdale, which had been used for many years as a parsonage, was sold in 1985 for \$52,000, and the proceeds were invested.

So . . . transition again. Search for another full-time chaplain. The search committee included Dennis Cox, chairman, John Halstead, Christina Stevens, Rob Vodra, Dave Rand, Roger Leach, Karen Mary's daughter, and Bob Ellingsen. The plan was to find an interim chaplain, continuing the search for a full-time one at least by the fall of 1990.

A report to the supporting denominations in the spring of 1990 detailed the work during the preceding months:

"In August Tom Chittick left MCA after six years of service. In September the Board called Howard Haskell Tobak, a UCC minister from Hancock, Maine, to service as part-time interim minister, with Karen Mary's daughter his assistant. The national search continued for a full-time chaplain, with over forty applications being received.

"During this interim time, the Board has been re-evaluating the ministry of the MCA, including the role and function of the Board itself. Howard has been instrumental in that process, seeing it as a major part of his role as interim minister.

"Some activities and programs of the MCA during 1989 included initiating 'Spiritual Values Week' in the residence halls, co-sponsoring incest workshops and a gay/lesbian awareness presentation, working on the controversial 'Luncheon Services' sponsored by the Memorial Union, leading a retreat to Weston Priory, holding a baccalaureate service for the May graduates, and participating in the annual Oxfam Fast for a World Harvest. Worship, study, discussions, Resident Directors' meetings, committees, and active participation in all ecumenical services were ongoing activities."

In the spring of 1989 a special financial appeal was sent out to Methodist and UCC women's groups. Over thirty groups contributed close to \$1,000. The campus minister continued to preach at local churches, including two months at the Orono United Methodist Church during the summer.

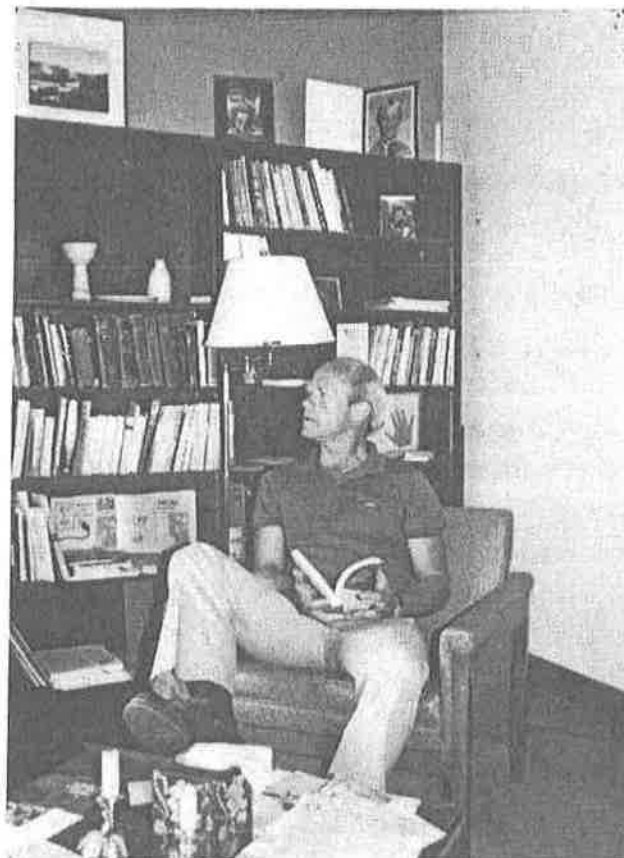
"This was a year of transition, evaluation, and renewed planning in hopeful anticipation of the future. The new minister to be called in 1990 will be met by a committed Board, a solid respectable relationship with the university community, and ecumenical support throughout the State of Maine."

During this transition period the Board agreed to begin referring to the campus ministry program as "The Wilson Center, Home of the Maine Christian Association" because of confusion on campus with the new Maine Center for the Arts being referred to as "the MCA". The Board and its subcommittees also began to meet more regularly and were experiencing a stronger sense of community and commitment. Some new Board members were recruited and appointed.

In February, 1990 the Board called Rev. Elizabeth Morris, a UCC minister who had been serving as interim campus minister at San Francisco State University to become the new full-time campus minister. She began her duties in May, and the MCA said good-bye, with gratitude for his good work, to Howard Haskell Tobak.



Reverend Thomas Chittick



EIGHT

Our telephone rang.

"This is Elizabeth Morris." a pleasant but unfamiliar voice announced. "I am the new pastor at the Maine Christian Association. I wonder if I could come and talk with you."

Of course we were delighted. We were always interested in anything happening at MCA. She came, a diminutive blonde who could easily have passed for a student but was somewhere in her early forties. She wanted help, guidance in her new job. As if we, who had probably used now outmoded techniques in vogue forty years ago, could give any ideas to this highly trained and experienced professional! But we shared with her some of the things we had done in those days of the early fifties, and she was obviously interested. We shared also some of our deepest concerns and found we were very much on the same wave length in our priorities, our commitments to problems relating to world peace and social justice. I told her about the essay I had written during my senior year at Bates College on "arbitration instead of war" which had first activated my concern, and at her suggestion this later resulted in the annual award in the peace essay contest conducted by MCA. It was she, of course, who insisted that it be done in my name.

This has been done during succeeding years with considerable success, with over twenty submissions the first year, and the prize was awarded at the first annual gathering of supporters of MCA held in the Maine Center for the Arts.

Elizabeth came to us with excellent professional credentials. Born in Wilmington, Delaware, she was a graduate of Western College for Women, Goddard College Graduate School in counseling, and Andover Newton Theological School with a Master of Divinity degree. She was an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. At one time she worked in community mental health in Vermont.

She came to us after serving as campus minister at the San Francisco State University. In her ministry there which touched the lives of

hundreds of people in the University community and beyond, she was involved with other churches in interfaith activities. She also was active in campus programs including serving as co-chair of the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Concerns Committee.

We knew soon that Elizabeth was making an impression on campus life such as no previous Director had ever done. She was an innovator, starting new programs, involving local churches, cooperating in a remarkable way with leaders of other faiths, always in the forefront of movements dealing with her priorities of peace and justice.

The report to the denominations in the spring of 1992 reflected some of these numerous activities.

"With the start of the fall semester, Elizabeth and the Student Reflections and Action Group of MCA planned worship for Sunday evenings, as well as other programs such as: a weekend retreat on a Maine island, two days at the Wilson Center for a couple of church groups, a forum on the Gulf crisis, an ongoing journeying group for women, the Oxfam Fast for a World Harvest, and a mid-Autumn Festival for Chinese students. Elizabeth had been asked to join a number of campus committees, including the Rape and Sexual Assault Awareness Committee, the Committee on Pluralism, the 125th Anniversary of the UMaine Committee, the Peace Studies Publication Committee, the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Concerns Committee, and the Women in the Curriculum Advisory Committee. She participated in ongoing ecumenical activities such as Bible study, yoga and meditation, meeting with resident directors in dorms and special worship services for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Elizabeth was also asked to speak at various classes and group meetings, to lead discussions in residence halls and to moderate a panel for the Women in Curriculum program."

"By the end of the fall semester, a strong group of students was in place working in program planning and service projects. Elizabeth was already a familiar face and name on campus. The Board's conclusion (in their six-month evaluation of her work) was that she was 'doing an outstanding job'. Despite the budget cuts at the university, the possibility of Mideast war, and the prospect of a major deficit for the

Wilson Center in 1991, the year ended with an air of purpose and optimism."

Further progress was reported in 1992:

"Programs: Sunday 5:00 p.m. Worship and Celebration, a strong faith community has developed among a significantly larger group of students from last year. Approximately 30 students are involved on a semi-regular basis. Worship is modeled after Base Christian Communities in which students reflect on the scriptures from their own life experiences. Students are responsible for preparing soup and homemade bread to share after each service. A 'Taste of Home' is a new program that involves five local churches. Each Thursday one church brings a home-cooked meal to the Center, and the campus community is invited to dinner for a \$1.00 donation. All join hands for prayer and community building time before sharing the meal together.

"Reflection and Action Group. Students gather weekly with the campus minister. They begin with prayer and offer each other support and challenge. They have developed a relationship with the Greater Bangor Area Shelter for the Homeless and prepare and serve one meal there each month. Students spent a weekend skiing together in Bethel. Aids Benefit Coffee House: Students organized a wonderful evening of student talent which packed the Wilson Center with a wildly enthusiastic audience. They raised \$100 for the Eastern Maine AIDS Network.

"Youth Group Weekends. Students hosted a weekend called, 'I have Called you Friend' for two church youth groups at the Wilson Center. Another is planned for April.

"University Christian Movement of New England. Students are taking leadership in this ecumenical, social justice campus ministry that brings together students from all over New England for one conference each semester.

"Annual Dinner. In October we had the first Wilson Center Annual Dinner at the Bodwell Lounge of the Maine Center for the Arts. Seventy people attended. Students performed chamber music and sang,

and Sarah Halford, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, gave a topnotch lecture on 'Image, Story, and the Bible'. Awards of \$500 and \$100 were given to students in the first Dorothy Clarke Wilson Peace Award Essay Contest. Twenty-three students submitted essays.

"Sunday Sojourners are students who travel on Sunday to other churches in Maine to offer singing and share in worship. The first trip was to Bethel, and another one is planned for Northeast Harbor.

"Interfaith Prayer Service for Peace in the Middle East.

"Breakfasts for Local Churches. The MCA Board of Directors is hosting breakfast for local churches at the Wilson Center as a way of saying thanks for the support and a way of sharing the mission of campus ministry. They are actively involved in an Endowment Fund Campaign with a goal of \$500,000 that would generate one half of the yearly budget each year.

"Ongoing weekly offerings: Ecumenical Bible study; Meditation in Drummond Chapel; Consultations with the Resident Directors of the residence halls; Psalms and Silence three mornings a week for one half hour.

"Counseling with faculty, students, staff, and administration.

"Dreams for the future: A lecture series on Religion and Society; Student ministry interns; more connection with the Bangor Seminary; a video."

Certainly a busy and productive year for the efficient Director!

During 1992 Elizabeth was very personally involved in the life of my family. She had insisted that both Elwin and I take part in many activities at the Center, and during his last illness in the spring of 1992 she was as close to us as a daughter. In fact, she visited him many times in the hospital and nursing home, and she was there when I left on March 31, the day he died. And would you believe, she actually planned a birthday party for him on April 13, when he would have been 94, with decorated cake and all the fixings! Her report to the Board in

April revealed her constant concern for both of us during those trying days.

"Elwin Wilson's hospitalization, move to the Orono Nursing Home and death on March 31 have touched us deeply here. His spirit lives on. We will remember and honor him by our incessant work for social justice and spiritual integrity. Dorothy has donated a portrait of Elwin to the MCA which will hang in the main room. Eight students attended his memorial service for which they wrote, 'We are here today to thank Elwin for his ministry to the student body. We also want to affirm that his work is living through us -- through the ministry that he paved the way for.' They sang 'The Turning of the World' which Dorothy said was for her the highlight of the service."

Holy Week that year seemed to have special meaning. Elizabeth wrote, "The campus is bursting with the energy of new life and hope as President Fred Hutchinson spreads his humor, directness and optimism among the students. In this morning's 'Town Meeting' he began the healing of the divisions in the University caused by the cutbacks and ensuing resentments."

The MCA program was continuing with increased vigor. "Eight students attended the weekend conference, 'Spirituality and Sexuality', sponsored by the Student Christian Movement of New England at the University of New Hampshire. Students received a grant from the University for the cost of renting a van and gas. Powerful time for students. One Maine student wrote afterward, 'The last time I felt ecstasy was Sunday afternoon coming back from the MCA weekend. I could tell I was feeling open to me because I felt like crying in the van. I wanted to let the tears come freely, but I lost to the old habits, and they only trickled. But I still felt open, more open than I had felt for a long time. That is what felt so glorious at worship service . . . I floated back to my dorm and called people I knew to say I loved them. I have started to see the ecstasy of the infinite that comes from spiritual and moral discipline. Those who discipline themselves to look at the naked truth of themselves, what they are, what their society is like, and then to compare it with the way of right and wrong as has been revealed to us by God and then to work to change those things that are not as God had intended.'

"Taste of Home going well. We will evaluate with each church. Helen McClure, a missionary with the UCC who spent two years in Afghanistan and two in Nepal showed her slides at one.

"Referrals for counseling coming from Residential Life, Philosophy Department, Social Work, Sociology, self referral.

"Poetry Reading Night: small and intimate and students interested in making it a Second Sunday of each month event!"

The new semester started in September, 1992, with Elizabeth's usual verve and enthusiasm.

"Back into full swing at the University with lots of attention going to first year students in the residence halls. We have mailed fliers about Wilson Center activities to all students who are UCC, UMC, Presbyterian and Lutheran . . . Started with a retreat to Cranberry Island . . . New students are coming as well as the remnants of last year's crew. Last Sunday we worshipped by the river, which people hope to do more often."

"Frank Murray and I will again be meeting with the Resident Directors of South Campus. This seems to be the best way to keep tabs on the pulse of students. This past week we focused primarily on a situation with a group of women students being harassed in their hall by a group of men on a different floor . . . Held an ice cream social at Memorial Union. Intended to bring in new students interested in learning more about the Wilson Center, but only returning students attended. We watched 'The Color Purple'. My refrigerator is full of chocolate, butterscotch and strawberry topping ready for the next event. I have been meeting throughout the summer with the Peace Studies group as they wrestle with the demise (due to budget cut) of what has been a very active and influential group . . . Four churches have agreed to make meals once a month for the 'Taste of Home', and we are still negotiating with the Universalist Church. Last week we had the biggest crowd ever . . . New students came to Yoga, and one has offered to lead a Thursday morning gathering . . . We will initiate a new program on the third Friday of every month offering a space for dancing without alcohol or smoke."

For the October issue of the *Wilson Center Times*, Stuart Corbett, one of the undergraduate students, wrote some interesting comments on activities:

"The year was full of life at the Wilson Center. Students were involved in making a meal every fourth Wednesday for the Greater Bangor Area Shelter for the Homeless. Each week at worship an offering was taken to cover the cost of creating a healthy, hearty meal for about thirty people. Some students planned the meal, others purchased the food, others cooked, and others served. I was one of the servers, and I greatly appreciated taking part in the ministry.

"Homelessness seems like a very real issue that people are ignoring, trying to shove this issue under the rug. A lot of people in the shelter are mentally ill and can't find work or income. I felt a lot of empathy for them. I saw pain . . . I think it is one of the issues Christ would bring up. Christ didn't put people in boxes. He saw the divinity of each person in the world. He wanted to change society so some people wouldn't always be on top and others on the bottom . . . At the Bangor Shelter people seemed so happy to get the food. I sat on the floor and talked to one guy . . . Going to the Shelter is a reality shock treatment compared to the pleasures of college life. It opens my world . . . makes me feel less self-centered."

Sara Driver, a graduate student who lived at the Center, wrote about another significant event. "I was inspired to organize a Coffee House, a 'Celebration of Life in Art' in memory of my cousin, who died of AIDS. It was held in the Wilson Center to benefit the Eastern Maine AIDS Network. Twelve different acts included a folk-singer, a guitar, flute and rock band, poetry readings, and various instrumental and vocal performances. It was a huge success . . . It was held not only to raise money but also to raise consciousness about AIDS. AIDS does not discriminate towards whom it affects: black, white, yellow, red, green, purple; heterosexual, male, female, old, young, tall, or short. Let's open our eyes, open our hearts and have compassion for all people in the world."

And Juli Parker, a theater major who graduated in 1992, wrote: "My senior year at the U of Maine was strengthened by my involvement in the Wilson Center. It gave my life a backbone in spirituality. My connection to the Center is especially tied to worship. Every Sunday at five p.m. I know I have a special place to go where I can sing, pray, and be accepted for who I am. We meet in a circle and instead of a sermon, all the students get to talk about the meaning the scripture reading has in their own lives . . . The people who come to worship make the place come alive. Worship gives the students a support system that professors and advisors do not. It goes beyond the classroom into your soul, your personal road of spirituality."

And Eric Wight, a student in engineering, was especially impressed by the Sunrise Service at Easter:

"A group of five folks from the Wilson Center insured themselves of seeing the Easter Sunrise by camping out on top of Chick Hill. We climbed the mountain on Saturday evening and enjoyed a magnificent sunset and moonrise. After a splendid night of stargazing, story telling and hot chocolate, we arose to an amazing sunrise and moonset. The sun, blazing orange, red and yellow, emerged from a sea of fog which covered everything except the mountaintops. We enjoyed a time of prayer, poetry reading, singing, and kite flying before journeying back down the mountain for a blueberry pancake breakfast at the Wilson Center."

And Elizabeth herself shared some 'Riverside Reflections' in the same issue of the Association paper:

"The Wilson Center has a student-grown organic garden in our back yard that leads to the neighbors' lush dahlias and vegetables and then to the Stillwater River. On warm days students gather for worship by the river, and this is where I sit now for a moment to reflect as the new academic year begins.

"This fall the quincentenary focus on Columbus' arrival in this hemisphere offers the opportunity to acknowledge our history and recommit ourselves to a new beginning. The next 500 years can follow

the sacred way that honors the rights of people, animals, and plants, and creates a society that oppresses none.

"Columbus wrote in his diary about the indigenous people he met. 'They would make fine servants . . . With fifty men we could subjugate them and make them whatever we want.' In less than fifty years all of the 60,000 Arawak and their descendants were gone, killed.

"Last year two African students were attacked on the streets of Orono. Racism is an invisible system that keeps white skin dormant and bestows privileges throughout life that people of color do not receive. How long, O God, how long!"

One of Elizabeth's major concepts and projects was the wonderful cross motif which now hangs on the front wall of the Center. A contest was held in the art department for designs of a symbol to fill the big triangular space. It was won by Cheryl L. Field, who furnished both a model and a design concept for her sculpture. The latter is worth recording:

"The design of this sculpture builds upon the familiar Jerusalem cross symbol that is displayed on the Center's sign and with which the Wilson Center is identified. The piece is intended to convey the purpose of the Center, which is the sharing and celebration of life enrichment throughout the community. The mass, strength, and warm tones of the sculpture present a pleasing symmetry which radiates a sense of stability and comfort."

The sculpture was built on the floor of the Center. Its size and tremendous weight necessitated expert engineering in hanging, and bids were made. The appropriate price seemed to run to about \$1,000, but a firm was found which volunteered to do the work for nothing. The materials had been furnished by the University. Pictures of the process of hanging and of the resultant feature are available. The bill for materials amounted to \$305. A substantial gift was presented to Cheryl at a reception in her honor, and the new decoration was properly dedicated. Elizabeth placed a notebook and asked people to record the impressions which the sculpture aroused in their reaction to it. Some of these are most rewarding to read.

"It appears to me as the ankh, the Egyptian symbol of life, but it's tied into death and transformation through the image of the cross. From death comes life. The slanting cross pieces seem to point toward the earth as if to say that life is a balance between earth and sky, between earth and heaven . . . Images that I draw from this work are: life, earth, heaven, transformation, death, peace."

"I saw the piece lying down on the floor. I immediately liked it because to me it showed that there were many paths one could take toward spirituality . . . I think the many crosses that are formed speak of inclusion."

"A significant symbol of our work. The cross is at the center, but it has arms reaching out into the world."

"I am moved by this sculpture. It reminds me of a Native American wall-hanging, and I see symbolism in both that has shared meaning: the circle, a symbol of wholeness, unity, all-inclusive life; the cross, representing the All - all directions, all elements, all parts of the self joined with the greater Self."

"The sun with rays coming down and a cross inside it. A halo around the cross."

"The rays of the sun peeking over the top of a mountain."

"The tree of life with four rays reaching out to the whole universe."

"This work reminds me of Elizabeth's heart. Large with open arms, mind, and love."

"I had so much fun watching Elizabeth's eyes light up as she passed this book around to collect our thoughts. For me it is symbolism of hope, laughter, joy, lightness of heart, justice, unconditional love, connectedness, encouragement, enthusiasm. Enthusiasm! Elizabeth."

These are the last two entries presently in the book, undoubtedly written, as you will soon discover, somewhat later.

During the college semester of 1992-93, MCA cosponsored with the Women's Resource Center, the Rape and Sexual Awareness Committee, Newman Center, the office of the Vice President, and the Office of Equal Opportunity, a winter retreat with Susan Savell. About forty students, faculty, staff, seminarians and community members attended. It was an important day of nurture and healing, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Elizabeth's report to the Board in February chronicled other marks of progress. "We reached an all-time high for worship attendance; for two weeks we had twenty in the circle. Students are participating more with the Prelude and with contributions to the liturgy. I am working with several students to plan a Taize worship service in Esterbrooke and perhaps it will be on a regular ongoing basis. Newman Center and Wilson Center are planning an Ash Wednesday service in Memorial Union." The Taste of Home continued to be thriving. "On Christmas Eve Sue Davies and I prepared a banquet at the Bangor Shelter for the Homeless of ham, yams, etc. About eleven people are involved in this ministry to the homeless."

Ed Sheppley, the intern from Bangor Seminary, was making plans for his work with the MCA. He wanted to investigate other campus ministries; help develop and articulate the goals and objectives of MCA with attention to the "Case Statement Package" that was to be shown to potential donors; determine ways the mission could be communicated to churches, non-profit funding sources, individuals, foundations and corporations with the goal of increasing the annual budget, endowment fund and capital improvement; explore the possibility of expanding the mission of the MCA to include satellite campus ministry programs at all of the other Maine campuses.

I was happy to attend the meetings of the Board that spring. Some time before, they had been kind enough to make me an honorary member. When we held our last meeting of the college year on June 16, the future looked especially promising. We were in a mood of thanksgiving and anticipation. Standing in a circle with Elizabeth using a "playball" introduction exercise, followed by the singing with her guitar accompaniment of "From You I receive, To You I give, Together we

serve", and then her intimate prayer, we felt that we were equal to all the challenges which the coming year might bring. Never had the Maine Christian Association seemed more blessed with good prospects and fine leadership. We rejoiced that Elizabeth would be leaving soon for a much-needed vacation with her family.

On June 22, less than a week later, my telephone rang again, very early in the morning. It was Vicki Woods, my pastor.

"I wanted you to know," she said, "before you read the paper. Elizabeth Morris was killed last night."

"Oh - no!" I was as shocked and grieved as she was, for we had both been very close friends to Elizabeth. "How!"

It had been a freak accident. Another two or three seconds, and it would have been avoided. She had been driving down the throughway in southern Maine when a heavy block of something--cement, concrete?--had toppled or been flung from an overhead bridge, smashed into her windshield, and killed her instantly.

The world seemed suddenly an empty place. I felt as if I had lost not only a dear friend but a very close member of my family. I hadn't felt so bereaved since those weeks in the preceding year when my husband of sixty-six years had left me. And I was not the only one. Grief was widespread, throughout the University and the community, for she had made herself an integral and beloved part of both.

As Dr. Susan Davies, President of the MCA Board, said, "Elizabeth has brought delight and life and energy and grace and connectedness to people from all parts of the campus and community." She would remember her especially for her passion for justice and her ability to encourage and bring others to see her vision of the world as it might be.

Her sentiments were echoed by Rev. Frank J. Murray, Catholic Chaplain for the campus and pastor at Newman Center. "In three short years an awful lot of people have been marked by her ministry. One of the most significant things that she has done for this community is model for us how an open, gentle approach pulls people together and accomplishes

great things. We as a community of many faith traditions here at Orono have been able to do so much together, and she is one of the reasons. I've heard it said that there is great strength that comes from gentleness, and her style personified that statement . . . As a friend, I miss her so much."

A memorial service was held for Elizabeth on Sunday, June 27, at the Orono United Methodist Church, with a full house attending. I was privileged to take a small part.

"Fortunately," I remember saying, "it is not length but quality of life that matters most. The One who did more than any other to change the world lived but a short span of years, only thirty-three, and her active ministry here, like His, was only three. Yet I feel that she made more of an impact on the life of the campus in those three years than all the directors who had gone before her, certainly more than we did in our five."

She had a dream, and that dream will go on and on. She herself made sure of that. By the provisions of her will, the Maine Christian Association will be helping to train qualified students as interns in specific areas of peace and justice for many years to come.

Another memorial service was held for Elizabeth on September 16, 1993 at the Newman Center, when more of the shocked and grieving students could be present. Pastor Murray and Sister Carol Jean Lappa led the service. The Board was represented by Rev. John Hoelter and Eloise McLaughlin and the university staff by Suzanne Estler, who participated in "Reflection". Several students who had been active, including Eric Wight and Patricia Boyle, took part. Tricia and I played a flute and piano duet which Elizabeth and I had once played together. Others participating in the service were Rev. Vicki Woods, Dr. Roger Plummer, and the Rev. Peggy Day, Episcopal chaplain.

Suzanne Estler, Director of Equal Opportunity, described Elizabeth as "an imp, a twinkling star, and more than anything else, a builder of bridges." She read an excerpt from a sermon Elizabeth herself had given just before her death.

"I decided to become a minister because I wanted to claim my voice in the world with regard to the things I cared most deeply about. I wanted to claim my voice because surely the God or Goddess who created all of life is counting on every one of us alive today to be leaders in our own way and with our own voices, in preserving life at this precarious time in history."

Another participant in the service was a worker in MCA whom Elizabeth had never met, Rev. Wayne Santos, who had just arrived to fill the post of Interim Chaplain. He sang the "Peace Prayer", with its familiar refrain, "Lord, Make me an instrument of your peace".

"Taking over from Elizabeth is a heavy task," he said, "but one that I know I am not doing alone. As she touched our lives, let us go from this place and touch others, and move them to action."

"A Builder of Bridges - yes." That was the way her close friend, Patty Coleman, Assistant Professor of Social Work at the University, wrote soon after Elizabeth's death.

"I have lost my dear friend," she wrote. "Our sister, spiritual leader, conscience and healer. I sit amid communities filled with pain. Elizabeth's mother, Emily Morris, asked me how I could tell about her Betsy in just a few words, and I did not know. In fact, I can't. Each person she touched, each community in which she lived and worked, has so many stories to share about the indescribable gifts they experienced."

Patty's article in the University of Maine Perspective interpreted beautifully the influence of Elizabeth's life on those of her colleagues.

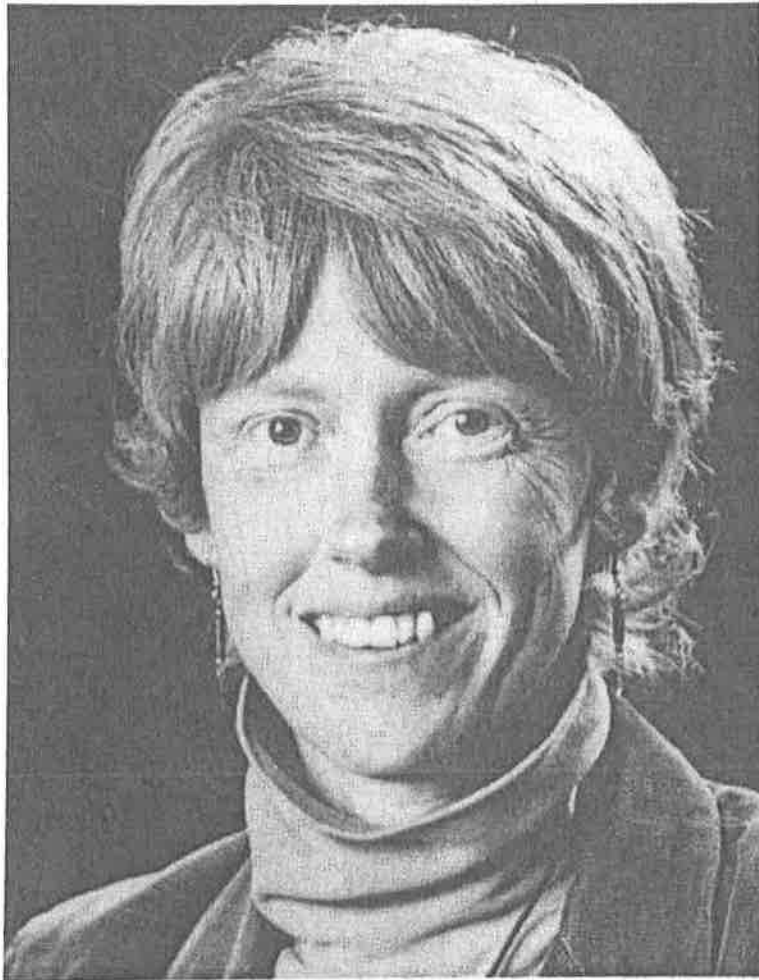
Tributes. There seemed no end to them. For me one of the most touching came from a student, Jeremy Potter, who was a student living at the Wilson Center during the summer of 1993. It was his impression of the Jerusalem cross motif which fills the space on the front wall of the room. I have already used a part of it.

"This work reminds me of Elizabeth's heart,
Large with open arms, mind and love,
With a solid core and flying buttresses,
She stands as a figure of beauty, grace and strength,
A circle with no beginning and no end,
As is the soul of us all.
Farewell, Elizabeth, let this Ankh and cross be your guide
in the afterlife
Let it be a cane in which you can hold
And remember us here in the living."

One of Elizabeth's own pieces entitled "Riverside Reflections", written in November, 1991, expresses for me not only the essence of her life but also the challenge and healing which she would have come to us through her loss.

"Leaves are beginning to drop into the Stillwater River. Each day many of us at the University cross the bridge over that river on our way to work or class. I am late and dashing, and the view offers a moment's stillness and a stunning glimpse of serenity. I see ninety-three year old Elwin Wilson crossing the bridge on foot. I asked Dorothy, his partner, why so often I see him stooping over. 'He's picking up trash,' she said with a smile.

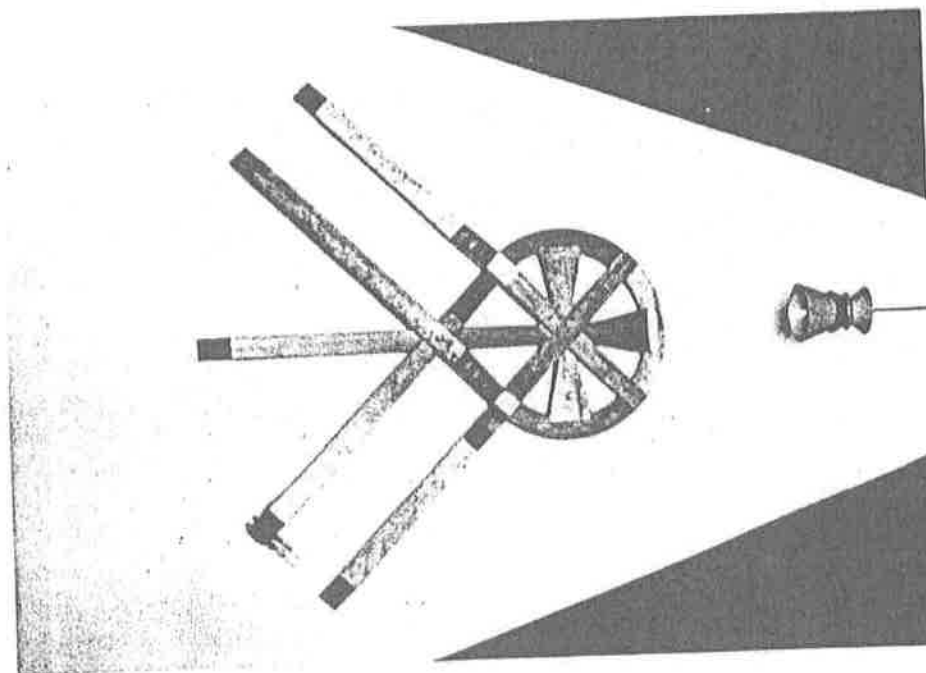
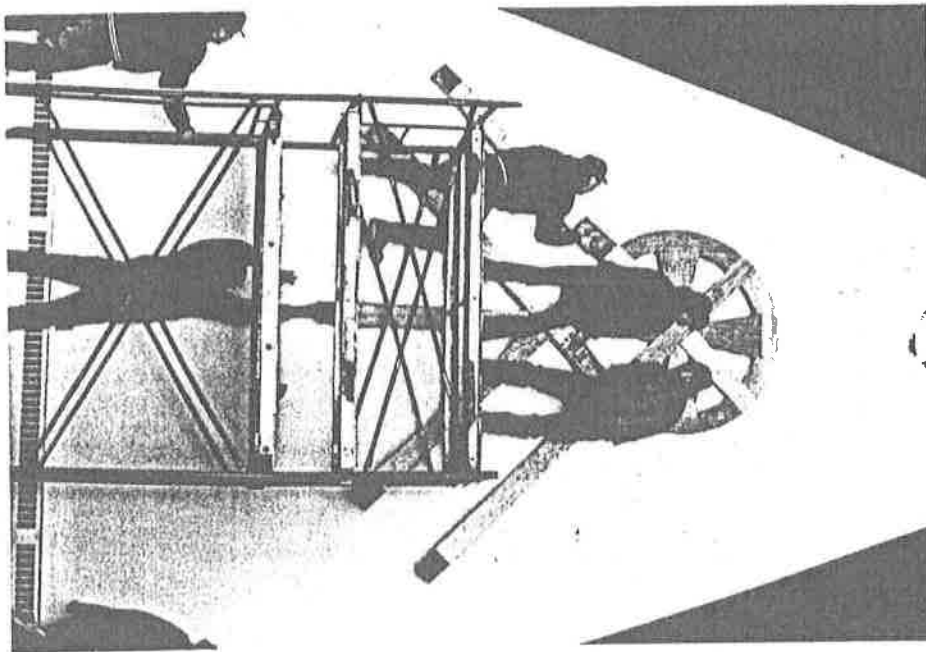
"We have grappled with the real questions of life and death, justice and peace. This is the heart of religion. We have held each other and kept the light of hope burning in the midst of despair . . . We cannot avoid the 'black river of loss' any more than we can keep the leaves from falling. But we can avoid the death of love. Together, in community, we can keep alive the spirit to give and to care. We can dare to love during the amazing days that are ours on earth. And pick up the trash and work to end injustice along the way. May all beings live in peace."



*Reverend
Elizabeth
Morris*



**The Jerusalem Cross Motif designed by Cheryl L. Field
being hung at the Wilson Center**





Maine Christian Association Endowment Steering Committee
Honorary Chairs: Dorothy Clarke Wilson & Fred Hutchinson, UM President
Standing (l to r): Vance Dearborn, Rev. John Neff, Thelma Robie,
B.J. Weigang, Roger Leach, Eric Wight and Theodore Curtis
Sitting (l to r): Sue Davies, Dorothy Clarke Wilson and
Rev. Deborah Adams



NINE

Again? And we had been so confident that the work and leadership of the MCA was secured for the foreseeable future! But the Board rallied valiantly one hundred percent strong.

I remember well the first meeting of the Board after Elizabeth's death on July 7, 1993. Present were Walt Turner, Nancy Lewis, Gary Vencill, John Hoelter, Vance Dearborn, Eric Wight, Meg Wright, Eloise McLaughlin, Bob Gustafson, Don Ziegenbein, Vaughn Stedman, Dennis Cox, Thela Leach, Phil Hastings, Vicki Woods, and myself. There was a sharing session on what Elizabeth had meant to each of us. Vicki closed this sharing time with a reading from the Gospel of Mark and with the comment, "There will always be one more story to tell about Elizabeth."

It was decided to seek once again an interim campus minister for the new academic year, with Don Ziegenbein, Phil Hastings, Eric Wight, and Nancy Lewis as the interim committee, and that the Memorial Fund already established should be extended to include an "Elizabeth A. Morris Endowment Fund" under a special account.

The Board continued to meet through the summer while the committees conducted their search for an interim chaplain. On August 18 the matter of sexual diversity was discussed, and the University of Maine non-discrimination statement was unanimously approved by the Board to become a part of the interim minister's description. It was reported that Elizabeth's Memorial Fund had reached \$16,930.28. Michelle Abbott, the long-efficient secretary of the MCA, was active throughout this period of transition. The search committee had met four times already and had received a total of 15 letters of interest for the interim position. Four individuals were to be considered for interviews on August 29, with a Board committee scheduled for September 1 to receive the report. Another episode of change and adjustment was being successfully encountered.

The new Interim Director/Chaplain, Rev. Wayne Santos, a Baptist Minister, was present for the monthly Board meeting on September 15 and hard at work and full of plans. Already he had activities to report.

"In my life," he said, "I have always tried to be open to the leading of the Spirit, trusting in the truth of the song which they would be singing at the Memorial service tomorrow. That I would find myself here in Orono this year, in this ministry, and in these circumstances is both a mystery and a joy. 'Here I am, now, Lord, tell me what you want me to do and be,' is my prayer. I trust that each of us will grow because of our experience together, and that the MCA and the Wilson Center will continue to be seen as a place where the hope, forgiveness and love of God are evident."

Father Murray and Sister Carole Jean had taken him on a tour of the campus. He was enthused about the whole team, which included not only them but Peggy Day, Episcopal Deacon, who was serving part time. "Sister CJ and I," he reported, "would take the East/West dorms that year." Plans had been made for meetings with the Counseling Center and the Health Center. Ecumenical Bible study continued on Wednesdays. The team planned to meet regularly twice a month to discuss issues, deal with problems and be supportive of each other.

Unfortunately, they had lost two churches of the Taste of Home program, but St. James Episcopal had agreed to serve one week, and there were leads on two others.

Weekly worship was continuing at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday with a light meal, followed this year by a Reflection and Action Group. This was the group responsible last year for the Bangor Area Homeless Shelter ministry. This year they would serve a meal for the Shelter each first Monday. With the students he had organized a hike to Katahdin Iron Works for September 19.

He was enthusiastic about the group of students living at the Center. "A wonderful and diverse group. Jonathan Lindberg is familiar to us as a member of our Board. Fred Farnham, Dan Boland and Rachel Caron are the other three who really care about each other and who have taken the time to get to know each other. All have already been involved in our

'Taste of Home' meal. Fred said he wanted to be involved in a community while here at Maine. He has already given of his time by fixing our leaky faucets, cleaning around the kitchen, worshipping with us and volunteering to be part of the ministry to the Shelter." Wayne planned to be present at the upcoming UCC Convention at Sugarloaf and at the American Baptist Churches of Maine convention in Rockland. "Perhaps as an ABC minister I can bridge a gap and encourage some involvement of the local ABC churches in our campus work."

Certainly an encouraging report for an Interim Chaplain who had been on duty but a couple of weeks! It was decided that the projected income from the sale of Elizabeth's Portsmouth, New Hampshire estate be placed in an Elizabeth Morris Student Intern Memorial Fund for Peace and Justice, these monies to be invested with the United Methodist New England Foundation. The money from the Memorial Fund, which now amounted to about \$17,000, was to be invested with the University of Maine Foundation. A yard sale had been held at MCA House, thanks largely to Thela Leach and her committee. It had yielded some \$846.00.

A Search Committee for a full-time Director/Chaplain was appointed, consisting of Diane Boettcher, Nancy Lewis, Vaughn Stedman, Kerry Twitchell and Meg Wright.

During the summer and fall of 1993, the Board planned to send groups of its members on team visits to local churches as a vitally important way to expand the constituency and involve more churches in the ministry. A list of all the churches in Penobscot County was compiled, together with the support given by each one through the years to the Maine Christian Association. It was hoped that these visits would result in gaining more "Friends of the Wilson Center". Guides for these visits were given the Mission Statement, a short history of the MCA, and an outline of its organization, programs, etc. was compiled for use of the visitors. Though the program was not carried through successfully at this time, the information is very valuable for possible future use.

Invaluable during this period of transition were the services of Michelle Abbott, the Administrative Assistant, as well as the services of the Center's tenants.

Students on the Board, and in the building, included Alex Pugh, Eric Wight, Kerry Twitchell, Meg Wright, Fred Farnham and Jonathan Lindberg. The Board enthusiastically voted for Fred Farnham to act as a highly efficient custodian. The Board heartily approved of Jonathan Lindberg's project of writing an exhausting study entitled "Maine Christian Association: A Strategic Policy Analysis" which had been supported by his college department as a part of his course. This was put into printed form in April, 1994 and is an invaluable source for any evaluation done on the organization and work of MCA. It is in the Center's files. At one Board meeting was a cake cutting in honor of Alex Pugh, a graduate student who had been very active.

In November of 1993, seventeen Board members attended an all-day retreat at Lucerne Inn, which was exceedingly enjoyable and successful. Roger Leach was the retreat facilitator and assisted all of us to create a vision for the future of the Wilson Center. Priorities were identified, and plans made for their execution.

In all of this activity, Wayne Santos was proving a most able and effective Director. I recall making the statement at this retreat that, though it was impossible for anyone to fill Elizabeth's shoes, Wayne was doing an excellent job of filling his own!

Wayne was certainly involved in activities that year in connection with Thanksgiving and Christmas observances. Listen to his report at the Board meeting of December 15:

"A special Thanksgiving Taste of Home drew over thirty students and friends here on November 18. Resident chef Dan Boland directed our efforts; a 25 pound turkey was cooked and consumed with all of the trimmings. Donations of pies and coffee topped off a delicious evening. This month (December 16) members of the Board prepared potluck dishes for a special 'Christmas Holiday Taste of Home.'

"Our first Wilson Center Monthly Coffeehouse attracted a multi-generational crowd of 20 people. Anne Lucky arranged performances and MC'd the event. Tricia Boyle and I led singing and sold coffee, tea,

juice, and assorted desserts. Fifteen dollars was added to our account for Shelter Meal serving. The next Coffee House is December 17.

"A date was set for the Second Annual Ski Weekend. It will be held February 25-27 at Sunday River Inn (Eric's parents are the owners). The Wilson Center will be the site for the Second Annual Winter Retreat: Celebrating a New Year of Healing and Joy for Women, to be held February 19. Susan Savell, workshop leader, described last year's event as a great success with over 40 attending.

"An Interfaith Thanksgiving Festival (November 22), the combined efforts of MCA, OCM, Hillel, B-Nai Fellowship and Islamic students, brought 35 members of the campus together for prayers and praises of Thanksgiving. This was followed by a Turkey Dinner at the Newman Center. OCM was on campus for WORLD AIDS DAY, December 1. On December 15 I read names for one-half hour from the Aids Quilt, on display at the Maine Center for the Arts. A Christmas Tree Menorah Lighting was held on campus December 19. Over 100 attended the lighting ceremony. We caroled our way to the Peabody Lounge for the lighting of the Menorah and a reception."

Of course, the Search Committee was busy during the early months of 1994, and in March three candidates had been chosen to visit the university and meet with the Board. They came at different times, over the space of two weeks. One was considered unacceptable for the position, another withdrew his name. The third, Karen Knodt, seemed eminently suitable. The Board voted to accept her candidacy. However, when President Davies notified her of the decision, she decided to withdraw her name also, preferring to remain in her present position. So the Board was once more entering another period of transition. Since Wayne Santos was leaving in May to become the Executive Secretary of the Maine Bible Society, it was decided to seek another interim director. The process must be renewed all over again.

One of the climactic contributions made by Wayne to the work was an organ concert in St. John's Episcopal Church in Bangor, when his wife, Christine Clewell Santos, who was completing her doctorate in organ performance at the University of Michigan, gave an extraordinary program, sponsored by the Bangor Area Clergy, OCM, Habitat for

Humanity, and the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists. All proceeds were to go toward Habitat for Humanity in the Bangor area. It was a remarkable artistic and financial success.

We were sorry to see Wayne go. He had performed outstanding services as our Interim Director/Chaplain. But he is still intensely interested in our work. In fact, the last time I attended a Taste of Home event at the Center, he was there visiting. Contact in his new work, especially with the American Baptists of Maine, will certainly help promote the work of MCA.

The Board was going through another period of self-study and evaluation, redefining its goals and priorities, and, under the capable chairmanship of Eloise McLaughlin, revising its By-Laws and Constitution. A Campus Minister position description was compiled. It was felt by the Board that "this extra year might be a gift from God to allow us to complete the necessary transition into new self-understanding and strength in our ministry." The colleagues in the Newman Center and Canterbury were also in a period of transition, giving all the groups an opportunity to review and evaluate the individual and common work. The Search Committee noted that this month (June) marked one year since Elizabeth's untimely and stunning death. Those of us on the committee were aware to varying degrees of the obvious and hidden comparisons we were making between the candidates and the mode of ministry which Elizabeth brought to our midst. The additional year may well offer all of us the occasion to see our work more fully and in new ways.

At the August meeting the Search Committee, consisting of Don Ziegenbein, Michelle Abbott, Patricia Boyle, Matt Jager, and Eric Wight, was ready to report. Eighteen applicants for the job of Interim Director had been received. The candidates had been interviewed, and the unanimous decision had been in favor of Deborah Adams. Two males and two females had been the four candidates considered. Rev. Deborah Adams was an ordained United Church of Christ minister, with ten years' experience in parishes, her last one being in southern Maine. She was not interested in the chaplaincy as a permanent position. She was hired for a term from September 1, 1994 for a period of one year to end not less than June 1, 1995 and no later than August 31, 1995. When

the college year started in September, she was in Orono with her two children and happily was able to secure housing in the University Park.

Under Michelle's expert tutelage and with the cooperation of other religious leaders, Deborah adjusted herself swiftly and with satisfying efficiency to her new task. I remember going to the first Taste of Home after she arrived (it happened to be served by our local church) and being impressed with the numbers who came. All of the tables were full. By the time of the Board's October meeting, she had both plans and program well in hand.

The Orono Campus Ministries, MCA and Newman Center (Canterbury was not functioning this year for lack of funding) were meeting twice a month for support and collaboration. She was attending bi-weekly Consult Team meetings (Pastoral, Nursing and Counseling Consultants to Campus living staff), attending weekly Breakfast Club meetings, had changed the ecumenical Bible Study to "guided scriptural meditation", designed and presented a Spiritual Health workshop at the Health Fair, had been requested to lead a "Pastoral Misconduct and Its Consequences" forum for the Cutler Health Center.

The Religious Affairs Committee had met with Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders and were collaborating on a publicity ad which would include an interfaith listing of religious organizations and contact persons. They would also be uniting in a Thanksgiving Interfaith Prayer Service and Cultural potluck in November at the Newman Center. A treelighting Service/Menorah Lighting would be held in December at the Newman Center. In January there would be an Interfaith Service and potluck in memory of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Worship on Sunday evenings was meaningful for the 5-10 regular attendants. The core participants were from the Reflection/Action Group - mostly graduate students. A Taste of Home was attracting 20-39 people weekly. When there was no church to provide the meal, she and Michelle had managed - she planning and Michelle doing most of the cooking.

The Reflection/Action Group had served one Bangor Shelter meal and was considering the project. They wanted to host a January gathering

for the friends of Elizabeth, a retreat/fellowship time to help facilitate the grief process for the university community.

Since non-traditional students comprise 70% of the student population, she was working with Commuter Services to attend meetings of commuters to determine their needs. She was arranging for a local member of the Penobscot Area Ministries to speak at a meeting on SHARE International (feed the hungry).

She had lots of plans and dreams: short-term studies in Creation Spirituality, Reader Roundtables, a Sexuality and Spirituality Forum, meditation from the various religious traditions. Perhaps a trip to Israel? Retreats? A camping trip? What were the special needs? She herself needed a contract specifying details with some kind of welcoming reception. A place to go for the December 10 retreat.

Should there be a space assessment done at the Center? Should child care be offered for special events and programs and how should it be funded? She felt, moreover, that the Board should consider extending the interim period for one more year primarily to give the Board a sabbatical from searching for a settled minister and give time to work on the interim tasks completely. Three searches in only a year and a half time! Why not take a much deserved rest and revise the ministry at the Center?

"I love my work here with you and among you," she ended her report. "I look forward to many rich gleanings in the months ahead. Blessings to you and yours."

The Board unanimously took action on her suggestion that the interim period be extended to two years, then be appraised, with the possibility that another year might be added if it seemed wise.

So . . . at present (October 1994) the work shows great promise. But we still must chronicle perhaps the most important feature of the fall program.

In the spring of 1994, the Board voted to launch a second Endowment Fund Campaign. The first one had yielded only a tiny fraction of its

goal of \$500,000. A Steering Committee was appointed. Fred Hutchinson, the President of the University of Maine, and I were designated as the Honorary Chairmen (a wonderful thing this "honorary" status, provided it doesn't get misquoted into "ornery". You can get in on the project without assuming too much responsibility, which is out of the question at age 90). The members are: Rev. John Neff, Chairman, Mike Crowley, Theodore Curtis, Vance Dearborn, B.J. Weigang, Eric Wight, Edwin Hinshaw, Roger Leach and Thelma Robie. Funds raised would be invested with the University of Maine Foundation. From the first, Amos Orcutt, head of the Foundation, and his efficient staff headed by Rebecca Peters have worked with us and provided invaluable assistance.

"For over one hundred years," the preliminary statement noted, a caring presence had provided opportunities for worship and fellowship, study and reflection, as well as service and action. The Maine Christian Association has sustained its Christian ministry through the dedication of Directors and Staff. Its funding reflects the economic condition of the growth and decline periods of the past few decades and is often insufficient to meet the salary and basic program needs. Now general endowment funds are being sought, which along with the annual giving, will stabilize the ministry and service of the Maine Christian Association/Wilson Center to the University community and insure its future.

"The Board of Directors has voted to conduct an Endowment Campaign in the fall of 1994 . . . The Maine Christian Association seeks your views and support as we move toward the beginning of an official campaign and celebration of the 30th anniversary of the building of the Wilson Center. Gifts may be made through a number of ways, e.g., current gifts of cash, stock, real estate, or by deferred gifts such as life income trusts, life insurance or bequests. The campaign is seeking to match a gift already in hand." The Steering Committee began its work under the skilled leadership of John Neff in May 1994, and met monthly thereafter. The Board established a goal of \$350,000. Under John's exceedingly competent planning, the campaign is progressing with enthusiasm.

So much for the first hundred years. And, hopefully, the future will be made secure. And the title of this brief chronicle will be doubly fulfilled. Maine Christian Association, we salute you. Thanks for all the memories, of friendship, song, prayer, vision, faith, fun, opportunities of service. Continue to nurture youth, to inspire, to challenge, to study, to dream dreams, to serve, to care, to dedicate their lives to peace and justice, and the creation of a better world. Live for a hundred years!

Throughout history, The Wilson Center has been extremely responsive to the needs of the current students on campus and the larger community. Under the leadership of Sarah Marx, who joined the Center in 2013, a two-year-long student survey of needs led to an amended mission statement. In the fall of 2015, we:

1. Changed our mission statement to include the word, “multifaith” so that the mission statement reads: “The mission of The Wilson Center/MCA, Inc. is to provide progressive, ecumenical, and multifaith dialogue for the University of Maine community, and through worship, study, and service, to work for social justice, honor diversity, and offer opportunities for spiritual growth.”
2. And added a new Statement of Intent of The Wilson Center:
“Be it known, therefore, that the Board of Directors of The Maine Christian Association, in the spirit of Dorothy Clarke Wilson, the Reverend Elwin Wilson and colleges and universities across the country...
 - a. ...intends that the Maine Christian Association (MCA, Inc.) become part of a larger multi-faith organization which will be known as The Wilson Center.
 - b. ...has spent the last two years listening carefully to the requests and desires of the increasingly diverse UMaine student body and, as a result, has intentionally expanded our multi-faith programming. We believe such interfaith dialogues to have been central to the Wilsons’ vision for the Maine Christian Association from the beginning and that the time has come when Dorothy and Elwin’s vision to open “more windows for people’s minds and spirits” can be brought to even fuller fruition.
 - c. ...has re-read Dorothy Clarke Wilson’s books and Trust Agreement Bequest and spoken with many people who knew Dorothy and Elwin Wilson and believes this expansion will continue the path laid out by the Wilsons 65 years ago. Our intention is to honor the past and carry their vision into the future.
 - d. ...expects to continue our multifaith and interfaith programming, as well as to make our space available for individual faith traditions, including Christianity, to have events, rituals, and celebrations specific to each faith.
 - e. ...will focus all future programs and events on reaching Dorothy and Elwin’s shared goals of peace, understanding, and compassion throughout the world among all faith traditions.

Since then, we have:

1. Taken down the cross that hung in the front of the building, converting it to the beautiful Turner table in our gathering space
2. Put up a new building sign created by former board member, Rev. Grace Bartlett, centered around the word “Peace” in 11 languages with a river running through it
3. Added signage to say: “The Wilson Center for Spiritual Exploration & Multifaith Dialogue”
4. Intentionally expanded our Board of Directors to be very multifaith
5. Worked to reach out to many groups on campus, co-sponsoring events, offering our space for their use, creating events like the Multifaith Days of Service
6. Created the interfaith/multifaith luncheon series
7. Made legal changes to our bylaws to reflect this multifaith mission

... and much more.

The ongoing challenge for us at this time to continue to reach out to the student body and the larger community to assess their needs so that our programs and offerings can continue to meet their needs.