

[Hempstead (Floral Park), Nassau Co.]

FLORAL PARK'S NEW CHURCH IS ORGANIZED

One of the inspiring features of the Canton Convention was the announcement that the new Universalist society in Floral Park, Long Island, would be organized on October 15. The movement had its inception in the faith of two laymen, Mr. Richard P. Saunders and Mr. George A. Friedrich, both of Brooklyn, that one of the suburbs of Long Island offered the opportunity for the organization of a new Universalist church. Theirs was a persistent faith. The idea originated in the Metropolitan Universalist Sunday School Association and the appointment of a Metropolitan Extension Committee resulted. Rev. Emerson H. Lalone, then pastor of the Church of Good Tidings, Brooklyn, was a member of this first committee, enthusiastic for a new church in Long Island. The Universalist ministers and churches of Brooklyn had a natural interest in this enterprise for they saw parishioners moving into this suburban section and becoming thereby lost to the cause. Something needed to be done in a new movement if these people were to continue their relationship with the Universalist cause.

Funds for a survey were provided by Brooklyn Universalists and by the New York State Convention, which matched the Brooklyn contributions dollar for dollar. The years passed and finally in July, the time for action arrived. Rev. Harry F. Shook, who had resigned in 1929 from the pastorate of the Universalist church in Concord, N.H., on account of poor health, was engaged to make a house to house canvass in Floral Park. By personal interview, he was to ascertain how many persons would be interested in the organization of a Universalist church in Floral Park. The survey was made at a time when many people had gone to vacation resorts. He called at 2,600 homes. Where people were at home, he discovered fifty-seven persons who would be interested in this new church and were ready to identify themselves with it.

In August Mr. Shook received the call to the pastorate of the church and his work began immediately. Further survey work discovered other Universalists in neighboring communities. The first service was held in the Nassau Athletic Club house on September 7. A beautiful room is being used as a meeting place and the contract of rental allows one week-day a month for social purposes. The congregations have been averaging on these autumn Sundays, with their automobile and golf allurements, around thirty. This is a splendid beginning.

The people of this new church have agreed to raise \$1,500 of their year's budget. This shows a substantial interest in the church. The balance will be provided by the State and General Conventions. Already, an inspiring devotion between pastor and people has developed and this promises much for the future. The great credit for the new church is due to the two laymen,

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Messrs. Saunders and Friedrich, who persisted in their faith that Floral Park offered a great opportunity to a new Universalist movement. This new church in Floral Park has the distinction of being the first Universalist home mission enterprise undertaken in a growing community of the east, in years and years.

Twenty persons signed the constitution of the Floral Park Universalist Church on October 15. There were thirty-eight persons present, on this rainy night. Five came from All Souls Church, Brooklyn, as guests. The principal speaker was the state superintendent, Rev. Fred C. Leining, D.D. He extended the greetings of the churches of the state and challenged the new members to grasp the opportunity that stood before them. He said that they could go as far as they really wanted to go as a church. All depended upon their faith and action. Multitudes are in the neighborhood who can be attracted to this liberal church. Mr. Friederich, who spoke for the committee which has been known always as the Metropolitan Extension Committee, expressed the joy that a new church had really begun its career in this section of Long Island. Rev. Cornelius Greenway, pastor of All Souls Church, congratulated the society upon its birthday and assured the members that the Brooklyn churches would always be enthusiastic for its advance. Violin selections were rendered by Mr. Becker, accompanied by Miss Grace Joslyn. Later, refreshments were served.

The new organization is known as "The Floral Park Universalist Church." The constitution provides: "Membership in this church shall be open to all persons in sympathy with its purposes and ideals—provided, that no test of creed and no observance of ceremony shall ever be allowed to bar from active participation in its membership and affairs any person who is sincerely interested in the advancement of reverence, truth and human brotherhood."

The officers are as follows: Moderator, Mr. Walter I. Sherman; clerk, Mrs. Edith H. Muller; treasurer, Mr. Charles H. Ford; trustees, Mr. C. H. Clarahan, Mrs. Beulah Julien, Mrs. A. C. Angell, Mr. Richard P. Saunders, Mr. Clifford C. Zahn. With the minister, these officers comprise the board of management. Messrs. Richard P. Saunders, Fred Imhoff and Frank Nichols are deacons. The nominating committee was: Rev. Harry F. Shook, Mrs. A. C. Angell, Mrs. Chester E. Durgin and Mr. Clifford C. Zahn. The committee on constitution was as follows: Rev. Harry F. Shook, Mrs. Charles H. Ford, Mrs. Beulah Julien, Mrs. Watter I. Sherman and Mr. C. H. Clarahan.

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