

[Washington Heights Universalist Church]

REPORT OF DEDICATION

The Dedication Service of the Washington Heights Universalist Church took place with appropriate ceremonies on Monday evening, May 7th. The Church is situated in the upper part of New York City, and for some time has held its services in a hall, but after various delays, this new edifice was erected. This accomplishment is the result of indefatigable devotion and work of the Rev. C. [Clarence] J. Harris, pastor, and his people, an earnest band of loyal followers assisted and encouraged by interested fellow Universalists. The society is now holding services in their new Church, which is a fine building in Spanish Mission architecture, and is fairly complete, lacking, however, the pews, the securing of which will be the new endeavor of the untiring workers. The Church was dedicated free of debt.

Many friends and well wishers accepted the kind invitation of Mr. Harris to join with him and his people on this solemn and happy occasion. The invocation was voiced by the Rev. Helene Ulrich, the scripture read by Rev. B. B. Gibbs. Dr. T. E. [Thomas Edward] Potterton preached the dedication sermon, and brought to the Washington Heights people, with their new responsibility and their new vision, a message of progress bidding them go forward to deeper and broader achievement, and saying, "We need to go forward in the establishment of the Kingdom of God. This to come through love expressed in terms of brotherhood. Co-operation is the magic word that spells success. You have the Church, be obedient to the voice of the Eternal and go forward."

Mr. Louis A. Ames, chairman of the financial committee of the General Convention, in the name of the latter, presented the building to the Washington Heights Society, and officially and personally extended his "congratulations to the people and the pastor in the realization of the dream of years that they may have a home." He emphasized the labor and sacrifice which enabled the edifice to be dedicated free and clear of all debt.

Mr. Frank Whitten, president of the local society, accepted on behalf of the Washington Heights' people. He spoke with gratitude of the help of the New York State and General Conventions, also the Metropolitan Women's Alliance, and thanked all who had aided and encouraged the work.

The service of Dedication was conducted under the leadership of Rev. C. J. Harris, who paid quiet tribute to those no longer here in body, whose love, work and sacrifice had helped make possible this glad day. Mr. Harris feelingly said, "We have not erected here a storm center, not alone another Church of the Universalist faith, but we have erected another altar where reason shall be enthroned. He promised that it should [would] be a place of tolerance, loving-kindness, peace and worship. Heads of the various

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organizations connected with the church, from the smallest boys' group to the ever-active Ladies' Society, pledged renewed allegiance to the work and ideals for which this Universalist body of people were united.

The General Superintendent, Dr. John Smith Lowe, brought greetings and words of appreciation from the General Convention and the State Convention. He affirmed that in the last analysis, "We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate. The only way is to here and now rededicate ourselves to the great spiritual purpose and truth and the service it (the Church) is to render."

Rabbi Martin of the Fort Washington synagogue, the purchaser of the old place of worship of the Washington Heights Church, a loyal friend of Mr. Harris, next expressed his congratulations and felicitations.

Mrs. W. Earp, president of the Metropolitan Women's Alliance, the members of which have always been interested in the progress of this church, brought greetings and good wishes.

Dr. H. R. Rose gave a short address on "The Successful Church," with the thought that the chief success of any church depends on the spirit of its people and minister.

Mrs. C. J. Harris and Miss M. Fudger added to the enjoyment of the evening with appropriate and pleasing solos.

Dr. A. W. [Arthur Wilder] Grose pronounced the benediction.

Thus the Washington Heights Church, in the words of its minister, was dedicated to the worship of God and the service of Man, and the unconquerable cause of truth.

*Empire State Universalist, Carthage NY, June 1923*

Transcribed on 11 Mar 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY